

# Serving His Father

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 23 February 2025

Preacher: Pastor Dave Thompson

[ 0 : 00 ] You can be turning to Luke chapter 2. Luke chapter 2. One of the most fascinating things in the world is watching a baby.

I'm sorry, I messed up my notes. One of the most fascinating things in the world is watching a baby learn.

You take that little baby, and you first have that little baby, and there are a thousand flailing movements. Their arms and their fingers, and they do things that just seem senseless, but all that time they're learning what, they don't think this, but what this signal does here and here.

And it's amazing to watch as they keep doing that until they're able finally to control their little hands and their little fingers, and bob your nose, and then giggle about it.

It's amazing. It's fun to watch. So much is learned by practice.

[ 1 : 30 ] Much is also learned by watching and listening. One area in particular that fascinates me is how children learn to speak. They can watch your lips, but they can't see your tongue move, how you position your teeth, or how you move your larynx, or how you open and close your throat, what you do with your nasal cavity.

You don't even think about that, but a baby can't see any of that. But somehow by listening, they can not only learn to shape all those things, so they end up making sounds that end up coming out like words, and eventually they say things just like you do.

In fact, they say things just like you do sometimes, and they've not watched a thing, and they learn all this. Then the formal education begins, and it's amazing.

My wife and I were talking about this. You ever teach a child to read or be with a child? As that spark happens, and they begin to string things together, and you hear them read, and now as they're beginning to read, they look at books, and they have new questions, and things just blossom, and it transforms their world, and then they grow, and they get into school, and teachers talk to them about calculus, and geometry, and about physics, and chemistry, and they come home and talk about things you've never even dreamed of, and you're just amazed to see how they learn.

The ability to learn is an amazing thing. Today's passage is about not only how Jesus learned, but about how he set his heart on learning to serve his father, and in serving his father, he served us.

[ 3 : 29 ] So let's go to Luke chapter 2, and we're going to start back at verse 39. We read this last week, but we're going to start back there. Start at verse 39, and we'll read to verse 52.

And when they had performed everything, this is talking about the purification, the presenting of Christ as the firstborn who opened the womb. When they had performed everything according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth.

And the child grew, and became strong, filled with wisdom, and the favor of God was upon him. Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the Passover.

And when he was 12 years old, they went up according to custom. When the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem.

His parents did not know it, but supposing him to be in the group, they went a day's journey. But then they began to search for him among their relatives and acquaintances.

[ 4 : 39 ] And when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him. After three days, they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them, and asking them questions.

And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. And when his parents saw him, they were astonished.

And his mother said to him, Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been searching for you in great distress. And he said to them, Why were you looking for me?

Did you not know that I must be in my father's house? And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them. And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them.

And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.

[ 5 : 51 ] Let's pray together. Father, I thank you for what we're going to look at today. And we're only going to be able to deal with a sliver of what's in this passage.

But Lord, I pray that in the end we would see you as amazing. And we would see the work of Christ as amazing.

And I pray that it would cause us to worship you, to want to follow you. I pray that it would also be used by your spirit in hearts to stir and bring people to trust Christ today.

So Lord, I ask that you would be with us in Jesus' name. Amen. So, last time we looked at how Jesus was recognized to be the consolation of Israel.

He was brought to the temple. Remember we talked about Simeon snatching him up and saying, Now let thy servant depart in peace. And everything then had been done according to the law.

[ 7 : 02 ] And Luke records that after everything had been done according to the law, Jesus went home to Nazareth. Now we read verses 39 and 40 last week, but I wanted to include them this week because I think Luke meant for them to be a bridge into what he deals with next.

We get now a small glimpse of what went on the years between his birth and his ministry which we'll see begin in chapter 3. Our account here is bookended.

You'll find in verse 40 and you'll find in verse 52 statements of how Jesus grew. Luke gives us this account because I think it typifies a couple of things that are important for us to know about how Jesus grew up.

The first observation about Jesus' growing up years is to look at the situation God put Jesus in. I want to remind you of a summary of what has gone on to this point.

We can look back at the beginning of the book of Luke and we can see things that can be summarized by saying that God gave Jesus godly parents to begin to teach Jesus to know and serve his father.

[ 8 : 30 ] He was born a baby with the same capabilities that a baby has as you did and as I did.

he did not come out of the womb being able to quote large pieces of the law or the book of Psalms. He cried when he was hungry.

He couldn't talk. He was just like us. He was a baby whose arms he couldn't control and his fingers wouldn't do what he wanted them to do if he thought about wanting them to do anything.

Now one of the things we're going to have to hold in tension and we won't have time to go into this a lot but I want to acknowledge it and remind you of it and that is that this baby that Mary had in her womb and then held in her arms and Mary and Joseph carried and led was at the same time fully human and fully God.

Two natures in one being not mixed together separate but both are part of who Christ is. But as we think of this passage we're going to be centering on his human nature and I want in the end one of the things I want you to be surprised about and now I've given away the I want you to look for.

[ 10 : 01 ] is the fact that his human life was not extraordinary in the sense that he could talk when he was born or that he could walk a week after he was born.

Jesus was normal and he had to learn and so to do that God gave Jesus godly parents to begin to teach Jesus to know and to serve his father, his father, God the father.

God the beginning of the book of Luke points out that they were both righteous. Remember the angel came to Mary and said hail highly favored one speaks about her righteousness.

At one point came to Joseph in the same term said he was a righteous man. They were declared righteous and they demonstrated their righteousness by the way they lived and the way they reacted to God's word.

They were willing to do what God asked to them. I mean after all here's this teenage girl whom God has come to through the messenger of an angel and said you're going to have a child and she says be it unto me as the Lord has said.

[ 11 : 14 ] She was willing to do what God asked. Joseph found out that Mary was pregnant and he was willing to put her away privately and the angel came to him a righteous man and said Joseph fear not to take Mary to your wife for that which is conceived of her.

I'm pulling this from a different gospel. That which is conceived of her is of the Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit. Fear not to take her as your wife. And so he did. These were people who wanted to serve the Lord who did love the Lord and desired to be righteous and desired to obey God.

And so Joseph married Mary and raised Jesus. And they brought Jesus up in the fear and admonition of the Lord to use a term that's in the New Testament.

Teaching him the things that were appropriate for parents to teach children. Don't touch that.

That's hot. You can't go there. You'll fall off the cliff. They just did what parents were to do.

[ 12 : 23 ] And both of them had received revelations from the Lord. And I'm going to mention this here. I don't know exactly at what point in Jesus' life this happened.

But I'm sure they taught him at the appropriate age the truths that they themselves had learned about him. Son, when the angel came to me, he said, you're the son of God.

God. When the angel came to me, he said, you're going to be on David's throne. When the angel came to me, he said, you're going to be the consolation of Israel.

And on and on, they could have shared with him the things that were revealed to him, and they taught him those things. we're tempted to say, oh, the divine nature was there, so he just automatically knew all these things.

No, Jesus learned these things, and it's evident through this passage, and I'll reference another passage in a minute, that is evident that even though he was God, as man, he had to learn these things.

[ 13 : 38 ] And so God gave him godly parents. They modeled godly lives. We can see from this passage, that they desired to do what God commanded. They were desiring to fulfill the law.

Forty days, sacrifice needed to be made, purified Mary. Eight days, he needed to be circumcised. Forty to fifty days, usually took place at the forty at the time that Mary was purified.

But Jesus then was presented as the firstborn who opened the womb, holy unto the Lord. They desired to do what God commanded. And they also, from our text today, this is where we begin picking up the things that are relevant to this passage, they also made yearly trips to Jerusalem.

In obedience to the law, three times a year, the men were to appear before God in Jerusalem. One of them was for the Passover and the feast of unleavened bread that was tied right with that.

And so every year it says that Joseph went up or they went up, both he and Mary. Women were not required to go, they were allowed to go, and it happened more as it got time towards the life of Jesus.

[ 14 : 51 ] In fact, it became pretty prevalent that the women went up. And so they made yearly trips to Jerusalem. Now, we can't say for sure that Jesus went up every time.

This may or may not have been the first time that Jesus went. And it doesn't really matter, but I think that he did go yearly. Normally, a boy went to the Passover in Jerusalem for the first time when he was 12.

Now, he would be bar mitzvahed, he'd be pronounced a son of the covenant at 13. But here at 12, most men and even the religious scholars of the day encouraged people to do this.

Bring your son at 12. Let him see what's going to happen. Let him begin to learn what this means to be a son of the covenant and what it means when the Passover sacrificed and all this.

And so, if not before, at least Jesus would go up when he was 12. So he grew up under his parents' example and instruction.

[ 15 : 58 ] Luke 2. 40 says, and the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom, and the favor of God was upon him. His parents had done that.

Now, God works in people's hearts, and good parents can do good things, and sometimes children rebel against them. But in God's grace, good parents did good things, peace, and Jesus was hungry to serve the Lord.

And he was becoming strong, and he was filled with wisdom, and the favor of God was upon him. Just break from our thing here for just a second, and ask Christian parents, do you give your children these benefits?

are you people who desire to serve the Lord so as to be an example for your children? Deuteronomy 6, 4-9, Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might. These words that I have commanded you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.

[ 17 : 16 ] You shall bind them as a sign on your hands, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes, and you shall write them on the doorposts of your house, and on your gates. Is it your desire to bring your children up in the fear and admonition of the Lord?

Is it your desire to teach them? Yes, we teach them how to do all kinds of things, learn to walk, different things, we help them with that, but do we teach them the things of God, so that they're headed, before they're even twelve, they're headed in a direction, they may not know Christ yet at all, but they're headed in a direction of having heard, this is what's right, this is what you need, this is what's true.

I would need to need to do. This is a requirement, we've read Deuteronomy, it's a requirement of us who are Christians to point our children towards the truth, it's a requirement that we tell them the word of God, but lest you be overcome with discouragement, just like Mary and Joseph, we all fail at this.

none of us have as good children as Jesus was, because our children have sin natures, and we have sin natures, but just like Mary and Joseph, we all fail at this, but is it your desire, is it your longing, if you fail at this, do you repent and stand in Christ's righteousness and try again, Lord, I haven't been talking about you with my children, Lord, I haven't been living this example, I've been less than diligent at being in the Lord's house, I've been less than diligent at wanting to understand and learn from God's word, I've been less than diligent from participating in the things God has provided for me to grow, and therefore now I am not an example that I should be, Lord, forgive me, I am wrong, I want to change that, help me to change that, Lord, help me to be a people who's in the service, who's around

Christians, who's reading God's word, who talks with God, with the children about the things of God, so in Jesus' instruction, God gave him godly parents, next we'll see in the account in our text, it shows what's in Jesus' heart, we go from how God worked in Jesus' heart, through the parents, to where now we get a glimpse of what's in Jesus' heart, at 12 years old, now, we've read the account, I'm not going to go through all the details of the account, but think through this, remember some of the things he said, he says, at one point, do you know that I must be in my father's house, at 12 years old, Jesus knew it was a priority for him to be in, to know, and to be serving his father, now what's in this account has three fold purpose, we're not going to be able to chase all three of these purposes, but one purpose of this account is to demonstrate that Jesus knew at 12 years old, he was the son of

[ 20 : 49 ] God, don't you know that I must be in my father's house, no one, Moses didn't, David didn't, Job didn't, no one in the Old Testament called God my father, Jesus is the first person in the whole Bible to say I must be in my father's house, he knew he was the God man, did he know all the ramifications of it, no, that's what's going on here, and so one of the things this passage does is to show that Jesus knew he was the son of God, another thing this passage does is to show that Jesus had a strong desire and felt a priority to know his father, as a 12 year old man, a boy, he was considered a man the next year, as a 12 year old boy, he was already saying,

I want to know my father, kids, 12, 10, 8, 14, 16, it's not right to say, when I'm 21, I'll get serious with God, young people, now is the time, now is the time for you to be seeking God, to be coming to know all you can about him, now is the time, you want to be knowing your father, you want to be knowing his word, and that's where we're going next, Jesus had this passionate desire to know God's word, so kids don't let this opportunity pass by, if you can read, you can read your Bible, it's not going to make you to be in favor with God in the sense that you'll earn any righteousness but it'll show you that God who loves you, it'll show you who you are, it'll show you what you need, it will be that which brings peace and joy and comfort, so young people be in the word, and the third purpose of the account is to show, and this is where we're really going to spend our time, is to show that as a real man,

Jesus had to learn most of what he would come to know about his life, and his responsibilities, he came to learn it, through the process of learning and studying God's word, God didn't put Jesus, now, I have to be careful, I don't get into too much here, Jesus was the God man, two natures, but as Jesus came to earth, he didn't exercise openly, very frequently at all, his deity, he only exercised his deity when it was the Father's will to exercise his deity, the deity of Christ did not go around informing Christ of all kinds of things that he didn't need to know to serve as our Savior, and so it was his responsibility to learn as he walked this earth, and so as this first opportunity that's recorded in the scripture, he may have been here before, but as this situation comes up,

Jesus, as a 12 year old boy, as he's come to the Passover, and is each year seeing more and more things, as he's been in the word, and I'll talk about how he's been in the word before this in just a minute, but as he's been in the word, as he's heard the word preached, as he keeps hearing about things, and maybe as he's been to the Passover years before and thought, I don't understand why they're doing that, and he learns more from the word and comes back, and now he's enthralled, they're doing that because of this, and if he's been reading Isaiah 52, 53, and 54, some of it, he begins to see, this is me, this is what I'm going to do, this is what I am for, and he's there, and he's beginning to put things together, and he's at that particular Passover, and as the week goes by, and all kinds of things going on, he decides, I'm going to stay behind, because there is stuff here I need to learn,

I want to avail myself of what the religious scholars would discuss about the word of God, now, as they were at the Passover, there were probably many opportunities where things were talked about and explained, religious leaders, scholars would gather together and talk, it was a common practice though, that once the Passover was done, the religious scholars of the day would hang out at the temple, they would hang around for three or four or five days, and what they would do is they would have, now remember, many of these religious scholars would have students, just like religious scholars in colleges today have, or just scholars have in colleges today, they have students, and so they hang around after the Passover, and from what I'm understanding the tradition was that these scholars would hang around, they would keep their students there, and they would begin this Socratic method of back and forth, and the teachers would begin talking about something they had been studying, and you know,

[ 26 : 47 ] I thought about this, and they would ask their students questions, and they would ask one another questions, and there would be these good religious discussions where people would talk about the things of God, and Jesus had seen that and thought, I need that, that's where I want to be, I want to learn about my father, and so he stays behind to get an opportunity to be involved in this kind of discussion, and he's twelve, twelve, I'm not going to do it, I thought about asking all the twelve-year-olds to put their hands up, but I didn't want you to feel bad, make you uncomfortable, but think about yourself, what were you like at twelve, was it your greatest desire, let's go listen to the religious scholars, I just can't wait to hear what they talk about, no, but Jesus had that hunger, had that hunger to know his father, had that hunger to know what the word of

God says, because he had a responsibility, he had a task, and he was there to follow that, to pursue that, so he stayed behind, the end of the Passover, his parents left with family and acquaintances, and moved on, he was normal, in a caravan like this, for the women and the younger children to walk in front, and the men and the older kids to walk in back, he's twelve, where does he fit, he's not bar mitzvahed yet, but he's an exceptional child, Joseph's going, yeah, he's probably up there with Mary, and Mary's going, he's an exceptional child, he's probably back there with Joseph, and they go a whole day's journey, no worries, no thoughts, common, and they get to where they're going to stay, and Frank, have you seen Jesus, Pete, have you seen

Jesus, no one has seen Jesus, and they keep looking and they figure out he's not there, and so they head back, takes another whole day to get back, and then they get back, and they spend the day looking, where do they look, where they stayed, some of the places maybe that Jesus played, I mean, he's still a boy, who knows where they looked, the last place they looked, we always find things in the last place we look, there's a reason for that, but anyway, you'll have to think about that one for a while, the last place they looked was the temple, and they find him there, and like any parent, they're aggravated by this point, it's an aggravation driven by fear, what if something happens, what if somebody's done something, and they finally find

Jesus, and Luke 2, 48 says, and when his parents saw him, they were astonished, I've tried to figure this out, I think this is, look at who he's talking to, could have also been, that's where he is, but they were astonished, and his mother said to him, son, why have you treated us so, behold your father, and I have been searching for you in great distress, was this the only time Jesus sinned, that's one of those trick questions, that's like me saying to a man, have you stopped beating up your wife, there's no winning answer to that, but many have said, this is the closest that Jesus came to sinning, was he sinning, no, he was not in rebellion against his parents, he was submitting to the authority, of his true father,

Luke 2 49, and he said to them, why were you looking for me, did you not know that I must be in my father's house, a legitimate translation is in my father's business, he's looking at them in all submission, in all proper authority, in the proper attitude, and he's saying, you know the story here, you know who I am, why didn't you look here first, and so, he's grown and he's listened and he's learned, but we see the conflict because we're parents, but the conflict is there to show he's hungry to know his father, well it didn't end there, because he's only 12, and he doesn't start his ministry until he's 30, but Jesus continues to learn until he started his ministry, you say, what evidence do you have of that pastor, and you can take your Bible and turn over just a page or so to

[ 32 : 08 ] Luke chapter 4, now Jesus has already been baptized, he's already started his ministry, he's been baptized, and he's been, he hasn't started his ministry in that he's gone out and preached, but he's already entered into a publicness, he's been baptized, and he's already been out in the wilderness for 40 days being tempted to the devil, and he comes back in chapter 4, and we find that after the temptation, you get down to verse 16, and it says, he came to Nazareth, and he came to Nazareth, where he'd been brought up, and as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him, and he unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, the spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor, he has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord, and he stops in the middle part of the verse, exactly where he needs to, and he rolls up the scroll, gives it back to the attendant and sat down, and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him, and I'm going to leave the rest for a couple weeks from now.

It was his custom to go to the synagogue every Sabbath. He knew the book of Isaiah well enough to be able to open it to the part he wanted to reference.

You know, I had a friend who used to say, prego, prego? It's in there. What did he mean by that? You think of a phrase, and you can't think of where it is, and you go, prego, it's in there.

Now you'll have to have watched an old spaghetti sauce commercial to get that. But, he wasn't just having to say, prego. He knew it.

And he knew that that passage referred to him. Why? Because he had studied and could put all these pieces together so that he understood what was going on.

[ 34 : 36 ] Now, how much divine revelation is here? all that's appropriate from God the Father. We don't know.

But the fact of the matter is, he studied, he learned, he grew until he understood it. And I don't have time to go into this, but I'm going to mention it anyway.

The Sermon on the Mount, I think he did that the same way I do every week. only he went back to the Old Testament and says, hmm, the law of the Lord.

And he thought through and studied out the ramifications not only of what you shouldn't do, but what requirements are there for you to do. He studied, he learned, he knew what was in the scripture.

He knew other passages. If we go on in chapter 4, which we're not going to go now, he quotes passages from other places. some of the things that they would say of him. He spoke of the kind of ministry he would have.

[ 35 : 43 ] Jesus could do all of this mostly because he saw that it was a priority for him to learn and know the word of God. So Jesus learned this way.

This is important. Jesus learned this way so that he might be a true and real human savior for us.

I had big long passages of Hebrews in here, but I took them out for time's sake. But let me just point to them. He learned obedience through suffering.

He learned his ministry from the word of God. He learned who he was in some measure. Where that balance is, I'm not sure.

But he learned who he was and what he was to do in some measure by looking at the word of God. And he did that so that he was a qualified savior.

[ 36 : 55 ] He didn't just come and cheat. He didn't just come and pop into the world already knowing everything and glide his way through life and die or pretend to die.

He was a real human being. A real human being in that the son of God took on flesh. He veiled his flesh so as to be seen as man which he was truly man but he was also God and in that he was a real human person so as to be our substitute.

To represent us he had to grow the way we grew. He had to learn the way we learned. He had to suffer the way we suffered yet without sin.

And so Jesus spent 30 years making it a priority to learn and understand the word of God that he might be able to teach his disciples and refute those who were against him.

Yes he is the son of God and he could have used his divinity in answering those but he knew the word of God he had studied through it and understood it so that he could give an answer to those who tried to rebuff him because that's what a substitute for a sinner like me needs to be able to do.

[ 38 : 23 ] He needs to be able to serve as a human and so he did. He learned the word of God that may be able to be and do all that was needed to be the substitute for us.

He needed to learn so that he could seek and do his father's will that he might be a substitute for us. I mentioned in the beginning how precious it is to watch a baby learn to do normal things that people do.

Brothers and sisters how wonderful it is to see and to know that our Savior became like us and made it a priority to learn and to do all that was necessary so that he could take our place and make us his own.

Jesus did that for you. He came into this world now a child is not a blank slate in relation to a sin. Jesus was sinless but a child comes into this world God gives them the ability to breathe and to cry when they're hungry but so little they can do.

He came into this world and learned everything that needed to be learned so that he could grow up and be a true human who lived without sin to take your sin upon himself and give himself for you.

[ 40 : 01 ] We need to rejoice in that. We need to be thankful for the Son of God who was willing to do that because God had set his love upon us.

A couple other little things. Christian, do you make it a priority, your priority, to learn and to do all that the Word of God teaches you to do? Do you make it a priority?

And this can relate to you as a Christian if you're 6, 7, 8, 85, 90, 95, 100.

Do you make it a priority to learn and to do all that the Word of God teaches you to do? Do you do that by being in gathered worship?



Do you do that by being in God's Word? Not to earn your salvation, but to know God and His will. Do you make it a priority to serve God with all your being? Young person, Jesus was desiring to know God and serving before He's twelve.

[ 41 : 11 ] Do you have that desire? And lastly, friend, if you're here and you don't know Christ as Savior, what are you trusting in? To not have to suffer for your own sin?

I mean, we all know that we do things wrong and we all know what justice is and we all want justice, except when it comes to us, but we know that justice must take place, even when it comes to us.

What are you trusting in to deal with that justice? Jesus lived and obeyed God as a true but sinless human. And as He had lived that life that way, without sin, then God placed all the sin of His people on His innocent Son and caused Him to suffer and die in our place.

And just like when Jesus was talking to Nicodemus and He brings up that Old Testament example of those who had been bitten by the snake and there was a pole with a snake on it. Jesus is pointing to Nicodemus the way of salvation for those people was to believe on God's promise, look to it and believe it.

And that's what Jesus wanted Nicodemus to see. There's a way of salvation. It is the Son of God who's taken on flesh, taken the sin of His people on Himself and offered His righteousness to them.

[ 42 : 35 ] How do you get that? You look to the Son and you put your trust in Him. Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Let's pray. Thank you Father for your word. Thank you for what's here. Thank you for the wonder of what Christ did to be able to pay for our sins.

This was a lot of work. He had to know tremendous amounts of things. And yet He was willing to do it for us. He was willing to do it without the aid of divinity except in those cases where you wanted it.

Thank you that He did it and earned a human righteousness, a perfect human righteousness for us humans who needed a perfect righteousness. And pray that you would be with us.

Work in our hearts in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen.