

LIFE GROUP LESSON

Just Like Jesus • Week of March 15

Opening Discussion:

Have you ever left one of your kids behind at church or the ball park, thinking they were either with another parent, grandparent, or family or friends? How did you respond when you realized the situation?

Read Luke 2:41-52

Outside of the birth narrative, this story of a 12-year-old Jesus visiting Jerusalem with his parents during the Passover is the only story we have of Jesus' youth. It is also the first time we see 'red letters' as he responds to his mother, frantic upon realizing he was missing as they returned to Nazareth. Three days it took to finally find him! ...in the Temple, sitting among the teachers, listening and asking questions with an understanding that astounded all who heard him. This is a most special Passover, for this visit directly preceded young Jesus' *bar mitzvah*, a ceremony marking a Jewish boy's entering covenant responsibilities at the age of thirteen. What do you make of the two questions Jesus asks his mother:

"But why did you need to search?"

"Didn't you know that I must be in my Father's house?"

Mary and Joseph were good parents, make no mistake, and yet, they needed Jesus to be in his Father's house. Jesus did not want to leave His Father's house because, even at a young age, he understood his Father's presence among his people was the greatest gift, as in the days of the Tabernacle when Moses declared: "For your presence among us sets your people and me apart from all other people on the earth" (Exodus 33:16b). Further, Jesus knew that his Father's plan from the beginning was to live among his people so *the world would know* the God of Jacob.

"I will also bless the foreigners who commit themselves to the LORD, who serve him and love his name, who worship him ... I will bring them to my holy mountain of Jerusalem and will fill them with joy in my house of prayer. I will accept their burnt offerings and sacrifices, because my Temple will be called a house of prayer for all nations. For the Sovereign LORD, who brings back the outcasts of Israel, says: I will bring others, too, besides my people Israel" (Isaiah 56:68).

Consider the Culture

Are we true to Jesus' passion for his Father's house? (John 2:13-17) Are we making the Father's house a house of prayer or a den of thieves? (Luke 19:45-46) Are we living what we say we believe? ... or are we playing church? The Greek word, *hypokrisis*, means 'playing a part on the stage, pretending to be something one is not.' Perhaps we stand in need of a deep cleansing today! E. Stanley Jones, evangelist to India one hundred years ago, had the opportunity to speak with Mahatma Gandhi about faith in Christ, to which Gandhi replied that he had no problem with the Christ of Christianity; his problem was with Christians. His experience with people who claim to be Christian revealed that most of them do not live according to the teachings of Christ – e.g. the Sermon on the Mount. He explained:

"... it is a first-class human tragedy that people of the earth who claim to believe in the message of Jesus, whom they describe as the Prince of Peace, show little of that belief in actual practice" ~ Mahatma Gandhi

Discussion:

Perhaps it is true that many of us at times *talk the talk* but fail to *walk the walk*. And yes, it is a tragedy. One of our pastors shared how, in more recent years, his college friend said that *the last place he would ever go to try to find God would be the church, the place where Christ-followers gather...!* Why is this? Have you ever experienced a similar sentiment?

Faith and Practice

It is important to be consistent in faith *and* practice. Yet, we are all works-in-progress. John Wesley taught how once we profess faith in Christ, we are immediately justified, *forgiven!* For Christ's righteousness is imputed (credited) to our account, our debt of sin, so to speak. This is Good News for sinners, because the Bible says no one is righteous apart from Christ (see Psalm 14:2-3, Isaiah 53:6, Romans 3:10-12). In fact, Jesus told the rich young ruler "... only God is truly good" (Mark 10:18). Believing and professing faith in Christ (inviting the Lord Jesus into your heart) is the first step. Then, the Holy Spirit through regenerating and sanctifying grace commences making us new, in an on-going way, as we avail ourselves to Christ's very presence now alive in our hearts.

Further Discussion and Action Steps

We need Jesus to be in his Father's house. We need the Holy Spirit to be just like Jesus. KNOW THIS: Jesus IS the completion of the Old Testament. He said, "I tell you the truth, before Abraham was ever born, I AM!" (John 8:58). The Lord Jesus Christ is the full expression of God (Colossians 1:19) and came to this earth not to do away with the Law, but to fulfill it (Matthew 5:17). He said, "I have other sheep, too, that are not in this sheepfold. I must bring them also. They will listen to my voice, and there will be one flock with one shepherd" (John 10:16). Jesus desires one flock with one Shepherd. He will help us emulate his love to the world around us as we ask him and trust him. If you are a fully devoted follower at Christ Church, are you living into the six-fold covenant? Are you –

- Attending Worship Regularly
- Inviting at least five persons per month to attend Worship or Life Group
- Learning Together in Life Group
- Praying Regularly for Christ Church
- Serving Regularly in a Ministry
- Tithing Regularly

Pray

Close in a time of prayer, praying specifically for Christ Church and for Vision 2:28, for the goals of this vision to be realized. Assessing where we are in the six-fold covenant is not intended to make us feel guilty but to awaken us to reality. Spring is the time for new life. So let us recommit ourselves to faith in Christ, and alongside our words, commit to *practicing our faith* so others may know Christ. Our Father's love is big enough to reach all who are lost, and being together in our Father's house is special. His house is truly a place of prayer for *all* nations. Let's pray to be more like Jesus and begin living into our prayers.

One Year Bible Reading

- Mar. 15: Numbers 22:21-23:30, Luke 1:57-80, Psalm 58:1-11, Proverbs 11:12-13
- Mar. 16: Numbers 24:1-25:18, Luke 2:1-35, Psalm 59:1-17, Proverbs 11:14
- Mar. 17: Numbers 26:1-51, Luke 2:36-52, Psalm 60:1-12, Proverbs 11:15
- Mar. 18: Numbers 26:52-28:15, Luke 3:1-22, Psalm 61:1-8, Proverbs 11:16-17
- Mar. 19: Numbers 28:16-29:40, Luke 3:23-38, Psalm 62:1-12, Proverbs 11:18-19
- Mar. 20: Numbers 30:1-31:54, Luke 4:1-30, Psalm 63:1-11, Proverbs 11:20-21
- Mar. 21: Numbers 32:1-33:39, Luke 4:31-5:11, Psalm 64:1-10, Proverbs 11:22

Just Like Jesus

Text: Luke 2:41-52

PLAIN TRUTH:

We _____ Jesus to be _____ Jesus.

- 1) We _____ the _____ to be Just Like Jesus.
- 2) Let's listen to Jesus' _____ as well as his _____.

POWER POINT 1: Living Like Jesus' is understanding that He is the completion of the Old Testament.

- 3) To be like Jesus is to continually _____ others to the _____.

POWER POINT 2 : Just like Jesus, our lives are most fundamentally shaped and directed through a relationship with God as our Father.

- 4) The _____ should reflect Jesus as he is our _____ and place of _____.

March 15, 2026