

What Do Children Need?

Luke 2:21-39

Almost everything we know about the childhood of Christ comes from Luke 1–2.

What Does The Bible Say?

21 Eight days later, when the baby was circumcised, he was named Jesus, the name given him by the angel even before he was conceived.

22 Then it was time for their purification offering, as required by the law of Moses after the birth of a child; so his parents took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. 23 The law of the Lord says, “If a woman’s first child is a boy, he must be dedicated to the Lord.” 24 So they offered the sacrifice required in the law of the Lord—“either a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.” (Luke 2:21–24 NLT)

Mary and Joseph's obedience reflects righteousness in two ways:

They obeyed the angel's instruction to name the baby "Jesus."

They show their righteousness by obeying the law of God.

Leviticus 12:12:1-4, 6-8

They circumcise Jesus on the eighth day (Luke 2:21) and take him to Jerusalem to present him to God (v. 22).

How Can You Obey?

Children need righteous parents.

Questions to ask yourself about being righteous:

Parents, is your obedience to the word of the Lord as consistent and thorough as Mary and Joseph's?

What do your children learn about serving God as they watch you?

What Does The Bible Say?

The two turtledoves or the two young pigeons would be offered if a family could not afford to offer a lamb and a turtledove (v. 24; Lev 12:6–8). In other words, Jesus was born into poverty.

The second thing each child needs to hear is how God wants to use them for His purpose.

What Does The Bible Say?

25 At that time there was a man in Jerusalem named Simeon. He was righteous and devout and was eagerly waiting for the

Messiah to come and rescue Israel. The Holy Spirit was upon him 26 and had revealed to him that he would not die until he had seen the Lord's Messiah. 27 That day the Spirit led him to the Temple. So when Mary and Joseph came to present the baby Jesus to the Lord as the law required, 28 Simeon was there. He took the child in his arms and praised God, saying, 29 "Sovereign Lord, now let your servant die in peace, as you have promised. 30 I have seen your salvation, 31 which you have prepared for all people. (Luke 2:25–31 NLT)

Simeon sees what Jesus will do in His ministry.

36 Anna, a prophet, was also there in the Temple. She was the daughter of Phanuel from the tribe of Asher, and she was very old. Her husband died when they had been married only seven years. 37 Then she lived as a widow to the age of eighty-four.

She never left the Temple but stayed there day and night, worshiping God with fasting and prayer. 38 She came along just as Simeon was talking with Mary and Joseph, and she began praising God. She talked about the child to everyone who had been waiting expectantly for God to rescue Jerusalem. (Luke 2:36–38 NLT)

Anna becomes an evangelist. She uses her gift and calling as a prophetess to declare the good news of Jesus's birth.

How Can You Obey?

Share with your children that God wants to use them in His plan.

The most important decision your children can make is that they know Jesus as their savior.

Parents need to pass down a revealed purpose for their children.

What Does The Bible Say?

Children need responsible parents.

41 Every year Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem for the Passover festival. 42 When Jesus was twelve years old, they attended the festival as usual. 43 After the celebration was over, they started home to Nazareth, but Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents didn't miss him at first, 44 because they assumed he was among the other travelers. But when he didn't show up that evening, they started looking for him among their relatives and friends.

45 When they couldn't find him, they went back to Jerusalem to search for him there. 46 Three days later they finally discovered him in the Temple, sitting among the religious teachers, listening to them and asking questions. 47 All who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. (Luke 2:41–47 NLT)

They find Him in the temple, where they had taken Him all of His life.

48 His parents didn't know what to think. "Son," his mother said to him, "why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been frantic, searching for you everywhere." 49 "But why did you need to search?" he asked. "Didn't you know that I must be in my Father's house?" 50 But they didn't understand what he meant. (Luke 2:48–50 NLT)

The twelve-year-old boy demonstrates a profound understanding of his identity and purpose. He knows he is the Son of God. No one else would have spoken this way at that time.

How Can You Obey?

They lost Jesus but did not stop until they found him again. That's responsible parenting.

Jesus was always in favor with God; however, as He got older, He grew in favor with others.

40 There the child grew up healthy and strong. He was filled with wisdom, and God's favor was on him. (Luke 2:40 NLT)

52 Jesus grew in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and all the people. (Luke 2:52 NLT)

What do growing kids need?

- **Righteous parents**
- **Revealed purpose**
- **Responsible parents**

Additional Notes:

If you want to use your home to disciple others, check out our training at www.crosswaveschurch.com/host. Cross Waves has produced short videos to train you to use your home to reach others for Christ. So please check it out.

Explore:

What does it mean that the Savior of the world, the Son of God, was born to a poor mother and family? I think it implies at least seven things:

1. Poverty is not a sin.
2. Poverty is not God's disapproval.
3. Poverty does not prevent a person from worshiping God.

4. Poverty does not necessarily doom a person to poverty forever.

5. Poverty does not excuse unrighteousness.

6. Poverty is not shameful in and of itself.

7. Poverty is a cross God entrusts to some people for a time.

So let us pray the prayer of Agur:

8 First, help me never to tell a lie. Second, give me neither poverty nor riches! Give me just enough to satisfy my needs.

(Proverbs 30:8 NLT)

Both poverty and wealth have their temptations. Let us beware of them both.

Explore:

Christianity is about more than attending church and living a good moral life. Being a Christian is about having a vibrant

personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Every Sunday School teacher or Bible study leader should want to see each learner enter into this relationship—their eternal destiny depends on it.

As you work toward this goal, keep the following in mind:

Following Christ is more than a mere decision; it is about a lifelong relationship. Jesus called us to make disciples, not mere decision-makers. Aim for long-term faith, not momentary emotion.

Salvation is a matter of grace, not works. Our works do not save us (Ephesians 2:8-9), nor do they keep us (Galatians 3:2-6).

Good works are a product of salvation, not a prerequisite to it.

Don't confuse sanctification with salvation. Holiness follows salvation; it doesn't precede it. Don't try to impose "Christian" expectations on men and women who don't know Christ.

- Keep it simple. Being born again is not complicated. Here's a simple way to explain it:

- Acknowledge your sinfulness and need for a Savior (Romans 3:10, 23).

- Trust in Christ's sacrifice for your sins and His resurrection (Romans 10:9-10).

Surrender your life to God's transforming power (Romans 12:1-2).

Most of all, remember that your job is to tell the truth in a way others can understand, answer their questions, and allow them to respond. If you do that faithfully, some will respond and join the band of Christ- followers. When they do, Heaven will rejoice!

Question 1 of 4

How can the Son of God, the Savior of the world, grow? What does this say about the biblical teaching of incarnation?

Question 2 of 4

Has your child shown that he or she is watching your obedience and compromises? Have you ever apologized for your failures? How did that affect your child?

Question 3 of 4

Think about older people you know who are gracious and happy like Anna, and those who are angry and grumpy. How can we avoid becoming cranky and bitter as we age?

Question 4 of 4

How did Mary and Joseph act responsibly as parents even when they left Jesus behind?

