

Jesus at the Temple (at age 12)

Teacher Pep Talk: Twelve sounds so grown up, *especially when you are a Little Guy!* But to us adults, 12 seems really young to be doing some of the things Jesus was doing at that age! The teachers at the Temple thought so too! They couldn't believe it when Jesus discussed the scriptures with them in such detail, especially since He hadn't had any formal training! Jesus was amazing in so many ways!

He was at once completely human and completely God. This is demonstrated very tenderly in the story of Jesus in the Temple.

Although Jesus already knew who He was (the Son of God) and was able to discuss the scriptures with the teachers, He was still obedient to his earthly parents, and was submissive to them.

NOTE: Consider asking a 12 year old boy to come and sit with your class during this lesson, just so the children can see how old 12 really is. Maybe you and the class could ask him questions like: "How tall are you?" "What grade are you in?" "What is your favorite activity?" "Have you ever been in a big city all by yourself for 3 days?" or "Have you ever sat for 3 days discussing the Bible with a bunch of pastors?" etc. *(Make sure that he has some of these questions ahead of time so that he isn't taken by surprise!)*

You will need: Blankets, towels and simple costumes for the skit

Major Points: Jesus is the Son of God.
Jesus grew up strong and in favor with God and man.
At 12 years old, Jesus talked with the teachers in the Temple.
The teachers were amazed at Jesus' knowledge!
Jesus knew that God was His Father, as early as age 12.
Jesus was obedient to His earthly parents.

Scripture Ref. Luke 2:40-52 (The Story of Jesus in the Temple)

Memory Verse: Luke 2:49 "Why were you searching for me?" he asked. **"Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?"**

Lesson: **Jesus is the Son of God**

- For the next few weeks we will be talking about stories of Jesus.
- At Christmas we celebrate that Jesus was born here
- You remember that Jesus was born to a woman named Mary
- Mary was Jesus' mother, but GOD was Jesus' father.
- Jesus is very special because Jesus is the Son of God!
- OK... so, Jesus was born... and He was a little baby... So tell me... What do little babies do? *(Wait for some answers.)*

- Yes, yes... Babies do all of those things. But let me ask you this: Do babies stay little or do they grow? (*Wait for answers.*) That's right! They grow!

Jesus grew up strong and in favor with God and man

- Jesus grew! Little babies grow! And Jesus started growing up! (Just like you are growing up!) His mother, Mary, and her husband, Joseph, took good care of baby Jesus, and He grew!
- The Bible tells us: "And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him."
- That sounds really good, doesn't it? And, it was.
- Now I have a Bible story to tell you about Jesus when He was growing up. In fact, it happened when He was 12 years old.

At 12 years old, Jesus talked with the teachers in the Temple

- While Jesus was growing up, every year His family (Mary and Joseph and all their relatives) would go to the Temple in Jerusalem. There they celebrated a holiday!
- It was a long way from where they lived (Nazareth) and it took them a few days to get there.
- One year, when Jesus was 12, they went and had their holiday as usual and then headed back home, with all their relatives.
- The first night out of town they stopped to sleep and realized that Jesus wasn't there! **Uh, oh!** Where was Jesus? They looked all around. No. He wasn't with any of His relatives. Where was Jesus? What do you think? (*Wait for answers.*)
- The next morning Mary and Joseph headed back to Jerusalem. Why do you think they did that? (*Wait for answers.*) That's right! Jesus wasn't with them, so He **MUST** still be back in Jerusalem!
- Mary and Joseph looked and looked for Jesus! Where would you look first? (*Wait for answers.*) They probably looked in a lot of different places. Finally, do you know where they found Him?
- In the Temple! The Temple then was like church is to us now. Back then, the Temple was the place where the people could go to worship God.
- There were teachers there, who taught the people about God. (Sort of like our preachers now.) Jesus was talking to them!

The teachers were amazed at Jesus' knowledge!

- Jesus sat among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions.
- The teachers were **AMAZED** at how much Jesus knew and understood about God! (After all, He was only 12 years old!)

Jesus knew that God was His Father, as early as age 12.

- Mary and Joseph were delighted to find Jesus safe and sound!
- But they had ONE BIG question: Mary asked Jesus “Son, why have you treated us like this? **Your father and I** have been anxiously searching for you.” (*meaning she and Joseph*)
- Jesus had ONE BIG answer for them: “Why were you searching for me?” he asked. “Didn’t you know I had to be in **my Father’s** house?” (*meaning God the Father*)
- By His answer to their question, Jesus showed that, even at age 12, He already knew that **God was His Father.**
- Jesus IS the Son of God!

Jesus was obedient to His earthly parents.

- But the story doesn’t end there. The Bible tells us that Jesus went home with Mary and Joseph and was obedient to them. (*That means that He obeyed them and did what they said.*)
- And after that, Jesus continued to grow up.
- The story ends with these words: “And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.”

Let’s pray and thank God for this wonderful story that tells us about Jesus!

Prayer:

Dear God,
Thank you for this story about Jesus.
Thank you that Jesus grew up, just like we do.
Thank you that He had parents to take care of Him, just like we do.
And thank you that Jesus knew that You were His Father!
Thank you for sending your Son to us!
Amen

Suggested Activities: (*Choose a few activities for your class!*)

Invite a Guest

Invite a 12 year old boy to come sit with your class during this lesson. Introduce him to the class when he arrives. Explain that he is 12 years old and that Jesus was 12 years old during the Bible story you will hear today. Allow the children to ask him some questions like “How tall are you?” “Do you play sports?” “What grade are you in?” etc.

After the lesson, ask your guest a few questions that pertain to the story; questions like: “Have you ever been in a big city all by yourself for 3 days?” or “Have you ever sat for 3 days discussing the Bible with a bunch of pastors?” etc. (*Make sure that he has some of these questions ahead of time, so that he isn’t taken by surprise!*)

Thank your guest for attending class with you. Allow him to decide if he will stay for things like snacks or not. Say good-bye! Have the class send him a thank you letter for attending their class. Allow the children to sign their names on the card. Twelve is BIG!

Act out the Bible Story

Use this narrated Bible Story to act out the story of Jesus in the Temple. If you wish, stop at different points during the skit to discuss with the class how Mary and Joseph must have felt at that point in the story. (*For example: When they first realized Jesus was missing; When they were searching high and low for Him in Jerusalem; When they finally found Him in the Temple; and When they heard Him talking with the Teachers.*) Have the children switch roles, and do the skit again. Use simple costumes if you like.

Simple Costumes: Things like large pieces of fabric make great costumes when draped across the shoulders or used as head coverings. For fun, belt the costumes at the waist with soft rope or long strips of cloth. Take off your shoes for even more fun!

Simple Stage Settings: Large towels or blankets spread on the floor can help denote different towns or areas of town. For example, a blanket on the floor on one side of the room (or perhaps even at the back of the room) can represent Jesus' hometown of Nazareth. Another blanket in the front of the room can represent the town of Jerusalem. Use a beach towel to represent the Temple in Jerusalem. Have the children start at "Nazareth" and make the long trek to the front of the room to get to "Jerusalem."

NOTE: If you have older children in the classroom (those who can read already) consider making signs that say things like "Nazareth" "Jerusalem" and "The Temple" as these will help them in making the connection with the locations in the Bible story.

SKIT – Jesus in the Temple (at Age 12)

Type: A Narrated Bible Skit for children 4-7 years old

Scripture: Taken from Luke 2:39-52

Time: 3-5 minutes

Characters:

MARY	The mother of Jesus
JOSEPH	Mary's husband
JESUS (Age 12)	The Son of God
FAMILY	Relatives of Mary and Joseph
TEACHERS	Teachers in the Temple at Jerusalem

Synopsis: Mary, Joseph, Jesus and their family travel from Nazareth to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover at the Temple. After 7 days they start home, only to realize that Jesus is not in the group. Mary and Joseph return to Jerusalem and search everywhere for Him. After three days, they find Jesus sitting among the teachers in the Temple, who are amazed at His wisdom and understanding. When asked by Mary why He did this to them, Jesus answers "Why were you searching for me? Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?" By this Jesus reveals that He already knows that He is the Son of God. Then Jesus returns home with Mary and Joseph and is obedient to them.

Jesus in the Temple (at Age 12) *A Narrated Bible Skit*

[The stage (or room) is divided into two main parts: Nazareth and Jerusalem. TEACHERS sit in an area of Jerusalem designated as the Temple. MARY, JOSEPH, and JESUS (and other FAMILY members) start in Nazareth and will travel across the room to Jerusalem.]

NARRATOR:

Every year, Jesus and His family (Mary and Joseph and all their relatives) went from Nazareth to Jerusalem to worship God at the Temple. There were lots of people there!

There were also special teachers at the Temple. They told the people about God.

[TEACHERS stand up and wave to audience.]

[MARY JOSEPH, JESUS and FAMILY all sit down with the TEACHERS.]

Everyone worshipped God at the Temple for 7 days. Then Jesus' family started back to Nazareth. But Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, without His parents knowing about it!

[MARY, JOSEPH and FAMILY start back to Nazareth but only get part way. JESUS goes and sits in the Temple with the TEACHERS.]

That night, when they stopped to sleep, Mary and Joseph realized Jesus wasn't there.

"Where is Jesus?" Mary asked.

"I thought He was with our friends and family." Joseph answered.

[MARY and JOSEPH return to Jerusalem. FAMILY all goes back to Nazareth.]

Mary and Joseph returned to Jerusalem to look for Jesus. They looked all through the town. They searched high and low. Where was Jesus? They couldn't find Him!

Finally, after 3 days, they found Him at the Temple sitting among the teachers. He was listening to them and asking them questions.

Everyone who heard Him was amazed at His understanding and His answers.

[TEACHERS all look amazed!!]

When his parents saw him, they were astonished.

Mary asked Him: “Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you.”

But Jesus said to them: “Why were you searching for me? Didn’t you know I had to be in my Father’s house?”

[MARY, JOSEPH, and JESUS all start back to Nazareth. As they walk, the Narrator reads the following.]

Jesus returned with Mary and Joseph to their home in Nazareth and was obedient to them. And the Bible says that: “Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.”

From this wonderful story we know that, even at the tender age of 12, Jesus already knew that God was His Father and that He was the one and only Son of God!

[MARY, JOSEPH, and JESUS arrive in Nazareth.]

THE END