

## Luke 2:41-52 (New International Version)

### The Boy Jesus at the Temple

<sup>41</sup>Every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover. <sup>42</sup>When he was twelve years old, they went up to the Feast, according to the custom. <sup>43</sup>After the Feast was over, while his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it. <sup>44</sup>Thinking he was in their company, they traveled on for a day. Then they began looking for him among their relatives and friends. <sup>45</sup>When they did not find him, they went back to Jerusalem to look for him. <sup>46</sup>After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. <sup>47</sup>Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers. <sup>48</sup>When his parents saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you."

<sup>49</sup>"Why were you searching for me?" he asked. "Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?" <sup>50</sup>But they did not understand what he was saying to them.

<sup>51</sup>Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart. <sup>52</sup>And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and men.

Two things came to my mind when I read this passage. The first is about Joseph and Mary's protective nature and the second about letting our children grow and become independent.

I sympathize with them on the first point, as anybody with children knows there is no worse feeling than when they separate from us in a shop or playground. It has happened three times to me and in all of them it seemed like an eternity the time I spent frantically looking for my son. On one of those occasions he thought it was funny to hide from me under some clothes in a department store, but felt very bad as soon as he saw the panic in my face. The last time, as he was older he kept calm and went to tell a security

guard that he was lost and gave him my name, so the guard was able to call me using the store's speakerphone.

I am learning from my daughter who is 10 years old about letting go and step back when she wants to do something her way. She has a language disorder, so I have been overprotective and her advocate to get help in school. I want to protect her when she is rejected by her peers because she isn't understood or she misinterprets their intentions. However, this passage is telling me that there will be a time when I will have to let her be her own advocate and fight her ground in general.

This week, at her school tradition's event; one of her classmates reprimanded her mother while reading out her family tradition. Her mum was quietly trying to correct her, and the girl thumped the table and said "stop mum", her mum didn't listen until she was told off again by her daughter. That is a lesson for parents, if we don't allow our growing children to try things. We have to let them grow, and discover things by themselves. They will make mistakes, just as we did, and it is our role to be supportive rather than authoritarian or undermining them with an "I told you so".

In the passage, Jesus is 12 years old and already showing his maturity by choosing to spend time in the temple, as well as his intellect as he demonstrates his wisdom to the teachers there. He answers to Joseph and Mary with a question when they reprimand him for staying behind. The end of the passage is encouraging to parents of teenagers: <sup>52</sup>And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and men. We all want our children to grow in wisdom not only in size, so that one day they become independent and responsible adults.

I found a table in my Parent's Bible about Mary and Joseph being entrusted with the task of rearing the only perfect child ever born. Their responsibilities were the same as any other parent:

<b>Parental Responsibility</b>	<b>Key Passage</b>	<b>Jesus' Experience</b>
Spiritual Influence	Luke 2:39	Mary and Joseph set an example of Obedience to

		God's Law.
Religious Training	Luke 2:41-42	Jesus' parents included him in Israel's religious festivals and events.
Parental Authority	Luke 2:51	Jesus submitted to the authority of his parents despite his own superiority as Messiah.

This morning I thought of one of girls of the youth group, who on Christmas Eve donated 10 inches of her hair to make wigs that are made for women with cancer who loose their hair due to the chemotherapy. She is only 16 and her gesture already shows what a great person she will be. I don't know what her mum's reaction was when she told her of her intentions, but I am sure she is proud of what her daughter did.

We need to guide and encourage teenagers in their path so that they stay focused and aren't tempted by negative influences, let's pray that their parents can also say one day about them "and they grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and men".