



# Brown Community Group

## Discussion Guide

The Faithfulness of Jesus  
Feb. 20, 2022 | Luke 2:39-52

### I. Starter Thoughts:

How does the faithfulness of Jesus impact you living out of your faith day-to-day? How did Jesus grow in his understanding of God and His will for his life? Was he instantly given the whole picture or did he continually mature and grow in his spiritual understanding and acceptance? How did Jesus continue to show His belief and trust in God?

Just as our Savior example, we need to be ***obedient and faithful*** to be able to grow in our knowledge of God and His will. It is only through our obedience that we demonstrate we are interested, humbled and accepting what God has in store for us.

### II. Discussion of Scripture:

#### Luke 2:39-52 (ESV)

<sup>39</sup>And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. <sup>40</sup>And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him.

We see in this week's passage, Luke 2:39-52, a view into the early life of Christ. The passage teaches us about the developing ministry and faithfulness of Jesus in his childhood.

After the return from Egypt, Mary and Joseph went to Nazareth rather than Judea because of their fear of Archelaus. When people of that day possessed unusual ability, they had success and good fortune, they were said to be objects of the "the favor of God". Favor translate as "charis", which means grace. Grace can describe those qualities that make one attractive and submissive to God. It can also describe the attitude of approval, respect or good will directed by others toward any person. These scriptures of his early childhood clearly demonstrate that he possessed unusual gifts.

### Discussion Questions:

1. What can you infer from verse 39 about how Mary and Joseph led their life? What impact would that have had on a young Jesus?
2. How does this influence our lives today as parents and grandparents?
3. What part of verse 40 did Mary and Joseph play?
4. What does the word "Favor" mean to you? How holistic is this to affect and direct one's life?
5. What does it reveal about the nature of the faithfulness of Jesus?

<sup>41</sup>Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. <sup>42</sup>And when he was twelve years old, they went up according to custom. <sup>43</sup>And when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, <sup>44</sup>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,

The Law required every male to go to Jerusalem to participate in the feasts of the Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles.

- Exodus 23:14-17, 34:23
- Deut. 16:16

For many Jews who lived after the exile in regions distant from Jerusalem, the fulfillment of this requirement became impossible. Residents of Palestine, would usually try and make an effort to be in Jerusalem for at least one of the feasts each year. Joseph was then therefore following current practice according to the customs as well as the Law. Although women were not required by the Law to visit, many of them would accompany the male members of the family on these pilgrimages.

At puberty, the Jewish boy became a son of the Law and became obligated to fulfill the Law's requirements. Thus, Jesus was joining his elders on their annual pilgrimages.

According to the Law, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, following immediately after Passover celebrations, was to be observed for 7 days. Nevertheless, many pilgrims departed after a few days of their participation in Passover. This would then usually involve caravans composed of kinsfolk and acquaintances from the same town or region. So while it seems at first to seem crazy that Mary and Joseph did not recognize Jesus absence, it may have been very easy to not notice his absence up until the first nights camp.

#### **Discussion Questions:**

6. How do you speculate Jesus got to the temple? How was he separated at the start of the journey home?
7. Do you find it hard to believe they lost Jesus and did not know that he had remained in Jerusalem?

<sup>45</sup>and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him. <sup>46</sup>After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them, and asking them questions. <sup>47</sup>And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. <sup>48</sup>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." <sup>49</sup>And he said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" <sup>50</sup>And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them. <sup>51</sup>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. <sup>52</sup>And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.

Everyone who heard Jesus on this occasion was struck by the depth of His understanding. Here we can see a foreshadowing to Jesus' future ministry, a Savior who teaches and listens, who not only commands but also submits. Jesus' response at the temple was filled with implications. His parents needed to understand His faithful and divine mission as they did not understand this yet. Even if they understood that he was the messiah, it could have taken much longer to understand His mission and faithfulness to the Father.

While Mary's reaction was perfectly understandable for a parent, Jesus's reaction is very interesting. Jesus words show that he was surprised by his parents' reaction and that he would naturally be in the temple. It is hard to believe that Joseph and Mary would not have given him specific instructions to follow and leave with the group, especially given this was his first time to travel to the Passover. Does this imply Jesus deliberately disobeyed his parents? Interesting to contemplate how all of this unfolded. In any case, Jesus only now begins to fully realize that his parents do not understand or are unaware of his personal and private position as the true Son of God. It is also possible that he had unconsciously assumed that God had already shared everything with them that he himself knew.

Jesus's reference to the Temple as his Father's house, directly affirms his relationship to the God of Israel. Verse 49 also raises an incredible important question about Jesus' consciousness of his own identity and mission on earth. Jesus is very obviously pointing out his unique bond and relationship with God at the very least.

At what stage of his life did Jesus begin to come to the conviction about his decisive role in salvation and man's sin? While these scriptures do not directly tell us a definitive answer, they do indicate at the very least that Jesus already had a strong awareness the singular character of his relationship to God.

The episodes directly affirm the Jewishness of his early environment and training. These were instrumental in his early development, growth, moral insights and character traits.

### **Discussion Questions:**

8. How do you speculate Jesus got to the temple? How was he separated at the start of the journey home?
9. At what stage of his life did Jesus begin to come to the conviction about his decisive role in salvation and man's sin?
10. How can we learn from Jesus in these scriptures concerning our "growth in understanding of God and His will for our lives"? Did Jesus fully understand his eventual role at this stage?
11. How do we demonstrate that we believe God to be sovereign over our lives?

### **III. Responding in Prayer**

- Spend time praying for each other, that God would reveal to you His love and faithfulness.
- Pray that your life and the lives of those in your community would reflect the faithfulness of Jesus to everyone you encounter.