

WHERE DO WE GROW FROM HERE

The Early Life Example Of Jesus

7 CHILDHOOD EVENTS IN THE LIFE OF JESUS: Not much is known about the boyhood years of Jesus. We have a wealth of detail concerning His birth. Then things, for the most part, go silent until He begins His ministry at age 30. Let me walk you through these 7 recorded events that take place.

1. Birth of Jesus: **Luke 2:7** *“And she gave birth to her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.”* **Matthew 1:24-25** *simply says concerning this awe inspiring event, “Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him (Mary) his wife, 25 and did not have relations with her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name Jesus.”*

2. Circumcision of Jesus: **This takes place when Jesus is 8 days old.** **Luke 22:21** *“On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise the child, he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he was conceived.”*

3. Presentation of Jesus: **Luke 2:22-23** *“When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took him (Jesus) to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord 23 (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord”)...”* **This would have taken place when Jesus was 40 days old, allowing for Mary’s 40 days of purification following her delivery. (Lev. 12:2-8)**

4. Honoring of Jesus by the Magi: **Magi is the Greek word translated WISE MEN in the KJV of the Bible. It’s the name given by Gentiles to the wise ones or educated, such as... teachers, priests, physicians, astrologers, interpreters of dreams, and so on. It’s probably so, that the Wise Men were astrologers. That’s why they would have noticed the unusual star in the heavens. It’s also worthy to note that these men were Gentiles and not Jewish. A testimony to the fact that Jesus came as the Savior of the WORLD, not just the Jews. Jesus would have probably been 1-2 years old, (a good guess would be 16-18 months) when the Wise Men presented their gifts to Jesus. They were NOT at the stable with the Shepherds shortly after the birth of Christ as many think and is often portrayed in our Nativity scenes. We know this for several reasons. First, the wise men were from the east. That reference is almost always speaking of Persia in Scripture (Modern day Iran). This means they would have traveled 800-900 miles to see the Christ child. That would take a while!**

In Matthew 2:7-8 we read, *“Then Herod, when he had secretly called the wise men, determined from them what time the star appeared. 8 And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the young Child, and when you have found Him, bring back word to me, that I may come and worship Him also.”* **Now, we know of course, that Herod just wanted to kill the child, because Christ was coming as King of the Jews. And that was Herod’s title. He wanted to eliminate any challenge to his throne. Notice Matthew 2:16** *“Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men.”* **That’s how we know the approximate age of Jesus when the Magi brought their gifts to Him.**

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2. Circumcision of Jesus:
3. Presentation of Jesus:
4. Honoring of Jesus by the Magi:

5. Flight of Jesus to Egypt: Not long after the Magi leave, if not that very night, Joseph was warned to get the child to Egypt. **Matthew 2:13-15** “Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, “Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him.” 14 When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt, 15 and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, “Out of Egypt I called My Son.” So Jesus is possibly 16-18 months old. We can't know for sure, but this would be close. Herod, as we have already read, had all the male children of the Jews killed that was 2 years old and younger when he realized the wise men weren't coming back. We can surmise that after he determines a date of birth for the Christ child, through his conversation with the Magi, that he would add a few months to it to allow for error in judgement. SO when he says all children 2 years old or less must die, we can be fairly certain there's a cushion in age there.

Now we don't know for sure how long the Holy family was in Egypt, but it would have been less than a year. More than likely it was just a few weeks or months. Historical records indicate that Jesus would have been around 2 years old when Herod died.

6. Return of Jesus to Nazareth: So, when Jesus is nearing 2 years of age, Joseph gets word from the angel that Herod is dead. **Matthew 2:19-21** “Now when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, 20 saying, “Arise, take the young Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the young Child's life are dead.” 21 Then he arose, took the young Child and His mother, and came into the land of Israel.”

It is at this point that there's about a 10 year silence concerning Jesus in Scripture. The only word we have as to what was going on in His life is found in Luke's gospel. Now remember that Luke tells us nothing of the wise men and the aftermath that follows. But in **Luke 2:40** we read “And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him.”

7. Jesus in the Temple at Jerusalem: Some 10 years later we see Jesus with His family in Jerusalem for the feast of Passover. Notice what the Bible says... **Luke 2:41-52** “Every year Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem for the Festival of the Passover. 42 When he was twelve years old, they went up to the festival, according to the custom. 43 After the festival was over, while his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it. 44 Thinking he was in their company, they traveled on for a day. Then they began looking for him among their relatives and friends. 45 When they did not find him, they went back to Jerusalem to look for him. 46 After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. 47 Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers. 48 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.” 49 “Why were you searching for me?” he asked. “Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?” 50 But they did not understand what he was saying to them. 51 Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart. 52 And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.”

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7. Jesus in the Temple at Jerusalem:

It's those two verses in Luke, verse 40 and 52, I want to look at for just a moment.

V 40 *"And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him."*

Then 10 years pass and we read again...

V 52 *"And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."*

It will be 18 more years before we hear anything else of Jesus. He will begin His ministry when He is about 30 years of age. He'll be dead buried and resurrected by 33.

Those 3 years of ministry are well represented in Scripture. Miracles, sermons, relationships, obedience to the Father, and unflinching tenacity to fulfill His mission...it's all there!

But what about all the other years of His life? Oh, there are fantastic tales, and fables of the young boy Jesus. But the only word we can trust is the Word of God. And all it says is, that Jesus grew... in wisdom, in stature, in strength, and in favor... with God and man. THAT'S ALL IT SAYS! But that seems to say a lot. LET'S LOOK AT IT...

Disciple's Study Bible - Whereas the birth of Jesus was marked by supernatural events, His childhood growth was natural for any human being. He increased His capacities in all areas of life. His spiritual growth amazed the religious authorities. Still He remained an obedient child. The presence of God was uniquely active in this Child, whose will and attitude developed with His body to reach the full potential God had for Him as His Messenger of redemption.

V 40 and 52 contain no hidden meanings. The Greek language used is oddly plain. It's as if God intended it that way. BUT WHY? Out of all that could be said, why so general?

I think there's a profound message in the simplicity of it all. JESUS GREW. That's what we would hope. He grew physically, mentally, spiritually, and socially. AND that's the hope for us! What is it that God desires of us? **John 13:15** *"I have set you an example so that you should do as I have done..."* In the immediate context of this verse, Jesus is telling His disciples to serve one another as He has served them. But this verse is much more broad than that as well. **JESUS CAME TO BE AN EXAMPLE FOR ALL MANKIND.** And here we are... **1 John 2:6** *"Whoever claims to abide in Him must walk as Jesus walked"*

CONCLUSION: With a new year upon us, what is your hope? Where do you plan to GROW from here? I would encourage you to take this simple example of Christ in His hidden years and follow it. Set a goal to grow spiritually, physically, mentally, and socially. Spend time in the Word of God, and be the hands and feet of Jesus in this world. If you'll commit to that you'll see God open your heart and mind. Your life will be the better for it. Let's do it together!