

Living the Four-fold Way of Life

Scripture reading Luke 2.42 - 52

42. And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast.
43. And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it.
44. But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance.
45. And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him.
46. And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.
47. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.

48. And when they saw him, they were amazed; and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.

49. And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?

50. And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.

51. And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them; but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.

52. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

In Luke 2 Jesus is a child of 12. In Luke 3 "Jesus himself began to be about 30 years of age..."

They sure grow up fast, don't they?

In just 1 page he went from age 2 to 30 in my King James Version of the Bible.

And it is all captured in one verse. Luke 2.52:

And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

I wonder why Luke skipped the most tumultuous years of a person's life – adolescence. Aren't these the years that we all look back on fondly each Mother's Day?

I can guess. To quote a country western song – “You can't live with them and you just can't shoot them.”

I know – bad attitude. Let me stop here and say – The ministers should never let us do this. What if we get it all wrong?

I proceed just the same....

Jesus? A rebellious teen? Really!

You know that my world has been informed by living with The Nephew the past 2+ years. And even before that when he spent the summers with us from age 5 on.

Michael insisted that as 12 he was a teenager. I thought that you had to have the word “teen” in your age in order to qualify. No never mind.

The point is that Jesus, at 12, let his folks go off without him. And when they found him after he had gone missing, he chastised them.

“How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?”

Excuse me!?! You stay behind with no word to us, let us worry ourselves sick, and then ask us - don’t we know we were supposed to read your mind?! And where is your cell phone?

You know Jesus the pre-teen was much like Jesus the grown-up, expecting understanding from the adults and being disappointed when they just didn't get it.

Enough about this. I am only setting the stage for the important message – how Jesus grew up and how we are to live our lives. Nice scope for a first-time sermon.

It turns out that it is really simple. Said in 1 sentence. Let's return to the real point of this:

And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

The Beyerman Girls were a lucky lot. We went to camp. Camp Miniwanca. A Christian camp founded on that one line in Luke. And there we learned, summer after summer, how to live the 4 fold way of life. Easily said, hard to do. It's a balanced life of growing:

- Mentally

- Physically
- Religiously
- Socially

MPRS

And not just growing and then you are done, like a cake. But a life-long pursuit of living a balanced life in the 4-fold way.

How did Jesus do this? Luke said he did, but where is the evidence?

Here is where being a nurse instead of a Biblical scholar becomes a problem.

I don't know.

Nice sermon. The "preacher" raises the question around scripture and then confesses not to know the answer.

But while that answer may be important, perhaps there is another question that we can more easily respond to:

How do WE live the 4-fold way? How do we grow mentally, physically, religiously, and socially? Specifically, how do YOU?

Now it is time for the participation part of the sermon.

What? You think the sermon is to be delivered and you sit there and receive it?

Not today.

I'd like to ask you to take a minute and write on your worksheet. Note what you are doing or have done to grow in each category. This is not an assignment. I will not be collecting it, but I will ask for some volunteers to share their thoughts with us.

PAUSE

ASK FOR VOLUNTEERS FOR EACH CATEGORY

Now turn your page over. This time think about what you would like to do, can commit to doing, to grow in these areas. Think about finding balance. I won't be asking you to share this.

PAUSE

So if Jesus is our role-model, let us try to grow as he did. Let us look for how we can improve our mind, strengthen our body, shore up our relationships, and connect with God. Let us pursue the Four-Fold Way of Life.

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*“And Jesus increased in wisdom (**Mental**) and stature (**Physical**), and in favour with God (**Religious**) and man (**Social**).” Luke 2:52*

The Four-fold Way of Life

What have I done to grow in the following categories?

Mental

Social

Physical

Religious

*“And Jesus increased in wisdom (**Mental**) and stature (**Physical**), and in favour with God (**Religious**) and man (**Social**).” Luke 2:52*

The Four-fold Way of Life

What will I commit to doing to grow in the following categories?

Mental

Social

Physical

Religious

