

# Luke 2:41-52. Christ Among the Teachers.

by Favell Lee Mortimer

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*The sermon explores Jesus' early life, emphasizing his commitment to his divine mission and the importance of prioritizing God's work in our lives.*

**Scripture:** Ecclesiastes 12:13, Matthew 6:33, Luke 2:41, John 4:34, 1 Corinthians 10:31, Ephesians 2:10, Philippians 2:13, Colossians 3:23

**Topics:** "Obedience To God", "Gods Purpose"

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## Description

Favell Lee Mortimer reflects on the story of Jesus as a child in the temple, emphasizing the importance of knowing Christ's words and actions during His ministry over His childhood. Jesus, even at a young age, was focused on His Father's business of salvation for mankind, setting an example of obedience and dedication to God's work. Just as Jesus was about His Father's business, each of us is appointed by God to fulfill a glorious work that promotes the glory of our Heavenly Father, rather than seeking self-pleasure, riches, or fame. Dr. Payson's realization on his deathbed serves as a reminder for all to prioritize pleasing God in all aspects of life.

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## Transcript

We only hear one story of our Savior in his childhood. We would like to hear many particulars concerning him in early life, but the Holy Spirit has caused us to know the things the most necessary, and it is more necessary that we should know what Christ said and did when he was a minister--than when he was a child.

We find that his parents were accustomed to attend the passover at Jerusalem every year. The men were commanded, the women were permitted to attend this feast. At twelve years old it was the custom for boys to begin to accompany their parents--and at that age our Lord accompanied his parents.

The feast of the Passover continued seven days, during which time unleavened bread was eaten. The parents of Jesus fulfilled the days of the feast--that is, they remained seven days in Jerusalem, and then began to return homewards. There was a large company of people returning to Nazareth, distant about seventy-six miles from Jerusalem. The parents of Jesus at first supposed that the child was with some of their friends, until evening came--they sought him, and found him not. They returned with heavy hearts to Jerusalem, and found him in the temple. Altogether they had not seen him for three days; they had gone one day's journey and returned during another day, and they saw him again on the third.

What was Jesus doing in the temple? He was sitting in the midst of the teachers. These teachers were men learned in the scriptures, who explained them to the people--but they were not in general pious men. Was Jesus teaching the teachers? Far from it. He was listening to them--for it was the custom for these teachers to instruct the young people, asking them questions, and answering their inquiries.

But we naturally wonder why Jesus did not inform his parents of his intention to remain longer in Jerusalem. No doubt he knew that it was his heavenly Father's will that he should not tell them, for he would not have caused them any useless sorrow. Probably God wished to remind Mary by this circumstance, that her Son had come into this world to do a great work, and that she must expect to find him continually engaged in it. All parents ought to be ready to give up their children for God's service, and to part with them to a distance, even as missionaries in a foreign land, if it be God's will. When the mother of the famous Wesley was asked, whether she was willing to part with her two sons, to go as missionaries to America, she answered, "Had I ten sons, I would rejoice that they should be so employed."

Mary gently reproached her son with having caused her and Joseph so much anxiety, (verse 48.) Accustomed no doubt to the most affectionate behavior from him, she was surprised at any conduct that appeared unkind.

Our Lord answered, "How is it that you sought me? Don't you know that I must be about my Father's business?"

This reply was full of the dignity that belonged to him, as the Son of God. In his obedience to his mother on other occasions, he set an example to all children, but in his conduct on this occasion, he acted as became the King of kings and Lord of lords.

But what was the business which our Savior said that his Father had given him to do?

We can discover what it was from other parts of the Scriptures! What did Jesus come down from heaven for? Was it for his own pleasure? No, it was to do his Father's work. This work was the salvation of sinful man. In order to accomplish this salvation, he fulfilled the law that we have broken, and suffered the punishment due to us for breaking it. He began to fulfill the law, as soon as he came into this world. While yet a child of twelve years old, he was intent upon his great work. Therefore he said to his parents, "Don't you know that I must be about my Father's business?"

Has God sent us on any business? Yes! He has appointed to each of us a work to perform. A glorious work it is--a work in which angels are always engaged, and of which they are never weary. It is not to accomplish our own salvation. That work Christ has done for all who believe in him. It is to promote the glory of God our Father. Yet who that looked around him and observed men's actions, would imagine that they had this work to do? What are the things about which men seem most anxious? Does not each seem to say, by his conduct, "How shall I please myself?" or "How shall I enrich myself?" or "How shall I become famous?" How few behave as if their chief desire was to please God! Yet is it not very sinful to be careless about pleasing him, who sent his Son to die for us? When that excellent minister, Dr. Payson, was on his dying bed, he said, "Oh how often have I begun the day thinking, 'How shall I please myself?' instead of 'How shall I please God?'"

Yet Payson had led a very holy life, and God had converted many sinners by him; but when a Christian is dying he often sees his actions in a light in which he never saw them before. O that every one of us, now that life is before us, may seek to do our Father's business; for we know not how soon we may be called to

render an account of the use we have made of our time upon earth.

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