

'On the road'

Luke's account of the life and ministry of Jesus

Luke is up front about his intention in writing his gospel record: it was to help a man called Theophilus to have the confidence to trust in Jesus as Lord and Saviour. He wanted to bolster the embryonic faith of this man in the face of both the hostility he was likely to face and the adversity which almost certainly would be his experience.

The aim of this study of Luke's gospel, therefore, is to help us all "*fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith*", to the end that we "*run with perseverance the race marked out for us*" (see Heb.12.1-2)

You can find the background to this series [here](#).

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2. Luke 2.40-52 [w/b Sunday 28th January 2018]

“.. and the child grew and became strong”

This is the first of three ‘broad brush stroke’ passages through which Luke builds in his readers’ minds a sense of expectancy in anticipation of the ministry Jesus will exercise.

This is the only recorded incident we have from the childhood and adolescence of Jesus, and, although he could doubtless have included others, Luke chose this as one which illustrated well the key features of Jesus’ growing years - tantalizing pointers to all that He would be and do.

[Despite your best intentions, there may not be time for all the questions to be addressed in your Community Group! Key questions which you should certainly be covered are perhaps questions 1, 4 & 7. Do try as always to leave good time for shared prayer!]

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1. **Read Luke 2.40-52.** The passage begins and ends with a reference to the fact that ‘Jesus grew..’: this little cameo narrated by Luke encapsulates the essence of all Jesus’ growing years.

What do you find most striking about Jesus’ growth from childhood into adulthood?

In what ways have you been most conscious of growing in your own life as a Christian?

2. Read Luke 2.41-42. The Passover, which celebrated the deliverance from slavery in Egypt, was one of the major festivals when every Israelite was obliged to gather together in Jerusalem.

'Salvation' is the theme of Luke's gospel record: in what ways was the Passover festival a celebration of God's saving power?

Why was it important for Luke that we see how even in His growing years Jesus fulfilled the requirements of the Law?

3. Read Luke 2.43-46. Luke records how Jesus went missing. The parents only noticed after a day's travel north, took another full day, therefore, to return to Jerusalem, and found Him on the third day.

Why did Jesus stay behind in Jerusalem?

What do you think Luke means us to learn from these verses about Jesus?

4. **Read Luke 2.47.** It was common for people to remain for a day or two after the major festivals to spend time with the rabbis - combining a trip to the city with a seminar-type event.

What two characteristics of Jesus' later ministry are noted here by Luke?

What examples of these characteristics can you think of in the record of His ministry?

5. **Read Luke 2.48.** The reaction of Joseph and Mary which Luke records is one which every parent understands! Relief - and recriminations!

Why do you think our first instinct is more often than not to throw the 'blame' for a situation onto someone else?

In what ways is the experience of His parents here the experience of us all?

6. **Read Luke 2.49-50.** The response of Jesus to the question of His mother is an early pointer to the significance of who Jesus is and what He came to do.

What important truth about Jesus does His answer here (the first recorded 'public' words spoken by Him) point?

Jesus' words here pick up what Mary says in v.48 (*".. your father and I .."*): what do you think Luke means us to learn from this contrast?

7. Read Luke 2.51-52. Luke rounds off this whole episode by underlining Jesus' obedience to His earthly parents through His growing years.

Why does Luke highlight Jesus' obedience?

What lessons does Jesus' obedience to His earthly parents have for ourselves?

What have you learned about Jesus from this whole passage?