



## **“Next Generation”**

**Luke 2**

### **Small Group Plan**

All Jewish adult men were required to attend three feasts each year — Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles (cf. Ex. 23:14-17, 34:23, Deut. 16:16). This took place at age 13. Since Jesus still had one more year to go, this trip was to be a time of preparation, as he looked forward to his future responsibilities in the religious community the next year. And so, going to Jerusalem is not the unusual part of this story. It is the going home part of the story that stands out as remarkable.

Jewish pilgrims from outside of Jerusalem usually traveled in large caravans. Normally, the women and children would walk together as one group and the men and older boys would travel as another group. And so, it is easy to see how both Joseph and Mary could assume that, during the day, Jesus was traveling with the other. But then came the night time ...

#### **OPEN IT / INTRODUCE IT ...**

- As a child, were you ever been separated from your parents?  
How did you feel? What did you do?
- If you are a parent, were you ever separated from your child?  
How did you feel? What did you do?

#### **LOOK AT IT / STUDY IT ...**

### **— TWO GENERATIONS —**

**Luke 2:39-47**

<sup>39</sup> When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth. <sup>40</sup> And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him. <sup>41</sup> Every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover. <sup>42</sup> When he was twelve years old, they went up to the Feast, according to the custom. <sup>43</sup> After the Feast was over, while his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it. <sup>44</sup> Thinking he was in their company, they traveled on for a day. Then they began looking

for him among their relatives and friends. <sup>45</sup> When they did not find him, they went back to Jerusalem to look for him. <sup>46</sup> After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. <sup>47</sup> Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers.

- What would be the first thing you would have thought about and said after finding your child missing for three days?
- What kind of teacher would allow a young boy to sit with him and ask questions for three days?

### — GENERATION 1 – PARENTS —

Luke 2:48-52

<sup>48</sup> 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.” <sup>49</sup> “Why were you searching for me?” he asked. “Didn’t you know I had to be in my Father’s house?” <sup>50</sup> But they did not understand what he was saying to them. <sup>51</sup> Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart. <sup>52</sup> And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

- **“They were astonished”** (v.48)
  - What was Jesus doing that astonished his parents?
  - How were they able to live with him for over a decade and not see this side of his mind and heart developing?
- **“They did not understand”** (v. 50)
  - What, in Jesus’ answer, was beyond Joseph and Mary’s understanding?
  - Why do some in generation 1 become angry and demanding when they don’t understand, while others ask questions and listen even more carefully?
- **“His mother treasured all these things in her heart”** (v. 51)
  - What is Mary doing here?
  - Why is she remaining open to something she doesn’t understand?
  - What gift is she giving to her son Jesus?

### — GENERATION 2 – CHILDREN —

Luke 2:48-52

<sup>48</sup> 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.” <sup>49</sup> “Why were you searching for me?” he asked. “Didn’t you know I had to be in my Father’s house?” <sup>50</sup> But they did not understand what he was saying to them. <sup>51</sup> Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart. <sup>52</sup> And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

- **“I had to be in my Father’s house”** (v. 49)
  - Jesus chose to stay behind. Why?
  - What did Jesus assume his parents should understand?
  - What is the significance of Jesus’ saying **“my Father”** instead of the normal Jewish reference **“our Father”**?
- **“He ... was obedient to them”** (v. 51)
  - Even though Jesus’ parents did not understand his actions, Jesus submitted to them in humility – Why?
  - From this story alone, how would you describe Jesus’ heart?
- **“And Jesus grew”** (v. 52)
  - How was Jesus able to continue to grow while living in a household and under the leadership of parents who didn’t understand him?

### **USE IT / APPLY IT ...**

- How does it impact you to know that Jesus’ family had major moments of friction and difference, just like yours?
- How did you (or do you) react to differences of understanding with either your parents or your children?
- What are the generational lessons taught by both generations 1 and 2?
- What happens when generation 1 doesn’t allow or prepare generation 2 to take their place of community leadership?
- What happens when generation 2 doesn’t respect the past leadership of those who have gone before?
- Close by praising God for showing us, in the family story of Jesus, how differences and live and grow together.