

December 27, 2015
First Sunday after Christmas
St. Luke 2:41-52
Jesus was not a Know It All
Rev. George Ferch

Dear Friends in Christ Jesus,

They grow up so quickly, don't they? One minute they are newborn babies. Before you know it they are 12 years old. This was no less true of Jesus of Nazareth than other children. Our Savior's earliest years do pass by quickly on the pages of Holy Scripture.

His birth, his circumcision and naming at eight days old, his dedication in the Temple at forty days old are there. The church remembers the first two on Christmas and January 1st. We remember Jesus' dedication every time we repeat Simeon's words in the Nunc Dimittis, "now you let your servant depart in peace."

Epiphany celebrates the magi's later visit when they came bearing gifts. The little family fled to Egypt and later returned to settle up north in Nazareth in a Galilee far, far away. We see our Savior now as a twelve year old boy about his heavenly Father's business in the temple courts.

Mary's son was there because **Jesus Was Not a Know It All**. He was concerned about learning God's Word. He found great value in studying God's Word.

The Son of God's humiliation means that while Jesus possessed all his divine glory and other attributes, he set aside their use. So, as Immanuel, God with us as one of us, Jesus had to learn everything just like we do. Our Lord's first school was Mary and Joseph's home. These faithful parents had Jesus circumcised. It was their custom, their habit to bring their son as he grew with them to celebrate the Passover.

Here is our example as parents to take to heart the religious education of our children. Other good examples are Timothy's mother and grandmother. They taught Timothy God's Word from the time he was a child. We can instill in our little children the concern Jesus had to learn God's Word; by baptism, by teaching them prayers and songs, by bringing them to Sunday school and having them in worship with us.

The concern for learning God's Word came to Jesus naturally because he was without sin. Learning God's Word was a habit, a custom, for him from the very start without having to curb any sinful desires. He had no bad habits in that regard he needed to see in the mirror of the law. Our children do need the law, "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy." They learn that first from parents who hold God's Word sacred and gladly hear and learn it.

Jesus was not a know it all. He needed to learn. He was willing to learn. He knew God's Word is important to know. God's Word strengthened him for his later life to face and overcome temptations. It gave him strength under the human weaknesses that all humans face in life's hardships. Jesus understood the important distinction between a childlike faith and a childish faith.

Jesus did two things for us as a twelve year old in the temple courts. He obeyed the law in his active obedience to fulfill the law perfectly in our place. He was setting an example for us and for our children to be about our heavenly Father's business with concern about learning God's Word.

Jesus moved beyond the basics, beyond the ABCs of Christian understanding and faith because also, he found great value in studying God's Word.

Think of Jesus as being just like you. He was a true human being. He was baby, a child, an adult. He got tired, hungry and thirsty. He faced the temptations of doubt, pride, and materialism. He bled, suffered rejection and physical pain. Yet in all of this, unlike us, Jesus did not sin. He overcame all sin by his perfect trust in his heavenly Father. Being true God did not make facing temptation and sin any easier for him than it is for us.

As a human being Jesus' trust came through his study of God's Word. He learned the Scripture verses he quoted to Satan in the wilderness. He learned the lessons of the Old Testament heroes of faith like Jonah he applied in his ministry. Jesus knew the great value in studying God's Word. It was the weapon, the sword of the Spirit, he used against his enemies and ours.

Jesus found great value in studying God's Word for the maturing of his faith. Think of Jesus being just like you, a Christian who trusts his Father's Word. Jesus trusted the Father's Word that his righteousness would apply to all sinners. We Christians trust that Word that Jesus' righteousness applies to us.

Our Savior found great value in God's Word for teaching his disciples. Jesus reminded them constantly that he was not teaching his words but the words his Father had taught him. Jesus found great value in God's Word for his obedience. Jesus learned his Father's will that will guided him in his life. He learned the commandments and his perfect love for his Father compelled him to obey them. It is not different for us. The difference lies in the way we obey them. Jesus obeyed perfectly, we do not, but the Father says we have because Jesus obeyed the law for us.

Jesus found great value in studying God's Word of his witness. He taught his disciples what to say. He sent out the twelve with that knowledge, a knowledge we continue to confess in our creeds. Those things the twelve year old Jesus learned in the temple courts, he later shared with the apostles. They shared it with us. We share it with our community and the with the entire world.

Jesus was not a know it all. He knew it was all right not to know everything. He knew it was right and good to want to keep learning more and more. We learn at home and through the church. Knowledge underscores faith, obedience, and witness. It is about being a spiritual adult. It is about seeing the great value in studying God's Word as opposed to being spiritually immature and thinking I know all I need to know.

In other words, we must be like Jesus and be about our Father's business. Amen. <SDG>