

Jesus? early family life ? a Christian Perspective

I have always wondered what it would have been like to grow up and live with Jesus every day in His home. I have always wanted to see the places where Jesus lived and walked this earth both as a child and also when He grew up to be a man.

In the Bible we are told very little about the early family life of Jesus' childhood. Who did Jesus play with? We learn in Matthew 13:55 that Jesus grew up with brothers and sisters in His home in Nazareth and was known by the people who lived there.

In Luke 2:41 we read that ? 41 Jesus' parents ?went to Jerusalem every year to attend the feast of the Passover.?

In Luke 2:45-51 we're told a true story of Jesus when He was 12 years old that took place there in Jerusalem. After being missing for three days His parents found Jesus [VERSE 46] ?? in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. 47 And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. 51 Then He (Jesus) went down with them (His parents) and came to Nazareth.? I would have loved to have been there that day! What questions did Jesus ask these teachers? What questions did they ask Him?

Perhaps as Jesus was growing up he might have asked His father Joseph questions and the conversation might have gone something like this:

JESUS: ?Dad, why are we going to Jerusalem again? Will we take a lamb with us to sacrifice? Why does the lamb have to die anyway? Father, why do people place their hands on the animal's head just before it is killed??

Perhaps Joseph might have answered something like this:

?Son, we go to Jerusalem because God asked His people to perform this tradition every year so we do NOT forget what God did for us when He set us free from being slaves to the Egyptians many years ago. God warned our fathers that He was coming to kill the first born child of every family.?

I can imagine Jesus' eyes getting big! ? JESUS: ?Dad, I am the oldest child in our family, would I too have had to die??

JOSEPH: ?No. ? God planned and told us of a way to keep us all safe. He said that a family could kill a lamb and take its blood and paint it onto the top and sides of the door as a sign ? to mark their door. God said, ?When I see the blood I will pass over you.' And our people obeyed God on that first Passover evening and the angel of death did not harm anyone inside a house whose doorway had been marked in that way.

?Later on God taught us to sacrifice animals to pay for our sins. God's law says ?the soul that sins it must die?. The person who brought the lamb would place his hand on the animal's head. It was understood that the lamb would die instead of the person that had sinned.?

JESUS: ?Dad, how did they choose a lamb??

JOSEPH: ?The sacrificial lamb had to be without blemish. It could not have a lame leg or a disfigured tail that had been hurt or any body parts sick or missing. They watched it closely to be sure it was absolutely perfect in every way.?

JESUS: ?Why??

JOSEPH: ?Because it had to be perfect. It was a gift for God and God only accepts perfection. And the lamb was a picture of the perfect Lamb that one day God Himself would provide.?

JESUS: ?Dad, do I have to place my hand on the lamb's head??

JOSEPH: ?No Son, really You of all people don't have to. Jesus, You are different than our other children. Have you noticed that Your brothers and sisters sometimes do bad, hurtful, disobedient things? I have never seen You do anything like that. So far You have always done the kind and loving thing in every situation!

?You have always resolved whatever the issue was with wisdom beyond your years. No, Jesus, I have never seen You do anything wrong! But You have always been a very special child ? the Son of God ? you must always do what you know your Father-God in heaven wants You to do. You must be careful to obey Him and try to please Him just like you have always obeyed and pleased your mother and me.

?Son, Your very name means ?Saviour' and somehow, someday, the prophesy will be fulfilled that ?You will save Your people from their sins.'?

As Jesus grew He continued to live a sinless, spotless life. As recorded in John 8:46, one time, after Jesus had grown to be a man of thirty years old, when addressing those who disliked Him He asked, 46 ?Which of you convicts Me of sin?? No-one there ? not even His enemies ? could find any time that He had done anything wrong because He was sinless and perfect.

A little earlier John the Baptist had pointed Jesus out to the crowd around him. He gave Jesus His Title when he said, ?Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!?' John 1:29 ? Jesus is indeed our Lamb of God. He will take away ours sins if we trust in Him and ask Him to!

By Jack Gault,

a Spiritual Leader

Bethel Bible Chapel, Shelburne