

The First Sunday after the Epiphany of our Lord  
St. Luke 2:41-52  
January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025  
Sts. Peter and Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, UAC  
Simpsonville, SC  
St. Michael and All Angels Ev. Lutheran Mission, UAC  
Augusta, GA  
All Saints Ev. Lutheran Mission, UAC  
Pawleys Island, SC  
St. Luke Ev. Lutheran Mission, UAC  
Ormond Beach, FL  
Pastor Jerald Dulas

### When He Was Twelve Years Old

*In Nomine Iesu!*

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

#### **Sermon Text:**

“And when He was twelve years old, they went up after the custom of the feast; and when they had fulfilled the days, as they were returning, the Boy + Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and His parents knew it not.”

#### **Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:**

O Lord Jesus Christ, Who, when a Child, wast seated in the Temple in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions, so rule us, we beseech Thee, by Thy Holy Spirit that, following Thy example, we may love the habitation of Thy house and the place where Thine honor dwelleth, diligently seek the same, hearing Thy Word with gladness, and faithfully keeping it to the saving of our souls; O Thou, Who, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, livest and reignest, ever, One God, world without end. Amen.

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ. Amen.

My dear friends, when our Lord + Jesus, the Christ, was twelve years old. He went up with His parents to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover. This is a foreshadowing of another Passover to come, when our Lord + Jesus would offer Himself up as the propitiation for the sins of mankind. He is able to be our Redeemer—to take our punishment upon Himself on the tree of the holy cross—because He is perfect and without sin. His innocent suffering and death atones for our sins, and the sins of all mankind. He is perfect and without sin because He was obedient to the Laws and ordinances of the Lord God. The Evangelist St. Luke tell us that it was the custom of His parents to appear in Jerusalem at the appointed feasts.

The Lord God established through Moses, the Prophet, the ordinance for His people that after they had taken possession of the land of Canaan, that wherever the Tabernacle of Meeting was to be established, the men of Israel would gather three times a year to offer their sacrifices of repentance, praise, and thanksgiving. These three times a year coincided with the three great feasts of the Jews: the Feast of the Passover, the Feast of Pentecost, and the Festival of Harvest.

As we shall read in Bible class in the coming weeks, King Solomon, at the encouragement of his father King David, built the Temple in Jerusalem. At that time the Tabernacle of Meeting was in one

place, with its own altar, at Gibeon. And the Ark of the Covenant was near Jerusalem, with its own tent and its own altar, in Gihon, where there were springs of water. After the Temple was built the Ark of the Covenant was placed in the Holy of Holies, and there was now one altar before the Lord, where the sacrifices of the people would be offered up unto the Lord God.

The men of Israel were expected to come to Jerusalem three times a year for the chief feasts of the Jews. The Feast of Pentecost celebrated the first of the produce of the land. It was a feast of the firstfruits. The men of Israel prayed the Lord of the Harvest to bless the work of their hands, and provide a plentiful harvest. We still celebrate this feast, only now we celebrate the first out-pouring of the Holy Ghost upon the people of the Lord God. We are the firstfruits of His grace and mercy. The Festival of Harvest celebrated the final harvest. The men of Israel came to Jerusalem and celebrated with sacrifices of thanksgiving the bountiful harvest that the Lord God provided for them. The Festival of Harvest is a foreshadowing of the Last Day, when the Lord God will send out His angels to gather from the ends of the earth all those, both living and dead, who have believed on the Lord + Jesus and His works and merits and bring them into their eternal home in Heaven.

Both of these feasts found, or will find, their spiritual counterparts after the Lord ascended into Heaven triumphantly after His death and resurrection. The Feast of the Passover, which celebrated the rescue of the Israelites from the destroying angel when he saw the blood of the lamb on the door posts and lintels of the Israelites, and he passed over, and slaughtered the firstborn sons of the unbelieving and rebellious Egyptians, who oppressed the Israelites with slavery. This is the feast where our Lord + Jesus is found to be when He was twelve years old. This is the feast where in about twenty years He would be the sacrificial Passover Lamb, whose blood on the wood of the cross would cause the wrath of the Lord God to passover mankind, especially of those who cling in faith to this great sacrifice of our Lord + Jesus.

Our Lord + Jesus on that great Passover, on the day which we celebrate in the Church as Good Friday, became both the Temple and the place of sacrifice for mankind. His Body was the Temple wherein the once and for all time sacrifice that atoned for the sins of the whole world took place. His suffering and death would render the need for a physical temple unnecessary. His death would render the need for any other kind of sacrifice unnecessary, and useless. This is why the Sacrament of the Altar is a remembrance and giving of thanks for this sacrifice, not a re-sacrifice of our Lord + Jesus as some are wont to teach. Our Lord + Jesus was sacrificed once and for all time on the tree of the holy cross on that Passover. There is now no longer any need for any other sacrifice. For His sacrifice is the perfect sacrifice. For He Who is without sin offered up His life in our place.

He is without sin, because He fulfilled the Law perfectly. And St. Luke, in today's Gospel reading, gives us an example of His obedience to the Law. In fact, we are shown a few ways in which our Lord is subject perfectly to the Law. One has already been pointed out. He went with His parents annually, three times a year, to the chief feasts of the Jews. Women were not required to go, but the fact the St. Mary accompanies her husband and son, shows us her piety. The trek was not a long one by our standards, just twenty miles, or so, but since they had to walk that distance, and back, it showed their faithfulness. That the Lord + Jesus is now twelve years old, means that He could choose for Himself whether or not He would go. He continued the faithful practice that His parents instilled in Him. In this He fulfills the Lord's Law and will.

Our Lord + Jesus also shows Himself fulfilling the Law in that He is in the Temple, the place that represented the presence of the Lord God. It was His dwelling place. This was the House of the Lord God. We call our sanctuaries "houses of the Lord God" for this is where the Lord God, especially the Lord + Jesus, dwells with us by His Word. He is here with us in this House of the Lord God, teaching us His Word, and giving us His gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation. The Boy + Jesus, just twelve years old, is also about His Father's business. He is among the teachers, learning from them, asking

them questions, and answering their questions. In this, according to His human nature, the Lord + Jesus grows in wisdom. For that is what the Word of the Lord God does, it creates wisdom in us. For the Word teaches us Who the Lord God is. This is the work of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost, by the Word of the Lord God, creates and strengthens and renews faith in us, so that we hunger and thirst after righteousness; that we desire to hear His holy Word and learn from Him Who He is, and how we are to be saved from sin and death.

St. Luke also tells us that the Lord + Jesus also fulfilled the Law of God perfectly, because not only was He obedient to the Law of His heavenly Father, but He was obedient to His earthly parents. For He returned to Nazareth with them, and was subject under them, in obedience to the Fourth Commandment. Therefore, my dear friends, we see our Lord + Jesus being obedient to the First Commandment in that He was about His heavenly Father's business. We see that He is obedient to the Third Commandment in that He observed the ordinances governing the worship of the Jews, and the Fourth Commandment in that He was subject under His parents.

But as we know, the Lord + Jesus did indeed fulfill perfectly the whole Law and will of the Lord God. For He is the perfect, spotless, and sinless Lamb of the Lord God, Who offered up His life as a ransom for ours upon the tree of the holy cross. The season of Epiphany is where our Lord + Jesus reveals Himself as the Lord God to the people. We see that He reveals Himself as the One Who is obedient perfectly to the heavenly Father. The sacrifice of our Lord is the ultimate revelation of Who He is. He is our Redeemer and Savior. He redeems and saves us from sin and death. Now we are free from sin, and live in the promise of an everlasting life.

Therefore, my dear friends, let us not forsake our gathering together in the Houses of the Lord God. For it is here where the Word the Lord God is preached into our ears, and He teaches us Who He is, that He is our Savior from sin and death. It is here where the Lord gives us His great gifts. Here through the Blessed Sacraments, He imparts to us forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and salvation. In this way, we are like the people of Israel who went up to Jerusalem three times a year to offer sacrifices of repentance, praise, and thanksgiving. Howbeit, we do not come to the House of the Lord God only three times a year, but every Sunday, and Feast and Festival Day in which the Divine Service is offered. For it is here in where our Lord God serves us with His great gifts, and we in turn give Him thanks and praise for all that He has done for us.

Let us then continue to come to this place and receive His gifts, that we might like the Boy + Jesus grow in wisdom, and in favor with both the Lord God and man. May the Lord God Almighty grant this unto us all. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus, the Christ. Amen.

#### **Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:**

Almighty God, be pleased to accompany Thy Word with Thy Holy Spirit and grant that Thy Word would increase faith in us; bring into the Way of Truth all such as have erred; turn the hearts of the unrepentant; and for sake of Thy Name grant succor to all heavy hearts and those who are heavy-laden, that they may through the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ be relieved and preserved so that they succumb not to the temptation of despair but rather that they gain the victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil; through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with the Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever One God, world without end. Amen.

#### **The Votum:**

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Amen.

*Soli Deo Gloria!*