

Second Sunday after Christmas January 5, 2020

Lectionary Year A – the Gospel of Matthew

Living the Lutheran Lectionary

A weekly study of the Scriptures for the coming Sunday since May 4, 2014.

An opportunity to make Sunday worship more meaningful and to make the rhythms of the readings part of the rhythms of your life.

Available on line at:

- ✦ www.bethlehemlutheranchurchparma.com/biblestudies
- ✦ Through www.Facebook.com at “Living the Lutheran Lectionary”, “Bethlehem Lutheran Church Parma”, or “Harold Weseloh”
- ✦ All links in this on-line copy are active and can be reached using Ctrl+Click

Gather and be blessed:

- ✦ **Thursdays at 10 AM:** At Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Road, Parma, OH 44134 and on line through <https://zoom.us/j/815200301>
- ✦ **Fridays at 7 PM in a house church setting:** For details, contact Harold Weseloh at puritaspastor@hotmail.com
- ✦ **First Sunday of the month at 11 AM:** St. Philip Lutheran Church, 11315 Regalia Ave., Cleveland, OH 44104
- ✦ **Tuesdays at 12:00 PM (8pm Kenya time)** via Zoom to the Lutheran School of Theology - Nyamira , Kenya
- ✦ **On Facebook through Messenger** in a discussion group shared by people throughout the United States, Kenya and Uganda. Contact Harold Weseloh on Facebook Messenger.

Well Balanced Growth

Luke 2:40 “And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him”

Luke 2:52 “And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.”

<https://slideplayer.com/slide/7951550/>

Hymn of the Day

Lutheran Service Book (LSB) 410 The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH) 133

“Within the Father’s house”

“What an honor it would be to rub elbows with the theological doctors of the Church and serve the monarch of the nation. That was the life of **James Russell Woodford** (1820–1885), this hymn’s author. As a priest in the Church of England, Woodford showed exemplary scholarship and pastoral wisdom...

His contributions to commentaries and sermon collections indicate that Woodford took seriously the study of God’s Word. He delved into Scripture so that the living Word would be heard and read by many...

Through the omission of one of the original stanzas, the framework of this hymn is now neatly divided into three sets of two stanzas each. In stanzas 1 and 2 Woodford provides a straightforward description of the scene. The first words of the hymn — “Within the Father’s house” — make us curious to know who is in the house and what kind of house this is...

Stanzas 3 and 4 get to the heart of the matter. In stanza 4 Woodford uses the word “epiphany,” which means to make manifest or to show brightly...

After singing the objective statements of stanzas 1–4 the hearer, the singer, is brought personally into the account of Jesus in the temple through the use of the pronouns “our” and “us” and “we.” The truths of this hymn are now appropriated to us. Stanza 5 moves directly into stanza 6; there is no punctuation dividing them...

- [file:///C:/Users/wesel/AppData/Local/Packages/Microsoft.MicrosoftEdge_8wekyb3d8bbwe/TempState/Downloads/LCMS-Worship-Hymn-of-the-Day-Studies-for-Christmas-Three-Year-Lectionary-v2%20\(1\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/wesel/AppData/Local/Packages/Microsoft.MicrosoftEdge_8wekyb3d8bbwe/TempState/Downloads/LCMS-Worship-Hymn-of-the-Day-Studies-for-Christmas-Three-Year-Lectionary-v2%20(1).pdf)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tzgn03coZSo> Piano accompaniment to page from TLH. [Andrew Remillard](#)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=waHIA6fALAc> Choral singing. “Hymns of the Church Year”, © 2009 Concordia Publishing House
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XrFXWtATQ7o> “Lyrics are formatted for church type projection, for use in worship or choir practice etc... Lyrics and tunes used are PD (*Public Domain*) versions, my music performance(sound recording) is copyright© Rod Smith but non-commercial, worship and individual education use is OK...”

Commentaries have been chosen because the author has written in a way that compliments the reading. Not all of the commentaries are from Lutheran sources. They have been edited for length and in some cases for additional content that is not in keeping with a Lutheran understanding of Scripture. Links are provided for those who wish to read the entire commentary.

The Holy Bible, English Standard Version. ESV® Text Edition: 2016. Copyright © 2001 by [Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.](#)

O.T.– “Ask what I shall give you.”

Psalms – “Oh how I love your law!”

Epistle – “In him we have obtained an inheritance”

Gospel – “***And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom.***”

1 Kings 3:4-15; Revised Common Lectionary (RCL), Jeremiah 31:7-14 or Sirach 24:1-12 (Next week: Isaiah 42:1-9; RCL, the same reading)

“Ask me, what would you like me to give you?”

Solomon is at the crucial beginnings of his kingship when God poses this generous question. The divine question is particularly meaningful when considering the circumstances regarding the royal succession from his father David. Solomon was not the heir apparent to the throne.

That rite traditionally would go to the eldest living son Adonijah, as brothers Amnon and Absalon had already died. But Nathan and Bathsheba convinced a dying David to proclaim Solomon’s rights to the kingship. Furthermore, the theophany occurs at a high place (i.e, worship center) in Gibeon, significant for its role in both worship and the consolidation of the throne. The temple in Jerusalem has not yet begun construction.

Within such uncertainty, God’s question presents an opportunity that would soothe, comfort and assure a young king. God offers to give anything to Solomon to help secure his reign with an honest, “What do you want” (paraphrase mine)?..”

➤ http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2194 **Roger Nam**

Associate Professor of Biblical Studies, George Fox Evangelical Seminary, Portland, Oregon

Solomon's Prayer for Wisdom Includes verse 1-3

³ Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of David his father, only he sacrificed and made offerings at the high places.

⁴ And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the great high place. Solomon used to offer a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. ⁵ At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, “Ask what I shall give you.” ⁶ And Solomon said, “You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant David my father, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you. And you have kept for him this great and steadfast love and have given him a son to sit on his throne this day. ⁷ And now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of David my father, although I am but a little child. I do not know how to go out or come in. ⁸ And your servant is in the midst of your people whom you have chosen, a great people, too many to be numbered or counted for multitude. ⁹ Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, that I may discern

between good and evil, for who is able to govern this your great people?”

¹⁰ It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. ¹¹ And God said to him, “Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, ¹² behold, I now do according to your word. Behold, I give you a wise and discerning mind, so that none like you has been before you and none like you shall arise after you. ¹³ I give you also what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that no other king shall compare with you, all your days. ¹⁴ And if you will walk in my ways, keeping my statutes and my commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days.”

¹⁵ And Solomon awoke, and behold, it was a dream. Then he came to Jerusalem and stood before the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and offered up burnt offerings and peace offerings, and made a feast for all his servants.

Solomon's Wisdom

Verse 16-28 ²⁵ And the king said, “Divide the living child in two...”

Today's Old Testament lesson is the famous text where Solomon asks God for wisdom.

Somewhat oddly, the lection begins and ends in mid-paragraph (according to NRSV and NIV), and it might be better to include in the public Scripture reading and in the preaching both verses 3-4, on the front side, and verses 13-14 (and perhaps verse 15 as well) on the back. [\[A reference to Year A, Proper 12, Track 2 of the Revised Common Lectionary.\]](#)

At the very least, astute preachers need to be aware of these other verses and the data they provide. Indeed, verses 3-4 gives important "background" information that is helpful in making sense of verses 5ff. -- for example, why Solomon was at Gibeon in the first place. But after reading verses 3-4, one is also sympathetic with the lectionary's editors, since these same verses raise more than a few questions. In brief, verses 3-4 tell us of the good and the bad about Solomon:

On the one hand, the *good*: "Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of his father David" (verse 3a; NRSV);

On the other hand, the *bad*: "only, he sacrificed and offered incense at the high places" (verse 3b; NRSV)...

But not here, not in the lectionary's selection, which effectively removes the ambiguity by focusing only on verses 5-12. Good preachers, attentive to the warp and woof of Scripture,

will worry more than a bit about the "whitewashed" version of the lectionary snippet, if only because it seems clear already from the first verses of chapter 3 that "Solomon sets into motion a pattern of misbehavior on the part of Israel's and Judah's kings."³

That granted, Solomon in 1 Kings 3 clearly comes with the good as well as the bad, and, even if the lectionary smoothes things over a bit too much, verses 5-12 clearly emphasize Solomon's better side. But Solomon's better side is prefaced by God *best* side: out of nowhere, it seems, comes the Lord's appearance to the king in a dream with the equivalent of a genie's wish (verse 5)...

What is not lost on the attentive reader is the *rhetoric* of Solomon's answer. God had posed the question in terms of Solomon: "Ask what I should give *you*" (verse 5), but instead of answering in those same terms ("*I* would like..."), Solomon begins with God ("*You* have shown...") and with what God has done for David...

"You have shown great and steadfast love (*hesed*) to...David,
because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart...
you have kept for him this great and steadfast love (*hesed*),
and have given him a son to sit on his throne today." (verse 6)

The very last bit of verse 6 is not to be missed. In this clause, Solomon attributes his own kingship to God's benevolence, but also ties himself to David and, simultaneously, introduces himself into the conversation (finally!)...

And yet more: all that Solomon didn't ask for is also given -- riches and honor, and again in incomparable fashion (verse 13). And yet one more final gift: long life, but this one with a built-in contingency: "*If* you will walk in my ways, keeping my statutes, and my commandments, as your father David walked" (verse 14). So, just as Solomon had reminded God of David in his request, so God now reminds Solomon of David in the answer...

In verse 15 Solomon awakes -- all this had been a dream...

This dream leads directly to right worship and benevolent activity, not in Gibeon, but in Jerusalem before the ark of the Lord's covenant (verse 15b). It also leads directly into the famous vignette about Solomon's wisdom in the case of the two prostitutes and the dead child (verses 16-28), which shows God's gift of wisdom to Solomon is both real and efficacious (see verse 28)...

- http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=991 [Brent A. Strawn](#) Professor of Old Testament, Candler School of Theology, Emory University, Atlanta, Ga.

Try a sermon on this reading from Pastor Bob Hill of Faith Lutheran Church, Moorpark, CA
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nJGhYUvPmuU>

Psalm 119:97-104; RCL, Psalm 147:12-20 or Wisdom of Solomon 10:15-21 (Psalm 29; RCL, the same reading)

This psalm is an acrostic poem of twenty-two stanzas, following the letters of the Hebrew alphabet; within a stanza, each verse begins with the same Hebrew letter.

“Psalm 119:97-104 is part of a prayer. Each verse addresses God directly. But there’s no petition; only adoration and personal testimony.

The theme is immediately clear in v. 97 — “Oh how I love your law!”

The psalmist declares his “love” for God’s law. He does not say, “I read your law,” or “I know your law,” or “I believe your law,” or even “I obey your law.” He speaks of something deeper: “I love your law.”

His “love” for God’s law is present tense. Not past tense, as though he is speaking of some sweet period of his life in the past that has now faded, and not future tense, as though he is making some promise to love God’s law in the future, with certain conditions. No, the psalmist continually loves God’s law, in real time, in the present.

He explains in vv. 98-104 three reasons why he loves God’s law.

THREE REASONS WHY THE PSALMIST LOVES GOD’S LAW

1. The Word of God will make you wise (vv. 98-100)

a. God’s Word will make you wiser than your enemies (v. 98).

The rest of Psalm 119 reveals that the psalmist has enemies — insolent enemies (v. 51), slanderous enemies (v. 69), determined enemies (v. 110), oppressive enemies (v. 121), disobedient enemies (v. 150) — and lots of them (v. 157)...

b. God’s Word will make you wiser than your teachers (v. 99).

Is the psalmist speaking out of youthful arrogance here? No — he is not saying that he has more knowledge or information than his teachers, but that he can have deep insight and understanding into God’s ways and God’s wisdom...

c. God’s Word will make you wiser than your elders (v. 100).

Age and wisdom do not always go together. Time doesn’t fix everything. Experience isn’t infallible.

This is because wisdom is not as much about what you know; it’s about what you do. “I understand more than the aged, for I keep your precepts” (v. 100).

2. The Word of God will keep you from sin (vv. 101-102).

The assumption of v. 101a (“I hold back my feet from every evil way”) is that there is an “evil way.” This goes against the relativistic spirit of the age. The kids in my neighborhood in Jacksonville like to say, “It’s all good.” That’s good slang but bad theology.

This clearly implies that there are situations and people and temptations that you should stay away from.

But our problem is not just evil on the outside, but evil on the inside. This is why I must “hold back my feet.” You must restrain yourself from evil.

The psalmist guards himself against “every evil way,” which means no small compromises.

3. The Word of God will bring you joy (vv. 103-104).

In ancient Israel, “honey” was one of the sweetest things the psalmist had ever tasted.

He is not talking about someone else’s appetite or perspective. This is personal: “my taste” and “my mouth.”

The Word of God will bring you both a satisfying joy (v. 103) and a sanctifying joy (v. 104)...

- <https://davidagundersen.com/2009/10/07/psalm-11997-104/> H. B. Charles, Jr. serves as Senior Pastor at Shiloh Metropolitan Baptist Church in Jacksonville, Florida.

Your Word Is a Lamp to My Feet

Aleph, Beth, Gimel, Daleth, Waw, Zayin, Heth, Teth, Kaph, Lamedh

Mem

- ⁹⁷ Oh how I love your law!
It is my meditation all the day.
- ⁹⁸ Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies,
for it is ever with me.
- ⁹⁹ I have more understanding than all my teachers,
for your testimonies are my meditation.
- ¹⁰⁰ I understand more than the aged,^{elders}
for I keep your precepts.
- ¹⁰¹ I hold back my feet from every evil way,
in order to keep your word.
- ¹⁰² I do not turn aside from your rules*,
for you have taught me.
- ¹⁰³ How sweet are your words to my taste,
sweeter than honey to my mouth!
- ¹⁰⁴ Through your precepts I get understanding;
therefore I hate every false way.

Nun, Ayin, Pe, Qoph, Resh, Sin and Shin, Taw

* Or *your just decrees*; also verses [30](#), [39](#), [43](#), [52](#), [75](#), [102](#), [108](#), [137](#), [156](#), [175](#)

“And then there’s Psalm 119. It’s long. It’s repetitious. It’s been around about 3,000 years or so. And it still says the most counter-cultural things. It says things like how happy you will be if you obey God’s commandments. It says how blessed you will be if, when you experience challenges in life, you turn to God for help. It says how wonderful it is to fill your heart and mind with God’s Word...

Well here’s the thing. What if you could just replace your recurring worried thought with a recurring word of God? Replace worrying with meditating. I’m talking about taking a portion of God’s Word and letting it saturate your soul... What if you developed the practice of replacing worrying with meditating on God’s Word? Listen to what the Psalmist says to us in Psalm 119...

“Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long.”

So what is this saying? It’s saying that the person who follows the simple truths of God’s Word is wise. In fact the person who follows the simple truths of God’s Word has more insight and understanding than the person who follows the most sophisticated philosophies of human

beings. So the student who listens to God's Word is wiser than the professor who criticizes it. The person who holds to God's Word will never be out of date. This person has greater wisdom than both the traditionalist who clings to worn out notions and also the novelty seeker who chases the latest fads. Because the person who meditates on God's Word is taught by God, they have the greatest wisdom. God's Words to them are sweeter than honey...

In Psalm 119 there are 8 different words used as synonyms for what we'd call God's Word. "Law" is one of them. So also precepts, statutes, decrees, etc. So when the Psalmist says, "Oh how I love your law" ... what he's saying? He's not just saying, "Gimme some more rules to follow and obey, I love trying hard to toe the line." No, he's saying more than that. I mean he doesn't begrudge God's for giving him some rules to obey. In fact he actually now find delight in them even as guidelines for his life because he sees them as ways God is trying to help steer us from pain and self-inflicted suffering. Because why does he really love God's law?

Because in God's law he learns about God's love. "Law" here in Psalm 119 is a broad meaning word that means instruction or teaching. It's simply a synonym for God's Word. He loves God's Word because it's God's Word that teaches and assures him over and over how much God loves him..."

- <https://victoryofthelamb.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Psalm-119.97-104-Saturate.pdf> Sermon preached by Pastor Ben Sadler, [Victory of the Lamb](#), Franklin, WI, a WELS congregation.

Ephesians 1:3-14: RCL, the same reading (Romans 6:1-11; RCL, Acts 10:34-43)

"This is a text of almost unfathomable depth.

Before exploring some of the many ways a preacher might preach from it, we can start by taking off the table one way it ought not to be preached.

Famously, these verses comprise one long sentence in Greek. Daunting enough in English so that translators have almost universally split it up into shorter phrases, the sentence exhibits a flowing style valued in Hellenistic rhetoric, but unmanageable in English translation...

What begs to be "translated" into proclamation is the lyricism of this doxologic text: a poetic, hymnic exultation that bids us bless the God who blesses all. And blessed be the preacher and church musicians who can craft preaching and liturgy in a way that captures the dignified exuberance of this paean to God's act of blessing all, "in Christ."

Redemption is a word often said and little understood in Christian worship. A preacher might help listeners discover its meaning as described by the Ephesians writer: God's determination to bless humanity. In fact, the opening of today's reading -- "Blessed be . . ." -- brings to mind the Jewish synagogue liturgy with its berakoth, its series of declarations of blessing..."

- http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1331
[Sally A. Brown](#) Princeton Seminary, Princeton, NJ

Greeting Verses 1-2 Spiritual Blessings in Christ

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴ even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love ⁵ he predestined us^[b] for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, ⁸ which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight ⁹ making known^[c] to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

¹¹ In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, ¹² so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. ¹³ In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee^[d] of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, ^[e] to the praise of his glory.

Thanksgiving and Prayer Verses 15-23

Footnotes:

- a. [Ephesians 1:1](#) Some manuscripts *saints who are also faithful* (omitting *in Ephesus*)
- b. [Ephesians 1:5](#) Or *before him in love, ⁵having predestined us*
- c. [Ephesians 1:9](#) Or *he lavished upon us in all wisdom and insight, making known...*
- d. [Ephesians 1:14](#) Or *down payment*
- e. [Ephesians 1:14](#) Or *until God redeems his possession*
- f. [Ephesians 1:15](#) Some manuscripts omit *your love*

“To insulate yourself against the direct challenges to your personal sovereignty represented in this passage, it is possible to bring up the question of authorship: Is the letter really from Paul's hand? Or is it, tsk, deuterio-Pauline, written by some enthusiastic pretender, and therefore not really scripture, that is, not really authoritative and binding? Such questions ignore the fact that these words had the ring of the apostolic message for the ancient church, and, therefore--Paul, part-Paul, or no-Paul--these words were God's life-giving words to the early believers...

in the end, you are going to have to face these words head-on, staking your sense of entitlement regarding the determination of your own destiny against twelve verses that insist most insistently that even your destiny--especially your destiny--has been in Christ's hands all along. In fact, if you were pressed to sum up these twelve verses in one sentence, you might try this: "Christ Jesus is in charge (and you are not)." ...

Well, if you can hear good news in the promise that you are not in charge of your destiny, there's more good news to come. Alas, as the lectionary goes, this passage has been cut off from the verses that follow. You either have to hearken back to Christ the King Sunday or jump ahead to Ascension Day if you want to get "the rest of the story"--that is, if you want to cover Ephesians 1:15-23. On the other hand, there's nothing to keep you from taking on the chapter all at once, in all its glory.

The first chapter of Ephesians concludes with a dramatic statement regarding this One who is in charge. When God raised up the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, he was placed "far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come" (1:21). Moreover, God "has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all" (1:22-23). In other words, Christ Jesus is as *in charge* as *in charge* gets..."

- http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=209 Hans Wiersma
Augsburg College, Minneapolis, MN

Luke 2:40-52; RCL, John 1:(1-9), 10-18 (Matthew 3, 13-17; RCL, the same reading)

*"A twelve-year-old-boy, filled with wisdom. **Look at how our text today is bracketed.** At the start it says: "The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him. And at the end: "And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man." Truly, this is no foolish boy, running off on his own and not telling his parents. No, this is the Son of God, doing the will of the Father who sent him. This is divine wisdom in the flesh. And we do well to find him where he wants to be found."*

- <https://steadfastlutherans.org/2015/01/a-twelve-year-old-boy-filled-with-wisdom-sermon-on-luke-240-52-by-pr-charles-henrickson/> Rev. Charles Henrickson currently serves at St. Matthew Lutheran Church in Bonne Terre, Missouri

"The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 2nd Chapter"

The Birth of Jesus Christ Verses 1-7

The Shepherds and the Angels Verses 8-21

Jesus Presented at the Temple Verses 22 - 38

The Return to Nazareth

³⁹ And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth.

*⁴⁰ **And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him.***

The Boy Jesus in the Temple

⁴¹ Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. ⁴² And when he was twelve years old, they went up according to custom. ⁴³ And when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, ⁴⁴ but supposing him to be in the group they went a day's journey, but then they began to search for him among their relatives and acquaintances, ⁴⁵ and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him. ⁴⁶ After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷ And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. ⁴⁸ And when his parents^[a] saw him, they were astonished. And his mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been searching for you in great distress." ⁴⁹ And he said to them, ***"Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?"***^[b] ⁵⁰ And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them. ⁵¹ And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them. And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart.

⁵² And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature^[c] and in favor with God and man.

Footnotes:

- a. [Luke 2:48](#) Greek *they*
- b. [Luke 2:49](#) Or *about my Father's business*
- c. [Luke 2:52](#) Or *years*

"This is the Gospel of the Lord" "Praise to You, O Christ"

"Luke's story of Jesus in the temple at the age of 12 is the only incident in the gospels about the life of Jesus between infancy and the beginning of his ministry. Luke has several intentions for this passage in the gospel of Luke and the book of Acts...

When recounting the lives of major figures in antiquity, ancient literature often included stories of unusual births and remarkable childhood feats. Ancient people regarded such stories as evidence that the gods had a special guiding role in the lives of such figures. Luke's birth and childhood narratives play this role (among others): assuring listeners that the hand of God guided Jesus from the beginning...

By noting that Mary and Joseph went every year to Jerusalem for the Passover, Luke 2:41-52 implies that Jesus grew up in a faithful Jewish household. The emphasis on Jesus in the temple and his interaction with the teachers of Israel plays a similar important role in the

gospel of Luke and the book of Acts. Jesus was immersed in Judaism since his youth. He speaks as an insider with a thorough knowledge...

In the gospel of Luke and the book of Acts, Jesus is the model for the apostles who are the leaders and models for the church. In the broad sense, then, the last line of this passage is a model for Christian education and child raising: to encourage children to increase in wisdom and in stature (the latter a preferable translation to “years”). Wisdom and statue refer to the capacity to discern God’s realm purposes and to respond accordingly”

- http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2708 Ronald J. Allen
Professor Emeritus of Preaching, and Gospels and Letters, Christian Theological Seminary, Indianapolis, Ind.
+++++

“Two key ideas: 1) Jesus’ life was one of growth through submission, the ultimate example of losing your life only to find it and 2) we just aren’t good at seeing those growth opportunities, but God loved us anyway. God loved us enough to submit to our cross. Jesus submitted where we could not, and so He is the the one directing growth from the right hand of the Father. Next time you feel growth stalled or advance stopped, take and second to look at Jesus and what does He want you to submit to in order to grow?”

- <http://www.saintmarkslutheran.org/2009/01/06/sermon-luke-240-52-pondering-growth/>
Pastor Mark Brown, St. Mark’s Lutheran, West Henrietta, NY



The difference between Jesus and the boy Ted has in mind is that Jesus really is a know-it-all.

- *Agnus Day* appears with the permission of <https://www.agnusday.org/>

“Perhaps Martin Luther was on to something when, speaking to a group of his fellow monks in Heidelberg in 1518, he offered the following proposition for debate: "The law says, 'Do this,' and it is never done. Grace says, 'Believe this,'" and everything is already done." (Luther’s Works 31:41).

- http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=209 Hans Wiersma
Augsburg College, Minneapolis, MN

+++++

How are you doing with
The Matthew Challenge,
a handwritten copy of the book of
Matthew by the Last Sunday of the
Church Year (Christ the King
Sunday), November 22, 2020.
January’s goal is Chapters 4-6, 107 verses.