

Doctrine of Jesus Christ

The Silent Years

1. The Bible provides little information about Jesus Christ from the days of His infancy to His appearance for baptism by John the Baptist.
2. Because there was not much information about the developing years of Jesus, a number of speculative writings appeared, beginning in the second century, to fill in the details. Each succeeding work was rejected by the early church. Many were simply works of forgery trying to give credibility to the writing by using an apostle's name, such as *The Gospel of Peter*, or *The Gospel of Thomas*. The works were frivolous.
3. A notable Biblical exception that does provide insight into the formative years of Christ is found in the gospel of Luke.
 - *Luke 2:42 And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast.*

It was the custom of Joseph and Mary to go from Nazareth to Jerusalem each year to observe the Passover.

43 And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it.

44 But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance.

Because so many people were going to Jerusalem, it was not uncommon for families and friends to travel together in caravans to share collective responsibilities, including that of looking after the children. Mary and Joseph were not concerned about the safety or location of Jesus, until they started to look for him among their families and friends.

45 And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him.

Joseph and Mary, like all good parents, became alarmed when they did not find Jesus. There was only one course of action to take. They must return to Jerusalem and search all the places they had been in an effort to find Him. So “they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him.”

The idea of people seeking after Jesus is a large theme in Scripture. The prophets sought for Jesus in the person of the Messiah. The wise men sought for Jesus, to find Him that was born King of the Jews. The Greeks wanted to see Jesus. It is good to seek Jesus.

46 And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.

On the third day, Joseph and Mary found Jesus in the Temple sitting in the midst of the teachers, hearing them, and asking them questions.

47 And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.

One of the great moments in this narrative is the scene whereby a 12 year old boy astonishes the learned Rabbis. Jesus was a child prodigy, having mastered so much of the Scriptures, and theology. The Bible says that Jesus confounded the religious teachers in the Temple, both by the questions He posed, and by the answers He gave. Jesus asked questions that went outside the traditional teachings of the Rabbis.

One reason why Jesus enjoyed penetrating insight into Scripture was because the noetic effects of sin, based on the fall, did not affect Him. Christ was born outside the slave market of sin so that His mind was not marred.

Paul teaches that sin clouds our minds. They are darkened by the Fall. Sin impairs our ability to think clearly. Even in a sinful state, man can still reason. However, the reasoning process is marred by sin. That is why mistakes are made in our thinking so that we note, "To err is human."

Romans 1:21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

Ephesians 4:18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:

The heart of the natural man is foolish. The understanding of the natural man is darkened. When people are given the same information, they come to radically different conclusions, even as Christians, leading to disagreement, disruption, and divisions.

One reason for this sad state is a refusal to study the Scriptures. Another reason for the disruption in fellowship and united understanding are the biases we tenaciously embrace. The mind is held in captivity by those biases. It is hard to cut the love line to a denomination, a mentor, a parent, or a teacher who has instilled in us a certain teaching. It is hard to be open to correction and instruction in righteousness.

In addition, the very act of reasoning has been weakened by sin, even those who are exceedingly bright. Charles Darwin had a bright mind, and gave the world the nonsensical concept that men evolved from some common ancestor with the animals.

The world had never seen anyone whose mind had not been affected by sin, until they saw Jesus, and heard Him speak. Jesus was a sinless human being, and so was not weakened by the problems that affect all others. Therefore, His thinking was crystal clear.

His acumen was without parallel. As a 12 year old child, Jesus could think more profoundly, more acutely, more precisely than the most educated Rabbi.

Jesus did not go to the Temple to show off. He went to the Temple to learn. Touching His humanity, Jesus had to learn as other children had to learn. He was not given a divine brain. He was in all points true humanity, and anyone who denies this truth is declared to be anti-Christ in Scripture.

1 John 2:22 Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.

Jesus was not endowed in His human nature with omniscience. However, His divine nature could communicate to the human nature of Jesus information. When this was done, it astonished people. But the divine nature did not communicate omniscience to the human nature.

48 And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? Behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.

Mary sees the actions of Jesus as an offense to her and Joseph.

49 And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?

In response, Jesus pointed out that they should not have been surprised at where He was, or what He was doing. Why did they not know He had to be about His Father's business? With this response, Jesus brought forth the fact that there was a problem of knowledge. With a gentle rebuke, Jesus said that Mary should have known He could be found doing the work His Father had given Him to do. Mary had been pondering all that had happened to her and Jesus for the past twelve years. Mary should have known that Jesus had come to do kingdom work. That divine mission required preparation. Jesus was preparing for the work of establishing the kingdom of God.

By referring to His Father's business, Jesus was acknowledging His own subordination in the Trinity. Theologians talk about the economic distinction within the Trinity, referring to the distinctions that have to do with the work of God. It is the Father who sends the Son. It is the Son who executes the will of the Father. It is the Holy Spirit who sustains what the Father has planned, and the Son has executed.

It is the Father who has planned salvation. It is the Son who has obtained salvation through His obedience, even unto death at the Cross. It the Holy Spirit who comes to apply the work of the redemption to the soul. At an early age, in the days of His humiliation, Jesus had a compulsion to do what the Father has sent Him to do. His meat, and His drink, was to do the will of His Father.

50 And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.

Mary and Joseph did not understand exactly what Jesus was saying, but they were wise enough to be silent. They could discern that Jesus had a mission before God, though they did not have details.

51 And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.

As Jesus was subordinate to the Father, so he would honor Joseph and Mary. Returning with them to Nazareth, Jesus worked alongside Joseph, learning the trade of a carpenter. In Nazareth, Jesus grew to manhood. He found favor with men, as He was beloved by God.

52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.