

Luke 2:36-52

Introduction: Luke ends his introduction where he began, in the Temple in Jerusalem. It emphasizes God's grace in the pre-ministry phase of Jesus' life,

Anna praises God and speaks about Jesus to other believers in Jerusalem—2:36-38

- 1) Who is Anna—2:36-37
 - a) Her family—2:36a ³⁶ *And there was Anna (Hannah) the prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher* (one of the Northern tribes).
 - i) OT prophetesses: Miriam, Deborah, Huldah, Isaiah's wife
 - ii) NT prophetesses: Philip's daughters, unnamed (1st Corinthians 11:5)
 - b) Her age and social status—2:36b-37a
 - i) *She was advanced in many days* (cf. 1:7), *living seven years with her husband from her virginity*.
 - ii) ³⁷ *And this woman was a widow for eighty-four years*,
 - c) Her concentrated spiritual focus—2:37b *who did not withdraw from the temple courts, serving* [λατρεύω]
 - i) What and when? *with fastings and prayers night and day*.
 - ii) She is a Godward widow (cf. 1st Timothy 5:5)
- 2) What does Anna say?—2:38 ³⁸ *And at that very hour* (as Simeon in 2:27-35), *having come near, ...*
 - a) *she was giving thanks to the Lord*
 - b) *and was speaking concerning Him to all those who were anticipating* [προσδέχομαι] *the redemption* [λύτρωσις] (cf. 1:68; 24:21) *in Jerusalem*.
 - i) Cf. Zechariah 12:7-14; 14:8-21

God grants grace to Jesus during His early childhood—2:39-40

- 1) Immediately after His naming and dedication—2:39 ³⁹ *And when they had completed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city of Nazareth*.
 - a) This was perhaps to get some more of their household goods to take to Bethlehem.
 - b) God provides for their trip to Egypt through the gifts of the Eastern magi, after which they resettle in Nazareth—Matthew 2:1-23
- 2) Between 2 months and 12 years old—2:40
 - a) ⁴⁰ *And the Child* [παιδίον] ...
 - i) Physically—*was growing*
 - ii) Spiritually—*and was being strengthened* (cf. 1:80) *in the Spirit*, (1) How? *being filled with wisdom*, (this sets the stage for 2:47)
 - b) *and the grace of God was upon Him*.
 - i) Jesus experiences God the Father's special attention (cf. 1:28, 30).
- 3) For the first time a human being is developing under ideal conditions, unimpeded by hereditary or acquired defects. (Thomas, *Harmony*)

God grants grace to Jesus on the cusp of His adulthood—2:41-51 [@ 7-8 AD]

- 1) Jesus's parents—2:41-46
 - a) Their custom—2:41-42 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 to Jerusalem according to the custom of the Feast.* (March 20, 7 AD or April 8, 8 AD)
 - i) Cf. Deuteronomy 16:16; but women were not required to attend
 - b) Their problem—2:43-46
 - i) ⁴³ *And when they had completed the (seven) days, as they were returning, the boy [παῖς] Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. And Joseph and His mother did not know it, ⁴⁴ but having assumed that He was in their caravan, they went a day's journey (@ 20 miles), and were searching for Him among their relatives and acquaintances.* (Remember that Mary and Joseph had other children to look after as well.)
 - ii) ⁴⁵ *And when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for Him. ⁴⁶ And it came to pass after three days (one day out, one day back, one day searching in Jerusalem), they found Him in the temple courts, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening and asking them questions.*
- 2) The responses to Him—2:47-48
 - a) The crowd around Him—2:47 ⁴⁷ *Now all who were listening to Him were astonished [ἐξίστημι] at His understanding [σύνεσις] and responses.* (cf. 2:40)
 - i) Jesus is infinitely more than a precocious child. He is God in the flesh!
 - b) His parents—2:48 ⁴⁸ *And when they saw Him, they were astounded [ἐκπλήσσω]; and His mother said to Him, "Child [τέκνον], why have You done this to us? Behold, Your father and I have been searching for You, while suffering pain."*
 - i) She confronts Him for being seemingly insensitive towards them. After all, they had been entrusted with caring for and raising God's Son and they had lost Him!
- 3) Jesus' response to His parents—2:29-51a (Jesus's first recorded words)
 - a) Jesus asks them two questions—2:49 ⁴⁹ *And He said to them,*
 - i) "Why were you^{pl} searching for Me?"
 - ii) *Did you^{pl} not know that I must be in My (not our) Father's things?"* (assumed Yes; this is the Temple where His Father is to be worshipped!)
 - b) They demonstrate a lack of understanding—2:50 ⁵⁰ *But **they** did not understand the statement that He spoke to them.*
 - c) He demonstrates a humble response—2:51a ⁵¹ *Then He ...*
 - i) *went down with them and came to Nazareth,*
 - ii) *and was continually submitting to them,* (for the next @ 20 years)
 - (1) Jesus's stay in Jerusalem was not a case of adolescent rebellion.
 - (2) With this, Joseph disappears from the Biblical record.
- 4) Mary's response to all these things—2:51b *but His mother was treasuring [διατηρέω] all these things in her heart.* (cf. 2:19)

- a) She is not hurt by the exposure of her ignorance. She carefully reflected on all that was happening throughout Jesus's life.

God gives grace to Jesus during His teens and twenties—2:52 (cf. 2:40)

- 1) What was Jesus doing? ⁵² *And Jesus was advancing* [προκόπτω]...
- 2) Jesus made progress in what four areas of life?
 - a) Intellectually—*in wisdom* [σοφία]
 - b) Physically—*and stature* [ἡλικία],
 - c) Spiritually—*and in favor/grace* [χάρις] *with* [παρά] *God*
 - d) Socially—*and* (in favor/grace with) *people*.

So what does this look like in our day-to-day world? Let's use the recent Supreme Court decision as an example.

- 1) Be concerned, but don't panic. God is **sovereign**. (Psalm 47:8; 115:1-8)
- 2) Understand that this is about the authority and sufficiency of God's Word, even for those professing Christians who support what some refer to as homosexual marriage. Homosexuality is a secondary issue. God is **the authority**. (2nd Thessalonians 3:14; 2nd Peter 3:15-16)
- 3) Be wise, and don't make your decisions about sinful behavior based upon relationships with family or friends. God is **righteous**. (Psalm 11:7; 89:14; Romans 12:1-2)
- 4) Be wise and gracious in our speech, but don't fear upsetting people who disagree. God is **truth**. (Colossians 4:5-6)
- 5) Be Godward in our perspective, but don't be unkind to those that struggle with sinful, same-sex attraction. God is **gracious and forgiving**. (1st Corinthians 6:9-11)
- 6) Be realistic about our fallen culture, but don't cave-in to society's pressure to conform. God is the **Judge**. (Genesis 18:25; John 5:19-24; 12:44-50; 1st John 2:15-17)