

## Was Jesus a Normal Child?

Joseph and Mary must have had precious memories of their first child, Jesus. Yes, they did have other children, but they did not have the same special purpose Jesus did. No one else has or ever will, but I am sure each child was precious to them. What do you suppose the childhood years of Jesus were like? More importantly let's ask what can we learn from those years when Jesus was a child, or are they important to us at all?

He lived in Nazareth the vast majority of His life. Is that good or bad? Well, people back then had some opinions. Nathanael wondered. "Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" I like the way Philip answered that question. "Come and see." Philip knew that if Nathanael met Jesus it would make no difference what town He came from, because Nathanael would fall in love with the person.

As for Jesus' childhood, it is all summed up in Luke 2:40, "And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him." He grew up like other boys. He learned like other boys. I believe He played like other boys. He fell down and scraped His knees like other boys. He possibly picked on the girls like other boys. This is one reason the people in His own home town could not accept Him as the Messiah, and neither could His immediate family at first. Not that He was an ornery, self-pious brat, but because He grew up just like everyone else. He was the kid that lived down the street and played with your child.

The next thing we know about Jesus is when He was 12 years old. His family was in Jerusalem for the Passover. For three days they did not know where their child was. Where did they find Him? He was sitting at the feet of some scholarly Jewish teachers. This was something extraordinary for a 12 year old boy to be doing. Evidently, by the time Jesus reached this age, He must have started to be different from the other children. He even astounded His earthly parents to the place they did not totally understand their son. In spite of this, He was not a disobedient son. Luke 2:51, "Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them." Jesus set forth a pattern that all of our teenagers should possess.

We need to accept Jesus with the faith of a child, but we are not meant to remain spiritual children. Let's look through the eyes of children, but let's mature into the Christians God wants us to be.

*Roy Goodlet is a retired minister and a member of Murphy Church of Christ. Email him @ royfcc@yahoo.com.*