

Jesus Christ – Some Defining Moments

Following are a few of the “defining moments” in the life of Jesus while on earth. By examining these life events we can learn something about Jesus - and gather some important life lessons for us:

The Boy Jesus at the Temple

(Luke 2:41-52)

The Bible tells us very little about Jesus life prior to the beginning of his ministry at age 30. But there is a recorded event when Jesus was 12 years of age – which was almost the age when in Jewish culture he would have been considered an adult (i.e. age 13).

Here are some of the facts we know about Jesus growing up years:

- Jesus grew up in a “normal” every day Jewish home and family
- Jesus had at least four younger brothers and more than one sister (Mark 6:3; Matthew 13:54-6)
- His earthly father Joseph was a carpenter as was Jesus (Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3)
- Joseph likely died sometime when Jesus was between the ages of 12 to 30.

Some key insights from Jesus visit to the Temple as a 12 year old boy:

- 1) Jesus knew he was divine – God the Son
- 2) Jesus listened; Jesus asked questions; Jesus provided answers
- 3) Jesus’ priority was His relationship with His Heavenly Father. At the same time He loved, respected and obeyed His earthly parents
- 4) Jesus grew in wisdom over time
- 5) Jesus grew in stature over time (physically, mentally, spiritually)
- 6) Jesus grew in His relationship with His Heavenly Father
- 7) Jesus grew in favor with people
- 8) Other?

Jesus’ Baptism

(Luke 3:1-23; Matthew 3:14-17)

Some key insights:

- 1) It was important to Jesus to be baptized – we should be baptized too!
- 2) God the Father affirms the divinity of God the Son – Jesus!
- 3) The baptism affirms the reality of the Trinity (God the Father, God the Son – Jesus, God the Holy Spirit)
- 4) John the Baptist (cousin of Jesus) pointed people to the Messiah (i.e. the Christ) – Jesus!
- 5) John the Baptist communicated several important truths in this passage – such as the need for repentance, importance of generosity and contentment, and the reality of Heaven and Hell.

Jesus in the Wilderness

(Luke 4:1-13)

Interesting to note that the three temptations that Satan tried against Jesus were similar in nature to what he used against Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:1-6) and are exposed in I John 2:15-17.

A key issue was whether or not Jesus would use His power for His own ends OR would He live by faith and dependence on God like everyone else in the Kingdom.

Satan is a sower of doubts. He tempted Jesus three times in three different ways:

- Turn stone into bread (motivation to gain physical food i.e. “lust/cravings of the flesh”)
- Worship Satan (motivation to gain earthly power i.e. “boastful pride of life”)
- Throw yourself down from the highest point of the temple (be selfish/self-centered i.e. “lust of the eyes”)

Key Insights:

- 1) Times of intense temptation are NOT indications of God’s displeasure
- 2) Satan is tenacious – he doesn’t give up after one or two tries
- 3) The Holy Spirit can help us avoid giving into temptations
- 4) Scripture is the most powerful tool in our fight against temptation. Don’t fight back with our words, fight back with God’s!
- 5) Other?

Jesus Reading at the Synagogue

(Luke 4:14-21)

Jesus made it a habit to go to church (synagogue). One day he was handed the scroll of Isaiah where he read from chapter 61, verses 1 and 2. Jesus read where Isaiah laid out God’s job description for the Messiah – then claimed to be Him!

Six key tasks the Messiah (Jesus) will do:

- 1) Preach good news to the “poor” (Greek word = “utter helplessness, complete destitution, afflicted, distressed”).
- 2) Heal the broken hearted
- 3) Proclaim freedom for the prisoners
- 4) Recovery of sight for the blind (2 Cor 4:4)
- 5) Release the oppressed
- 6) To proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor

Jesus Encounters a Gentile with Amazing Faith
(Luke 7:1-10)

The centurion was Roman and normally would be despised by the Jewish people. But he was a positive example to us and we could learn from him – a man of good character:

- The Centurion valued his servant highly
- The Centurion was a man of good works (e.g. he helped build the synagogue)
- The Centurion was highly respected and had many friends (amazingly – even though he was *Roman/Gentile*, **Jewish** leaders pleaded with Jesus on his behalf)
- The Centurion was humble
- The Centurion was a man of great faith – and he *asked* Jesus for help

What do we learn about Jesus from this story?

Jesus Shows Compassion to a Widow - and raises a man from the dead!
(Luke 7:11-17)

Cast of Characters:

- Large crowds
- Widow
- Widow's son – now dead
- Jesus

Observations about Jesus:

- Jesus was very compassionate
- Jesus acted without being asked
- Jesus is all-powerful – He can bring a dead person back to life!
- Other?

Rest of the story:

- Dead son brought back to life
- Widow had a son again
- People amazed
- God honored and praised

Jesus Raised Jairus' Daughter from the Dead
(Luke 8:40-56; Mark 5:21-43)

Cast of Characters:

- Crowds
- Jairus – ruler of synagogue
- Jairus' 12-year old only daughter
- Jairus wife/daughter's mother
- Bleeding woman
- Jesus

Observations about Jesus:

- Jesus is very caring and compassionate
- Faith and belief in Jesus is powerful
- Jesus is all-powerful – He can heal a person's body and even bring a dead person back to life!
- Other?

Rest of the story:

- Bleeding woman healed
- Daughter brought back to life
- Jairus and his wife had their daughter back
- Parents amazed
- God honored

Jesus Has a Special Dinner Experience
(Luke 7:36-50; Matthew 26:6-13; Mark 14:3-9; John 12:1-8)

Jesus has raised Lazarus from the dead. In the home town of Lazarus (Bethany) a Pharisee known as Simon the Leper hosts a dinner in his home to honor Jesus. Lazarus and his sisters Martha and Mary are present. Mary – who evidently had a very sinful past (i.e. may have been a prostitute) – shows her extreme devotion to her beloved friend and Savior – Jesus. Jesus uses the event as a teaching opportunity.

Insights:

- 1) Jesus reaches out to people from all walks of life – including prostitutes and Pharisees
- 2) Jesus reads our minds
- 3) Jesus is full of grace and forgiveness
- 4) Jesus exhibited His divinity by forgiving her sins
- 5) Jesus never downplayed or minimized her sins – but Jesus did forgive and save her
- 6) Faith in Jesus is what saves us
- 7) The greater the extent of our forgiven sins, the greater our gratitude towards Jesus
- 8) We should be willing to offer Jesus our very best
- 9) Other?