

“Jesus, Our Example!” *Jesus grows and is filled with wisdom*

From Elder John Stoos *Based on Luke 2:8-21*

Dr. Luke’s Prologue for His Orderly Account

“Behold, I send My messenger and he will prepare the way before me” Malachi 3:1

Dedication to Theophilus *Luke 1:1-4*

Time Set: *“There was in the days of King Herod...” Luke 1:5*

John’s birth announced by Gabriel *Luke 1:5-25*

Jesus’ birth announced by Gabriel *Luke 1:26-56*

John is born *Luke 1:57-79*

Jesus is born *Luke 2:1-7*

John is circumcised *Luke 1:59-66*

Jesus is circumcised *Luke 2:21*

John grows and is strong in spirit *Luke 1:80*

Jesus grows in wisdom and strength *Luke 2:39-51*

-- Angels Proclaim Jesus & His Kingdom *Luke 2:8-20*

-- Saints testify that God is faithful

*[Elizabeth 1:39-45- Mary 1:46-56 –Zacharias 1:67-79 –
Shepherds2:15-20-Simeon 2:25-35-Anna 2:36-38]*

Jesus presented at Temple

as Son of God and Son of Man *Luke 2:22-38*

Time Set: *“Now in the 15th year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar...” Luke 3:1, 2*

John told to prepare the way: *Luke 3:3-6*

Jesus begins His ministry: *Luke 3:23*

John baptizes the people *Luke 3:7-20*

Jesus is Baptized by John *Luke 3:21*

John is arrested by Herod *Luke 3:18-20*

Jesus is tempted by Satan *Luke 4:1-13*

-- John proclaims Jesus and His Kingdom *Luke 3:7-20*

-- The Father testifies of His Beloved Son *Luke 3:21, 22*

Jesus presented in the genealogy

as the Son of God and Son of Man *Luke 3:23-38*

Jesus Begin His Ministry *Luke 3:23 & 4:14*

Scripture Reading:

Luke 2: “39 So when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city, Nazareth. 40 And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.

41 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. 43 When they had finished the days, as they returned, the Boy Jesus lingered behind in Jerusalem. And Joseph and His mother did not know it; 44 but supposing Him to have been in the company, they went a day's journey, and sought Him among their relatives and acquaintances. 45 So when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking Him. 46 Now so it was that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. 47 And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. 48 So when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother said to Him, "Son, why have You done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously." 49 And He said to them, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" 50 But they did not understand the statement which He spoke to them. 51 Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart. 52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.”

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A Call to Maturity

From Elder John Stoos *Based on Luke 2:8-21*

As we continue to work our way through Luke’s prologue to his orderly account, we come this week to the references about the growth of the young Jesus in the sight of God and men.

We see Jesus, in His humanity, maturing and being prepared to begin His ministry. We see His example as one to follow as we grow and mature in our Christian walk.

Once again the outline is included:

- **Luke shows the fulfillment of Malachi’s prophesy: “Behold, I send My messenger and he will prepare the way before me!” *Malachi 3:1***
- **We have covered the announcements and births during the Advent season and last week we looked at the circumcision of Jesus.**
- **Now we see both John and Jesus growing strong and maturing in the sight of men and God.**

First in the life of John the Baptist:

Luke 1:80 **“So the child grew and became strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his manifestation to Israel.”**

Then as we heard in our reading this morning Luke turns to Jesus:

Notice the bookends of this section:

- **In verse 40: “40 And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.”**
- **And in verse 52: “And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.”**
- **It is the normal & expected course in our Christian walk to grow in wisdom & Strength..**
-- That we should mature!

The account of Christ’s visit to the Temple falls in between these verses and has been used by many for many different things down through the ages:

What is often lost is the focus of this passage: Given as an example for us to grow in wisdom:

-- To be mature!

➤ **If we miss this, we miss the application that the Holy Spirit in guiding Luke gives to our lives. The context demands that we see it as an example of how Jesus grew and matured from a human perspective as the God-Man, the Son of God and the Son of Man.**

Luke in his prologue begins to lay the ground work for us to understand this dynamic of the Incarnation:

[Make note of references on chart]

- **To better understand how important this is, let's take just a moment to review what the Apostle Paul had to say to the Church at Philippi:**

➤

Philippians 2:1 “So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, 2 complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. 3 Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. 4 Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

[Again, the CONTEXT here is Paul calling the Saints to maturity & service, Love as we read this morning from I Corinthians 13!]

5 Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus,...

[Christ is our example here]

“5 Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus,6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped,

[Jesus is the Son of God]

“7 but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.

[Jesus is the Son of Man:

Fully God and Fully man!]

8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

- **Paul's clearly shows the purpose of the Incarnation of Christ and also puts it in the context of being an example for us.**

Luke is doing the same!

Throughout his prologue we see Jesus as the Son of God and the Son of man:

- **At His birth...**
 - **Angelic Proclamations & gifts from the wise men**
 - **The baby in the manger**
- **With Simeon at the Temple**
 - **The Salvation of Israel**
 - **Baby who is circumcised**

- **Twelve years old at Temple:**
 - **About His Father’s business**
 - **Submissive to His parents**
- **At His baptism**
 - **“My beloved Son”**
 - **Baptized by John**
- **In His genealogy**
 - **The Son of men**
 - **The Son of God**

So the question we ask this morning is again pretty simple: **If Jesus as the Son of Man, “increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.”...**

What does he expect of us?

- **If you are thinking that we should increase in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and men, you are quite right!**

As Christians, the people of God whose sins have been forgiven, saints who serve the King in a Kingdom that will have no end:

WE MUST MATURE in our walk with the Lord.

Those who were with us for the study in Proverbs know that it was a call to maturity, moving from the young man to the King.

The New Testament is full of calls for maturity: Listen to just a few...

Lu 8:14 – “And as for what fell among the thorns, they are those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature.”

1Co 2:6 – “Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away.”

1Co 14:20 – “Brothers, do not be children in your thinking. Be infants in evil, but in your thinking be mature.”

Eph 4:13 – “Until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ”

Php 3:15 – “Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you.”

Col 1:28 – “Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ.”

Col 4:12 – “Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, greets you, always struggling on your behalf in his prayers, that you may stand **mature** and fully assured in all the will of God.”

Heb 5:14 – “But solid food is for the **mature**, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.”

- **Jesus grew and matured on solid food and we should do the same!**

Our problem today, even within the Church, is that we live in a nation that has revolted against maturity: It is a revolt against the Bible and it covers all aspects of our lives!

As I move from our youngest to our oldest members, I will outline the pattern of revolt and then come back to discuss the Biblical call for maturity in each area:

Consider these few examples:

Young Children: [IF they are born]

- Schedules & demand feeding

Older Children:

- Adolescence: A time where they can refuse to grow up!

Young Men & Women:

- “Free-love” [Example of advice to daughter]
- “Doing your own thing”
- Getting away from parents

Older men & women:

- The mid-life crisis – dumping vows
- [Mostly the result of all the others]

Old men & women:

- “spending our children’s inheritance”

- **The Biblical call for maturity, to increase in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men, could not provide a more stark contrast:**

Young children:

- They are Covenant Children who are to be loved, nurtured and disciplined in the Lord

Older Children:

- They are Disciples of Christ who learn to serve others and understand & prepare for His calling on their lives

Young Men & Women:

- Young Men establish their vocation, grow in wisdom and prepare to lead in their own households
- Young Ladies are trained to be a helpmeet and prepare to be keepers of their own homes, and to raise any Godly seed they are blessed to have.

Older Men & Women:

- **Older Men** grow and mature, looking to examples of great men like Joseph and Daniel, becoming leaders in their churches and community
- **Women** carry out all the dominion mandates of Proverbs 31

Old men & women:

- **Men** provide wise counsel for the young and help sons and grandsons establish their own homes & vocations
 - inheritance: spiritual & physical!
 - **Women** teach the younger women and help the poor
- **Maturity is the pattern throughout the Scriptures:** Luke gives us a picture of Jesus growing in wisdom and strength and I have focused on how this should impact us as individuals and families.
- **As we reflect on what I have shared with these comparisons, we must be honest about which end of the spectrum we are at!**
- **We must be willing to move toward maturity!**

We are also called to mature as a Church:

- **In our worship:** Hebrews
- **In our community:** Corinthians
- **As a Kingdom:** Will be in Acts!

Our Thursday night study has moved on to the Book of Revelation and I want to close with one of the reflections we made with the letters to the seven Churches:

We have been challenged by the example of Jesus to be growing in maturity, or to be “conquerors” as these letters indicate: ALL SEVEN of them!

[Note that some promises & blessings are corporate and other are extremely personal]

To Ephesus: “To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.”

To Smyrna: “The one who conquers will not be hurt by the second death.”

To Pergamum: “To the one who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, with a new name written on the stone that no one knows except the one who receives it.”

To Thyatira: “The one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations, 27 and he will rule them with a rod of iron, as when earthen pots are broken in pieces, even as I myself have received authority from my Father. 28 And I will give him the morning star.”

To: Sardis: “The one who conquers will be clothed thus in white garments, and I will never blot his name out of the book of life. I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels.”

To: Philadelphia: “The one who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God. Never shall he go out of it, and I will write on him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down from my God out of heaven, and my own new name.”

To: Laodicea: “The one who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I also conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne.”

As we hear and reflect on these precious promises, it should remind us that Jesus said that He came to give us life and to give us life abundantly!

As we mature & conquer, we will possess this abundant life in all of his rich fullness:

As Jesus also told each of the seven Churches:

“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”