

# Grow Up

**Big Idea: It's important to remember that Jesus was both God and man, and that how He lived out His humanity models for us how we can "grow up" a little more every day!**

What's remarkable about the life of Jesus in Nazareth (90% of His lifespan) is how unremarkable it was. The only story recorded in the Gospels about Jesus as a boy, as a teenager, and as a young adult was that exceptional encounter with the teachers in the Temple during the Passover when He was 12 years old. This likely means that most of His childhood in Nazareth was fairly ordinary – just a normal boy growing up, working with His dad, and learning enough to impress those temple teachers. The fanciful accounts of Jesus performing miracles as a boy reported in some apocryphal books simply do not fit with the gospel's portrayal of Jesus. His neighbours seemed to have no idea Jesus was exceptional and were shocked when He began his public ministry of teaching and healing:

*Coming [back] to his hometown, he began teaching the people in their synagogue, and they were amazed. "Where did this man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers?" they asked. "Isn't this the carpenter's son? Isn't his mother's name Mary, and aren't his brothers James, Joseph, Simon and Judas? Aren't all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?" And they took offense at him. But Jesus said to them, "Only in his hometown and in his own house is a prophet without honor." And he did not do many miracles there because of their lack of faith.*  
Matthew 13:54-58

Why is it helpful for us to see Jesus as fully human, living His life just like His other family members, friends, and neighbours? This means that He understands us. He gets that we have to sleep, wake up, get dressed, go to work, deal with stress, come home, get along with the fam, cook, eat, clean up, take out the trash, feel tired, need to relax, have fun, play games, crack jokes, go to bed, and start all over again the next day, day after day, year after year.

He also understands that the context of everyday life is our chance to grow up, to prepare ourselves for those fleeting moments when we can make a difference. One of those "moments" was the time He spent interacting with the teachers in Jerusalem. But when His parents found Him He quickly returned to His regular routine: *And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them. And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man* (Luke 2:51,52).

## 1. Grow Up In Wisdom

Jesus left behind ("kenosis" – emptied Himself of His expression as God, Philippians 2:7) so that, just like us, He had to learn how to walk, talk, and read God's Word. During this "normal" childhood He had applied Himself so well to the required lessons in the Torah leading up to His bar mitzvah, that the student quickly became the teacher. Notice though that He was still respectfully asking questions (2:46,47), modeling that we should always be learners, students of God's Word for life. What are you doing during a typical day to grow up in His wisdom?

## 2. Grow Up In Maturity

When the text says Jesus grew in stature it refers to more than just height. This includes the qualities of maturity: a well-developed work ethic, a sense of responsibility, a balanced lifestyle, emotional stability, patience, tolerance, respect for others, and a healthy personal identity. How well are we progressing in our ordinary lives toward maturity?

## 3. Grow Up In Favour With God and Man

The sequence is important: if we seek the favour of man first we will likely suffer in our relationship with God. But if we work first on His favour, our reputation in our community will follow. What are we doing day-to-day to connect with God's favour?