

My Father's Business

Luke 2:41-51

We know very little of Jesus childhood. There are apocryphal stories of Jesus playing at the age of five near a brook and making clay birds. After being told he was polluting the Sabbath, he clapped His hands and the birds turned to real sparrows and flew away. Another story in the Gospel of Thomas speaks of Jesus helping his father in the carpentry business by '*stretching board*' to make them even, to which Joseph responded, "*Happy am I for that God hath given me this young child.*" Again these stories are doubtful. What we do know about Jesus and his family is found in this story of Jesus going to the temple.

Background: Jesus is 12. He lives in Nazareth, and is going up to Jerusalem with his parents for Passover. In those days, they travelled in caravans and relatives and whole villages often travel together and keep an eye on each other's children. They traveled back to Galilee (one day of travel). They went back to Jerusalem (one day of travel). In Jerusalem, they spent another day looking for him. Finally they found him in the temple. He was with the teachers, listening and asking questions. After expressing their concern, Jesus responded to them, "Do you not know that I must be about my Father's business" (KJV). "*The person who says he abides in Christ ought to walk in the same manner as He walked*" (I John 2:6).

I. There is to be a powerful assurance in my Father's business.

Think about this. Jesus is missing for three days as a twelve-year-old. Where did he sleep? What did he eat? What went through his mind about Joseph and Mary? Yet, through it all, Jesus seemed calm. There will be those occasions in our lives when we are faced with critical decisions. We know what God desires, and we know what man expects. It can't be said enough: *The Father's business is best.* "If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ" (Gal. 1:10). This is real faith.

II. There is to be a practical awareness of my Father's business.

Trace the thought processes of Jesus throughout his life. He knew the Father's business intimately. "*Did you not know that I had to be about my Father's business*" (Luke 2:49) - at the age of twelve. Jesus said, "*For I have come down from heaven to do the will of my Father who sent me*" (John 6:38). "*Everything written about me in the Law and the Prophets and Psalms must be fulfilled*" (Luke 24:44). "*I have come that they (God's people) might have life and have it more abundantly*" (John 10:10). Jesus fulfilled the Law: His life, my blessing; His death, my punishment; His resurrection; my hope. "*I did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many*" (Matt. 20:28). When Jesus died, He cried out "*It is finished.*" What was finished? The business for which He came. The measure of success in this life is ***the intentionality of your service.*** In the movie Zero Dark Thirty, the CIA agent who gets Bin Laden says to her friends, "*I believe I was spared so I could finish the job.*"

III. There is to be a personal activity for my Father's business.

"Did you not know that ***I had to*** be about my Father's business?" There is a very real sense that God's sanctification of us is a work that He does through Christ. God sanctifies us in Christ's work. However, there are some very real reasons why we should be about God's business in our lives.

(A). Focusing on the Father's business brings the greatest joy in this life.

"Seek first the kingdom of God... and all these things will be added to you" (Matt. 6:33)

(B). Focusing on the Father's business winds up being the thing that truly helps people.

"Live such good lives among the pagans... that they glorify God the day He visits" (I Pet. 2:12).

(C). Focusing on the Father's business is ultimately the most rewarding job you'll have.

"With good will render service, as to the Lord, knowing that you will receive back" (Eph. 6:8).