



Around the Word
Bible Study
 Epiphany, 2017

The Light of Christ
 St. Luke 2:42-52

Christ, the Light:

"For He who had said that He has given Him (the Son) to have life (Jn 5:26); the Same says in another place, 'I am the Life' (Jn 14:6); and in another, 'I am the Light' (Jn 8:12). And what, tell me, is the nature of this light? This kind (of light) is the object not of the senses, but of the intellect, enlightening the soul herself. And since Christ should hereafter say, that 'None can come unto Me except the Father draw him' (Jn 6:44); the Apostle has in this place anticipated an objection, and declared that it is He (the Son) who 'gives light' (Jn 1:9); that although you hear a saying like this concerning the Father, you may not say that it belongs to the Father only, but also to the Son. For, 'All things', He says, 'which the Father has are Mine.'" (Jn 16:15)

—St. John Chrysostom (*The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. XIV:24)

This Bible Study is brought to you by Issues, Etc. Listen on demand at www.issuesetc.org.

Issues, Etc.



Christ-Centered Cross-Focused Talk Radio
www.issuesetc.org

Introduction: *God of God, Light of Light.*

From the literal light of a star to the figurative light of knowledge—though Jesus is no figurative Savior. For God's Word not only lightens our path, but is made flesh and dwells among us. Today, Jesus shines His light upon the world not in the stars, but in His Word.

Opening: Psalm 100

- ¹Make a joyful noise to the LORD, | all the earth!*
- ²Serve the LORD with gladness!
Come into his presence with | singing!
- ³**Know that the LORD, | he is God!***
It is he who made us, and we are his;
we are his people, and the sheep of his |
pasture.
- ⁴Enter his gates with thanksgiving,
and his | courts with praise!*
- Give thanks to him; | bless his name!
- ⁵**For the LORD is good;**
his steadfast love endures for- | ever,*
and his faithfulness to all gener- | ations.
Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*
and to the Holy | Spirit;
as it was in the be- | ginning,*
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.

Read St. Luke 2:42-52

v.42: And when He was twelve years old, they went up according to custom.

Is this Biblical proof for the "age of accountability"? Hardly. Nowhere in Scripture is this "age" even presented. This argument is usually leveled at infant baptism. What is a Scriptural "age of accountability" we can present faithfully? See Psalm 51:5.

Twelve is the godly number of completion or perfection. It is mentioned 187 times in the Bible. What are some other famous "twelves" in the Bible? See Genesis 49:28; Leviticus. 24:5; the Minor Prophets; Matthew 10:1ff; Mark 5:42; John 6:13; Revelation 7.

Thus, it is at the fullness of time (Gal. 4:4) that Jesus begins to speak. The perfect time.

Which custom was the holy family observing and how often? See Luke 2:41.

How long are they commanded to observe this custom? See Exodus 12:14; Leviticus 23:14.

Did Jesus keep this custom? See Luke 22:15. Why did He do this? See Galatians 4:4-5. What day of the Church Year is this?

How do we keep this custom? See 1 Corinthians 5:7, 11:26.

v.43-45: And when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, but supposing him to be in the group they went a day's journey, but then they began to search for him among their relatives and acquaintances, and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him.

Is this Jesus being the usual, adolescent rascal, eluding his parents whenever he can? No, for Jesus also had a heavenly Father to obey (Jn. 6:38). Equally unsurprising is Jesus going missing. Families travelling in large groups often separated out into men, women, and children.

Being too anxious or too neglectful of children is not good. However, God pays more attention to children than even their parents do. What other child, abandoned for dead, was cared for better by his heavenly Father? See Genesis 37:33-45:28.

v.46: After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions.

If you lost something, retrace your steps. This is the advice given to us and this seems to be the advice taken by Joseph and Mary. Yet, for three days they did not find Him, just as Herod did not find Him (Mt. 2:13). Are Joseph and Mary searching for a disobedient child or for God's only Son? See John 5:39.

Returning to the Temple should have been obvious (1 Kings 8:12-13), but then again so should have seeking the King in Bethlehem (Mt. 2:3-4). At another time, Jesus was looked for in the wrong place and not found. Which time was that? See John 20:2,

13; Luke 24:5.

What is so important about Jesus being among the teachers of Israel? See Matthew 23:2.

Who was the one to truly lead and teach Israel? See Ezekiel 34; John 10.

v.47: And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers.

In this reading are the very first recorded words of Jesus speaking Himself. Here, we can say that God has begun to show the light of wisdom that He has given to His Son, so amazing were His answers. The light Jesus gives now is the light of the knowledge of Himself. What is true, godly wisdom? See 1 Corinthians 1:30; Colossians 2:3, 1:15-17.

How do you hear the works of Christ in Proverbs 8? (Keep in mind that the female gender is used here because "wisdom" (חָכְמָה) is a feminine noun in Hebrew).

v.48-49: And when his parents saw him, they were astonished. And his mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been searching for you in great distress." And he said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?"

As Rachel lamented for her children (Mt. 2:18), so do we lament in our own search for Jesus. We suppose His to be with us and He is not (Is. 45:15), we suppose Him to be here or there, and He is not (Mt. 24:23).

Even the Apostles were put into apparent confusion many times. See Matthew 9:30; Mark 1:43-44, 5:43, 7:36.

Something greater than the Temple, something greater than Solomon, and something greater than miracles is going to happen that everyone should talk about instead. What do you suppose that was? See Matthew 17:9.

Jesus enters His Father's house (the Temple) many times to teach and to preach (e.g., Matthew 21:12ff). This time, and those times, it was true that we could find Jesus there. When was the time when we would not find Jesus in the Temple? See Exodus 29:14, 33:7; Matthew 27:2; Mark 15:1; Luke 23:33; John 19:17-18; Hebrews 13:12-13.

v.50: And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them.

Knowing the your son is the Son of God and witnessing what it

Bible Study

The Light of Christ St. Luke 2:42-52

means to be the Son of God (crucifixion) are two different things. Just as seeing Jesus' miracles are one thing, but seeing Him alive from the dead is quite another.

Read John 6, and especially note v. 15. We confess that Christ is prophet, priest, and king. Which of these have people been tempted to put undue emphasis on? See John 6:15. How do they distort this office? See John 18:36.

When did the light finally dawn on Mary and the Disciples? See Luke 24:8; John 12:16.



v.51-52: 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.

So we can now answer our previous question: why didn't Jesus stay with the teachers and accomplish salvation right then and there? Because His mother said, "No" and His heavenly Father has a Commandment just for such an occasion. See Exodus 20:12.

So holy, and meet, and right was the command to honor father and mother that God Himself obeyed it and became a servant of it! (Gal. 4:4)

Is the message "just be good, kids" or is something greater happening here? See Matthew 5:17; Galatians 4:5.

Obedying your parents gains you wisdom and favor, yet this is easily overlooked by those who are on the path to their own righteousness. All children shall be taught by the Lord (Is. 54:13) and those who have heard and learned from the Father, go to Jesus (John 6:45).

The Epiphany light of wisdom only comes from the Son. It is His Words that lay bare our sins and bind our wounds in forgiveness (1 Samuel 2:6; Job 5:18; Hosea 6:1). The natural light of stars is not enough to pierce the darkness of sin and death. But the Word that spoke all things into being, has the power to grant this eternal life.

Closing: Within the Father's House (LSB, 410)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR Rev. Benjamin Hertel (prhertel@centurylink.net) is pastor of St. Luke Evangelical Lutheran Church in Rensselaer, IN (www.saintlukeev.weebly.com).