

## THE BOY JESUS

Lesson Scripture: Ecclesiastes 3:1-15; Luke 2:39-52

Focus Scripture: Ecclesiastes 3:1, 7b; Luke 2:39-52

*Key Verse: The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him. Luke 2:40 (NRSV)*

**ECCLESIASTES 3:1, 7B; LUKE 2:39-52 (NRSV)**

**Ecclesiastes 3:1**

1 For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:...

**7b**

7b ...a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;...

**Luke 2:39-52**

39 When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth.

40 The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

41 Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover.

42 And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival.

43 When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it.

44 Assuming that he was in the group of travelers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends.

45 When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him.

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

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

48 When his parents saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, "Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great

**ECCLESIASTES 3:1, 7B; LUKE 2:39-52 (KJV)**

**Ecclesiastes 3:1**

1 To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:...

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7b ...a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;...

**Luke 2:39-52**

39 And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth.

40 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.

41 Now 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 after the custom of the feast.

43 And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it.

44 But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance.

45 And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him.

46 And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.

47 And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.

anxiety.”

49 He said to them, “Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?”

50 But they did not understand what he said to them.

51 Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart.

52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favor.

48 And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.

49 And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?

50 And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.

51 And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.

52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

### KEY TERMS

- **Season** – An appointed time.
- **Wisdom** – Clarity.
- **Astonish** – Strike with panic or shock.
- **Grow** – Gain mastery; improve.

### INTRODUCTION

In the 1993 sequel of the movie, *Sister Act*, Rita Watson, a young girl from the lower parts of San Francisco, made a decision that would change the relationship between Rita and her mother forever. Rita wanted to sing. She loved to sing. It brought Rita great joy when she

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was singing; and, she had teachers and friends who so believed in her gift, that they let Rita lead the choir. They did this knowing it would risk Rita missing and possibly quitting school.

Rita’s mother wanted Rita nowhere near music and forbade her to participate in the choir. In a desperate attempt to live out her dreams, Rita disobeyed her

mother’s refusal to allow her to compete and attended the competition with her schoolmates. On her return home from work, Rita’s mother found an empty house and a note that Rita left, explaining that she “never meant to hurt (her), but (she) had to follow (her) heart.” Shortly after in

the movie, you see Rita’s mother at the competition, visibly upset — just as Rita is about to sing. Mom quietly takes her seat but is less than thrilled by her daughter’s actions. After staring shamefully at her mother and missing her cue twice, Rita looks away, takes a big gulp, and belts out the most beautiful rendition of “Joyful, Joyful”! The choir, with their upbeat version of the classic won the competition.

The celebration is short-lived once Rita comes face-to-face with her mother. She immediately begins to remorsefully apologize; but her mother stops her. Beaming with joy, Rita’s mother affirms her daughter’s gift and tells her how proud of her she is. We don’t know what happened to Rita when she returned home. One thing we do know is that Rita never had to hide her gift again, for she now had the full support of her mother.

### TELLING THE BIBLE STORY

The reading from Luke is one that is all too familiar. We marvel at how Jesus at Jesus’ age was able to be in the spaces

of his elders and engage in dialogue and discourse. Not only was it unusual because of Jesus’ age, but because of Jesus’ audacity and courage to do what only trained and prepared scholars were allowed to do. Though the teachers stood in amazement, not everyone was pleased with Jesus’ actions.

Jesus’ disappearance into the temple temporarily caused Mary and Joseph

concern, and their reactions must have mirrored those of any parent in a similar circumstance. When Mary and Joseph finally found Jesus, they were dismayed that Jesus was in the temple. And, too, Jesus responded to them in an unexpected way. Given Jesus’ parents’ innate concern for their son, it is easy

to see how Jesus’ actions could have been interpreted as disrespectful. Jesus’ actions and response were of contempt, amplifying Mary and Joseph’s distress. Was Jesus wrong? Should Jesus have remained silent and only listened to his parents’ rebuke?

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## SANKOFA

In 1969, a young and talented Nina Simone composed and released a single entitled, “To Be Young, Gifted, and Black (YGB).” Ms. Simone believed that her composition was given to her by deceased Lorraine Hansberry, the youngest black playwright in history and author of *A Raisin in the Sun*. Simone believed Hansberry was among the young, gifted, and black, and wanted to use her platform not only to promote Hansberry’s works, but encourage other young, gifted, and black girls and boys to use their gifts to get involved in the fight for justice.

Simone, knowing her greatness and wanting to speak to the horrific conditions of blacks in America, wrote “To Be YGB” as an encouragement to “make black children all over the world feel good about themselves.” She made it her business to “somehow make (black people) curious enough, or persuade them, by hook or crook, to get them more aware of themselves and where they came from and what they are into and

what is already there, and just bring it out...by whatever means is necessary.” This song broke the stereotypical cultural beliefs and negative connotations surrounding the idea that only a few were gifted enough to find a place in America (and the world). The song encouraged those who were once YGB to begin to tell the youth “(t)here’s a world waiting for you. Yours is a quest that’s just begun.”

### CASE STUDY

The song encouraged those who were once YGB to begin to tell the youth “(t)here’s a world waiting for you. Yours is a quest that’s just begun.”

Parents and guardians are taught to care for their children, and teach them basics like the alphabet, numbers, and colors. What happens when the child learns these basics in less than a year? And, if that is not odd enough, the child has an IQ of 145,

learns numbers in another language, and by four years old, knows the capitals of the fifty states? The child becomes one of the youngest members inducted into Mensa, an organization for the 2% of people with the highest IQs. The parent/guardian would not be prouder! Videos are recorded of the child showing off his/her genius skills, with parents/guardians

beaming with pride.

When asked about the child's smartness, the child responds that not only is s/he very smart, s/he is smarter than the parent/guardian(s)! So much so that the child corrects grammar and any erroneous information uttered from the parent/guardian(s). The child's IQ is truly a gift, and if properly honed, will be a global asset. But, for now, where are the lines of demarcation between the child's giftedness and respect for the parent/guardian's limited knowledge and status?

### LIFE APPLICATION

Everyone is born with a set of unique gifts, and as God sees fit, the time will come when those gifts are anointed for action. The question is not *if* space will be made for gifts, the question is *when*? There is a generation of leaders who show signs of wisdom beyond their years, and they are ready to take leadership. Will the church be embarrassed or shocked by youths' (not just in age but in experience) audacity to speak up? Will we take the stance of the elders in Jesus' case and

allow the space for learning? Or, will we not only accept the gift, but hone it?

Remember, Jesus was not known as Jesus Christ during the time of this event told in the scripture. Though we know in hindsight that Jesus was chosen by God, the people of that time did not. Several times in scripture and history, God rejected the "qualified" and picked the unlikely person. Jesus was no different.

Jesus was the son of a carpenter and had an extraordinary gift as well as the challenges of any gifted person who decides to accept and use his or her gift. Jesus needed people who would create space for Jesus to sharpen his gift, as Jesus waited for God's appointed time. Despite Jesus' connection to God,

Jesus had to wait for the appropriate time to be the Savior. God's anointing and timing shaped Jesus' chosen destiny.

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### QUESTIONS

1. Many say that a child is to be seen and not heard. When is the time (season) for a child to "speak"? Discuss ways that

we might unintentionally contribute to stifling the maturing process of youth's gifts?

2. When we observe and experience bold and courageous youth, how do we respond? What are some of the ways we might discourage youth because of their age?
3. How can the church be more intentional about nurturing and enhancing youth's gifts?

## CLOSING DEVOTIONS

Listen to Tasha Cobbs Leonard's, "Your Spirit." Let it remind us that all we do is not by our own might or power, but by God's Spirit. Therefore, anyone, no matter how young or old or seasoned or inexperienced, can be the fire, voice, and light of God.

Prayer: Father, give us wisdom to guide and nurture our youth and set godly examples that they may follow. Amen.

## HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS

July 6–July 12

<b>Monday</b>	Ecclesiastes 3:2-8 (Everything Has Its Time and Season)
<b>Tuesday</b>	Ecclesiastes 3:9-15 (Perform Your God-Given Task)
<b>Wednesday</b>	Numbers 3:11-13 (The Firstborn Belong to God)
<b>Thursday</b>	Luke 2:21-24 (Jesus Presented to the Lord)
<b>Friday</b>	Luke 2:25-35 (Simeon Praises God for the Child)
<b>Saturday</b>	Luke 2:36-38 (Anna Speaks About the Christ Child)
<b>Sunday</b>	Ecclesiastes 3:1, 7b; Luke 2:39-52 (The Wise Boy Jesus Amazes Teachers)