

Sermon Series: The Courage to Be...
Sermon Title: "The Courage to Be Me"
Pastor Warnock
Date: February 26, 2023
Luke 2: 41-52

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 were unaware of this. 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^[a] saw him they were astonished, and his mother said to him, "Child, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously looking for you." 49 He said to them, "Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?"^[b] 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, and his mother treasured all these things in her heart. 52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years^[c] and in divine and human favor.

Summary and Commentary

We continue our series, *The Courage to Be...* with this familiar passage from the life of Jesus. Courage is important to our own lives because courage guarantees the other virtues. Courage helps us know what not to fear.

When the passage begins, Jesus' parents have taken him to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover, representing the time when God liberated the Jewish people. They took him there every year so that he could learn this important history. This reminds us of how important it is for us to recite and re-tell our own history. It is a holy history of God's protection and deliverance. On this occasion, Jesus' parents are heading back home and after a day on their journey, they notice that Jesus is missing, and begin frantically looking for him. It might seem strange that Jesus' parents didn't notice that he wasn't with them until a day later. But if we are honest with ourselves, there have been times in our own lives when we've gone days, months, even years without noticing that we have left something valuable in our lives behind. Like them, we may also be surprised that God isn't where we parked Him, and sometimes we aren't where others left us. People expect us to be in the same place in life, and we've moved forward but they haven't.

Sermon Points

1. I must be about my Father's business
2. I must be in my father's house
3. I am my father's child

When Jesus' parents find him in the temple questioning the elders and confront him, he responds that he was in "his father's house," and he was doing his "father's business" as the King James Version states. Jesus exhibited the courage to become who he already was. He was going about his father's business, living out his mission

and purpose. He was in his father's house, where he belonged. He found the courage to take his place in the world. He was also making it clear that he was his father's child. As he increased in wisdom and years, he would look more and more like the one who created him. Like Jesus, we must find the courage to live out our own mission and purpose, to be the person God created us to be. We must also understand that we belong and can take our own place in the world. Finally, as we continue to grow in wisdom and years, we should reflect more and more the image of our Creator.

Reflection Questions

1. Describe a memory of being separated from your parents or being a parent who got separated from your child.
2. Who do people say you look like in your family? How does it feel to be told that?
3. Do you have any important area of your life that you have "left behind" without even noticing it? What did you do when you realized it?
4. Have you ever been in a place where you felt as though you belonged (should be there), but others wondered why you were there? What did that feel like, what did you do?
5. In what area(s) of your life do you need to garner the courage to be yourself, to live out God's mission and purpose for your life?
6. In what ways can we (individually and collectively) grow in ways that reflect more of the Creator?
7. How do you know who God created you to be or what your purpose is in life?