



Week 1: Luke 2:52 (NIV)

“ And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.”

Now Jesus is growing up in the town of Nazareth with his parents Mary and Joseph. Joseph is a carpenter who builds things out of wood.

Mary and Joseph and Jesus have friends in their community of Nazareth, families with children Jesus' age. They do things together, even study together and learn about God together, like we do.

When Jesus is 12 years old, a large group of families take a trip to the city of Jerusalem. They plan to visit the Temple in Jerusalem and celebrate the holiday of Passover there, as they do every spring. The trip will take several days of walking, and Passover lasts eight days, so they will be gone for about three weeks. As they walk together, members of the families visit with each other. The women might talk together for a few hours. The boys might run ahead and then rejoin their families later. The men might stop to pray together.

Finally, they get to Jerusalem. They worship at the Temple and celebrate the festival. Then they start the long walk home to Nazareth. After a day of travel, Mary and Joseph realize that they haven't seen Jesus all day. They expect to find him with his friends or other families, but when they ask around, no one has seen Jesus since they left Jerusalem. So Mary and Joseph turn around and walk back to Jerusalem. They search for Jesus for three days.

Finally, they find Jesus sitting in the yard of the Temple, studying with the priests and teachers there. Jesus is only 12, but the smartest priests and teachers are amazed at how much he understands about God.

Of course, Jesus reminds his parents that they should know that he belongs in God's Temple, in his Father God's house. The family returns to Nazareth, but Jesus comes to the Temple in Jerusalem many more times in his life.

In the Gospel of Luke, Chapter 2, Verse 52, it says, “ And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.”

*Can you help Mary and Joseph find Jesus in the temple?*

