

Coffee to Go | First Sunday After Christmas | Year C

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

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SPEAKERS

Karin Peter, Blake Smith

Karin Peter 00:26

Welcome to Coffee to Go, where we center ourselves in the scriptures, seasons and holy days on the Christian calendar. I'm Karin Peter here with Blake Smith, and we welcome you on the journey. We are on the first Sunday after Christmas, and if you are a Project Zion Podcast listener, you know that the Christmas season lasts 12 days, just like the song, from Christmas Day to the eve of Epiphany, or what's known as 12th Night, which is January 5. So here, on the first Sunday after Christmas. Still in the Christmas season, we are with Jesus, and we are in the temple, actually, with Jesus and his family. We have an opportunity to get a rare look at Jesus growing up. It's one of the few in the gospel. So Blake, let's start.

Blake Smith 01:20

Alright. Our scripture this morning comes from the Gospel of Luke the second chapter, and it is the 41st through the 52nd verse.

Now, every year, his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover, and when he was 12 years old, they went up as usual for the festival. When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy, Jesus, stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents were unaware of this, assuming that he was in the group of travelers. They went two day's journey, then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends, and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. After three days, they found Him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions, and all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. When his parents 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," he said to them, "Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my father's house?" But they did not understand what he said to them. 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, and Jesus increased in wisdom and in years and in divine and human favor.

First of all, I have to say of all the times that I've read this, it just hit me as I was reading this now, he was in the temple for three days. I can't make it three hours. Wait a minute.

Karin Peter 03:09

Not only that, where were they looking for three days? I mean...

Blake Smith 03:12

Exactly, oh, my goodness, I just I've read that a million times, and all of a sudden it was like, Wait a minute. Here's this 12 year old by himself...

Karin Peter 03:23

It was interesting, missing for three days when, he's crucified, missing for three days. So we have kind of a foreshadowing thing going on as well.

Blake Smith 03:34

Right. Exactly. So why does this matter? I want to take this from a perspective of what's kind of going on here behind the scenes. And that is that in the ancient world, and actually quite often in modern culture, we seem to give heroes, great leaders, these remarkable qualities. We remember the great things about them, and we kind of put aside the things that are less likable or maybe bad qualities. So, we think of people like George Washington. We say he never told a lie, but he was a slave holder, and we don't talk about that. And Abe Lincoln was scrupulously honest, but he offers, also suffered from depression. So, you know, he had some weaknesses we don't often hear about or talk about. And here in this story, we have Jesus at 12 years old, and we're amazed with this remarkable ability that he has to be able to understand and debate and to teach scripture, not just to other kids, but to the learned people in the temple, the priests and teachers. And so, we have created this image where we focus on those remarkable traits of Jesus. And there's a little catch here in the end, where we get a sense of Jesus humanity. One commentator says Jesus was not omniscient. He was not born omniscient. In this passage, we hear that Jesus increased in wisdom and in years and in divine and human favor. So, he had things to learn, and he did learn, and he increased in maturity as he was growing up. So, we see again, yes, there were some remarkable traits about Jesus, but there was also this sense that he was a child and he needed to learn and needed to grow.

Karin Peter 05:45

Well, in this passage, it's worse than a child. He's a, he's a almost teenager in that, in that 12 year old range,

Blake Smith 05:56

Right, and he's driving his parents crazy, right? As any teenager might, or near teenager might, so. He wasn't where he was supposed to be. He caused his parents anguish, and also time, because they had traveled, probably on foot at this point, for a day's journey, and then a day back, and then three days of hunting. So, but we also understand that after this point, because the passage tells us this, that Jesus became obedient to his parents, and he was growing and maturing from his error. He was also increasing in wisdom, as I said, as he grew into adulthood and in favor. So, this grace and climate of appreciation for his giftedness was bubbling up in him. We could say that God and humans looked kindly upon him as he got older. So, the short passage is often as is our case and our, the way we kind of do things to showcase Jesus' remarkable ability with teaching, but we need to not overlook the joy to see that Jesus, like every other child, grew and made errors and learned from them and matured into a wise and appreciated adult.

Karin Peter 07:22

Isn't that what we want for all of our kids, right?

Blake Smith 07:26

Yes, yeah. It gives us hope. For those with teenagers, there is hope, right? [Yeah.] So, some questions we might ask ourselves this week is, am I more drawn to remarkable folks or those who possess a quiet wisdom? What missteps have I made in my faith journey, and what did I learn from them? And finally, in what ways have I matured in faith, belief or spiritual discipline as I've journeyed and matured?

Karin Peter 08:06

Those are good questions to come from this passage. So, we mentioned at the beginning that we're still in the Christmas season. So, I think a way that we can live with this passage through the week is maybe to think of one gift, it's the season of giving. So, think of one gift from your own spiritual journey that you would give to your 12 year old self. So, something that you've learned later in life, later in your journey, as a gift from your own spiritual journey that you would give to your 12 year old self and give thanks for that gift, and keep it close as a blessing this week.

Blake Smith 08:49

I'll have to really think hard about that, because I think at 12, that was a pretty rough time. So, there are probably lots of things I could give myself as a 12 year old. But anyway, yeah, our blessing today comes from Edward Hayes, and it is called, "From Prayers for the Domestic Church."

Divine parent. Make me as humble and healing as our mother the Earth. Make me as honest and defenseless as a child. Make me as compassionate and loving as your son, Jesus. And Lord, giver of true strength, make me as forgiving as are you yourself. Amen.

Well, thanks for joining us here at Coffee to Go. We invite you to join us next time for the next part of our journey through the liturgical seasons and holy days of the Christian tradition.