

Luke 8:40-52

“Ponder”

January 3, 2016

Can you imagine trusting your son so much at twelve years old that you would not take a head count as you leave a big city? Jesus parents had learned to trust Jesus so much that they did not count noses and notice that Jesus was missing as they left Jerusalem. Of course part of that was explained when it says that they believed Jesus was with the relatives and friends that journeyed with them. When there are large families, it is hard to keep track of them all. Just think of the movie “Home Alone.” They counted noses but included the neighbor boy and missed that the youngest was still sleeping as they left for the airport.

So they went back to Jerusalem and found their son at the Temple. He said that He was in His Father’s house. Jesus was listening to the Teachers of the Law, asking them questions and answering their questions. The Teachers of the Law were amazed at His answers and His questions because they showed a mind that was beyond what a twelve year old should be able to understand. That Jesus knew that He was in His Father’s house tells us that already Jesus knew that He was the Son of God. This is no ordinary boy born of man and woman. This is the Savior born of a Virgin through the work of the Holy Spirit.

Our text goes on to say that Jesus grew in wisdom, stature and favor with God. First Jesus was the baby born in Bethlehem. Then He was the young child forced into exile in Egypt. Now He is the Son of His Father in heaven. Later we will see Him as the Savior in His three year ministry. We don't hear much about the period of growth from birth to manhood. We are told in our text that He grew physically into manhood. We are told in our text that He grew in wisdom in the eyes of the world as He grew physically. We are told in our text that He grew in favor with God.

As I have progressed from childhood to this age, I realize that I too need to grow in wisdom and in favor with God. In fact we all need to continue to work at growing in wisdom and in favor with God. Our God has given us the gift of life. Psalm 139 tells us that before we even were conceived, God knew us. Our God gave us the gift of bodies that can grow and mature. Sadly our genes can be damaged over the centuries and some of us are born without the ability to grow up and mature. As we live our lives, some come to believe that life is all about us and we forget that life is a gift from God. Then when death comes we are not ready because life is still about us.

Sometimes it is a wonder that any of us make it with Christ at the center and focus of our lives. Like Mary the mother of Jesus we have to ponder all these things in our heart and treasure the glimpses we receive of God in our lives so that

we are prepared to meet our Lord and Savior when our time comes to face death. I did a little research on the idea of pondering and I came away realizing that no matter how hard we try, we will never understand the things of God and be prepared to face God on Judgment Day without the influence of the Holy Spirit in our lives. For as the Bible tells us that things of God are spiritually discerned.

Something else struck me about Mary pondering and treasuring these things. There is much here that could leave a person anxious. Trying to discern the ways of God can cause us to be anxious. Trying to discern the future can cause us to be anxious. God does not want us to be anxious or troubled in our minds. He want us to be content. As First Peter says, we achieve contentment by first humbling ourselves before our God. Second we learn to be alert at all times in our lives so that the devil will not devour us. This means that we have to resist the devil when he attacks and stand firm in the faith that God had given us. We are better able to resist the devil if we never stop growing and maturing in our faith. Therefore keep our eyes focused upon Jesus and support each other in our quest to be ready for the Lord when He comes. Amen.