



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

The People's Business & The Father's Business

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LUKE 2:41-52

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We often hear those involved in politics and government service refer to their work as “being about the people’s business”. In so doing they are recognizing their desire to rightly represent their constituency and serve those who elected them to office. Political staffers have the same attitude towards their bosses. They are called “will and pleasure” employees who are there to do the will and pleasure of those for whom they work. This relationship and attitude of elected officials towards the people and staffers towards their bosses will help us understand and apply today’s study.

We are looking at the life and ministry of Jesus Christ with a focus on what Jonathan Edwards called the “diverse excellencies” possessed and demonstrated by our Savior. We find another event where those qualities are shown in the account of Jesus visiting the temple in Jerusalem at the age of twelve.

41 Now His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. 42 And when He became twelve, they went up there according to the custom of the Feast; 43 and as they were returning, after spending the full number of days, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. But His parents were unaware of it, 44 but supposed Him to be in the caravan, and went a day’s journey; and they began looking for Him among their relatives and acquaintances. 45 When they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem looking for Him. 46 Then, after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. 47 And all who heard Him were amazed at His understanding and His answers. 48 When they saw Him, they were astonished; and His mother said to Him, “Son, why have You treated us this way? Behold, Your father and I have been anxiously looking for You.” 49 And He said to them, “Why is it that you were looking for Me? Did you not know that I had to be in My Father’s house?” 50 But they did not understand the statement which He had made to them. 51 And He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and He continued in subjection to them; and His mother treasured all these things in her heart. 52 And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

Here we see another clear example of the diverse attributes found in Christ. We see the presence of both His divinity and His humanity. We also find that even at the age of twelve, Jesus knew the importance of the work He had come to do. We are also shown an example to follow. So as you are about the “people’s business” here in the statehouse, let us learn some important lessons about the Father’s business from this amazing passage.

FULLY GOD AND FULLY MAN

In this account we see demonstrated that Jesus was both God and man – both divine and human. We also see the tension this caused his human family as they must have struggled to understand the reality of this truth. Up to this point, Jesus had been treated as any normal Jewish boy. He had been circumcised and presented at the temple where an offering was made (Luke 2:21-24). Jesus continued to grow and become strong like any normal young boy (Lk. 2:40).

As they did each year, Jesus’ family went to Jerusalem for the Passover Feast. At its end, they, their extended family, and perhaps others from their village formed a caravan for the journey home (a distance of about 70 miles). After a day’s travel they looked around and finally noticed that Jesus was not with them. As any distraught parents would, they turned around and traveled a day back to Jerusalem. Evidently, they spent another day looking for Him. They found finally found Him in the temple, “sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions”. Needless to say, they were just a bit upset, asking Him “Son, why have you treated us this way?” His answer is astounding, demonstrating that even at this age, Jesus knew who He was and what He had come to do.

While they began to rebuke Jesus for His behavior, He offered them a gentle yet pointed reminder of who He really was. We see this in the contrast between Mary’s “**Your father and I...**” in verse 48 and Jesus’ reference to “**My Father**” in verse 49. From the angel’s visits to Mary (Luke 2:26-28) and Joseph

BIBLE STUDIES

LOBBYIST / STAFF STUDY: **TUESDAYS, 12:00 NOON**, TREASURER’S CONFERENCE ROOM (EB 54)

LEGISLATOR / ELECTED OFFICIAL STUDIES: **THURSDAYS NOON** TREASURER’S CONFERENCE ROOM (EB 54)

The People's Business and the Father's Business

(Matthew 1:20-21), they both knew who Jesus really was. Yet as they saw the baby lying in the manger, as they nursed Him, cared for Him, and raised Him as their own, it must have been easy to forget that this young man was the Son of God, the Savior of the world. For any “normal” young man, this behavior would certainly have been disrespectful and sinful. However for Jesus who was the Son of God, this was an opportunity to teach an important lesson about who He was and what He had come to do. Yet even after this event we see Jesus “went down with them...and continued in subjection to them”. What a demonstration of the excellencies found in Christ! Though He was the Son of God and possessed sovereignty and authority over all things, He submitted Himself to the authority of His earthly parents. As the Son of God He was the very source of all wisdom and knowledge (Rom. 11:33; 1 Cor. 1:24, 30), yet we see that Jesus, as a human boy, increased in wisdom (Lk. 2:40, 52). Evidently Joseph and Mary struggled to understand these things. Can we understand any better how this can be? Perhaps we should just end up where Mary did and “treasure all these things in our hearts” (vs. 51).¹

ABOUT MY FATHER'S BUSINESS

Jesus responds to Joseph and Mary's query, “*Why is it that you were looking for Me? Did you not know that I had to be in My Father's house?*” In the KJV His reply is translated, “Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business?” (either one is a possible translation). Jesus showed that even at the age of twelve, He understood the work God had sent Him to do. If Joseph and Mary had remembered and understood what the angels had told them, they would not have been surprised and they would have known where to look for Him. Jesus informs them that He had to be – ***must be*** – about His Father's business. It was His great priority. It was His utmost commitment.

We must ask ourselves an important question, what is the Father's business to which Jesus refers? Many might point to the miracles Jesus performed as He healed the sick and fed the hungry. Others might point to His teaching such as loving God and loving others. We must remember as we read the whole of scripture that God's business was primarily that of redemption – the provision of a way for sinful people to be made right with a holy God. John testified “...The Father has sent the Son *to be* the Savior of the world” (1 John 4:14). God

made Christ who knew no sin *to be* sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (2 Cor. 5:21). This is the “business” Jesus' Father sent Him to do for us. We take part in His business when we repent and trust Christ and then seek to faithfully follow Him.

AN EXAMPLE TO FOLLOW

We have seen how Jesus demonstrated in this passage He was both fully God and fully man. Since He was indeed completely human, He is not so different that He cannot serve as a great example for us to follow.

Growing in Wisdom and Knowledge: As a child and young man Jesus increased in wisdom. He was found in the temple sitting among the teachers both listening to them and asking them questions (and giving answers as well). If the Son of God sought out teachers, studied, and asked questions about the Bible, He is a good example for His people to do so as well. Are you working and studying to “Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18)?

Being About the Father's Business: Jesus' utmost commitment was to be about the Father's business – that of redeeming sinful people. As followers of Christ we are called to be about our Father's business as well. In the midst of all the “people's business” at the capitol, it is easy to lose sight of the ultimate business of the Father. We may get caught up in standing for certain issues and fighting for particular legislation and forget that what every person REALLY needs is to understand what Jesus has done on the cross. We should let Jesus' example be a reminder to constantly seek to be about the Father's business even as we conduct the people's business in the capitol.

CONCLUSION

This passage certainly points us to one of the greatest “divine excellencies” found in Jesus Christ. Let us join with Mary in “treasuring these things in our hearts”. In so doing, may it stir our affections so that we might better love, worship, and serve Jesus Christ!

¹ Three times Luke refers to people keeping truths about Christ in their minds and hearts: 1:66; 2:19; and here in 2:51.