



**What Child Is This?
“Child of Providence”
Luke 2:40-52**

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For 2000 years, theologians, philosophers, professors, preachers, and people of every tongue, tribe, and nation have battled the question: What Child is This?

- The common theme among them all is they deny His Deity.

- They make Jesus out to be less than the God He was and is today.
- Jesus was not “a god,” nor did He “become” God at some point in His journey to the cross.
- That child in the manger was the incarnation of God – i.e., God came to earth in that baby’s body.
- **Christmas is not about the Savior’s infancy!**
- **Christmas is about the infant’s Deity, and our celebration should not be about anything less or anything else.**

In previous sermons, we have seen Jesus as:

- **“The Child of Promise”** – God said a child would be born who would eventually crush Satan’s head. For 4,000 years, Satan tried to destroy the seed line through which that child would be born. However, that ‘Seed of Eve’ passed through 42 generations until **“*Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.*”** 1:16
- **“The Child of Prediction”** – the prophet Balaam predicted that a new leader would rise in Israel who would one day rule the world. Daniel prophesied the exact year that a new ruler would arrive, and he trained some Persian astrologists to watch for the sign that would indicate the new ruler had arrived in Israel. Around 4-5 BC, God allowed these Persian astrologists to see that sign, and they traveled to Jerusalem and told the people, **“*We have seen His Star in the East, and we have come to worship Him.*”** 2:2
- **“The Child of Perfection,”** – unless that baby in Mary’s womb was the sinless Savior sent from God to redeem us from our sins, we are still lost and headed for hell. However, in 2 Corinthians 5:21, the Apostle Paul said, **“*God made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might receive the righteousness of God in Him.*”**

Luke wrote his account of the life of Christ to convince the Greeks that Jesus was the Perfect Man – the Savior sent from God. Luke included the testimonies of:

- **Zacharias and Elizabeth** – to whom God had given a son in their old age as a sign that the Messiah was about to be born.
- **Mary and Joseph** – to whom the Angel Gabriel said that Mary would conceive in her womb without having sexual relations, and she would bring forth a son and name Him Jesus.
- **The Shepherds** – to whom the Angel appeared and told them where to find the Child who was the Messiah.
- **Simeon and Anna** – who recognized Mary’s Child as the One sent from God to be our Savior.
- **The Magi** – who said they had followed His Star from the East, and it had led them to Jerusalem in search of the New King.
- But at what age did Jesus understand that He was the Son of God sent to earth to redeem lost mankind?

Having been warned of Herod’s orders to slaughter all the male children under the age of two in and around Bethlehem, Joseph took Mary and Jesus to Egypt.

- After Herod died, Joseph, Mary, and Jesus returned to Nazareth, where God used the human experiences of earthly life to instill within Jesus an eternal purpose for His life.
- In Luke 2:41-52, we have:
 - **The only recorded experience** in Jesus’ life from His birth to the beginning of His earthly ministry.
 - **The only recorded words** of Jesus for the first 30 years of His life.
 - **The only thing the Bible tells us about Jesus’ life** from age 12-30.

1. His Internal Direction – Vs. 40 “*And the child grew, and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him!*”

Luke said three things about Jesus:

- **“He grew”** – His physical body developed from stage to stage.
- **“He grew strong in the Spirit”** – Jesus developed a deeper concept of life as He grew older.
- **“He was filled with wisdom”** – Jesus manifested greater wisdom about the issues of life as He grew older.

Nazareth was a small quiet town where life was not as hectic as it was in the larger cities.

- Jesus learned what was going on in the other parts of the world through the stories of the tradesmen that passed through the city.
- Jesus felt compassion for the hurting people of the world because of the suffering He endured for the circumstances around His birth.
- God used those experiences to develop within Jesus an “internal direction,” prompting Him to live in obedience to His earthly parents, as well as to His Heavenly Father.
- When Joseph and Mary took Jesus to the temple and placed Him in the arms of Simeon, he lifted Jesus up and dedicated Him as God’s **“Light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.”**
- That was the internal direction that was instilled within Jesus throughout His childhood.

2. His External Submission – Vs. 41-48 – “Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the Passover, and when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast!”

All male Jews were required to attend the temple worship services three times each year – Passover, Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles, and their families were also invited.

- This Passover was significant to Jesus since He was 12 years old, and He could attend and observe all the events, including listening to the teachers of the Law.

- After the eight-day celebration ended, the families began their journey back home. After the first day of travel, Mary noticed Jesus was not with them.
- They returned to Jerusalem and found Jesus sitting in the midst of the teachers, listening to them, asking them questions, and answering theirs, **“And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers.”** Luke 2:46-47
- Mary was amazed that Jesus would do anything to worry them, for He had never done anything like this before.
- Even though He was considered to be a man, and He had the right to discuss the issues of life with the teachers of religion, and even though He was sent by God to teach them the truth about life, as a 12-year-old boy, He was still under submission to His earthly parents.

3. His Eternal Protection – Vs. 49- “And He said to them, “Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father’s business?”

- For 18 more years, Jesus was in submission to His earthly parents, but as Luke said, **“Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.”**
- God used this time to develop that multi-dimensional attitude of life within Him, to the point that when it came time to do what He had been sent to earth to do:
- **“Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore, God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”** Philippians 2:6-11