



# Stuff They Didn't Teach Me In Sunday School



## Episode 131 - Final Preparations

(Luke 2:22-52 and 3)

### Jesus' Presentation

Luke wrote his Gospel for Theophilus, a man whose name was Greek and not Jewish. So why does Luke take the time to describe a Jewish rite required by God's Law—Jesus' presentation? He wants Theophilus to hear Simeon's words on that occasion and be assured that Jesus did not simply come to save Jews, but all people.

- What comfort do you find in each of the double-meanings in Simeon's "let Your servant depart in peace" (i.e. being able to face death in peace as well as coming to Christ as a slave to sin, and departing a free, forgiven child of God)?

Simeon called Jesus a light to the Gentiles and the glory of Israel. Being a light to the Gentiles signifies they are living in darkness until Christ comes to them.

- In what way were the Gentiles living in darkness in respect to God's plan to save them by grace through the life, death and resurrection of His Son?
- How does Jesus' salvation light up the darkness in your life?

Simeon spoke to Joseph and Mary about the opposition Jesus would face. He told Mary of the bitter pain she would feel standing by the cross of her Son.

- Why was it important for Mary to learn life would not be an easy road for her Son?

### Jesus Lost at the Temple

Jesus' interest in God's Word and the temple at the age of 12 is remarkable.

- How important was God's Word to you when you were that age?
- Why is that a good age to study and learn the Scriptures?

Jesus told Mary and Joseph He was busy doing the work of His Father.

- Why do you think they were unable to understand what He was saying?
- What work does your Heavenly Father have for you?

Jesus' first act in His public ministry would be to go to the wilderness, fast for 40 days and nights and be tempted by the devil.

- Why was this time spent studying God's Word, memorizing it and asking questions about it essential for Jesus' later success, resisting Satan's temptation for us?

## Final Preparations

Before Luke launches into Jesus' ministry, He carefully anchors that ministry in its historical matrix. He gives sufficient detail for us to pin down the beginning of Jesus' ministry to 26 or 27 A.D. Again, a physician is careful to specify the time and location context for Jesus' life, assuring Theophilus—and us—these events really took place in human history.

- Why do you think Luke went into more historic detail here than he did in chapter 1:5?
- Imagine Luke beginning Jesus' story like so many of the Greek and Roman myths and our own fairy tales, "Once upon a time ..." How does Luke's careful inclusion of the historical context give a stronger assurance these events actually took place?

Luke ends his preparation for Jesus' ministry with a genealogy tracing Jesus back to the first man Adam and, ultimately, to God Himself.

- What reassurance does it give you to know Jesus came to save all of Adam's sons and not simply Abraham's descendants?
- Why is it important to hold onto Jesus' universal salvation (i.e. the teaching that Jesus paid for the sins of *all people* on the cross, not just the sins of a certain group of people)?