

In His Orbit

Luke 2:49 (40-49)

Introduction

From Jesus as a newborn child to Jesus as a 12-yr-old boy. Important transition in the life of Jesus. Important lessons for anyone who would follow Him as his disciple.

As a Jewish boy, turning 12 meant that Jesus was now a “Son of the Law”. It was now his own responsibility, not his parents’, to know the difference between right and wrong, to do good and shun evil, to practice faithfully the duties and commands of his religion.

Jesus was a model for His disciples to follow in that he was ...

1) Father-focused 2) Mission-minded 3) Community-centered

1. Father-focused

“Stayed behind” — not an active of disobedience.

When the thing that captivates a person is another person, a commonly used phrase is to say he was *caught up in her orbit*, or she was *caught up in his orbit*. That is because their life tends to revolve around the person who has captured their heart.

Jesus was different. He was caught up in His Father’s house, listening to His Father’s Word as it was being read and taught, and asking questions.

The first Words spoken by Jesus: v.49 “**Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?**” It’s the first time in the Bible that anyone claimed God as his personal father.

Michael Wilcock commentary:

“The first recorded words of Jesus are a statement about himself, and a claim to a relationship between himself and God different from, and deeper than, anything that had ever been known before. Furthermore, it is a relationship into which he is going to bring all others who are prepared to put their faith in God through him. He will teach them to address their prayers regularly to their ‘Father’, and they will learn to use the affectionate, intimate name ‘Abba’ (meaning ‘Daddy’) which he himself uses.”

Jesus showed awareness of relationship, His identity as God’s Son. He also modeled worship, by valuing the Father and placing himself in His house of prayer, and scholarship, with His focus on the study of God’s Word.

2. Mission-minded

What is a mission?

- A) an important assignment given to a person or group of people, typically involving travel abroad.
- B) the vocation or calling of a religious organization, especially a Christian one, to go out into the world and spread its faith
- C) a strongly felt aim, ambition, or calling:

The word MUST in v 49 reflected Jesus' commitment, a determination that carried on: Luke 9:51, "When the days drew near for him to be taken up, (Jesus) set his face to go up to Jerusalem."

Other examples of this "I MUST" attitude indicative of His special "calling":

John 4:34 Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work."

John 9:4 "We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work."

Verse 49 in the King James or New King James version says "I must be about my Father's business" instead of in my Father's house (ESV). Both translations capture important elements, one general, the other specific.

Theologian Alexander Maclaren:

"The certainty of His place is more to the point than that of His occupation. But the locality carried the occupation with it, for why must He be in the Father's house but to be about the Father's business, 'to behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in His Temple'?"

Submission to the Father's authority. Other examples in the Gospels:

John 6:38; John 8:29

Maclaren:

"In Jesus Christ the 'must' was not an external one, but He 'must be about His Father's business,' because His whole inclination and will were submitted to the Father's authority."

- Father's agenda
- Father's ways
- Father's authority and empowerment
- Servant's Heart and Mindset

3. Community-centered

Luke 2 shows Jesus not only made it a priority to be IN the LOCATION where His Father's activities were centered, the place where His people assembled, but he was a model of PARTICIPATION. He was not passively involved, but actively engaged, asking and answering questions, using His gifts, resulting in EDIFICATION.

Fifteen times in the Gospels it is recorded that Jesus went to the synagogue on the Sabbath.

Hendriksen-Kistemaker:

“Though even with respect to his human nature Jesus was far advanced in knowledge, wisdom, etc., above anyone else who imparted instruction in the synagogue, **he did not stay away**. The example set by Jesus should remind us of such passages as Deut. 12:5; Ps. 84:1–4; 95:2–7; 122:1–4; Isa. 37:1; Matt. 18:20; Luke 2:36, 37; 24:52, 53; Heb. 10:25.

Jesus' zeal for His Father's house continued throughout His life (e.g. John 2:16-17)

Wilcock:

“Both these truths—that he is Son of God, and that he has come into the world so that others may become sons of God—are implied in his words in 2:49. For to be ‘in my Father's house’ really amounts to the same thing as to be ‘about my Father's business’: where my Father is, where he centres his activity, there I am always to be found as well.”

Reflection:

1. Are you Father-focused? Christ-centered? Do you have a burning, passionate, consuming interest in the Word of God? Is it your priority to do the will of God?
2. Are you mission-minded? Are you all about the Father's business? Do you submit to the Father's authority in your life? Do you seek to learn what He is doing, testing what you see against Scripture, and discover where He is equipping you to join in?
3. Are you community-centered? Is it your priority to be in the house of God with the people of God? Using your God-given gifts to help, in some way, to build up the body of Christ?

Parable of the Talents Matt 25:14-30

Conclusion: We fall woefully short.

Caution: The danger of responding to the obvious disparity with just another checklist of things to do or to do more consistently.

Need for a Copernican Revolution

About 500 years ago ... Nicolaus Copernicus' model of the universe placed the Sun rather than Earth at the center of the universe. Brought about a paradigm shift in the way people understood their place in life. Up to then, the Catholic Church and ancient philosophy placed MAN at the center of the universe

When you shift from being more concerned about how **people** look at you to being more concerned about how **God** looks at you, you have not necessarily turned away from being self-centered.

If your starting place is to think of how either God or people look at you, then you will end up with a law-based or list-based assessment of how **you** compare to how you **ought** to look. All that does is excite your sinful flesh. You will produce dead works, lifeless, plastic fruit, rather than the fruit of repentance, the works of a Resurrection Life.

Attending the events of the church, participating in the fellowship and building relationships, even mastering theology, do not alone remove SELF from the CENTER of our universe.

Paul Tripp in How People Change ...

“They allow me to be a CONSUMER of the faith rather than be CONSUMED by Christ. So I shop for the element I think is most important and SELF stays at the center. The one place you are never supposed to exist is the center of your universe. That place is reserved for King Christ alone, and part of heart transformation is a dethroning of SELF and ENTHRONING of Christ.”

It is only when you die to self that you are in the starting place for a God-centered, Christ-centered life Paul wrote about to the Galatians and Corinthians.

Gal. 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

2Cor. 5:14-15 For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.

It is only then [when YOU have DIED and been raised to newness of life] that you are ready and able to enter His Orbit, to enjoy a Christ-centered view of your world and your life, and to ask the right questions ... with the right perspective ... and the right motives.

This is the right starting place. This is the point where you're ready to ask ... What is God doing? And, what is God saying? Like young Jesus, you'll find your answers in the Scriptures and find your place in the Father's House.

You'll gain a big-picture view from the Bible of what Christ is doing, that He is fulfilling Adam's mandate to be fruitful and multiply and fill the whole earth with the knowledge and glory of God (Colossians 1 and elsewhere). You'll see that Christ didn't cease this work when He ascended to Heaven, but as Acts 1:1 explains, his sinless life and death on the cross were the precursor to a Resurrection Life that He now lives in us as He continues His mission by working through us, to build His house out of living Stones.

The Scriptures say we are His house ... but we are not houses unto ourselves with Christ's blood on our door posts to keep us safe and happy on the inside, but living stones, being used as instruments of His, vessels of mercy, to go out, to usher in the next layer of stones — and to solidify and purify the ones around us — those to whom Christ chooses to reveal the Father, as the Father, Son and Spirit draws them, as the Father & the Spirit prepare a bride for the Son.

It takes a ***Copernican Revolution*** to die to self and see your life this way.

It orients you to the Son that will always guide you. Psalm 123:

“To you I lift up my eyes, O you who are enthroned in the heavens!
Behold, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master ...
so our eyes look to the Lord our God”

This Copernican Revolution is a complete shift in ...

1. Knowledge
2. Awareness
3. Position
4. Posture
5. Vantage point
6. Attitude
7. Altitude
8. Orientation

This difference of being self-centered vs. Christ-centered affects, influences, shapes ...

- What you notice ...
- The questions you ask
- How you view/assess/judge yourself
- Why you do what you do
- Why you seek what you seek including change in your behavior and character
- How you view, assess and judge others
- Your priorities (use of time, resources)
- How you evaluate a church
- How you pursue growth in Christian character and virtues