

I get asked a lot. Why we don't know about Jesus's childhood. Why we don't really talk about it. I got asked this week. I was talking with this gentleman, and I said, well, we do, we do know about his childhood. We know about when he was born, we know about when he was circumcised, when he was presented at the temple, and we know when he was 12 and just kind of disappeared for a few days. But that's all we know. That's all The Bible tells us. From the Bible that we read, some of the other faiths, they read the same Bible we have. But they also have a section called the Apocrypha. And the Apocrypha has 113 different Gospels, Acts, and Epistles that we don't have in ours.

And they have one that's very specifically called The Birth and Infancy of Jesus, the Gospel of. So there are more out there that we just don't cover. That we don't talk about. And it briefly goes into his childhood some more. But while I was talking with this individual about it, we were discussing why. Why don't we talk about his childhood? Today is, well, tomorrow is Epiphany. That is the day that the three kings came. The three kings finally got to Bethlehem to see the baby, see the infant.

It's an important day because that was also the day that as an infant, Jesus was baptized. So we do talk about some of these things. We see the end of the 12th day. The end of the part of his infancy. That is so important that Matthew and Luke wrote about it. But not Mark and John. We celebrate the three kings. We celebrate the gifts that they gave to Mary and Joseph, and they make a point of saying that they gave it to Mary and Joseph. And that's important because women were not important at that time.

When we read the genealogy, we read Matthew's genealogy, and it covers the lineage of Joseph back to Adam. And when we read Mark, it covers the lineage. We read Luke, it covers the lineage of Mary back to David. But It doesn't say Mary. It says Joseph. So they identify Joseph as being part of that family, because women weren't important. Even though she was the mother of God, she still didn't have her own part and part of History for them. Children at that time were no better than parasites. They didn't care about them. They had them. If they lived, they made it. That was the important part. It wasn't what they did. It wasn't who they were. They were simply a drain on resources and most of them didn't live to be past 12. So at that time, nobody worried about what was going on with him, really? When he was a baby, when he was a child, it was important enough to record.

It's not like today where you can't walk out a door without having somebody taking a selfie or going to a restaurant, pointing in the back booth there(to Dada), taking pictures of all of his food every week. There's no real time updates during that time of you know, everything is coming out.

The Book of Mark was written in 50 AD. Matthew and Luke were written in the 80s. John was written in the 90s. Acts, still part of Luke, but then the Epistles were in a different times, some of the gospels, some of the later gospels were written 100, 200 years later. So it wasn't like everything was getting written down right then. So a lot of it got lost. But we do know from going through now how important children play in our spirituality. We recognize that now. We make an effort to make sure that children are included in many things, in our church, and our faith does that much better than a lot of other faiths. We don't believe that children should just be seen and not heard. We try to include them in many things. We go on outings with them. We

have them come up here and sing. We did a wonderful Christmas Pageant where they're all so excited. They really did; they had a great time. But we make an effort to include children in this. And that wasn't done at that time. So it wasn't that Jesus's childhood wasn't important. It just wasn't important enough to the people then. It's incredibly important to us, and it's incredibly important to him. If it wasn't important to him, what children mean to the church, he wouldn't say that only those who enter like a child will make it into the kingdom of Heaven. He wouldn't spend time going through and showing how significant children were; the disciples wanted nothing to do with the children. He said no. Bring them to me.

Today's reading is talking about when he went to Passover at 12, at 12 at that time was pretty much going into adulthood. And sitting there, and he's in the temple. You know, Mary Joseph had lost him. They go back, they find him sitting there, and he is talking about the word of God. He is sharing what it means to be a part of God's kingdom. He's telling them that his father will one day take care of all of us. He doesn't matter who they are or what they're doing. He is that child giving advice to adults, and they're all sitting there listening to him. And some of them are truly believing him, and some of them are just trying to trip him up, were trying to get him to say something that doesn't make sense, that doesn't go in line with what they've been taught, in Hebrew school. To try to mess with him and it doesn't phase it.

I know when I was 12, I enjoyed sitting there and talking and firing things back at adults, that they didn't always agree with me, especially if they didn't agree with me. And I still enjoy doing that, but it's not really the point. The point is that no matter how old we are, God speaks through us, and sometimes we're so set in our ways as adults that we are not willing to listen to what these kids are telling us.

Wednesday fires off with some great questions. Lately though it's been about how bluey gets to heaven. You know, things like that. But she does have really good points. We were talking about epiphany and what it meant this week. And she was confused on why sometimes it says Magi and sometimes it says kings, sometimes it says wisemen. Those are all questions we all have, but children are more likely to ask them. They don't have that barrier that we have of ourselves. That point where we don't want to look foolish because we don't know something. That point that we don't want to show our ignorance. They don't care. They just want to know. They have an innocence that we all should go back to. It'd be easier for us to find our way into heaven, and we're not fighting all the time because we're all talking. We're communicating. It's much easier to love one another. We might not agree with what everybody is saying. We might not agree with what everybody is doing.

The children do that. If they don't like it, they'll tell you and they'll ask you, why are you doing that? I know honestly sometimes I can't answer. Like, I don't know. It's just how I've always done it, just how we've always been. That's not a good enough answer anymore. I wish it was.

We're starting a new year. We're starting a new time in our lives. We're starting a continuation. We're going into our 51st year of being the two churches together. What does that mean for us? What are we going to do next? It's a question that comes up a lot, especially with me. What are we going to do next? Children don't care what we're gonna do next. Maybe I should stop caring about what we're going to do next. If we behave in a manner that is childlike before God, we can recognize his love. It's much easier than if we were trying to figure it out for ourselves.