

Growing in Wisdom, Stature, and Favor

Sermon by Andy Sochor

Text: Luke 2:52

The gospels focus primarily on the public ministry of Jesus leading up to His crucifixion (approximately 3 years). Matthew and Luke also include Jesus' birth and infancy. Luke also briefly recorded one event in Jesus' childhood – when He was “lost” in the temple at 12 years old. We may be curious about what happened as Jesus grew up, but the Scriptures are mostly silent. However, the Holy Spirit did see fit to include a statement about the growth of Jesus. This may seem somewhat obvious and, therefore, insignificant; yet it was given for a reason. If Jesus grew in wisdom, stature, and favor, then it should be expected for us to do the same. In this lesson, we are going to consider what this means for us in our lives today.

Physical Growth

- This is the most natural – yet there are ways to promote it
 - Nutrition – making sure we eat and drink things that encourage our body's health
 - Avoiding harmful foods/substances – some things are unhealthy or even destructive to our body
 - Exercise – doing something with our bodies to strengthen and condition it
 - Rest – time for our body to recharge and heal
- These things promote the proper growth of our physical bodies – yet we can promote growth in other areas in the same ways

Wisdom

- Feed on God's word – it can make us wise (Psalm 19:7); this wisdom leads to salvation (2 Timothy 3:15)
- Avoid evil influences – the ones close to us will influence us (Proverbs 13:20); evil companions corrupt (1 Corinthians 15:33)
- Practice God's word – we must be doers of the word (James 1:22)
- Prayer – ask in faith (James 1:5-7); in connection to this, we gain wisdom as we hear God's word and do it (James 1:21-22)

Favor with God

- Learn more about Him – He rewards those who seek Him (Hebrews 11:6); He is not far from us (Acts 17:27)
- Avoid idols – guard ourselves from them (1 John 5:21); we are to be wholly devoted to Him (Matthew 6:24)
- Worship God – He is worthy of worship; He wants us to worship Him in spirit and truth (John 4:23-24)

- Meditate on His ways – meditate on His word (Psalm 119:97) and on His works (Psalm 145:3-5)

Favor with Man

- Spend time together – grow in love together (Ephesians 4:16); requires time together (Acts 2:46; 4:32-35)
- Do no harm to others – we are to act in love, which is a fulfillment of the law (Romans 13:8-10)
- Do good to others – look for opportunities to do this (Galatians 6:10)
- Respect others' space/time – we need to spend time and do good, but with a limit (Proverbs 25:17)

Conclusion

- If a child is not growing, that is an indication that something is wrong
- In the same way, if we are not growing in wisdom and favor with God and man, something is wrong
- Let's make sure we are eating right, exercising, and getting the rest we need – not just for physical health; this is also for our spiritual development and our relationship with God and others