



LESSON 1 FOR LEADERS

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: Jesus Shows Us What God Is Like

SCRIPTURE: Luke 2

WORD OF WONDER: From Colossians 1:15

I'll never forget that day.

A friend and I had taken our kids to a children's museum. We were standing near the elevator debating which exhibit to visit next when I realized I didn't see Will, my three-year-old. We began to search, working our way up to the enormous lobby. Frantically scanning the crowds, I spotted Will slipping out the front doors. I dashed to him, scooped him up, and burst into tears. He was perfectly calm. I most definitely was not.

Take a moment to read Luke 2:41–52. Most parents have a story like mine. They instantly connect to Joseph's dismay, to Mary's fear. Do you ever wonder what they made of Jesus' response? His calmness in the face of their worry?

Jesus did not share Mary and Joseph's fear; His connection to His Heavenly Father was secure. He knew where He belonged.

What about you? Do you get swept up in the anxieties that surround you? Even as a child, Jesus shows us what God is like: a haven where we can grow and mature and learn, no matter how old we are.

Mary herself seems to make the shift from anxiety (v. 48) to wonder (v. 51). She learned more about her Father by watching her Son.

May we do the same.

—Lise Caldwell

Children's Ministry

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Wonder Ink

LESSON 1 FOR LEADERS

JESUS AT THE TEMPLE

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

The Jewish teachers were religious experts who instructed pupils in the temple courts. The teachers in Luke 2 were likely *rabbis*, which means “my teacher” or “my master” in Hebrew. Rabbis would have taught apprentices, who sat at their feet, using a question-and-answer format.

WHAT?

Every year Jewish families made the trip to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover. When Jesus’ family left to go home, Jesus stayed behind in His Father’s house, listening to the teachers and asking questions. The 12-year-old Jesus amazed the rabbis at the temple with His wisdom and understanding.

WHERE?

Jerusalem was about 40 miles from Jesus’ home in Nazareth. It typically took about three days to get from one city to the other. The temple in Jerusalem included buildings and courtyards used for both sacrifice and instruction. Jewish teachers may have taught here or in other areas of the temple.

WHEN?

At this point in God’s big story, King Herod had died, and his son Archelaus reigned over Jerusalem. Caesar Augustus was likely nearing the end of his reign as Roman emperor. Passover happened in late March or early April.

CONNECTING TO GOD’S BIG STORY

This account bridges Jesus’ infancy and adulthood. It depicts Jesus growing strong and wise, living in step with the Father as He prepared for His kingdom work. It shows that Jesus understood His special relationship with God the Father, a relationship God would confirm years later at Jesus’ baptism.



Curiosity

Belief

Faith

Identity

LESSON 1 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Play Stations

SUPPLIES: shatterproof mirrors (3–4)

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Jesus at the Temple Coloring Sheet (1 per kid)

Greet kids warmly as they arrive and briefly explain the play stations. Invite them to play at any of the play stations.

Welcome to church! While we're getting ready to start, you can play at any of these stations to help get ready for our lesson today. Do you have any ideas of what we'll be learning about today?

Play Station: Looks Like Fun

Set-up: Place the shatterproof mirrors on a table or flat play area. Then put the assortment of toys on top of the mirrors.

Play: Invite the children to freely play with the toys and mirrors. Encourage them to move the toys around on top of the mirrors and see what they notice when looking at the toys in the mirrors.

Play Station: Jesus at the Temple Coloring Sheet

Set-up: Print one copy per kid of the Coloring Sheet. Set out the Coloring Sheets and coloring utensils.

Play: Let the kids color. The kids can also turn the sheet over and draw their family.



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Prayer of Invitation

Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use the prayer here or your own words: **God, thank You that we all got here safely today and that we get to come together and worship You. As we listen, play, and ask questions, help us learn more about who Jesus is. And help us see how Jesus shows us more about You and Your love. Thank You for Jesus. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

God's Big Story

Pull out the Bible

Ask: What is this called? The Bible

Ask: Why is the Bible special? Because it is God's word. Everything in it is true. It really happened.

Tell the Bible Story

The Beginner's Bible, pages 296-302

Jesus Is Lost

Word of Wonder

WORD OF WONDER

The Son is the exact likeness of God, who can't be seen.

— Colossians 1:15

Gather kids to discuss these questions:

- What are some words that tell us what Jesus is like?
- What do those words show us about God?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Why did Jesus and His family travel to the temple in Jerusalem? *(to celebrate the Passover Feast)*
- What problem happened when Mary and Joseph were on their way home? *(They couldn't find Jesus.)*
- Where did Mary and Joseph find Jesus, and what was He doing? *(the temple, listening and asking questions)*
- Have you ever lost something that was really special to you? How did you feel? Did you ever find it?
- Jesus told Mary and Joseph that He had to be in His Father's house. Who is Jesus' Father? *(God)*
- What is something you learned about Jesus in this story?



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Craft: Who Is Jesus? Puppet

SUPPLIES: coloring utensils, kid-safe scissors (1 per kid), craft sticks (1 per kid), glue or tape

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Jesus Puppet Printable (1 per kid)

Ahead of time, print a Jesus Puppet Printable for each kid. If possible, print the puppets two-sided (front and back). If not, kids can simply glue or tape the two pictures back-to-back. Set out coloring utensils, kid-safe scissors, craft sticks, and glue or tape.

Mary and Joseph must have been so worried when they couldn't find Jesus. But Jesus was exactly where He needed to be, in His Father's house. Jesus shows us what God is like! You will cut out your Jesus puppet from the printable and color the letters that spell J-E-S-U-S on one side. Then you will color the letters that spell G-O-D on the other picture. Point to each word as you talk about it. Glue the pictures onto the craft stick. Then you can flip the picture back and forth and see one side that says Jesus and the other side that says God. This reminds us that Jesus shows us what God is like. Encourage the kids to turn their puppets to the side that says *Jesus*. Even if they can't read yet, point to the letters that spell *Jesus*. Encourage the kids to share some things we know about Jesus from the Bible. Then invite the kids to turn their puppets to the side that says *God*. Point to the letters that spell *God*. Ask the kids to share some things we know about God.

What does Jesus show us? Allow the kids to respond. **Jesus shows us what God is like. What does Jesus show us about God?** Allow the kids to respond.

