



Ministering as the God Man, Mediator, and Miracle Worker

Maturing Physically, Emotionally, Mentally, and Spiritually.

"And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men." (Luke 2:52)

1 Samuel 2:26, And the child Samuel grew on, and was in favor both with the LORD, and also with men.

Proverbs 3:4, So shalt thou find favor and good understanding in the sight of God and man.

Luke 2:40, And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.

How Do We Grow In Wisdom and Stature, and in Favor with God and Men?

Jesus: The Perfect One...The Perfect Standard

There are many outstanding traits that Jesus possessed that would be good for all of us to have as part of our basic character:

- As a child, he was subject to His parents (Luke 2:51; Eph. 6:1; Col. 3:20).
- He was about His Father's business at an early age, i.e., He was interested in spiritual things while just a youth (Luke 2:49; Eccl. 12:1).
- He lived, not selfishly, but for others (Mark 10:45; Phil. 2:4).
- He accomplished God's will in His life (John 6:38).
- He left an example that all can follow (1 Pet. 2:21).

He gave of Himself to show the Father's Love to the World!

Today, let's look at Jesus' development that is related in Luke 2:52.

Four (4) areas in which Jesus grew that are revealed in that passage -- wisdom, stature, favor with men, and favor with God.

These are the areas we must emphasize as we look to our own lives.

The Bible says:

- *Jesus grew in wisdom – that's mental or intellectual growth.*
- *Jesus grew in stature – that's physical growth.*
- *Jesus grew in favor with God – that's spiritual growth.*
- *Jesus grew in favor with men – that's social growth.*

Wisdom—To advance in wisdom is to grow intellectually or mentally.

Wisdom is "the quality of being wise; the power of judging rightly and following the soundest course of action, based on knowledge, experience, understanding."

- ***Wisdom is the ability to use our experiences and the knowledge we have gained to make righteous decisions and perform the right actions.***
- ***True wisdom can only come from God. "For the LORD gives wisdom, and from his mouth come knowledge and understanding" (Proverbs 2:6).***
- ***Wisdom's importance is emphasized by Solomon in Proverbs 3:13-26.***
- ***While one should give attention, especially when young, to his education, he should "give diligence" (2 Tim. 2:15) to gain knowledge of the Bible.***
 - ✓ ***The Bible gives us direct access into the mind of God. We shouldn't take this source of wisdom for granted but daily ask God to open our hearts and minds to the rich storehouse of knowledge that He created for us.***
 - ✓ ***God will give us wisdom if we ask Him. "If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him" (James 1:5).***
 - ✓ ***He gives us wisdom through the presence of His Holy Spirit dwelling in us.***

- **A good understanding of its teachings is far more valuable than an education at the finest academic institutions.**
- **Wisdom is also given by the experiences God allows us to go through.**

Sometimes we may not understand at the time why we have to experience certain trials, but God is molding us for what he has designed. The apostle Paul put it this way, “That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”

Stature—To advance in stature is to develop physically. Jesus developed a strong, healthy body.

- **Our bodies are to be instruments of our service (Rom. 12:1; 6:12-13) and,**
- **Temples of God (1 Cor. 6:18-20).**

There are three essentials to a strong body:

- 1. Eat proper food,**
- 2. Exercise moderately (1 Tim. 4:8) and**
- 3. Keep it free from diseases.**

Stature is synonymous with maturity.

We must become mature in our walk with Christ. 1 Corinthians 13:11 states, “When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me.”

Just as Jesus was demonstrating to His parents that He was no longer a child by His actions in the temple, so we must begin our maturing after we come to the saving knowledge of Jesus.

Favor with God—This is the spiritual development that ought to characterize every child of God. The importance and value of the soul is seen in Matthew 16:26 where it is shown to be of greater value than all the amassed wealth to be found in the world.

Basically, the essentials for spiritual development are the same as those for physical growth: proper food, exercise and freedom from disease.

- **The correct spiritual food is the Bible (Acts 20:32; 1 Pet. 2:1-2).**

- **Spiritual exercise is the application of the word of God to one's life which results in proper character development and worthwhile service to the Lord and others.**
- **Freedom from disease is being pure and "unspotted from the world" (Jas. 1:27) by keeping one's lusts in check.**

This account seems to be the beginning of Jesus' preparation for His eventual ministry and inevitable crucifixion and resurrection. Jesus began a process of becoming physically and spiritually ready for His mission.

Note: Christ has a mission for each of us and an eventual place in His Kingdom if we put our faith in and live our life serving Him.

God's favor is given to us when we turn to Him in repentance and accept Him as Savior and Lord. He removes all the penalties for any wrong thing we have ever done. That's an amazing amount of favor.

To grow in this favor we must strive daily to obey God and live according to His commandments. *"As God's fellow workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. For he says, 'In the time of my favor I heard you and in the day of salvation I helped you.' I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation" (2 Corinthians 6:1-2).*

Now that we have God's favor we must live our lives in service to Him so that "our maturity in our faith grows."

Favor with Men

This is to develop socially. It has to do with human beings living together as a group in a situation which requires they have dealings with one another.

NOTE:

- 1. Man is created a social being: to live one with the other. It is not in man's nature to live alone (Gen. 2:18).**
- 2. He is to be a gregarious (sociable) being.**
- 3. We need to learn to love people. It makes it easy to live with them. Jesus associated with all kinds of people -- publicans, sinners, Samaritans -- because He loved them (John 3:16). Jesus always tried to influence those with whom He associated to be better people setting the proper example of behavior before them.**

“Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart, Then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man” (Proverbs 3:3-4).

By simply being good Christians we will earn favor with men. If we show love and are faithful to God's instructions those characteristics will excel us in our dealings with everyone. We will surely stand out and be noticed by our actions.

Final Thought: God has a tremendous mission for each of us. He is preparing us now for what He has ultimately designed us.

By growing in Wisdom, Stature, Favor with God, and Favor with Men, we are being equipped for our final use in His plan.

SCRIPTURES FOR THIS LESSON:

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- **Luke 2:51**, Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart.
- **Ephesians 6:1**, Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.
- **Colossians 3:20**, Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.
- **Luke 2:49**, “Why were you searching for me?” he asked. “Didn’t you know I had to be in my Father’s house?”
- **Ecclesiastes 12:1**, Remember your Creator in the days of your youth, before the days of trouble come and the years approach when you will say, “I find no pleasure in them.”
- **Mark 10:45**, For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.
- **Philippians 2:4**, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.
- **John 6:38**, For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me.
- **1 Peter 2:21**, To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.
- **Proverbs 3:13-26**, Blessed are those who find wisdom, those who gain understanding, for she is more profitable than silver and yields better returns than gold. She is more precious than rubies; nothing you desire can compare with her. Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor. Her ways are pleasant ways, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her; those who hold her fast will be blessed. By wisdom the LORD laid the earth’s foundations, by understanding he set

the heavens in place; by his knowledge the watery depths were divided, and the clouds let drop the dew. My son, do not let wisdom and understanding out of your sight, preserve sound judgment and discretion; they will be life for you, an ornament to grace your neck. Then you will go on your way in safety, and your foot will not stumble. When you lie down, you will not be afraid; when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet. Have no fear of sudden disaster or of the ruin that overtakes the wicked, for the LORD will be at your side and will keep your foot from being snared.

- **2 Timothy 2:15**, Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.
- **Romans 12:1**, Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.
- **Romans 6:12-13**, Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. ¹³ Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness.

- **1 Corinthians 6:18-20**, Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a person commits are outside the body, but whoever sins sexually, sins against their own body. ¹⁹ Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; ²⁰ you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.
- **1 Timothy 4:8**, For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.
- **Matthew 16:26**, What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?
- **Acts 20:32**, Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.
- **1 Peter 2:1-2**, Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. ² Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation,
- **James 1:27**, Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.
- **Genesis 2:18**, The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."
- **John 3:16**, For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

