

Boy Jesus in the Temple

TRADITIONS

LUKE 2:41-52

What's happening in this story?

This unique story about Jesus' childhood illustrates that Jesus was faithful to scripture and was a willing student of the rabbis who passed on the Jewish faith. The trip to celebrate Passover in Jerusalem shows that Jesus' family followed religious traditions, just like we do. Traditions were important to Jewish people in Jesus' time, and they were important to his family. Christians also have traditions that we observe for various stages of life, during seasons of the church year, and as part of the worship service. Traditions help guide us, unify us, and connect us to those who have gone before us.

What does this story mean for kids?

Kids will immediately connect with this story because it is about what Jesus was like when he was a kid like them! Even as a kid, Jesus had a lot he could teach others, but also had a lot to learn. Growth is a part of being human, as Jesus fully was. Jesus grew by finding mentors, people with great understanding, as well as by taking part in theological discussion in the temple.

Why this theme?

Many kids have traditions—even if they don't recognize them. It's important to remember that our traditions help us remember where we come from and where we're going.

TEACHING TIP

Kids in your group will have differing levels of awareness about the existence of traditions in their lives. Use this opportunity to help kids think about traditions they want to celebrate in their lives.



GENERAL SUPPLIES

- Markers

LESSON SUPPLIES

- Pictures of traditions, such as birthday cake, Christmas tree, graduation ceremony, etc.
- Large blankets and/or classroom objects (at least 1 per kid)

WELCOME 15

DO SOME KIDS ARRIVE EARLY? TRY THIS.

Set out pictures of a birthday cake, Christmas tree, graduation ceremony, and other traditions. Invite kids to figure out what the pictures have in common.

Circle up with kids for an opening conversation.

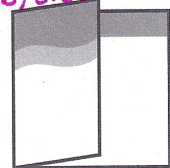
Point out a tradition your group has—maybe it's sharing highs and lows each week, having a snack together, or saying the sending blessing at the end of each lesson. **Traditions are activities or events that we repeat because they are important to us. What are some of your favorite traditions?** Give time for kids to respond. **Traditions help us celebrate events or special memories. When Jesus was a young boy, his family had a tradition of traveling to Jerusalem each year for the Passover festival. In our story, we'll read about what happened during their traditional celebration of the Passover when Jesus was twelve years old.**

Pray together: ~~Dear God, thank you for church leaders who welcome our questions and guide us into better and better conversations about you. Amen.~~

Be still and know that I am God...

Pass out leaflets.

You can do this as a discussion activity or get out paper and markers and have everyone draw their traditions, etc.
Help kids find a buddy. Place your finger on the girl with her hand by her mouth. Taking turns, tell your buddy a story about something your family does a lot that you enjoy. Give them time to share. Place your finger on the girl cupping her ear. Tell your buddy a favorite family story you enjoy hearing again and again. Allow them to share. Place your finger on the boy who's thinking. Share with the group a question you have about a tradition here at church. Pause for answers. When Jesus was twelve, he had questions for the religious leaders. I wonder what he asked them. Collect their leaflets until Respond.



Gather kids around the screen where you'll watch the video.

Leo, Ada, Otto, and Tot are headed to a retirement community for Christmas dinner. What could possibly go wrong? Let's find out.

View Episode 4, "Active Acres," on the Year Blue Winter DVD. (4 min, 25 sec)

Ask kids these questions about the video:

- What relatives do you usually visit at Christmas?
- Who are Leo, Ada, Otto, and Tot going to visit?
- What are your favorite Christmas traditions?
- * What's good about keeping traditions?
- * What's good about allowing traditions to change over time?



HEAR 15

Open your Whirl Kids Story Bibles and Whirl Kids Study Bibles.

Have older kids find a younger buddy. Invite them to find "Boy Jesus in the Temple" on page 174 of the Whirl Kids Story Bible. Jesus' family was Jewish, and a Jewish tradition was to travel to Jerusalem each year for the Passover festival. When Jesus was twelve, his family went to Jerusalem like usual, but on the way home, Mary and Joseph realized that something very *unusual* had happened. Jesus was missing!

As you read the story aloud, invite kids to silently act out the action words. Each time you read one, pause to allow them time to do this. **Jesus was talking with the teachers in the temple. I wonder what he told them.**

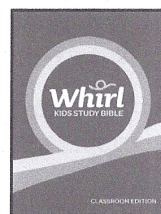
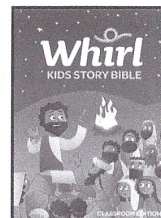
Read Ada and Otto's questions and comments on each page. ~~Then read Luke 2:39-40 and what Mimi says about that passage on page 1230 of the Whirl Kids Study Bible.~~

Ask these questions after you read the story:

- Why were Mary and Joseph so tired?
- Why was Jesus missing?
- When have you accidentally gotten separated from a parent?
- How was Jesus impressing the people at the temple?
- How did Jesus respond to his worried parents?

Play together!

~~Jesus wasn't hiding, but his parents were seeking him. Let's play a game of Hide and Seek with a twist.~~ Provide a variety of large blankets and/or large classroom objects to hide under or behind. Choose a volunteer to be Jesus. Then choose another volunteer to be Joseph or Mary. Joseph or Mary should close their eyes or leave the room. Invite kids, including Jesus, to spread out and hide under or behind a blanket or object. Invite Joseph or Mary to find Jesus. Play again with new volunteers as time allows.



BIBLE BIT

If you have time to give some extra, in-depth background on the origin of the Passover observance, read the passage about the Israelites' flight from Egypt in Exodus 12:33-42.

WATCH IT AGAIN

If you watch the video again, try to notice when it is that Tot disappears.

OUR CHURCH

What are some of your church's unique annual traditions? Spend some time talking about the ways your church uniquely impacts your broader community each year.

RESPOND 10

Use extra time before Help and Thanks to continue drawing/sharing about traditions. You can also do the balloon "I am ... years old" page in the leaflet.

~~Pass out leaflets and markers.~~

~~Unfold and tear off leaflet square.~~

- ~~1. Jesus knew so much about God that at age twelve, he was teaching the religious leaders! In this activity, you'll think about what you know how to do.~~
- ~~2. Decorate the person on the square to look like you.~~
- ~~3. Accordion-fold along the lines on your leaflet. Fold back on the green dotted lines and fold forward on the orange dashed lines. Kids' leaflets should now show a head and arms and the phrase "I knew enough to do that as a baby."~~
- ~~4. Have kids practice opening the leaflets to each phrase. Read each phrase aloud so kids know what their options are for the activity.~~
- ~~5. I'm going to say a few situations and you will respond by folding or unfolding your leaflet to show whether or not you know how to do that thing.~~
- ~~6. Read a few of the example scenarios or improvise a few of your own. Pause to let kids adjust the size of their leaflet. Examples: spend the night away from home, talk in front of the church, walk somewhere outside alone, tell a stranger your opinion, ride a motorcycle, tell someone you disagree with them, teach the pastor about God like Jesus did.~~
- ~~7. Jesus sat in the temple impressing adults with his answers and his questions at age twelve! What age would you need to be to feel comfortable doing that?~~

LAUNCH 10

Circle up with kids for a quick review.

How would you feel if you were Jesus sitting with all of those grown-ups? Wait for answers. Traveling to Jerusalem wasn't the only tradition we heard about today—our faith also has a great tradition of sharing learning through asking and answering questions. Everyone can learn from each other, no matter what age!

Pass out leaflet panels and markers.

Jesus was just twelve years old when he talked with the teachers about God. In the yellow balloon, write your age. No matter how old you are, you can share about God. What's one thing you know about God that you could tell someone else?

Send kids out with a blessing. → Help and Thanks prayers

Circle up with kids. God blesses all of us. And that means me (place a hand on your chest). And that means you (place your other hand on the shoulder of the kid next to you). Each kid passes the blessing by repeating those words and actions. When the blessing makes it back to you, say, Go and bless the world.

Thank kids for coming today. Remind them of the Family Square on the other side of the leaflet.