

In My Fathers House

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[0 : 0 0] Well let's turn again then in that passage we read earlier from Luke's Gospel chapter 2 beginning at verse 41. And before we do that let us ask God for his help as we consider his holy word. Heavenly Father your word is true and your word is eternal. The grass falls and the flowers fade but Lord your word endures forever. You tell us as well that your word is living and active. It has the power to penetrate our hearts and to search us and to know us. And Lord we pray that would be so just now. We pray that your word would indeed penetrate our hearts. That your Spirit would take and own the preaching of your word and apply it to us. Make it effectual to us Lord.

For those of us who know you may it be a powerful word of encouragement even of challenge but Lord a word that will do us good. And Lord for those who don't we pray that this word would show Jesus and that it would be powerful in drawing anyone who does not know you to the Savior that they might put their trust and their hope in Him. And we ask this in His name. Amen. Well what a lovely selection of boys we had there. They were they were full of fun and they really listened and they were they were just a delight to speak to earlier. But just imagine if I don't know I guess their parents are here. If you were driving home and you got home and it was all a you know it's been a bit hectic and you finally got home and you realized that one of these little ones wasn't actually there. They hadn't been in the car. They hadn't come home with you. The whole time I imagine your your heart would be in your mouth. Where is he? And you would frantically about turn and come back here to the church to see where they've gone. The story this account that Luke has of Jesus staying behind in Jerusalem while his parents went on unawares on their way back to Nazareth. Anyone who has a child or really anyone can understand the anxiety particularly of Mary when she realizes that Jesus isn't with the group. This isn't really negligence or anything on their part. They would have traveled in a large company of people all together and when they'd arranged to leave Jerusalem at a particular point it would have appeared that Jesus would have been there at that point or at least in the vicinity and so they would have believed that he was in the group because everyone took a shared responsibility over looking after the children. But when she realized that Jesus wasn't among them and they were a day away from Jerusalem how she must have felt and how Joseph must have felt and how frantically they must have returned to Jerusalem and searched. Because when Mary says to Jesus, your father and I have been searching anxiously for you. That word is only used in one other place in Luke's Gospel and it describes the agony of the rich man in the story of the rich man in Lazarus, the agony of the rich man in hell. What a state she's in as she searches frantically for Jesus and that's this emotional hook that we can all relate to that brings us in to this account that Luke has for us. But the fact that Mary and Joseph left Jesus behind is not the main point of this account. It's the fact that Jesus stayed in Jerusalem. He's the focus of the passage. It's the fact that he remained behind. He wasn't ready to leave Jerusalem. Everyone else was leaving after the Passover and going back to their homes. But he wasn't ready to leave and he explains why that is. He had to be in his father's house.

That's the explanation, the key if you like, for the whole passage. Because this passage tells us that Jesus Christ is wholeheartedly dedicated to fulfilling his mission, the reason for his coming into the earth. He's wholeheartedly dedicated to fulfilling his mission because he is the Son of God who must do his father's will. Wholehearted commitment. Now if you're a Christian, a believer, if you're in Christ, this is wonderfully assuring that even in this passage, even when Jesus was 12, before the beginning of his public ministry, he is single-mindedly determined to do the will of his father. And that sets the tone if you like then for what follows. The rest of what follows is a life of complete dedication to fulfilling his mission, his mission of salvation for those who will put their trust in him and that will take him to the cross. That is going to take determination and we see it already here in this 12-year-old and that should give us encouragement, assurance. But if you're not a Christian,

here is someone who you see even at this age determined to do his father's will and as we see throughout the rest of Luke's gospel, able, willing to do it. He does it. Here is one who perfectly fulfilled his father's mission and therefore you can trust him. You can put your trust in this one because he must be doing what his father wants him to do. He must be doing it. It's that must I had to be in my father's house that is so significant about this passage. It's the only story, the only account of Jesus's childhood beyond his actual birth and the infancy contained in all the gospels. The only story from his childhood. We hear about his birth in Luke and in Matthew and then in Luke we have this story but then it's Jesus beginning his public ministry much much later as an adult well into adulthood. Why is this here then? What is it supposed to tell us? Well given that it's the only story about Jesus childhood it's as if to say this is all you need to know. Well indeed that's what it is saying. This is all you need to know about Jesus's childhood. It's symbolized if you like or it's encapsulated in just this one event of what happened that time when he was 12 at the Passover. This is what tells you everything you need to know in this one incident but also this passage is significant because it's the first time that Jesus speaks. We've gone through a lengthy two chapters in Luke's gospel already and this is the first time he says something. Yep we've had Zechariah, we've had John the Baptist's mother, we've had Mary, we've had angels announcing things, we've had Simeon in the temple. This is the first time Jesus speaks and so far in fact it's the earliest utterance of Jesus from anywhere in the Gospels. The 12 year old Jesus has something to say and it's this one sentence so that tells us we had better pay attention doesn't it? It tells us we had better listen to what this 12 year old Jesus is saying because what he says defines his identity and his mission. Who he is and why he came. Now in any event, in human history there are three factors at play. There's something takes place at a particular time, a particular place and involves at least one person. There's a time at which everything happens and it takes place in a specific location and it involves at least one person and it's that element, the human element, the human factor that often is what makes it so interesting. Humans are so interesting and they get up to so many interesting things, that human element and here those three elements are also very significant to the passage. The time is significant, the place is significant and of course the person is significant and he explains what's significant about himself in what he says, in what he tells

[11 : 30] Mary when she says we have been looking everywhere for you and you can get that sense of where were you. He explains why it's so important. So first of all we'll just look, we'll look at it from these three angles and so first of all just briefly we'll look at the significance of the time. Look at the start of the passage verse 41. Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the Passover, at the feast of the Passover, the timing is so significant because this is the festival where all the Jews remember their deliverance from slavery in Egypt by God's mighty hand. Specifically the night when they were told they had to kill a lamb and do or smear the blood on the doorposts and on the lintels of their house so that when that night when a destroying angel would pass over Egypt killing all the firstborn they would be spared, they would be passed over because the angel would see the blood and spare the Jews and so they were spared and for hundreds and hundreds of years remembering that night, that night of deliverance from under the lash of a hard task master and being brought out of Egypt and eventually brought in to the Promised Land into Israel itself and Jesus would have seen the animals being slain in the temple courts which was how it was conducted at that time in Jesus's day. In the temple courts hundreds of these animals would be slain and the blood splashed on the altar before the families that had brought their animals would get them back from the priests to eat them in their different companies or groups like the company that had traveled here to Jerusalem and was traveling back from Nazareth they would eat the meal together and the young boys in the family would ask their father why do we eat this meal and their father would explain why. Starting with Abraham so it would take a while they would take them through the entire history of Israel's being chosen and being redeemed out of Egypt. Just imagine then the boy Jesus hearing about Passover and seeing the Passover festival seeing the lambs being slain, eating the meal in haste along with his family and seeing something of the fact that this is all pointing to him. He is the lamb that this festival and this ritual and this meal is ultimately just all pointing towards. The one whose blood will ensure all those who are under it will be passed over will be spared. It's so significant that the shadow of the cross is casting itself all the way back even to here to Jesus aged 12 at the

Passover and you see it throughout the Gospels the significance of this festival because of course he's going to be back here at Passover and the circumstances are going to be very different. Jesus is crucified at Passover and here even here long before his public ministry begins there's this sign of who he is going to be and what he is going to do because this takes place in the shadow of Passover. How much would he have known about how much this spoke of him and what he had come to do. 12 years old a boy is almost ready at 13 to become a member of the synagogue and to be accountable before the synagogue for his actions and so Jesus would be getting instructed in so much of the Torah in preparation for that and learning that it is all speaking of him. That's the time and why that's significant but what about the place where is Jesus found in the temple. Now the Gospel of Luke begins at the temple and it ends at the temple and this section of the infancy narratives of you like begin and end at the temple as well and this is where Jesus says his first words are in the temple it's so significant because this isn't just a place where Jews gather to make sacrifices and to sing psalms and to offer worship this is as Jesus puts it his father's house this is not to put it irreverently but this is where God lives this is where heaven and earth meet where the Creator of the universe amazingly has said I will dwell here the infinite and eternal God has said I will presence myself in a special and a particular way in this building in this city in this place and how significant that was for the Jews this is the God who said I desire to dwell among you in your very midst and so as he was leading them through the wilderness they all lived in tents and God to show his solidarity with them his identification with them lived in one as well and then when they settle in Jerusalem finally and live in their houses he desires

Solomon to build a house for his name to live in their midst that's Immanuel God with us God desires to dwell in the midst of his people I sometimes think we fail to grasp just how wonderful and amazing that is that God does not say I am remote and far off but rather none of you are very far from me I desire to dwell in your midst and so Jesus is found in the dwelling place of God where God lives now that is so significant because that tells us about who Jesus is the temple is where heaven and earth meets right that the most holy place that the high priest would go into that was where a human being met with the living God it's the gate of heaven who is Jesus the same where heaven and earth meet the eternal son taken on flesh and dwelling among people the ultimate realization of Immanuel God with us because God has actually if you thought this was near living in a temple with your people surrounding you this is the ultimate nearness joining yourself to a human nature and living among humans in order to draw them to yourself in order to live in the flesh the life that they could not live on their behalf and to die for their sins he's the ultimate expression of the temple that's why that's so significant too I had to be in my father's house he wants to be in his father's presence he wants to be near him and to learn more of him in his human nature that he might learn more about his mission and what that means is why he's exchanging in this Q&A; format with the teachers in the temple courts asking questions giving answers and they're amazed at what he knows he's learning about his father and he wants to be in his presence it's a delight to be in his dwelling place do we have that delight of being in the presence of God of being taking this great delight and prioritizing God over everything else such that when your parents decide it's time to leave he wants to stay and worship he's not a festival worshipper who turns up only at the big events and then is off home he is there after that when everyone else has gone home and all the commotion is over he still wants to be in the presence of his father he's so delighted and this is what what he says this first utterance of Christ in the Gospels is so important his mother says your father and I have been searching for you in great distress in verse 48 but he says to them in verse 49 why were you looking for me why were you looking for me did you not know that I must be in my father's house

[23 : 07] my father's house your father and I have been looking for you his response is I was in my father's house he's telling us he is the son in a way that even bamboozles Mary the and Joseph it says in verse 50 they didn't understand what he was saying to them despite all the information they had been given already this just doesn't quite compute at this point but he's saying the God that we've all been to worship in this temple over this Passover period and his son he's my father not just our father the Jews would have had a sense of God being the father of Israel if you like but not of an individual person saying he is my father I'm his son this is just mind-blowing but that's what he's saying he is and that means because he's the son of God uniquely the son of God he will see to it that he will do what his father has given him to do I had to be here he tells his mother not I fancied it to fancy hanging around in

Jerusalem for a bit longer see the sites I had to be here in his presence and learning about him and the ways of God and I fit in to this story it's just such delightful obedience he's just so so wholeheartedly passionately committed to doing his father's will there's no slavish legalism about this is there it's an obedience he's delighted to perform and the fact that Christ is dedicated to doing his father's will makes all the difference in the world all the difference in the world because as we read later on in chapter 3 there's a genealogy of Jesus and when we get to the very end of it which is actually the very beginning of the genealogy in verse 38 of chapter 3 we read the son of Enos the son of Seth the son of Adam the son of God this is showing us as then what happens next in the temptation of Jesus that here is another Adam a new Adam the last Adam Adam not in this eternal divine way but he is called the son of God because he has this unique relationship to God which promises immeasurable blessing and glory if he will but obey God something he has complete power to do but what do we know about Adam he doesn't do it he turns from God he disobeys and humanity is plunged into sin and misery as a result because of this first Adam well here clearly we're seeing being presented to us by Luke the new Adam the better Adam the last Adam who will obey because he is uniquely the son of God who will do his father's will I had to be here he says and so he is that greater Adam who does so succeeds where Adam failed and if we put our trust in him that perfect obedience of his is ours in Christ what a comfort what an assurance but of course this is just the beginning of Jesus saying I have to I have to I had to be here because he'll later tell his disciples I will have to be delivered up the Son of man must be handed over to the elders and the chief priests and be crucified and the disciples don't know what to make of that either not you Lord but he is adamant I must so that if we go all the way forward again to Jerusalem to the temple again the Passover at the end of Jesus's earthly ministry when it's not this kind of delightful Q&A; anymore between the teachers and Jesus but they are baying for his blood and the discussions are extremely charged and hostile as they're determined to put this one to death Jesus realizes in the garden of Gethsemane I must be in the things of my father I must be doing my father's will your will not my will be done so that on Calvary Jesus's mother is there isn't she we have it recorded that she sees Jesus being crucified and sees him on the cross and imagine the agony of her heart then when she describes the agony of her heart having lost him for three days why why are you there why are you on the cross I must be doing my father's will it had to be this way that is determination to see the mission through and he did it and he did it for all those who will put their trust in him if you have then remember and be assured that the dedication of the one who even at 12 was saying I must be in my father's house and that expression you may be familiar with the authorized version and I must be about my father's business yes and so here it says I must be in my father's house well like any good ETS student you try to figure out what it says and go get your Greek Testament out and read it and really neither house nor business are in there it's really I must be in the things of my father but house makes sense because if

I said I was going to Donald's house I might just say I was going to Donald's and so that's how we get the understanding that it's in my father's house because he's in the temple he had to do it he had to do it he was determined what an assurance that is for us but if you don't know Christ and you are either in Christ or not you're either in Christ or not if you're not in Christ here is one who had to be about the things of his father to the extent that he died for sinners on the cross faithful obedience to the end and he was gloriously raised up and is ascended and it is father's right hand and that finally is the glorious truth about this passage Jesus is still in his father's house still doing what he must do which is as our great high priest he intercedes for his people before his father always ensuring that the best for us is what is happening always guiding always offering his supplications and his pleas and the father is delighted to answer he's still in his father's house and we have that wonderful assurance today are you troubled worried struggling to obey yourself turn to the obedient one the one who just so delights to obey his father that he would go to Calvary to save us turn to him that you trust in him and it will make all the difference in the world he has to be in his father's house he was then he was when he was doing his father's work on

[33 : 12] Calvary and he is even now at the right hand of the father well I'm in may God bless these thoughts on his word we're going to conclude now by remembering this amazing entrance of Christ into his father's heavenly sanctuary on the completion of his earthly mission which this Sam surely ultimately looks forward to the entrance of the King into heaven having completed his work on earth beginning at verse 7 you ate Sam 24 beginning at verse 7 in the Scottish Salter version the gates lift up your heads on high the doors that last for a be lifted up that so the King of glory enter me we'll

stand to sing these verses to God's grace

Verily that great in mind, I'm strong in battle is.

Ye gates lift up pure heads, ye doors, doors that do last for a.

Be lifted up, I saw the King of glory and turning.

A two is he that is the King, the King of glory who is this, the Lord of hosts and unbatee, the King of glory is.

[36 : 28] The Lord of hosts and unbatee, the King of glory is.

Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Amen, Amen.

Amen, Amen. Let us pray. Father, we pray that you, the God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep by the blood of the eternal covenant equip us with everything good, that you that we may do your will working in us that which is pleasing in your sight through Jesus Christ to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.