

11-14 appendix



Day 1

Jesus' childhood

Bible readings

- Luke 2:41-52 The boy Jesus at the Temple: bit.ly/3Su6eK8
- Matthew 13: 31-32 Parable of the mustard seed: bit.ly/4b9v7SB

We don't really know much about Jesus' childhood, do we? We have the Christmas birth stories and then we skip a load of years until we come to the story of Jesus in the temple.

What happened between Jesus and his family returning from Egypt and today's story when we are told he is 12 years old? We know from the Bible passage that Jesus' family went to the temple in

them? In the Jewish faith, a boy doesn't 'come of age' until he's had his Bar Mitzvah – when he's 13 (girls celebrate their Bat Mitzvah when they are 12). There is no record of Jesus having a Bar Mitzvah that he did, because going to Jerusalem for the Passover was a requirement for Jewish men.

What are the important things that happened to you growing up between when you were born and when you went to secondary school?

Activity

Using a pen and paper, draw a timeline of your life from birth to now. Mark on your timeline the important events that happened to you.

Discuss

Are there similarities between your timeline and those of the others in your group? Which life events might Jesus have included in his timeline?

Question

I wonder why the people that compiled the Bible didn't include anything else about Jesus growing up?



Day 2

Jesus' baptism

Bible reading

- Matthew 3: 13-17 The baptism of Jesus: bit.ly/3SrmBXO
- Matthew 5: 15-16 Parable of the lamp on a stand: bit.ly/3Ubm1OZ

Jesus was baptised by his cousin, John, in the River Jordan when he was about 30 years old. Nowadays, although some churches practice 'adult baptism' we are more likely to be baptised when we are children or babies. We don't have the knowledge or understanding of what is happening in baptism – which is why we have Godparents to make promises on our behalf.

Discussion

What do you think baptism means? Why do we do it? Are you baptised? How old were you when you were baptised? Does not being baptised mean that God doesn't love you as much?

We understand baptism as being welcomed into God's family. Jesus is the Son of God – did he really need to be baptised?

Activity

Using your phones or a laptop, look on the internet to explore the different baptism beliefs of Christian denominations (eg Roman Catholic, Baptist and United Reformed Church). Which do you agree with? Do any make you feel uncomfortable?

Day 3

Jesus' ministry

Bible reading

- Matthew 22: 36-40 The Greatest Commandment: bit.ly/3u0CQSm
- Luke 10: 25-37 Parable of the Good Samaritan: bit.ly/48LDhyU

Do you know people who, when you ask them a question, give you more of an answer than you need? The Pharisee asked Jesus "What is the most important commandment?" and Jesus told him what the TWO most important commandments are! Is that too much information? Or is Jesus making an important point?

Go out and be – Jesus commission and ascension

Bible reading

- Matthew 28: 16-20 The Great Commission: bit.ly/3u2sDoo
- Luke 24: 50-53 Ascension of Jesus: bit.ly/3OdV7Cr
- Luke 14: 15-24 Parable of the Great Banquet: bit.ly/491r20S

Have you ever been invited to a party or an event to which you didn't want to go? What excuses did you make up? Which do the group think is the most inventive excuse?

The Parable of the Great Banquet would seem to suggest that people gave some great excuses for not being able to go to a banquet organised by an important person in, presumably, a posh venue (maybe that is why it is described as 'great') so the Master told his servants to go and invite people who would not normally get to go to such an event.

Discussion

What sort of people do you think were originally invited? Why might they not have wanted to go? How do you think the people who were invited by the servants felt when they were allowed in? The Master was clearly very angry that his initial guests turned his invitation down – do you think they deserved the punishment that they received (never to eat with the Master again)?

Activity

If you were to organise a 'great banquet' what would be on the menu and whom would you invite? What would you do if people didn't turn up?

Some people suggest that this was Jesus saying that, if the Jews didn't want to hear his message of God's Kingdom, then he would share it with anyone who wanted to listen – no matter who they