

Reflection Questions: Luke 2:39-52

For the message, "The Question of Personal Identity" given by Pastor John Ferguson at Mercy Hill Church in Bryan/College Station, Texas, on January 13, 2019

These reflection questions are designed to help you apply the message from the Scriptures by helping you think through application to your personal life, your church life, and your city's life. You can use these by yourself for reflection, or with your family or small group for discussion. To review the message, go to MercyHillBCS.org/resources/messages.

INTRODUCTION

Pray. Take a moment to pray asking God to guide you in reflecting upon the Scripture text.

Read: Luke 2:39-52

39 And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. **40** And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him.

41 Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. **42** And when he was twelve years old, they went up according to custom. **43** And when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, **44** but supposing him to be in the group they went a day's journey, but then they began to search for him among their relatives and acquaintances, **45** and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him. **46** After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. **47** And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. **48** And when his parents saw him, they were astonished. And his mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been searching for you in great distress." **49** And he said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" **50** And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them. **51** And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them. And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart.

52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.

A summary of the message: Jesus' identity was wrapped up in His Father's identity which has everything to do with our identity.

Key Quotes:

- John Calvin, "In knowing God, each of us also knows himself."
- John 1:11-12, "He came to his own, but his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God."
- 1 John 3:1, "See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God; and so we are."
- JI Packer, "'Father' is the Christian name for God."

Bottom Line:

- For the Christian, identity is not something we achieve, it's something we receive.

QUESTIONS

Have you ever wondered what the boyhood of Jesus was like? If you could have one question answered from his childhood, what would you want to know?

1. Let's think about how this text applies to our lives as individuals.

- Mary and Joseph were astonished to find Jesus at the Temple interacting with the religious leaders. Jesus seemed astonished that they didn't know where he would be. "Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" Or more precisely, the text could be translated, "Did you not know that I must be in the things of my Father?"
 - What does this tell us about Jesus identity and mission?
 - What kinds of questions does Jesus question prompt in your mind? If you could ask him a follow up question, what would it be?
- Jesus knew who he was, even from an early age, because He knew who God was—He related to him as "my Father." Read John 1:11-12 above. If I really believed and held to this—namely that part of the mission of the Son of God was to make me an adopted child of God, how would things change? How would my life look differently?
- When I forget that Jesus by his grace gives to me the gift of adoption into God's family, what lies fill that vacuum? How do I tend to define myself? What kinds of things clamor to define me?

2. Let's think about how this text applies to us as a community of Jesus' followers.

- How does this text help us to understand the kind of church we want MHC to be? In other words, what kind of community of faith is this text calling us to become? How would our Jesus-given identity define us and change us as a community of faith?
- What is the cost if we are not transformed by this text? In other words, what is lost if we ignore the message that the Son of God became a human so that we might become the children of God?

3. Let's think about how this text applies to our city.

- How does this text serve as Good News for those outside the faith? What kind of new life / future in Christ is this text calling our city to experience?

CONCLUSION QUESTION

What is the one thing you want to take away from this study to remember or to make a change in your life?

PRAYER

What are some ways you can turn what you are learning into prayer?