

**Children of the Bible Series**  
**Jesus - Submission**  
**Luke 2:41-51**  
**June 20, 2021**  
**Fellowship Bible Church**

In July I will be preaching a series of four sermons at Durkeetown Baptist Church called Children of the Bible. My aim is to encourage young people in their faith, and challenge older people to have a child-faith. You can hear the entire series at our website - [www.durkeetown.org](http://www.durkeetown.org) or at our facebook page [@DurkeetownBaptist Church](https://www.facebook.com/DurkeetownBaptistChurch). This sermon serves as a sort of introduction.

*[Pray and Read Text]*

I used to use the term childlike faith to describe how adults need to have faith like children - simple and complete. But after experiencing the expression of child-faith in my son, Jackson, as he traveled the path of physical death, I feel the term childlike is too pretend. It feels like we are trying to pretend we are child. I believe the term child-faith better describes the reality that our faith must be simple and complete. We shouldn't pretend to uncomplicate it. We can't pretend; it must really be simple and complete.

Let's get into the text then and see what child-faith looks like in the life of Jesus.

The context of this passage is the mid-childhood years for Jesus. After fleeing to Egypt to avoid Herod's wrath, Joseph, Mary, and Jesus moved back to Nazareth. There Jesus has begun to grow and become strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God is upon Him. The record then jumps to when Jesus is twelve. Every year Joseph and Mary go to Jerusalem at the Feast of Passover. This is in compliance with the command of God recorded by Moses in Exodus 23 and Deuteronomy 16. All the Israelite males were supposed to appear before the Lord God three times each year - The Feast of Unleavened Bread (Passover), the Feast of Harvest (Weeks or Pentecost), and the Feast of Ingathering (Booths).

Joseph's family are returning from Jerusalem after the feast but Jesus stays in Jerusalem. Since groups of people travel together, Joseph and Mary are not concerned the first day supposing Jesus was with the other travelers. Likely toward evening when they are preparing to rest they realize Jesus is not with the group. As good parents they return to Jerusalem to search for Him. When they find Him, He is in the Temple. But, Jesus is not just in the Temple as a tourist or even a casual observer. He is interacting with the teachers. Note that Jesus is listening to them and asking questions, but He is also giving answers - answers that amaze the people.

Jesus' parents are astonished. They know Jesus is special. They understand He is the Savior of His people. They probably grasp at some level that He is divine. But they are astonished. Perhaps Jesus hasn't had opportunity to have these kind of discussions in

Nazareth. It is certainly doubtful He led in family devotions. Something new is happening. And Mary, out of concern, scolds Jesus. But Jesus is aware of Who He is and Who His Father is. And He is understanding His work. Jesus is beginning to reveal His true person and true calling. He is the Son of God and has God's work to do. But these things are veiled from His parents - "And they did not understand the saying that He spoke to them."

Now comes a most interesting part in this narrative. Jesus has essentially just expressed to His parents that He has done nothing wrong, but look carefully at verse 51 - "He went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them." Jesus submits Himself to His parents. This should not surprise us, but have you considered that His parents are fallible while He is the Infallible Word of God?! Jesus submits Himself to fallible people because they are in authority over Him by God's design.

Here is today's application. Listen carefully children. Pay attention young people! Here is encouragement for you - Keep obeying your parents even though they are not perfect! Be submissive to them!

Sadly I was not the kind of obedient son I should have been. Had I kept obeying my parents I would have saved many people, including myself, heartache and would not have wasted so much time. I should have heeded the proverb of Solomon - "A wise son makes a glad father, but a foolish son is a sorrow to his mother." (Proverbs 10:1) God has been gracious to me and given me time to redeem what I wasted. You may not have that opportunity. As a father one of my great joys is that my children keep obeying me, and loving me, even though they are very certain I am not perfect. Children and young people, your parents are not perfect, but they have been given authority over you and responsibility for you by God. In your child-faith keep obeying them.

Now it is time to address the other "children" - the adult children of our Heavenly Father.

Adult children of our Heavenly Father, keep obeying those in authority even though they are fallible. Father will bless you when you suffer for obeying those in authority. Now, let's be honest - it is hard, sometimes very hard, to obey those in authority when they have demonstrated they are fallible. The recent pandemic has proven this to be true. It is true in many churches and in many workplaces. We struggle to obey authority when they demonstrate fallibility! But the Bible teaches us to obey authority. And, not just in some obscure passage. It is all over the place.

Let's look at one from a letter to the Church. It comes from the Hebrews 12:17. "Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you." One common issue in the church is that congregants lose respect for the leaders when they demonstrate they are fallible. But, as with so many authority texts, the writer places no qualifiers on obeying and submitting to those in authority. He doesn't say, "If your leaders do and say everything right you should submit to them." The principle Jesus is teaching is that we submit to God-given authority because God says commands it. This shows child-faith.

So, as a minister among the churches of the Lord Jesus Christ I exhort you to obey and submit to Pastor Howie, Pastor Jim, and any other leaders who have authority in this church. The Scriptures promise it will be to your advantage if you do because our Father always blesses obedience.

Now, admittedly, this is very challenging, especially for those who have several layers of authority to whom they are responsible. But, the good news is that Jesus understands. He Himself faced this challenge, and this is why the writer records in another part of the book to the Hebrews that Jesus understands. "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need." You see, we can have draw near to the throne of grace with confidence because Jesus understands how hard it can be to submit to authority, especially fallible authority. Take courage brothers and sisters!

Now I want to make sure it is impressed on our minds that Jesus obeyed fallible authority when He was an adult. Look with me to Matthew 17:24-27.

"When they came to Capernaum, the collectors of the half-shekel tax went up to Peter and said, 'Does you teacher not pay the tax?' He said, 'Yes.' And when he came into the house, Jesus spoke to him first, saying, 'What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth take toll or tax? From their sons or from others?' And when he said, 'From others,' Jesus said to him, 'Then the sons are free. However, not to give offense to them, go to the sea and cast a hook and take up the first fish that comes up, and when you open its mouth you will find a shekel. Take that and give it to them for me and for yourself.'"

The men who collect the Temple tax ask Peter why Jesus doesn't pay the tax. Peter thinks He does. Jesus explains why He doesn't. But, then, Jesus chooses to obey fallible authority ("However, not to give offense...").

This is what child-faith looks like. This is how child-faith acts. We obey those in authority even when they are fallible - trusting God to bless us and accomplish His purposes in us.

So, children and young people, obey your parents in the Lord for this is right!

Adults, obey and submit your church leaders for this is the will of God!

[Pray]