

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Christmas

"Why?" Luke 2:48-50

January 5, 2025

Rev. Ed Weber

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, our text for this 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Christmas is from our Gospel reading, Luke 2:48-50.

**“So when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother said to Him, “Son, why have You done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously.”**

**49 And He said to them, “Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father’s business?” 50 But they did not understand the statement which He spoke to them.”**

So far the text...

We have two “why?” questions in our text, don’t we? One from Mary and another from Jesus. Although Mary and Joseph did not understand Jesus’ answer to them, Mary kept all these things in her heart in her 3-day journey back to Nazareth.

This morning, in God’s house, we also take a moment to ponder our text and gain greater understanding of these two “why?” questions, and apply this understanding to our lives.

We begin with Mary’s: **“Son, why have You done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously.”**

12 years have gone by since Mary and Joseph had marveled at Simeon’s words in the temple. For us, it was just a week ago that we heard Simeon give thanks to God as he held Jesus in his arms and said:

**“For my eyes have seen Your salvation 31 Which You have prepared before the face of all peoples, 32 A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, And the glory of Your people Israel.”**

Jesus was growing in wisdom and stature like every other boy for He is true man. Scripture doesn’t say that He performed miracles as a child, for Jesus hadn’t begun His

public ministry yet. To Mary and Joseph, Jesus was a normal boy. Like other Jewish boys He went to Jerusalem at least once a year for the feast of Passover. The other two feasts would have been the feast of Pentecost and Tabernacles. Jesus was very trustworthy and righteous and sinless, of course...so much so that they had no problem letting Him be on His own.

In Mary's question, we see Jesus' humanity on full display. "Son", she says, just as any mother would speak to her 12-year-old son. "Your father and I" she says to Jesus, speaking again as human parents. Joseph was Jesus' earthly father. This is also the last mention of Joseph in the Bible, which leads us to think that Joseph died by the time Jesus began His ministry. Again – as all human fathers must do.

When Mary and Joseph find Jesus in the temple, they are amazed again, for they had not been thinking about Jesus' heavenly Father. They had not been thinking about Jesus' divine nature as the Son of God.

Instead, we hear in Mary's "Why?" question a placing of blame and fault. Why have You done this to us? When things don't go as planned, our first reaction is to blame somebody else instead of ourselves. Jesus hadn't done anything wrong. Mary and Joseph were lacking understanding about their Son, and they took it personally. Why have You done this to us?

There are so many things in this life that we lack understanding of. When things in our lives don't go as planned or the way we like it, do we blame God by saying "Why have You done this to us?" Why am I going through this hardship? Why am I sick? Why am I grieving the death of a loved one? Why do I have problems at work or school? Why do I feel that people don't love me?

Yes, Mary's question has been rephrased by each of us in so many ways as we face heartbreaks and losses in this world. We ask the "why?" question because we live in a sin filled world where we must enter the Kingdom of God through many tribulations. (Acts 14:22).

We remember how Simeon told Mary something very special about her Child. **"Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against 35 (yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."** Luke 2:34-35

And Jesus was preparing Himself at the age of 12 for His destiny of being the Savior of the world. Yes, Jesus, the Son of God had to be a true human in order to take the place of every sinner in the world on the cross and bear every sin.

And so, we also ponder Jesus' "why?" question. For in it we see Jesus' divine nature and His purpose for coming to us.

**“Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father’s business?”**

Why did Mary and Joseph get themselves all worked up and search for Jesus everywhere but where they should have looked in the first place? They should have known that Jesus would be in His Father’s house, His Heavenly Father’s house. For Jesus is the Son of God. And as a human boy He was filling His heart and mind with His Father’s Words and giving understanding to those teachers around Him.

We shouldn’t be so quick to criticize Mary and Joseph for not understanding this. For do we seek to find Jesus first where He is found, in Word and Sacrament? When we are anxious do we seek comfort in God’s house and in His Word? Or after much searching do we realize where our true strength is found – in the Gospel of Jesus!

Mary and Joseph weren’t unique in not understanding and trusting in Jesus. Jesus asked the people:

**“28 “So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; 29 and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.” Matthew 6:28-29**

Jesus asked His disciples on the sea:

**“Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?” Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm.” Matthew 8:26**

As we heard on Christmas day in Psalm 2, we know that the unbelieving world plots against God and His anointed, Jesus Christ.

**“Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing? 2 The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the Lord and against His Anointed, saying, 3 “Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us.”**

And this plotting came to a climax when Jesus' betrayer came to Him in the Garden of Gethsemane. **"50 But Jesus said to him, "Friend, why have you come?" Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and took Him." Matthew 26:50**

And Pilate could not find any fault for crucifying Jesus and so he asked, **"Why, what evil has He done?" But they cried out all the more, saying, "Let Him be crucified!"**

Yes, the sinless Jesus knew of His Father's business, the business of saving the world from their sins at the age of 12. Who was subject to His human parents. He knew that He would be the sacrificial Lamb and that He would have to suffer all humanity, for you and me.

### **2 Corinthians 5:21**

**"For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."**

In Jesus' deepest suffering for all people, Jesus cried out to His Father a most agonizing "Why?" question.

### **Matthew 27:46**

**And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"**

With great trust in His Father Jesus cries out, My God, My God. And in that time on the cross, Jesus not only suffered the physical torment, but the spiritual torment of hell itself. Jesus suffered hell eternally, the full wrath of the Father for all sin, of the absence of the Father's presence. Yes, Jesus as true Man and true God suffered this eternal wrath. And because Jesus is true God, His suffering in hell was for all people.

Once and for all – it is finished -Jesus said. There is no more reason to wonder why Jesus came. There is no more reason for the angel to ask: **"Why you are seeking the living among the dead?" Luke 24:5.** For Jesus is risen. For His resurrection is the proof that our salvation has been accomplished! The Father's business for the world's salvation has been accomplished!

And still, the Father's business continues in God's house right here and now. For Jesus is present with us in His very Word and gives to us His very body and blood sacrificed on the cross for us. Why? For the remission of our sins!

Yes, with the wise men we come and worship our Lord and give Him our treasures for He has given us the greatest treasure – our eternal salvation. Yes, as Paul told Timothy,

**“from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”**

From childhood Jesus prepared Himself to be our salvation and has won our victory! All glory to God that He has made us also wise for salvation! Amen

**And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” Amen. (Philippians 4:7)**