

MONDAY 5.1.23 - Luke 2:52

Not much is revealed about Jesus' youth. It surely encompassed daily events and schedules, work and play. The window of time for children to grow is only a small portion of their lives and passes by very quickly. Parents grasp this later in life, grandparents grasp it right away. Experience is a great teacher.

The renown of Jesus' life is demonstrated in his later years, during his ministry to the world. All the world beheld this man full of grace and truth. But the foundation for that life was formed early on, while at work and play, in the midst of schedules and events. There he learned obedience, love, perseverance, and forgiveness, among lots of other disciplines. Parents today teach these disciplines. As his parents taught these things, Jesus grew into the man whom the whole world needed, a man of wisdom and having favor with God and man.

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

TUESDAY 5.2.23 - Philippians 1:19-21

I had a middle eastern colleague that treated me, several decades older than he, with a respect typical of his culture. When I was no longer in the office, my associate was treated far differently. Age was the only qualifier!

In today's passage, Paul exhorts Timothy to not let anyone despise his youth. It is important to note that Paul does not leave it there! He exhorts his young companion to **prove** himself by being an *example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, and in purity*.

That is a powerful exhortation to us, as well. Young and old. New to the faith or years down that journey. Simple in our understanding of the Scriptures or deep in our knowledge. In speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity - what an *example* we would be to family, church and the world!

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

WEDNESDAY - 5.3.23 - Galatians 1:6-9

Paul is amazed at how quickly the Galatian believers embraced false teaching after he had left them. The false teachers deceived and convinced the Galatians into believing that faith alone in Christ alone is insufficient for eternal salvation. They taught that a person must obey the Law of Moses to be justified in God's sight. So, what's the antidote to false teaching? Keep moving forward in the truth! That's why it is so important for you to spend time in the Word of God and prayer every day. That's why it is so important for you to be at Shiloh every Sunday morning to study the Word in a worship service. That's why it is so important for you to be involved in an E2 small group so that you will "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18).

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

THURSDAY 5.4.23 - Deuteronomy 13:1-4

American author David Foster Wallace writes: "in the day-to day trenches of adult life, there is actually no such thing as atheism. There is no such thing as not worshipping. Everybody worships. The only choice we get is what to worship. And the compelling reason for maybe choosing some sort of god or spiritual-type thing to worship is that pretty much anything else you worship will eat you alive. If you worship money and things, if they are where you tap real meaning in life, then you will never have enough, never feel you have enough. It's the truth. Worship your own body and beauty and sexual allure and you will always feel ugly, and when time and age start showing, you will die a million deaths before they finally plant you. On one level, we all know

this stuff already - it's been codified as myths, proverbs, clichés, bromides, epigrams, parables: the skeleton of every great story. The trick is keeping **the truth** up front in daily consciousness." That truth is faith in Jesus Christ...anything else will eat you alive.

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

FRIDAY - 5.5.23 - Acts 20:29-32

²⁹I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. ³⁰Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. ³¹So be on your guard! Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears.

³²"Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

There is nothing wrong with fresh ideas but be careful. The best sales strategy is to get the person to make a quick emotional decision rather than a well thought out logical one. Satan strategy is no different. Further, in our science-based culture, if someone says, "statistics show" we tend to believe it. When it comes to accepting the things of the world, I would like to offer a few suggestions:

1. Make well thought out and logical decisions. Think about what the world is selling and where you stand on these issues, as I often told my kids, "Draw a line in the sand ahead of time and say I will not cross this line.
2. Base what is true on the Word of God.
3. Remember, God loves everyone and wants all to be saved, but Jesus said "wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. ¹⁴But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it. Matthew 7:13-14.

SPACE FOR REFLECTION
