

*Get Ready!*

## Jesus Begins His Ministry

By: Betsy Moore



### Text

Luke 2:39-52

### Key Quest Verse

“Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.” (Luke 2:52.)

### Bible Background

The beautiful area of Galilee in the northern section of the Holy Land was the home of Jesus. He lived in the city of Nazareth with Mary, His mother, and Joseph, who was well-known as a carpenter. From the time He was a newborn baby, recently born in Bethlehem, through the years of His boyhood, and as a young adult, Jesus had a normal human development.

Jesus experienced a fourfold growth. Luke, the beloved physician, tells in his Gospel: “Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man” (Luke 2:52). Note the four areas in which Jesus grew. They include: mental, physical, spiritual, and social aspects of growth. What a wonderful pattern for us today!

When Jesus was thirty years of age, He was baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan River and began His public ministry in Galilee. The city of Capernaum on the northern shores of the Sea of Galilee became the major center of His wonderful work.

*Get Ready!***Lesson Quest**

**What I want my students to:**

**Know:** Jesus grew from a baby to a toddler, to a child, to an adult, just like you.

**Feel:** Excited that even at your age you can talk to someone about God.

**Do:** Follow Jesus' example and talk to others about the Good News.

**Leader's Devotion**

Jesus had a divine calling from God. He planted the seed and it was blessed and flourished. As a leader, what are you doing? Do you reflect the joy of your calling? Do you recognize the opportunities that God has blessed you with? We must consider our calling as a teacher and rejoice in the pleasure of being involved in training a child in God's word. You are planting a seed! Develop techniques to show your students how you respect their knowledge of God's word and make time for discussion just as the teachers in the synagogue did with Jesus.

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**Get Set!****Option A**

**Materials:** One toothpick for each child

**You're big boys and girls now and are really growing up! Do you remember when you were a little baby?** (If there is a baby in your church ask if they can remember when they were that small.) **Then you were two and you started talking. You're all so grown-up now and strong. I have a challenge for you. First, let me see your muscles. Wow, you're all getting so strong! Who thinks they can break one of these toothpicks? We're not going to break these toothpicks just by bending them in half. I want you to place the toothpick under your pointy (index) finger, and over your middle finger, and back under your ring finger. Now, press as hard as you can and let me see you break the toothpick. Is it impossible? No! The trick to breaking the toothpick is to slap your hand down onto your leg or the table and the toothpick will break. Did you just learn something new? Try it out on your mom or dad. Your body is growing, you are getting smarter, too, just like Jesus did. In today's lesson, we're going to learn that Jesus got bigger and taller and stronger and especially smarter as He grew up. He was even teaching the teachers when He was only 12 years old.**

**GO TO THE BIBLE STORY**

**Option B**

**It's time to pack your suitcase for a fun celebration vacation. What will we need? First, pull out your imaginary suitcase and open it. We're taking a trip to a far away land called Jerusalem for a big celebration. Have the children list items they'll need for their trip and pretend to put items in their suitcase. Make sure each child has suggested at least one item to pack and pretend to close your suitcase and start to travel. Walk around the room. Oops, I forgot my toothbrush . . . we better go back. Oh, no, I forgot to let the dog out of the house, we've got to go back to do that. Continue on your journey until it's time to take a rest. Let's rest here at this table and learn about a journey that Jesus and His family took.**

**GO TO THE BIBLE STORY**



**Get Set!****Bible Story**

**Teacher Tip:** Provide markers for students to highlight portions of the story in their Bibles.

God had special plans for His son, Jesus, even before He was born. God chose Mary to be His mother and Joseph to be his step-dad or father on earth. Everyone was looking for a Savior and king, so when Jesus was born in a stable, many people didn't believe He was the Son of God.

There was a man in the temple named Simeon who had been waiting many years on one special baby. God promised Simeon that he would see the Savior before he died. Simeon and Anna, an 84-year-old prophetess, were in the temple together when they saw a couple walk in with a young baby. They knew immediately that the baby Mary was carrying was God's son, Jesus. They were happy to finally see the Savior. It was a promise that God had given, a Savior would be born and they would see Him.

Mary and Joseph heard that mean King Herod wanted to kill all the baby boys because he didn't want anyone else to become king. Mary and Joseph took a trip to Egypt with baby Jesus to keep him safe from King Herod. One night when Jesus was still small, an angel came to Mary and Joseph and said it was safe to return home to Nazareth. They were so happy. Jesus was growing up and Mary and Joseph had another baby for Jesus to play with and help take care of. Even though Mary was a busy mom with more babies, she taught Jesus all about God creating the earth.

Jesus was growing up fast. When most boys were six years old during Jesus' time, they were sent to school in the synagogue. The schools were known as "houses of the book," because their lessons were taken from the Old Testament. The teachers would greet them and they would take their places, and the teacher would read to them. The boys listened carefully and memorized the words from the Bible. At the age of thirteen, the boys left the school and usually went to work with their dad.

When Jesus was 12, He went with His parents to Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover. When the celebration was over, everyone was going back home. When you're at a party, do you stay with your mom and dad or do you go off and play with your friends and cousins? Well, this celebration time, probably the moms and dads were talking and walking and the kids were running around and playing together. Begin to walk around the room with the kids. Mary and Joseph and the other moms and dads, walked and talked for a full day. At the end of the day, it was time to find their kids. They looked and looked, but couldn't find Jesus. Put your hand above your eyes as if to search. They began to call His name, JESUS. There was no answer.

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*Get Set!*

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**Bible Story**

CONTINUED

**Do you think they were afraid someone kidnapped Him? Where could He be? They couldn't find Him anywhere. They had to go where they last saw Him . . . Jerusalem. They were probably scared as they hurried back a full day's trip to find Jesus. I imagine as they traveled, they asked, "Have you seen a 12 year old boy?" They went to the temple courts where the teachers were sitting. Can you imagine the look on His mom's face when she saw Jesus? She probably said, "Jesus, where have you been? Why have you done this to us? We've been worried sick about you." Jesus answered, "I've been busy doing my Father's business." Jesus was talking with and teaching the teachers. After all, He was God's son. Jesus was only 12 when He began His ministry of teaching and preaching.**

**Go!****Who's Missing?****GAME****Materials:** An adult helper**Quest Connection**

Jesus was missing and His parents went searching for Him. He was doing His father's business or discussing God's plan with people in the temple or church. Everyone is special to God. Take notice of who is missing and make sure to let them know you missed having them worship with you and you hope they are back soon.

**Procedure:** I'm glad all of you are here today! Is anybody missing? Let's all close our eyes for a minute and think of how Mary and Joseph must have felt when they realized Jesus was missing. As students close their eyes, have your helper tap one student on the shoulder and tip-toe out of the room. Let's open our eyes and think about the first thing Mary and Joseph did when they realized Jesus was missing. Wait a minute, I think someone in our class is missing. Let children decide who is missing and have missing student return; continue to play until all children have been missing.

**Close**

We should be just like Mary and Joseph when we notice someone is missing! We should search for them and invite them back to church! What are some ways we could invite people back to church? (telephone, e-mail, card, visit.)

Optional: Have students write "We Miss You" notes to students who haven't been regularly attending church.

**Go!****Dusty Journey Cookies****FOOD**

**Materials:** Snack size Zip-lock bags, graham crackers, a teaspoon of powdered sugar (per student) and chocolate syrup

**Quest Connection**

**Jesus and Mary and Joseph went on a long journey. They walked on the dusty roads.** Place the graham crackers and powdered sugar in the bag and seal. Begin to crush the graham cracker with your fingers. **They were probably tired and hot but excited to be going to Jerusalem for this Passover Celebration.** What do you think happened if it started to rain when they were on their trip?

**Procedure: Let's put a little mud in the bag.** Squirt about a tablespoon of chocolate on top of the graham cracker crumbs. **Now the road is muddy. Let's squash the crumbs in with the chocolate.** Can you imagine planning a long trip and walking all the way there? **That's just what Jesus and Mary and Joseph did!** Hopefully it didn't rain on them and get the roads all muddy. **They got to Jerusalem and everything was fine. I'll bet they were hungry when they got there! I'm hungry, too!** Let's see what happened to our dust in our bags. **Look, it made a gooey cookie!**

**Close**

**What is the farthest that you have ever had to walk? Just think, people in the Bible had to walk wherever they went. Let's eat our mud cookie and remember that even when Jesus was on a celebration trip, He remembered to talk to others about God.**

**Go!****Beginnings****GUEST QUEST**

**Materials:** Ask your pastor or youth leader to be your special guest. (Warn them that you will be doing an interview about their childhood life and how they began their ministry of teaching and preaching.)

**Quest Connection**

**Our guest today is someone that I think all of you already know. But today we are going to find out some things about them that maybe you didn't know!**

1. How old were you when you started talking to other people about God?
2. How did you learn so much about God?
3. What does it mean to be doing God's work?
4. What do you do to minister to other people?

**Procedure:** Let children also ask questions, and make sure the guest makes each child feel special. "Example, Johnny, that was an excellent question, etc."

**Close**

**Jesus was only 12 years old when He started to teach and talk to others about God. What did He do to prepare himself for His father's work? What should we be doing?**  
Ask your guest to give the class some suggestions.

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**Go!**

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**Snack Pack****FOOD**

**Materials:** 12”-16” circle of muslin fabric, string or yarn, snack

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**Quest Connection**

**What do you think of when you think of taking a trip? I’m sure Jesus was excited about the journey, getting to play with His friends and cousins. He was also excited to be able to go into the temple and learn from the teachers. Before you take a trip, what is one of the first things you need to do? Pack, right? Do you ever pack a snack when you take a trip? Today we’re going to make a snack pack, maybe like one that Jesus took on His trip when He went to the temple.**

**Procedure:** Give each child a circle of muslin. Slits can be cut to put a drawstring through, or wrap the string around the top of the circle and draw it together. Place a snack inside your snack pack.

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**Close**

**We should always bless our food before we eat.**

**Prayer: Dear God, thank You for sending Jesus and letting Him teach us how to live. In Jesus’ name, amen.**

**Go!****Getting Lost****CHRISTIAN LIVING**

**Materials:** Contact your local police station and see if they have any pamphlets, videos, etc. that you could show your class about getting lost, strangers, etc.

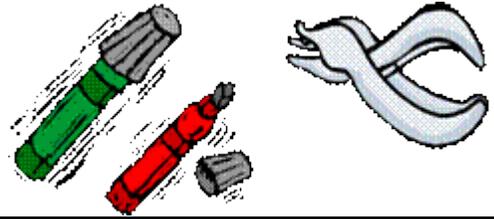
**Quest Connection**

**Are you afraid of being lost? In our story today we learned that Jesus' parents couldn't find Him. They were very upset.**

**Procedure:** Show a video or information that you have gathered on safety. Discuss with children what to do when they get lost from their parents. Let children suggest whom they should go to for help. Discuss who to stay away from. **Do you think Jesus felt like He was lost when His parent's couldn't find Him? Why is it important for your parents to always be in sight when you are in a store?**

**Close**

**We must always remember to let an adult know where we are going and how long we will be gone, even if it is just to a good friend's house. Can you help me think of a way we can ask God to help us be safe?**

**Go!****Backward Masks****ARTS/CRAFTS**

**Materials:** Paper plates, hole punch, elastic thread, and markers

**Quest Connection**

Sometimes it seems like our parents have eyes in the back of their head! You can be doing something and they are not even in the same room, and they know what you are doing and tell you to stop. I'll bet when Mary and Joseph were traveling with Jesus, they wished they had had eyes in the back of their heads. Maybe then they wouldn't have lost Him. Today we're going to make a backward mask so we can pretend to have eyes in the back of our heads.

**Procedure:** Hole punch each side of the paper plate. Place elastic thread in holes and tie so mask will fit the child's head. Let children decorate mask with eyes or even glasses, lips, and a nose. Place their masks on the back of their heads with the string across their foreheads.

**Close**

Prayer: **Dear God, thank You for giving us loving parents to watch over us. In Jesus' name, amen.**

# Journal Page

Jesus grew from a baby to a toddler, to a teenager and was searching God's word and telling others of God's plan. Outline your hand in crayon. Inside your hand draw a picture of baby Jesus in pencil or a picture of the Bible. Look how big your hand is now! You are growing and can be doing God's work, too.

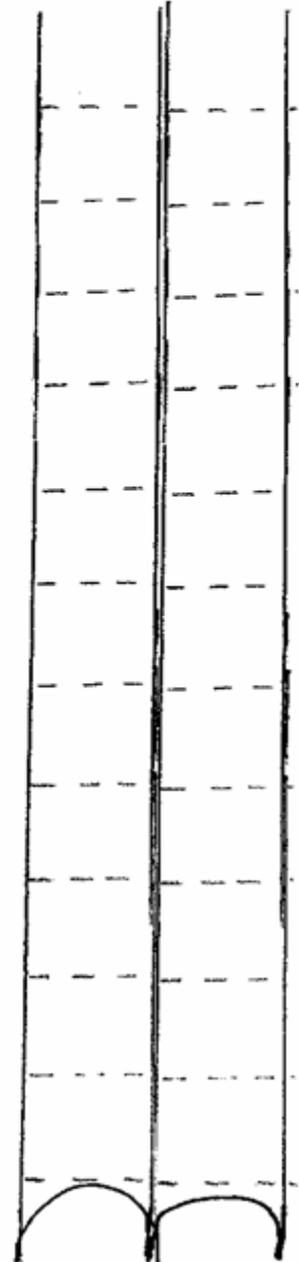
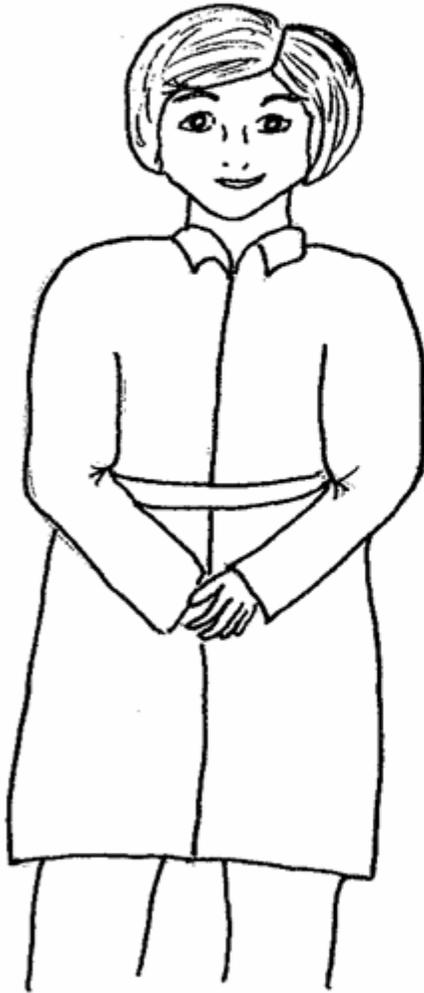
NAME \_\_\_\_\_ AGE \_\_\_\_\_

*"Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man" (Luke*

**Growing Jesus:**

**Color Jesus and cut Him and His legs out. Tape or glue the legs to Jesus. Fold the legs on the dotted line and watch Jesus grow. Jesus got taller and stronger and smarter. He wanted to do His Father's work and learn all He could.**

**"Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man" (Luke 2:52).**



**Game: Traveling with Jesus**

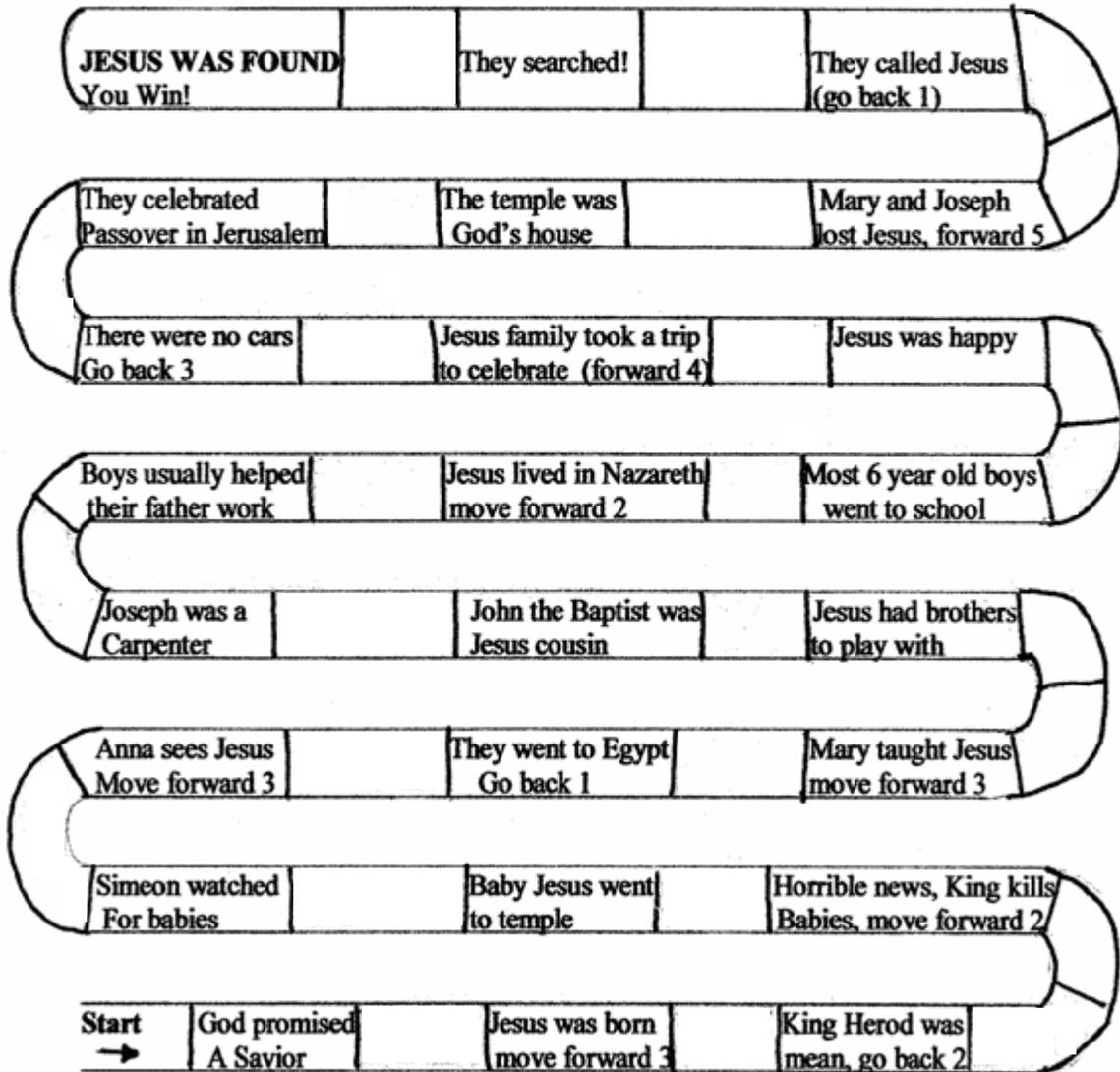
Materials: game page for each student, button or rocks for game pieces, dice

Preparation: Copy game pages for each student.

Quest Connection: Jesus grew and traveled to tell others about His Father.

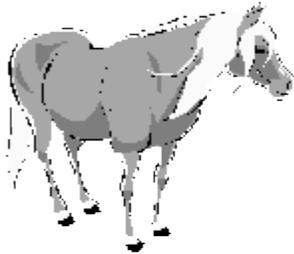
Wherever you go or whatever you do, you should remember God.

Procedure: Move game pieces according to number on dice. Follow directions on game page. Let each student take turns rolling the dice and moving until they win.



“Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man” (Luke 2:52).

When Jesus was 12 He went on a trip with His family to Jerusalem for the Passover Celebration. How do you think Jesus and His family traveled? Mark an X on the items you know they did not use to travel to Jerusalem.



Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man” (Luke 2:52).