

5. Jesus in the Temple



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Jesus in the Temple

Leader Notes:

- View [this session's focus](#), faith nurture goals, leader devotional, and story symbol (click on the story symbol to download or print).
- For the full set of DWELL Flex story symbols use the link in the sidebar.
- Need this as a PDF? Just [print this page](#) and choose to save/print as a PDF.

Take a few moments to greet the children and let them know how glad you are to see them.

I love exploring God's story with you. Let's get ready to do that together.

Breathe

Use this time to focus your attention on God.

Do this with me: calm your head, heart, and hands as you slowly breathe in . . . and out. *(Demonstrate a few deep "in and out breaths" with eyes closed.)*

Tell and Wonder

Let's enter God's story together. Here's the story symbol for the part of God's story that we'll be spending time in today. I wonder what clues it gives us about the story we're about to hear? *(Show the story symbol. Accept any answers without giving away whether or not the kids have guessed correctly.)*

Listen closely as we read the story together to see which story our symbol represents.

Read "Jesus in the Temple" aloud (below), pausing throughout to allow children to answer the wondering questions. NOTE: It's always a good idea to read through the story beforehand so you'll be able to tell it well.

You can also read the story from a children's Bible or a simplified translation of Scripture like the New International Reader's Version (NIRV). Remember to pause throughout to allow time to wonder.

Pray

Close with a prayer of thanksgiving. Thank God for each child by name, thank God for this time together and ask God to go with each child throughout the week.

See [5 Ways to Pray with Kids](#) for other ways to pray.

Respond

Select and do one or more of the response activities from God's Big Story card #87 or check out [5 Ways to Retell a Bible Story with Kids](#) for some fun ways to retell this story. Include older kids in the retelling by having them read the story aloud while the younger children act it out.*

**God's Big Story cards can be ordered from FaithAliveResources.org.*

Easy Extra

Invite kids to imagine and then draw a picture of what they might look like at the age of 12. If you have 12-year-olds in your group (who are comfortable sharing), have them tell a little about what it's like to be 12. Use the following questions to guide your conversation:

- *What jobs do you do around the house?*
- *Do you ever watch your younger siblings? What's that like?*
- *How do you feel about school? What are your favorite and least favorite subjects?*
- *Do you do any cooking or fix any foods or snacks? What do you like to make?*
- *What are your favorite things to do?*

Story: Jesus in the Temple [Luke 2:41-52](#)

Listen to how this part of God's story begins. I'm reading from the book of Luke, chapter 2. (Open your Bible and read [Luke 2:41](#).)

That's how this part of God's big story begins. It's true, every year, Mary and Joseph went to Jerusalem to celebrate the feast of the Passover. It was a time for a special meal, a time to remember how God had freed his people, a time to pray and to praise God. No wonder God's people would come from every little town and big city to worship God in the temple in Jerusalem.

When Jesus was twelve years old he traveled to Jerusalem with his parents to celebrate the feast of the Passover. The trip was wonderful! Lots of families from Nazareth walked the road to Jerusalem together. Imagine Jesus walking along with the other kids—laughing and singing as they walked. Kicking stones in the road. Taking in the wonderful sights of the big city that was much, much bigger than little Nazareth. **What do you think would be the most exciting part of traveling to Jerusalem with your family and friends?** (Pause for responses.)

Imagine his feelings when he finally reached the city and saw the beautiful temple. More beautiful than any other building he'd seen. Giant pillars stood in front. There was a courtyard outside it. What an amazing sight!

Then the celebration started. The people ate the Passover meal together. They remembered how God had brought their ancestors out of slavery. They worshiped God—praying and singing and praising God for taking them away from Pharaoh, the wicked king who made them his slaves. God's people were free!

When the days of the Passover Feast ended, all of the families who had gathered in Jerusalem left the temple and began to walk back home.

Close your eyes and picture what it might have looked like to see a whole group of families walking together. What are the kids doing? The grown-ups? What do they see as they walk? (Pause for responses.)

After a day of traveling, Mary and Joseph found the large group of kids who were walking together and asked about Jesus. No one had seen him. He wasn't with the group. Mary and Joseph were frantic! Where could he be? It wasn't like Jesus to do things that upset them.

Imagine Mary and Joseph's feelings when they couldn't find their son anywhere. Describe how they must have felt. (Pause for responses.)

In a panic Mary and Joseph turned around and hurried back to Jerusalem. They called Jesus' name. They stopped people to ask if anyone had seen him. After they reached Jerusalem, they looked for Jesus for *three whole days*. The crowds had left. That made it a lot easier to see if Jesus was there somewhere.

Finally they found him in the temple! Did Jesus look worried because everyone else had left? No! Was he trying to get directions back to Nazareth? No! Jesus was sitting with the priests and wise old teachers whose job it was to serve God in the temple. These were the leaders who knew all about God's story—the ones who could answer anyone's questions. And here's what's amazing: Jesus was not only listening to the leaders, he was also talking to them. He was asking them questions and he was explaining God's teachings to them! They were amazed at what Jesus asked and knew.

When Mary found Jesus, she ran right up to him and blurted out, "Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been searching for you for days!"

And now listen carefully to Jesus' answer: "Mother, why were you looking for me? Didn't you know that I have to be in my Father's house?"

Imagine that! What do you think Jesus meant? (Pause for responses.)

What do you think Mary and Joseph thought of that answer? (Pause for responses.)

Here's how this part of God's story ends. Jesus got right up and walked back to Nazareth with his parents. As they walked, Mary kept thinking about all of these things. She wondered what all of this meant. The Bible ends this story this way:

Read [Luke 2:51-52](#) to the group.

Looking for More Activities for This Story?

Click below to access the full age-specific *Dwell* session for this story:

- [Kindergarten-1st Grade: People in the Temple Learn about Jesus](#)
 - [2nd-3rd Grade: Jesus in the Temple](#)
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