

Growing Together

Inspired by the Christian Faith

WHO IS JESUS? GOD'S SON

Read together



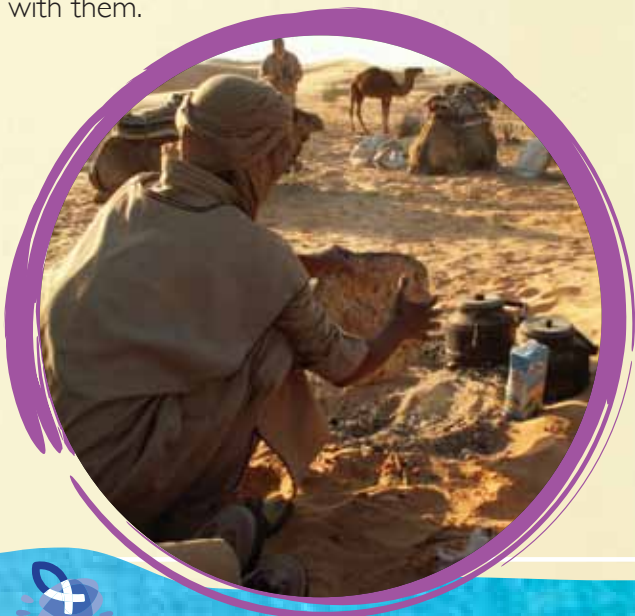
The Journey

A retelling of Luke 2: 41-52

The journey home from Jerusalem was so special. We all felt God really close to us after celebrating the feast of the Passover. Everyone was there - toddlers riding on shoulders, babies wrapped in shawls. Children, so many children, constantly running, weaving between the grown-ups, as they played their endless games. Old friends linked arms and walked a little slower as they shared their stories. Parents planned where to stop for the night and what to eat.

Now and then someone would start up a song and we all joined in, sometimes turning to catch a last glimpse of the Temple in Jerusalem. We praised God every day, with our whole lives, but the Temple was still a very special place for learning.

Everyone was travelling together. Everyone except for Jesus. All the older boys on the journey stuck together, chasing, eating with their cousins, sharing tents with their friends. We just thought he was with them.



I can remember the loud beating of my heart as Joseph and I searched for our boy among all the people. I say 'our boy', but we knew all along Jesus was really God's boy, God's own son. So many strange and special things happened when he was born, there was no doubt that he belonged to God. So where would a boy, who belonged to God, be?

Do you know it took us three whole days to find him? I really thought my heart would burst. We had to walk all the way back to Jerusalem. We were so tired and so afraid. And there was Jesus sitting in the Temple with the teachers, cool as a cucumber, listening and asking questions as though nothing had happened. The teachers were impressed with his knowledge.

I was so happy to see him, but my words were cross. "Young man, why have you done this to us? Your dad and I have been going crazy looking for you."

He simply said, "Why were you looking for me? Didn't you know that I must be here, in my Father's house?"

We really didn't understand what he was talking about, we were just so pleased that he came home with us. As I watched Jesus grow into a man of God, I kept this special memory in my heart with all the others. I didn't understand everything - there are mysteries about God we can't understand, but I did know that God would take care of his Son.



Did you know



Greta Thunberg and Malala Yousafzai are both young girls who have acted unexpectedly and both bravely spoken out. In August 2018, aged 15, Greta began protesting about climate change alone by striking from school. She has since been joined by tens of thousands of school and university students in more than a dozen countries and has addressed the United Nations. Malala Yousafzai started speaking out when she was eleven years old, fearlessly demanding that girls in Pakistan should be allowed to receive an education. A Nobel Peace Prize winner at just 17, Malala said, "It doesn't matter how young or how old you are, anyone can bring about change — and the action you take to deliver that change is valuable."

Courageous Advocacy



Bravely making the world better

Jesus knew, that as God's Son, part of his work was to bring change in people's lives through speaking out for them.

Do you find it difficult to speak out? Are you brave enough to tell people when they are doing things wrong? What about when they are doing things well? Sometimes it takes courage to stand up and speak out, even to tell people when they are doing something well. Think about how you feel when someone notices you are good at something and tells you so. Take time to notice people in your household or school who do things well and see if you can find a way of encouraging them. Consider if there is anything you feel strongly about that you would want to stand up and speak out about.

Create & make



Decorate biscuits with encouraging phrases on them like **'Do not be afraid'** to help you remember you are a child of God.

If biscuits aren't your thing, make a sign for your bedroom door or even your front door.

Family Fun



Use a small toy figure to be Jesus and play a 'hunt the thimble' style game. Tell the children how close they are by telling them they are getting 'warmer' until they are 'scorching hot' or how far away they are by how 'cold' they are getting.

Idea for Pre-schoolers



Set up a journey around a room perhaps using rugs, cushions and scarves to make a path. Choose a soft toy 'Jesus' to stay behind with God in a special place, then walk along on your path with your child pausing to ask 'where is Jesus' and then going back to find him. Allow your child to express their feelings at Jesus always being with God. Repeat the game if they enjoy it.

Prayer space ideas



Labyrinths are ancient prayer pathways found all over the world. They are cut into grass, made from bricks or stones rope, even hedges. A labyrinth is different from a maze. A maze is full of dead ends deliberately designed to get you lost. A labyrinth has a single path always leading you to the centre, if you stay on the path then you can't get lost.



Can you use bricks, string or small stones to make a finger labyrinth? Reflect on where people would find you, if you could follow your heart like Jesus did in the story? Where would God be?

Web Links & Extended Ideas



Flame creative ministries has a simple labyrinth made from foil or tissue paper
<http://flamecreativekids.blogspot.com/2014/09/diy-foil-finger-labyrinths.html?m=1>

