

WHEN DID JESUS KNOW?

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When did Jesus know who He truly was? This question has been around for hundreds of years: “When did Jesus understand He was God in the flesh and the only begotten Son?” When considering something of this nature, we have to remember that Jesus was always one hundred percent man while He lived on the earth, as well as, one hundred percent God from eternity as the Word.

As a human, just like any human, Jesus had to grow and mature physically and mentally, as well as, spiritually. As a babe, Jesus was just like any other baby in the physical sense; he had to eat, sleep, and grow to be a young child and adult. The only difference between Him and any other baby was the circumstances surrounding His birth. The prophet Isaiah wrote, “Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel” (Isa. 7:14). The fulfillment of that prophecy is recorded by the apostle Matthew, “Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise...” (Mt. 1:18-25). Jesus was born to a virgin: not just a young woman, but a young woman that was sexually pure! His birth was indeed a miraculous birth.

Even though He was God in the flesh, He was still in the flesh and, because he was in the flesh, He was subject to the flesh. He became hungry and thirsty, He felt pain, and He had all the emotions that any other person would have. The Holy Spirit blessed us with one statement that gives us some insight into His life from birth to the age of twelve. Luke recorded, “And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him” (Lk. 2:40). Like the very early years of His life, the Holy Spirit has given us one other statement that speaks of Him from twelve years old until He was about thirty years old. Again Luke recorded, “And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man” (Lk. 2:51-52).

Both the provided statements focus on the fact that He **grew** or increased in different areas of His life. He grew physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially. Because of these inspired statements, we know He progressed from a lesser point to a greater point. Does this mean He was any less deity at birth than He was at the crucifixion? The answer is a resounding NO! However, that does not mean that He was any less human than any other person.

It appears that He was coming into the knowledge that He was the very Son of God at the age of twelve years old. He made this statement to His mother, “**How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business**” (Lk. 2:49)? It is obvious that He was referring to the heavenly Father and not to Joseph, the husband of Mary, because he had no duties in the Temple. Many have asked, “Did He know more than His parents at this stage in His life? Of course, He knew more. It would not have taken much to have known more than them concerning His role because they understood very little at that time. It is doubtful, however, that He knew completely the role He would play in man’s redemption in a short twenty-one years from that point.

His complete experience of the physical world is what made Him the perfect sacrifice for mankind. The Hebrews writer said, “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are*, yet without sin” (Heb. 4:15). It will not be possible for us to stand in the judgment and say to Him, our Judge, “You do not understand what I went through on earth,” because He knows personally what we endure in this life.

If Jesus was going to experience this life, He had to experience every aspect of it, which would include His development as a human in the same way all people have from the beginning of time. This in no way takes away from His deity or the great sacrifice that He made. In fact, it points to His greatness because He did experience everything any other person can experience, but He was successful in remaining sinless and obedient to the Father (1 Pet. 2:21-22).