Sermon theme = Wisdom, the practical application of knowledge, is an essential area of growth in life.

Introduction

- Open Bibles (Luke 2)
- Mystery of Christmas = celebration of Jesus’ birth
- He didn’t stay a baby – he grew (Luke 2:52)
- 252 Series – Growing in Wisdom
- Testimony – Robbie Barnes

Exegesis

“And Jesus grew…”

- What is growth?
  - Luke 2:52
    52 And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.
    ✓ “grew” = Greek prokopto; KJV and NASB “increased”; Meaning – to change one’s state for the better by advancing and making progress
    ✓ Only used 5 other times in the NT = all by Paul and all are generally negative
    ✓ Romans 13:12 = advance of the night
    ✓ 2 Timothy 2:16 = babblings increasing to ungodliness
    ✓ 2 Timothy 3:9 = advance of men with depraved minds
    ✓ 2 Timothy 3:13 = Advance of evil men and imposters
    ✓ Galatians 1:14 = Paul’s own growth or advance in Judaism beyond others
  - Luke 2:40
    40 And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him.
“grew” = Greek auxano; Meaning – to increase in the extent of a state

Cp. Luke 1:80 (John the Baptist) – “And the child grew and became strong in spirit...”

More “normal” word for growth – used 23 times in the NT = Gospels, Acts and Epistles

- What a strange thing it is to say that Jesus, the Son of God, grew or increased...
- ...But Jesus has a human nature and human nature, from birth, is intended to change and advance for the better = gaining in skills and abilities and understanding

- **How does growth happen?**
  - Luke 2:40
    - And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him.
    - “grace of God” = The work of God, that we couldn’t do, is active in our lives
  - We have to allow His grace to work (and we can prohibit or forbid it from working in our lives)
  - John 1:14
    - The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.
    - “grace” = Jesus was full (a vessel filled up with) of the work of God
  - Acts 4:33
    - With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all.
    - “grace” = The early disciples were over shadowed by the work of God
  - Growth happens when we allow God’s work to be done in and through us = we grow as He desires and directs

❖ Jesus grew (advanced and made progress) in His human nature through the grace of God

➢ “…in wisdom…”
• What is wisdom?
  o Luke 2:52
    52 And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.
    ✓ “wisdom” = Greek sophia; Meaning – the capacity to understand and, as a result, to act wisely or prudently
    ✓ Hebrew hokmah; Meaning (basic) – skill, aptitude, experience, shrewdness
  o Luke 2:40
    40 And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him.
    ✓ “filled with wisdom” = Passive verb – being filled with wisdom
  o Wisdom is the practical application of knowledge – it is skill and experience
  o “Knowledge knows a tomato is a fruit while wisdom is not putting it into a fruit salad.”

• How do you gain wisdom?
  o Acknowledge the source of wisdom – the Lord
  o Acknowledge the basis of wisdom – the fear of the Lord
  o Proverbs 9:10
    10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.
    ✓ Cp. Proverbs 1:7; 15:33; Psalm 111:10; Job 28:28
    ✓ “fear” = Reverence, awe, respect, trust
    ✓ God, the designer of mankind and the universe has constructed His creation according to His will and wisdom (Example: cheat codes for video games)
  o Look to the blessings of wisdom – the Spirit
  o Isaiah 11:1-2
    1 A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.
    2 The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him-- the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD--
    ✓ “Spirit of wisdom” = The Spirit is given as a blessing of wisdom
✓ Cp. Ephesians 1:17 = blessing to all believers
✓ Cp. Deuteronomy 34:9 = Joshua
   o If you want wisdom, you need to be in relationship with the Holy Spirit
   o Look to the blessings of wisdom – the Bible
   o Deuteronomy 4:5-6
     5 See, I have taught you decrees and laws as the LORD my God commanded me, so that you may follow them in the land you are entering to take possession of it.
     6 Observe them carefully, for this will show your wisdom and understanding to the nations, who will hear about all these decrees and say, "Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people."
✓ Obedience to God’s Word, following it’s dictates, demonstrates wisdom in our lives
   o Psalm 119:98
     98 Your commands make me wiser than my enemies, for they are ever with me.
✓ Wisdom from His Word
   o Colossians 3:16
     16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.
✓ Wisdom from His Word
   o If you want wisdom, you need to be in God’s Word and have God’s Word in you
   o Look to the blessings of wisdom – the Body of Christ
   o Proverbs 11:14
     14 For lack of guidance a nation falls, but many advisers make victory sure.
✓ We are given one another as a blessing of wisdom
   o Acts 15:6
     6 The apostles and elders met to consider this question.
✓ Jerusalem Council called to bring the blessing of wisdom together
   o Colossians 1:9
9 For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding.

✓ We are to be the blessing of wisdom through prayer for one another

○ If you want wisdom, you need to be in fellowship with others in the Body of Christ

❖ Develop your relationship with the Holy Spirit

❖ Make 2011 – the Year of the Bible for your life (reading plans, online Bible, audio Bible, Bible by phone or Twitter)

❖ Get into a study with other Christians – Wednesday night studies and ABFs

Response

• As disciples of Jesus Christ, we need to follow His example of growing in wisdom.
  ✓ Observers = Come to Jesus
  ✓ Disciples = Follow Jesus