My Father's business

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Preacher: Mr Malcolm Macleod

[0:00] And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my father's business?

I have long desired to preach a sermon to young people.
It is indeed wonderful to see so many of you adorning the courts of the Lord, sabbath after sabbath.
And our fervent prayer for you is that the real beauty of the Lord's house would fill your heart and captivate your young hearts forever and forever.
As we have been singing, the real beauty is not really the beauty of a house, even the Lord's house.
[1:36] But the beauty of the triune God, the God who is three in one, the tri-personal God, the real beauty is the beauty of his holiness.

We are to worship him in the beauty of holiness. The real beauty is the marvelous beauty of his love.
The real beauty is the perfection of beauty of his attributes. The real beauty of his love.
The real beauty of his love.
we preach to you. The gospel of our Lord excludes no one, no matter what his or her situation. And every sermon, and this was said before us last Sabbath morning, every sermon preached in his name should be full of spiritual encouragement.
[3:58] We as preachers are not warranted to give spiritual discouragement but spiritual encouragement. We are warranted to seek to remove everything that is in the way, everything that is a stumbling block to the gospel of Jesus Christ. But we are asked to preach spiritual encouragement to everyone.

It is remarkable that the Lord of glory should have resided on earth for 30 years with no allusion to these 30 years except the allusion to his birth.
And his first visit to the temple when he was 40 or 41 days old. He was unconscious like any babe then.
While more or less unconscious of these surroundings, the Lord was on earth for 30 years and there is only, there is only this one allusion to him besides that of his birth.
When he was 12 years old. Just going back to his first visit to the temple, we read that beautiful incident. A man was waiting for him there. He had been waiting long.
[6:10] waiting to greet him. In fact, he may have spent his whole life waiting, sabbath after sabbath in the house of God.

And he got his desire. He took the Lord Christ in his arms. Oh, he took him into the arms of his faith, into the arms of his unseen life, far more than he took him into his life.
And he spoke these wondrous words. Lord, now let us, thou thy servant, depart in peace. For mine eyes have seen thy salvation.
We are indebted to look for this information about the Christ, both with regard to Simeon and the incident when he was 12 years old.
The Gospels are not biographies. They were not meant to be biographies. A biography is an account of a whole life.
[7:58] And apart from these two incidents that we have referred to, the Gospels are wholly about the last three years of the life of our Lord on earth. And therefore, they are not biographies.

Why then, why then, why then were they written? John tells us. John tells us why the Gospels were written.
That this was the reason. These are written. That ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.
And that believing ye might have life through his name.

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The Lord of glory was born in the house of an inn. There was no room for him. In any inn or house in Bethlehem, he was born in an outhouse.
[9:25] He was reared for 30 years in a carpenter's home.

He had the hands of a workman. He did not attend the great universities of the world, like Moses and Paul and Apollos.
He was extraordinary in being ordinary. Let us try to grasp this fact. John the Baptist, his co-age, was the extraordinary one.
John the Baptist was extraordinary in his dress, in his food, in his habits, his way of life.
John was in protest against the spiritual slackness that was abroad at that time.
[10:44] John was the forerunner, the greatest of the prophets. But we must qualify that, the greatest of the prophets who were sinful men.

He was the voice crying in the wilderness. But the real prophet, the real priest, the real king.
He who is God, he wore no extraordinary clothes. He ate no extraordinary food.
And for 30 years, he lived in the quiet valleys of existence. Even he, whose every breath was a perpetual protest against sin.
Infinitely more so than John the Baptist. He would say, I don't know, how to prepare for the world.
Let us then, for a while this morning, look at this incident in the life of this 12-year-old.
[12:09] And let us ask four questions. Four questions. When, where, who, and what?

When, when did this take place? Where did it take place?
Who was involved? And what was the special purpose of it all? First then, when?
It was Passover time. And that is in itself interesting because Passover time was at this very time.
The Passover Sabbath would have been yesterday. Nearly 2,000 years ago at this very time of the year.
[13:31] And we know, I'm sure the youngest here know, that the Passover, that the first Passover was celebrated by the children of Israel in Egypt.

The Lord himself as a child was in Egypt.
Moses spent the first part of the first Passover was celebrated in Egypt.
And we know, that the Passover was in Egypt. Just as they were about to leave it. We remember the solemnity of that occasion. A lamb without blemish had to be killed for each family.
And the blood of the lamb must be sprinkled on the two side posts and on the upper door posts of the entrance to each home of an Israelite.
[14:48] And we remember the Lord. And we remember the awesomeness of that night. Every home of Egypt. Every home that was unprotected by the blood was visited by the angel of death.

The next morning, saw a dead person in every family of Egypt.
Surely that was awesome. The oldest member of each family, the oldest son in each family died that night.
And every home belonging to the Israelites was protected from death.
Death passed over. That's the meaning of the Passover. Death passed over.
[16:07] Because they were protected and because they were under the shelter of the sacrificial blood.

But we must keep in mind that at the center of all this, there was a great mysterious death.
We must keep that in mind. Every lamb without, it had to be a lamb without blemish, every lamb killed in Israel was a type of another lamb.
We must keep in mind that there was a lamb slain before the foundation of the world.
From all eternity, the God who knows. The God who knows. Who knows not only what I am.
[17:36] And what I was, but who also knows what I shall be. That God was viewing this lamb.

And everything about this lamb. From all eternity, viewing him. The lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.
God's sacrificial lamb was protecting the people of Israel that night. Remember another incident.
A young man and an old man wending their way up a mountain side. And the young man asked a question. Where is the lamb?
Where is the lamb? And his father, that great man of faith. Abraham answered Isaac. God will provide himself a lamb.
[18:49] That lamb. God's sacrificial lamb. The lamb protected Isaac.

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We know that his father offered him in his heart. But this lamb of God protected Isaac from death.
The Passover then in Israel was the memorial. Of this memorable birth night in Egypt.
In a great spiritual sense. It was on that night that the nation of Israel was born. It marked the beginning.
It marked the beginning of the Exodus. The Passover was the greatest of the Jewish feasts.
[20:07] And in spiritual significance only one day was greater. And you know what that day was.

No feast in Israel was as great as the Passover. But one day in Israel was of greater spiritual significance.
And that was the great day of atonement. And boys were expected to attend the Passover for the first time when they were twelve or thirteen.
And just a word on the place. Where? Where did this take place? The place was the great temple at Jerusalem.
The only temple on earth built for the living God. The world was brim full of temples. And some of them were exceedingly beautiful.
[21:09] But they were all dedicated to heathen gods. To idols dumb. To idols which nations that were blind spiritually worshipped unspiritually.

The temple at Jerusalem was wondrously beautiful.
So beautiful that it excited the admiration of every foreigner. And kindled the enthusiasm of every true son of Israel.
At this very time it was undergoing a great transformation. At this very time. Work had started on it sixteen years before Christ was born.
And was to go on till thirty-one years after his death. And to give some idea of its size. Made up as it was of porches and courts.
[22:28] The court of the women alone. Could house twenty-five thousand. And that was just one court.

It could house twenty-five thousand. And the great edifice in its entirety. Could hold no fewer than two hundred and ten thousand people within its girdle.
Now you think of this church. This church can take about twelve hundred people. One thousand two hundred. Well.
You can estimate the relative size of the temple from that. Two hundred and ten thousand people could be held within its girdle.
And at this time there were about three hundred thousand people in Jerusalem. Of course at the time of the feasts. The population would be swollen.
[23:37] Sometimes to twice and maybe more. Twice its size. Even more. The temple was terraced.

There were at least three terraces. And the uppermost terraces. And the uppermost terraces. And the uppermost terraces. And the holy place. And the holy of holies. It was a magnificent sight.
To behold from its high vantage point. Adorned with gold. And every type of precious. But we haven't got time to linger there. Who was there that day?
Who? For the temple was especially adorned that day. He to whom every stone in that temple pointed. Whom every preciousness in that temple displayed.
Every priest serving there signified. Whom every sacrifice offered there typified. He was there as a 12 year old.
[24:57] God manifest as a 12 year old. Oh friends, do we realize in small or great measure the significance of this?

Jesus, the first man Adam was never a babe. The first man Adam was never a 12 year old. He was furbished with the fullness of humanity.
From the hand of his maker, he was full grown. Coming into the world, he was never a child. But the second man, the last Adam, came as a babe.
And was present in the temple of the living God himself. The real temple. The real temple in the temple made with hands.
The temple, we can say, not made with hands. In the temple made with hands.
[26:14] The temple was only a similitude of him, a likeness of him.

Oh, when we say, even when we say that he is faultless and sinless. How little we realize who he is.

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When we say that he is holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners. What we say has only any significance.
If these are the words of the Holy Spirit. Let us first seek to look at this 12 year old.
Through the eyes of his mother. Through the eyes of her who bore him. Let us look at him.
[27:18] Let us try to look at him through her eyes. Let us look at him.

Elizabeth, with the sad burden that her own husband, Zechariah. Had not believed a lesser wonder.
He had not believed that he himself was to have a son.
And Mary believed that she was to be the mother of the incarnate God. Mary had laid deep in her heart. What she had heard.
She had spiritually sung her God-given song. And yet, the question confronts us right through the gospel story.
Why did she apparently understand so little of his ministry? Oh friend, she was no different in this.
[28:43] She was no different in this from the disciples and from others. She misunderstood him at this time in the temple.

The company from Nazareth. The company from Nazareth had only stayed for the first two days, we think, of the feast. The feast went on for seven.
the feast. But he stayed for the feast. He stayed for the feast. He stayed for the feast. The company from Nazareth only stayed for the first two or at the most three days of the Passover week.
And then they returned home. Mary and Joseph thought that Jesus was in the company. And they went on a day's journey before they realized his absence.
And it is very possible that he was the only child absent. All the other children were present with their parents or in the company.
[29:55] He alone seems to have been absent. One day, two days, three days they searched high and low for him.

But he, he was engrossed with one thing. His father's house, his father's business.
And when they found him, and it is very likely that they found him in the last place where they expected him to be.
When they found him, his mother remonstrated with him for what she thought was a fault in him.
She misunderstood him. She thought he was at fault.
She thought he had failed them. And she declared her mind in that way.
[31:02] And he answered, From the midst of the learned holy men, he answered her, How was it that ye sought me?

Did ye not know that I must be about my father's business? His mother did not understand. In spite of her spirituality, And she was a wondrously spiritual woman.
She was not spiritual enough to realize that though she was his mother. That though she bore him, though he belonged to her, yet he did not belong to her.
Though his sonship brought him very near to her, to her as a mother, yet his eternal sonship separated him from her as from all others.
She was a sinner. The best of saints are still sinners on this side. We find her being rebuked again at the wedding in Cana.
[32:24] And the probable reason for that is that she was over emphasizing the role of an earthly mother. And we find her misunderstanding his work again when she came with his brethren.

In what looks like an attempt to arrest his work. You remember his answer then? Who is my mother?
Who are my brethren? He looked at the disciples. He looked to the disciples.
And he said, Those who do the will of God, These are my mother and sisters and brethren.
We are apt in our folly. To think that all doubtings of all kinds should have been excluded from the virgin's mind.
[33:33] But it does not work out so in the experience of the same sinner. She bore him. She nursed him when he was helpless.

She taught him. She taught him. He was taught at his mother's name. But in a far greater spiritual eternal sense.
He was bearing her. He was nursing her. He was teaching her. As her God and Savior and Redeemer.
And next we view him through the eyes of these doctors of divinity. These learned men.

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These men of the colleges. These men who had spent their lives pouring over the word of God. He asked them questions we are told.
[34:38] The twelve year old asked them questions. It was Passover time. And he could have asked them questions about the Passover.

Great deep spiritual questions about the Passover. At best. How unspiritual their answers would be at best.
The Pharisees. And a lot of these doctors were Pharisees. They had externalized religion.
The Sadducees had secularized religion. The Selots had nationalized religion. The Sadduce. This twelve year old was engrossed.
In the deep things of God. His father. He was engrossed in performing.
[35:38] In fulfilling the will of his father. He listened to them with all reverence. This was the only.

In reality the only. Dutiful. Twelve year old. Oh we are thankful that twelve year olds can be dutiful. But. Through and through. Through. Through. This was the only one. The only.
Twelve year old. Without sin. Whom this world has ever seen. He listened most reverently. This only proper.
Twelve year old. This only proper. Twelve year old. But. It looks as if he had to answer his own questions. It looks as if he had to answer them himself. And all that heard him. Were astonished. At his understanding and answers. And all that heard him. Were astonished.
[36:37] At his understanding and answers. He who asked the question. Answered the question. As I said. The one who answered the question. Yes, the one who asked the question. Ever then called the question.

It looks as if he had to answer his own questions. ■ At his understanding and answers. He who asked the question.
Just one query. Did he lead them up in his questions and answers to the great reality of the Passover?
Behold the Lamb of God. Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us.
He was the real Passover. And finally, what was he accomplishing?
[37:43] He was about his father's business. He was fulfilling all the Old Testament promises about himself from the very first promise which was about himself.

That marvelous first promise. That he would bruise the serpent's head while his own heel, his own humanity would be bruised, would be broken.
He was fulfilling the Old Testament prophecies and types. And remember what a type is. It is a prophecy in symbol.
That's what an Old Testament type is. A prophecy in symbol. He, the great reality, had come. He was accomplishing salvation.
He was on his way to destroy death by dying. I have power to lay down, to lay my life down.
[38:58] No man taketh it from me. I have power to lay it down. And I have power to raise it up again. This commandment I have received from my father.

And very significantly. And mark this, young people. Very significantly.
21 years after this, almost to the day. 21 years after this, almost to the day. Two or three days before his death.
While he was teaching in the same temple. The 12 year olds who had been brought there by the first time. Just as he himself had been brought on this occasion.
The 12 year olds who had been brought by their fathers. Shouted. They couldn't help it. They shouted in the temple of God.
[39:59] Hosanna to the son of David. The 12 year olds who had been brought to him. The religious authorities found fault with them. And they complained to Jesus.

But he replied. A marvelous reply. Yea, he said. Have ye never read.
Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings. Thou hast perfected praise. He said to these learned men. Are you so ignorant of these scriptures.
Have you not read Psalm 8. Where it says plainly. Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings. Thou hast perfected praise.
And again at this same feast of the Passover. 21 years after this. Just a day.
[41:02] Just around the time. When these 12 year olds had hailed him with Hosannas. He inaugurated the great feast of the New Testament.

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The Eucharist. The Eucharist. The Lord's Supper. In an upper room.
In a borrowed room. Amply furnished. By an unknown host.
Oh how wondrous it is. To accomplish something for the Lord. On the Friday of that Passover week.
The great high priest offered himself. Men were involved. Devils were involved.
[42:03] But he offered. He was there offering himself. The only real priest. Offered the only real sacrifice for sin.

He made atonement. He is the atonement. That is the only ground of our service here today.
Without these great basic facts and accomplishments. Of God in our nature. Our service would have no sense at all here today.
He rendered satisfaction for sin. And death could not hold him. Death could not hold him.
And this Lord's day. Is the memorial of his resurrection. He was declared to be the son of God with power.
[43:05] According to the spirit of holiness. By the resurrection from the dead. And if our person is in resurrection terrain.

Whether we be old or young. We also can say. We also can say.
If our person is in resurrection terrain. We also can say. In simplicity and sincerity. Like Mary Magdalene. We can say.
Rabboni. Which means. Master. And if our person is in resurrection terrain. We also can say.
We also can say. In spite. Of these stumblings of unbelief. Like Thomas. We can say. My Lord. And my God.
[44:09] And if our person is in resurrection terrain. We also can say. In spite of all our waywardness. Like Peter.

Lord. Thou knowest all things. Thou knowest that I love thee. Amen. Let us pray.
O Lord.
We bless thee for thy sin. Thou art the resurrection. Thou art the life.
Thou art the eternal life. O shine upon us.
[45:07] And bless us freely for Christ's sake. Amen.

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