

## The Early Years of Jesus

### Leader Guide

#### Breaking the Ice

1. We watched a video of kids telling us what they think Jesus was like when He was their age. What do you think Jesus was like when He was 12 years old? Do you think he had a best friend? If so, how do you think they played, learned, interacted, etc.?
2. How does this compare to what you were like when you were 12 years old (or when one of your children/grandchildren were 12 years old)?

#### Getting Started

1. Brandon offers 10 “we know” statements about what Jesus was like as a growing child. What “we know” statement did you most identify with? Are there any other “we know” statements that you would add on top of what Brandon listed?

Here is the list of “we know” statements that Brandon shared: (1) Jesus grew up in a low-income family that was, at best, lower middle class. (2) Jesus wasn’t particularly attractive. (3) Jesus learned stories of Torah, attended synagogue, and attended annual feasts in Jerusalem. (4) Jesus dealt with the joys and frustrations of being the oldest of lots of siblings. (5) Jesus went to school. (6) Jesus had to interact with other kids and make friends. (7) Jesus endured scorn and mockery from others. (8) Jesus learned the trade of carpentry from his father Joseph. (9) Jesus went through puberty and wrestled with discovering his identity and purpose. (10) Jesus had to deal with his earthly father dying.

2. Brandon lists the statements as “we know” statements. Are there any that you would disagree with or are skeptical about? Why or why not?

#### Digging Deeper

1. What can we gain from spending an entire message looking at the early years of Jesus when there is so little we know about that time period?  
Brandon lists 4 timeless truths that we can learn and apply by looking at Jesus’ early life through the “fully human” lens:  
(1) Let the scriptures and Spirit of God shape your identity

- (2) Be a continual learner in life to keep growing in wisdom
- (3) Come to Jesus first with all your relational struggles and pain
- (4) Don't underestimate how pivotal the early years are as you prepare to live out your purpose

2. Where are you looking to get clarity regarding your identity (is it social media, peers, occupation, family, or the Scriptures)?

Brandon asked a couple of follow up questions to help people reflect further. Consider asking these questions to prompt those in your group to reflect deeper.

- (1) Do you spend even a fraction of the time searching God's word as you do watching Netflix?
- (2) Do you spend time with the Spirit of God asking Him to reveal Himself to you?

3. What are some of your favorite ways to keep learning?

Taylor – I listen to podcasts on simplifying life, bible reading, and parenting. I also love cooking blogs.

Mike – I already feel like I know everything 😊. I look for pearls of wisdom such as quotes from leaders in history, for example.

Robert – I listen to podcasts on leadership, preaching and Christ-like living. I spend time in the Bible, and I read books that help give additional perspectives. I have several mentors that I seek out regularly that speak into various areas of my life (ministry, family, entrepreneurship, etc.) I do not read cooking blogs.

4. When you're struggling, where do you typically go first for support?

It's all too commonplace that believers go to Jesus last, rather than first. They try to figure it out themselves, or they talk about it with others, and then finally, they may pray about it.

Perhaps ask a follow up question: What is something you're dealing with right now and have you gone to Jesus about it yet? Consider pausing and praying together as a group.

5. What are some of the most formative things that you experienced as you were growing up that have influenced who you are today and what your purpose is?

## Bringing It Home

1. Considering how important the early years are, how are you instilling these values that we've discussed in your children now?
2. As we've discussed the timeless truths that the early years of Jesus reveal, are you living out these values in your own life? How can you get better at

aligning your life with scripture, at continuing to learn and be teachable, at going to Jesus first, and at being intentional with living out your early lessons and sharing them with your kids?