

# Family Connections

January 6 to 27



Epiphany

## Family Connections

### Unit 4: Epiphany – January 6 to 27

The Season of **Epiphany** (Greek for "to manifest" or "to show") is a time that celebrates how God was revealed in human form in the person of Jesus Christ. We will be studying three stories in this unit: The presentation of Jesus in the temple, the story of Jesus staying behind in the temple at age 12, and Jesus' first miracle – turning water into wine. The point of all three stories will be to show how God *revealed* that Jesus (as a baby, child, young man) was the "Christ" – the Messiah.

In the first story, Jesus is eight days old and his parents have brought him to the temple. While they are there, two very devout people (Simeon and Anna) are drawn to him. Both of them praise God for Jesus. Simeon recognizes Jesus as the fulfillment of a promise – "that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah" (Luke 2:26).

The second story occurs when Jesus is twelve years old. According to Jewish tradition, a Jewish boy became responsible to observe the law when he was 13. Adolescent Jesus is coming into a greater understanding of who he is separate from his parents. His knowledge, his understandings of his world and of himself have had to grow as any human child. It is also a story of his divinity since Jesus' identity is that he is the Son of God. Whatever he knew intellectually, he had a relationship unbroken, unseparated, with his heavenly Father. Was this a growing realization, or a bolt of lightning in the temple? We don't know. Luke seems to be telling us that his conversations with the teachers as well as the celebration and worship that were part of the Passover had something to do with it. He is not being disobedient; he is acting as an adult. But his parents expect Jesus to continue to behave as their child. They are like most of us as parents. We raise our children to be independent grown ups, and then are surprised when they claim their own identity, making decisions for themselves. And so Jesus chides them, gently, "did you not know?"

In our third story, Jesus is attending a wedding feast with his mother and disciples. For people who typically lived quite simply and had little to eat, a wedding banquet was a very great occasion. To run out of wine was a major social blunder--especially considering that wine was the primary beverage for any meal. The water was often not safe to drink, but fermenting the wine killed bacteria. Mary tells the servants, "Do whatever he (Jesus) tells you" (v. 5). At first Jesus claimed, "My hour has not yet come," but then he decided to help out. He instructed the servants to fill the large stone jars standing nearby with water, and then to draw some out and take it to the steward of the feast. The steward was amazed (and relieved) at the quality of this new wine that enabled the party to go on. Only Jesus, his disciples, and the servants knew that a miracle from Jesus had produced that fine wine. Jesus' miracle was a "sign" which revealed something important about him. It also revealed God's generosity and grace since the miracle not only met the need, but met it in a way that went over the top in terms of quantity and quality.

Sources:

- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epiphany\\_\(holiday\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epiphany_(holiday))
- JESUS IN THE TEMPLE, Rotation.org Writing Team
- [Lesson Set on Simeon and Anna and Baby Jesus from Silverdale United Methodist](#), posted by "learner" on [www.Rotation.org](http://www.Rotation.org)
- [Wedding at Cana/The Wedding Feast](#). Posted by Augustana Lutheran Church on [www.Rotation.org](http://www.Rotation.org)

January 6: The Presentation of Jesus -  
"My eyes have seen your salvation"

- **Epiphany** is a time that celebrates how God was revealed in human form in the person of Jesus Christ
- How did Simeon and Anna know that Jesus was so special? (God's Holy Spirit moved in them and told them that Jesus was God's Son.
- As we prepare for the coming of Christmas, let's watch for signs that God is with us.

January 13 & 20: 12 Year Old Jesus -  
growing in wisdom, stature and favor.

- We can learn about God by going to church, just like Jesus did.
- Jesus lived in another culture where children grew up much faster than they do today. They started working sooner and they got married sooner. But do you think Jesus' parents were okay with him staying in Jerusalem without letting them know? (No, they were very worried)
- Why do you think Jesus stayed behind? (Maybe he was so interested in being in the temple that he forgot all about his family. Or maybe he knew that he was doing what God called him to do – to teach and enlighten the people of his day.)
- The Bible doesn't tell us why Jesus stayed behind, but it does tell us that he was an obedient son. Whatever his reason was, it must have been a good one!

January 27: The Wedding Feast at Cana -  
"Do whatever he tells you."

- We did a trick (with Kool-aid) to dramatize this story. Jesus did not need to do tricks – and we are unable to do miracles!
- Jesus' first miracle reveals his glory as well as God's generosity and grace. How does God show generosity towards us?