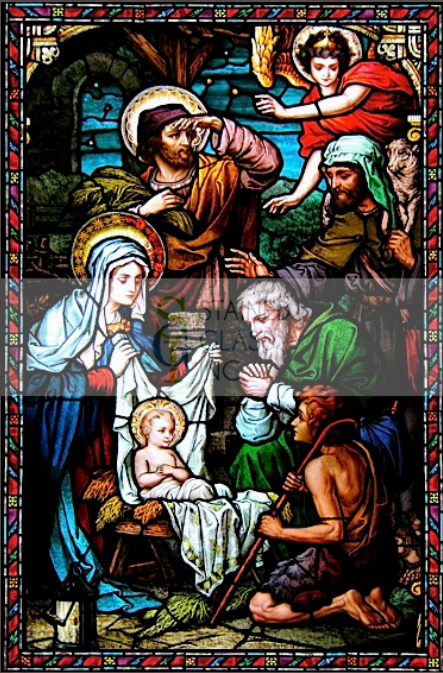


# Christ's Youth in Stained Glass



*Stained Glass Window 603: Nativity Scene*

## Christ's Youth

While other events in the life of Christ are described in great detail in the Bible, information provided about Jesus as a young boy is sketchy at best. In church stained glass windows, scenes from Christ's youth that are found in the Bible are usually limited to the Nativity, the Flight to Egypt, the Presentation of Child, and Jesus conversing with the elders in the Temple. The lack of information, however, provides stained glass artists with a fair amount of artistic license. Some religious stained glass showing Jesus as a young boy, for instance, depicts Him learning the craft of carpentry from Joseph. Other works show domestic scenes of the Holy Family that are quite ordinary. It is awe-inspiring to think that, before all His miracles, the life of the Messiah was similar to that of most other children.

## The Story of Christ's Youth

The first account of Christ's youth is of course the story of the Nativity. When Joseph and Mary arrived in Bethlehem and discovered the inns were full, they were forced to take refuge in a stable. It was here in this humble setting that Mary gave birth to the baby Jesus. Shepherds in the area and the Three Magi were informed of His miraculous birth, and went to worship the Christ child. King Herod grew jealous of the infant when the Wise Men called Him "the king of the Jews." He ordered a massacre of all the young boys in Bethlehem, but the Holy Family



*Stained Glass Window 378: Carpenter*

# The Story of Christ's Youth continued

escaped to Egypt before any harm could come to the Messiah.

The Bible also tells of Christ's presentation at the Temple, where both Simeon the Righteous and a prophetess named Anna recognized the true identity of Jesus. Finally, we are told of His visit to a temple in Jerusalem at the age of 12. Here, He amazed the teachers with His questions and comments, which showed an understanding and intelligence well beyond His years.

Any series of stained glass windows in church depicting the life of the Savior should include at least one image of Him as a young boy. Works of youth stained glass represent the time leading up to Christ's public ministry and show that Jesus entered the world as an innocent child.

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