

Christmas 2020

JESUS THE MAN WHO SAVES

Part 2

Last week we made the point that 'THE BABY BORN IN BETHLEHEM'S STABLE' was not named, 'Christ' but, 'JESUS' – a name that was revealed from Heaven to both Mary and Joseph separately. And we said that that name, JESUS, is the name of the Saviour of mankind. (Matthew 1:21)

WE ALSO MENTIONED LAST WEEK THAT **JESUS WAS HIS EARTHLY NAME** – THE NAME OF A MAN AND THAT IT IS 'JESUS THE MAN' WHO IS OUR SAVIOUR ... NOT SOME DETACHED DEITY.

*This is not some super-spiritual salvation but a salvation that came 'down to earth', where a real earthly man **came and lived and died among us**, whose name was Jesus.*

That name represents a human saviour ...

Not a detached deity who spiritually overshadows us or zaps us ... or demands our devotion ...

THIS VERY POINT OF THE SAVIOUR'S HUMANITY WAS UNDER ATTACK IN THE EARLY CHURCH

There was a demonic heresy called ...

Docetism [doe-seat-is-em].

It's a belief that says, 'Christ was not a real human-being and did not have a real human body. He only seemed to be human to us. He was some phantom.'

It is this heresy that the apostle John addresses in his first epistle -

1 John 4:2 NIV

*This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that **Jesus Christ has come in the flesh [flesh and blood]** is from God.*

JESUS HUMANITY IS MADE PLAIN & CLEAR IN
THE OPENING VERSES OF JOHN'S GOSPEL

John 1:1-2 & 14 **SLIDE**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.² He was in the beginning with God. ³All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. ¹⁴And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

The apostle John also stresses the point of Jesus' being physical in the opening verses of his first epistle.

1 John 1:1-2 Berean Study Bible

*That which was from the beginning, which we have **heard**, which we have **seen with our own eyes**, which we have gazed upon and **touched with our own hands**--this is the Word of life. ²And this is the life that was revealed; **we have seen it** and testified to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed [physically] to us.*

IT WAS IMPERATIVE ... 100% ESSENTIAL ... ABSOLUTELY CRUCIAL ... FOR **THE SAVIOUR OF MANKIND TO BE MAN OF VERY MAN** ... and not some detached deity.

HE HAD TO BE A REAL HUMAN-BEING TO BE ABLE TO REDEEM MANKIND.

HE HAD TO BECOME ONE OF US IN ORDER TO REDEEM US.

It's interesting that all religions have their gurus and leaders trying to become like their deity ... Whereas Christianity has its deity becoming a man ...

GOD, THE ETERNAL SPIRIT BECAME A PHYSICAL MAN.

He came down to us ... He had to work for a living ... He had to eat ... He had to wash ...

HE HAD NO SUPER-SPIRITUAL POWER ...

HE BECAME LIKE US ... FOR US ...

SO, TODAY WE WANT TO ASK THE QUESTION ...

WHY DID THE LORD OF ALL CREATION HAVE TO BECOME A MERE MAN – A LIMITED HUMAN BEING LIKE US?

SOME PEOPLE UNDERSTAND IT WAS TO **EMPATHISE WITH US
IN EVERYTHING -**

That it was to understand our pains and sorrows ... our struggles ... as is alluded to in Hebrews 4:15 [See below]

They see that *as a man, Jesus now totally understands our struggles and disappointments ... **HE EMPATHISES.***

EMPATHY IS:

'To place oneself in another's position so as to understand or feel what another person is experiencing from within their frame of reference'

IT IS TRUE, JESUS IS EMPATHETIC WITH OUR HUMAN PLIGHT

Hebrews 4:15

For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are [in likeness, resemblance], yet without sin.

AS GRAHAM KENDRICK'S SONG STATES

He walked where I walk ... He stood where I stand ...

*He felt what I feel ... **He understands [empathises]***

He knows my frailty ... Shared my humanity ...

Tempted in every way ... Yet without sin ...

God with us, so close to us ... God with us, Immanuel

DURING THE PANDEMIC LOCKDOWN, Ben Lee's song became a theme ... 'WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER' -

Woke up this morning ... I suddenly realized ...

We're all in this together

I'm made of atoms... You're made of atoms ...

And we're all in this together ...

BUT - Empathy doesn't offer salvation.

THE PROBLEM IS ... BEING AN EMPATH ONLY LEAVES US ALL IN THE SAME SINKING BOAT ... ALL GOING DOWN WITH THE SHIP

***BUT JESUS CAME AS MORE THAN AN EMPATH –
JESUS CAME AS THE SAVIOUR***

JESUS DIDN'T BECOME HUMAN FOR EMPATHY ONLY

JESUS BECAME HUMAN FOR ADVOCACY

an advocate

(Paraklēton) (a) an advocate, intercessor, (b) a consoler, comforter, **helper**, (c) Paraclete.

An advocate is someone who comes alongside ... bears our burdens **with us, but also holds us up when our strength fails ... Someone who answers our accusers **for us** ... Someone who stands with us and for us ... in the place of us ...**

THIS IS WHAT JESUS DID IN HIS HUMANITY FOR US.

JESUS WAS 'BORN A MAN' TO REPRESENT US AS OUR ADVOCATE ... TO STAND IN OUR STEAD ...

JESUS 'THE MAN' NOT ONLY UNDERSTOOD US ...

SLIDE JESUS 'THE MAN' STOOD **WITH US & OVERCAME **FOR US** - EVERY MOMENT OF EVERY DAY.**

**HIS ADVOCACY WAS MORE THAN MERE EMPATHY ...
IT WAS ABSOLUTE VICTORY ...**

HE WAS AN ADVOCATE FOR MY WEAKNESS

Hebrews 4:15 **SLIDE**

*For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with **our weaknesses**, but was in all points tempted as we are [in likeness, resemblance], **yet without sin.***

Jesus had to be one of us ... **like us ...**

But He wasn't the same as us.

He wasn't the same as you and me, because HE WAS WITHOUT SIN.

Phil 2:7-8 says He came in **the Likeness of man and was found in **the appearance of a man.****

NB: These words allude to the fact that even though Jesus was human ... He was not identical to sinful man ...

HE WAS SINLESS.

Hebrews 7:26 Berean Study Bible

Such a high priest truly befits us--One who is holy, innocent, **undefiled, set apart from sinners**, and [now] exalted above the heavens.

'... The idea expressed by "undefiled," ... points to the perfect sinlessness of our Lord, who lived amongst sinners and yet was ever separated from their sin.' (Ellicott – paraphrased)

THE PERFECT MAN STOOD WITH & FOR SINFUL MAN ...
IN EVERY SITUATION HE WAS AN OVERCOMER FOR US ...

*So every time you fail ... He has already succeeded.
He takes up your slack ...*

In Graham Kendrick's song, rather than saying, 'He stood where I stand' ... we should sing, 'HE STOOD WHERE I FALL ... WHERE I FAIL ...'

HE WALKED THE WALK FOR EVERY MAN (PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE) AND SUCCEEDED.

HE HAS ALREADY WALKED THROUGH EVERYTHING YOU COULD EVER EXPERIENCE ... AND YET WITHOUT SIN OR FAILURE.

If your circumstances turn bad, if you start to lose it, you can confidently know ... even if you fall and fail ...

Jesus has already stood ... and already succeeded ... for you.
Jesus was the forerunner.

You know the **STORY OF 'FOOTPRINTS IN THE SAND'** **SLIDE** -
How a lady dreamed of two sets of footprints representing Jesus walking through life with her.

After a while there was only one set marking the sand. She queried why the Lord had left her. But Jesus said, 'I will never leave you ... It was then I carried you.'

HE WAS AN ADVOCATE FOR MY SINS

1 John 2:1 **SLIDE**

*My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, **we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.***

I have been declared righteous forever ... it is my legal position ...
But **NOTE CAREFULLY** - even if I still sin ... His righteousness

represents me ... speaks for me on an ongoing basis ... Because He was already declared righteous and overcame for me ...

Hebrews 2:17-18

Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. ¹⁸ For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.

Isaiah 53:4

Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.

3 MORE REASONS WHY IT WAS IMPERATIVE FOR JESUS TO BE A MAN

1. HE OVERCAME SATAN FOR US

Matthew 4:1-11 speaks of Jesus temptation by the devil.

We were always taught and challenged that as Jesus overcame in the wilderness ... we had to overcome the devil in the same way.

We were taught the principles of how to do this ... to quote Scripture just as Jesus did ...

And we tried and tried, again and again. And we failed again and again ...

Because ... this isn't written for us to imitate ...

It is written to benefit us ... -- TO SHOW US JESUS' VICTORY FOR US ...

SO THAT WE KNOW, THAT DAY, JESUS ALREADY OVERCAME FOR EACH ONE OF US.

WE SEE JESUS OVERCAME WHERE ADAM, THE FIRST MAN, HAD FAILED

There are 3 areas where Adam and Eve failed in the Garden -

Genesis 3:6 **SLIDE**

So when the woman 1. saw that the tree was good for food, that 2. it was pleasant to the eyes and a tree 3. desirable to make one wise,

she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

These 3 areas by which all mankind fails are also outlined by John –

1 John 2:16

For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.

See in Genesis 3:6 these are the same 3 areas in which Adam and Eve fell into sin and became subject to Satan’s power.

1. The Lust of the Flesh ... [Eve] *‘saw that the tree was good for food’*
2. The Lust of the Eyes ... [She saw] *‘it was pleasant to the eyes’*
3. The Pride of Life ... [She saw it was] *‘desirable to make one wise’*

Now compare Adam’s temptation in the Garden to Jesus’ temptation

Jesus was tempted with -

1. The Lust of the Flesh ... Turn these stones into bread (Matthew 4:3)
2. The Lust of the Eyes ... He saw the glory of the kingdoms of the world (Matthew 4:8-9)
3. The Pride of Life ... Throw yourself down in the midst of all the religious leaders and let them know how great you are. (Matthew 4:6)

JESUS THE LAST ADAM OVERCAME WHERE THE FIRST ADAM FAILED. AND SO HE OVERCAME FOR ALL HUMANITY.

If Jesus hadn’t overcome Satan and got past this point ... He would have been instantly disqualified ...

2. HE SATISFIED THE LAW FOR US

Galatians 4:4-5 **SLIDE**

*But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman [human], **born under the law**⁵ to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.*

SLIDE JESUS, THE MAN WHO LIVED UNDER THE LAW FOR US ...
THE TIME THE LAW REJOICED

Can we for a moment personify the Law?
See it as if it were a person?

How do you see it?

ANGRY ... STERN ... DEMANDING ... WITHOUT MERCY ...
AND SO IT IS ...

BUT PAUL SAYS, THE LAW IS GOOD. IT IS A SUMMARY OF GOD'S STANDARDS.

HOWEVER, THE LAW IS ANGRY BECAUSE OF YOU & ME ...

WE FAILED IT ...

Until the birth of Jesus, no one in all history had ever satisfied the law. Can you imagine how frustrated it was ...?

BUT JESUS FULFILLED IT

For the first time in all history ... one man satisfied the law ...
Jesus fulfilled the Law.

THE LAW LOVED JESUS ... JESUS LOVED THE LAW ...

AND THE LAW REJOICED ...

JESUS SATISFIED ALL RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE LAW.

JESUS WAS SCRUTINISED BY THE LAW ... EVERY MOMENT OF EVERY DAY ...

Philippians 2:8 tells us HE WAS OBEDIENT to the death of the cross.

Romans 5:19 says by the act of **one Man's** obedience many are made righteous.

Jesus passed the law's scrutiny with flying colours ...

3. **SLIDE** HE SUFFERED THE JUDGEMENT FOR US

*He left His Father's throne above,
So free, so infinite His grace;
Emptied Himself of all but love,
And **bled for Adam's helpless race.***

Charles Wesley

2 Corinthians 5:21 Berean Study Bible

God made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.

NB: 'To become' is the Aorist tense ... meaning once and for all it is established.

CONCLUSION

**The Baby born in a manger was the Man born to stand in our stead,
The One to overcome Satan where Adam failed,
To secure all righteousness for us,
And to take away all judgement for us, for all time.**

THANK GOD FOR 'THE MAN' JESUS CHRIST