

SERIES: **BETTER- Hope from the book of Hebrews**

TEXT: **Hebrews 2:5-18**

((STAND AND READ AND PRAY)))

Name these non-human beings who become human:

Fish-girl turned Human-girl (Ariel); Wooden-boy turned Human-boy (Pinocchio);

Computer Program-man turned human-man (Vision);

When we talk about Jesus' *divinity* (He is God), it's common to come across people who object that; skeptics.

But when we talk about Jesus' *humanity*, almost no one has any objections to that!

Most simply accept the reality that Jesus was human

*To be fair, this was a bigger issue in the ancient world than it is for us

**Gnostics believed the material world was evil and only the spiritual was good

So far in the book of Hebrews, the author has detailed the *divinity* of Jesus; He's unlike you and me because He's God! But in this section, it is His *humanity* that is highlighted.

What most of us take for granted, Jesus was a man, this passage essentially screams out, lest we miss it,

"THAT IS JUST AS INCREDIBLE!!!"

TITLE: **One of Us**

MAIN POINT- Our salvation depends as much on Jesus' *humanity* as it does on His *divinity*

The original readers of the book of Hebrews were believers who were *struggling with their faith*, for various reasons.

In all honesty, it's difficult to follow and be committed to a God that's **invisible**.

But we have Jesus, who became a human being like we are, and experienced this world as we do.

What we find in these verses is a beautiful encouragement that Jesus is not only truly God, and therefore, can save, but that He is also truly man, and therefore He understands the suffering and the weight of this life.

OUTLINE:

- **Our glorious rank and our inglorious reality (V.5-8)**
- **The importance of Jesus' humanity (V.9-18)**
- **The encouragement of Jesus' humanity**
- **A question to reflect on**

Our glorious rank and our inglorious reality

⁵For he has not subjected to angels the world to come that we are talking about.

⁶But someone somewhere has testified: **What is man that you remember him, or the son of man that you care for him?**

⁷**You made him lower than the angels for a short time; you crowned him with glory and honor**

⁸**and subjected everything under his feet.** For in **subjecting everything** to him, he left nothing that is not subject to him.

As it is, we do not yet see **everything subjected** to him.

Did you know that when God initially created the world, He originally designed humanity to rule over it?

Genesis 1:26,28 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness. They will rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the livestock, the whole earth, and the creatures that crawl on the earth."

28 God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, and subdue it. Rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and every creature that crawls on the earth."

King David as He reflects on this, writes **Psalm 8**, quoted here in our text:

“What is man that you remember him, or the son of man that you care for him? You made him lower than the angels for a short time; you crowned him with glory and honor and subjected everything under his feet.”

God made us to rule this world, but in an ironic turn of events, we gave up our place and tried to take God’s place!

We were tempted and we gave in (Adam and Eve first, and all of us since).

Who brought the temptation? The serpent, satan.

Satan tempted humanity with the very thing he also desired, to take God’s place.

Isaiah 14:12-16 outlines his downfall

**the prophecy against the king of Babylon also carries a spiritual significance. We see in Daniel 10:12-13 the angel referring to a spiritual being he was contending against as ‘the prince of Persia’*

That’s why **V.5** reaffirms that it is not to the angels, but to us, that he has subjected the ‘world to come’.

‘the world to come’??- Back in **Chapter 1:10-12**, we read that this world as we know it will pass away, but God will make a new one. One not tainted with sin or death (Rev. 21).

We will take back the position of ruling that God originally intended for us- **that’s our glorious rank.**

1 Corinthians 6:3 Don’t you know that we will judge angels...

(God doesn’t need help ruling, He welcomes it because He’s a relational God)

But **our inglorious reality** is highlighted in V8: *As it is, we do not yet see everything subjected to him.*

We live in the ‘not yet’. A world infected and affected by sin.

We can try to fix the problems of the world with higher education, better moral values, social justice , humanitarian aid, fair laws, better pay, more infrastructure, more vacation days, better health care, etc.

-but in all these scenarios, the problem is still there as long as WE are still there.

Because the problem is us- sin in us, through us. We are the conduits of sin. We give in to temptation.

We needed a way back to our originally designed purpose.

Which is why the remainder of the chapter **pivots** to say, basically:

Jesus is the solution because Jesus is not only the Son of God, He is the son of man- a human

The importance of Jesus’ humanity

⁹ **But we do see Jesus** (First time so far in the book that the Son of God is referred to by His human identity)

—made lower than the angels for a short time so that by God’s grace he might taste death for everyone—crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death.

The author shifts from applying Psalm 8 to humanity in general, to applying it to one human specifically- Jesus

Jesus’ humanity is important because it means that: **Jesus’ death is our death**

Our greatest problems all lead to death, it’s the problem no one can escape-

so God became a human, in order to dive into death to tackle the problem of problems

Jesus didn’t just get involved at the risk of his life...He did so at the cost of it

Death for those who trust in Jesus for salvation, is now no more than a passage from one place to another.

1 Cor. 15:55 O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?

¹⁰ For in bringing many sons and daughters to glory, it was entirely appropriate that God—for whom and through whom all things exist—should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

Jesus' humanity is important because it means that: **Jesus' glory is our glory**

We aren't just rescued *from* something- we are redeemed into something- glory!

Glory (*dóksa*) literally means "what evokes *good opinion*"

IOW- we are brought back to good standing with God- GREAT standing, HONORABLE standing!

His good standing is our good standing

'pioneer'- picture Jesus carving the path through the thick brush of the jungle so that we could follow him

But then an interesting phrase: 'perfect through sufferings' ????

Not referring to His moral perfection or His divine attributes;

not saying there was something wrong that needed to be corrected.

It is speaking of His **effectiveness as our representative**.

Not only is Jesus really human, He has human experience.

He can fairly and perfectly be our representative and intercessor.

Dane Ortlund- *"Jesus is not Zeus. He was a sinless man, not a sinless Superman. He woke up with bed head. He had pimples at 13. He never would have appeared on the cover of Men's Health (He had no beauty that we should desire him Isaiah 53:2). He came as a normal man to normal men. He knows what it is to be thirsty, hungry, despised, rejected, scorned, shamed, embarrassed, abandoned, misunderstood, falsely accused, suffocated, tortured and killed. He knows what it is to be lonely. His friends abandoned him when he needed them most. Had he lived today, every last Twitter follower and Facebook friend would have unfriended him when he turned 33. He who will never unfriend us."*

¹¹ For the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father. That is why Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters,

Jesus' humanity is important because it means that: **Jesus' holiness is our holiness**

When we are born again we aren't just declared holy, sanctified, as if it were some vague concept-

We are given the holiness that Jesus displayed as one of us yet without sin (2 Cor. 5:21)

¹² saying: **I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters; I will sing hymns to you in the congregation.**

(*Psalm 22:22) ¹³ Again, **I will trust in him.** (*2 Samuel 22:3 LXX; Isaiah 8:17 LXX; Isaiah 12:2 LXX)

And again, **Here I am with the children God gave me.** (*Isaiah 18:18 LXX)

Jesus' humanity is important because it means that: **Jesus' family is our family**

It is a misconception that all are children of God-

all *are* image bearers of God, but we must be adopted into His family to become His children

We aren't strangers to Him, we aren't unwanted guests- we are family

¹⁴ Now since the children have flesh and blood in common, Jesus also shared in these, so that through his death he might destroy the one holding the power of death—that is, the devil— ¹⁵ and free those who were held in slavery all their lives by the fear of death.

Jesus' humanity is important because it means that: **Jesus' win is our win**

His death defeats the *devil*, and His death satisfies God's *wrath*.

"When we say that Satan has the power of death, it is not to say that he has the ultimate power and that he really controls the power of death. Satan has the power of death in the sense that he influences the thing that causes death. Death as a result of rebellion against God. It is the penalty for sin. This means that the only way to defeat death is to defeat sin." -Michael J Kruger

The devil's greatest weapon was not only death itself, but the fear of it as well-

- On the one hand, we all have a deep intrinsic fear of dying.
- On the other hand, we all have a fundamental fear of our loved ones dying.

Jesus defeated death through death itself. Which means:

- Our death is not final, but transitional.
- The death of those we loved, who were in Christ, is but a mere brief departure
 - Those who lost children think of the moment you walk in glory and see them face to face
 - Those who have had miscarriages, you will enter eternity to the hugs of the children death robbed you of
 - Those who've lost a friend, a family member, a spouse- one day you will again share a laugh with them

We are free from the fear of death because we know the hope of what awaits, and His victory is ours.

¹⁶ For it is clear that he does not reach out to help angels, but to help Abraham's offspring. (= believers)

¹⁷ Therefore, he had to be like his brothers and sisters in every way, so that he could become a merciful and faithful high priest in matters pertaining to God, to make atonement for the sins of the people.

Jesus' humanity is important because it means that: **Jesus' obedience is our obedience**

We see it play out in detail in Matthew 4, but it was true of Jesus whole life that he never sinned or gave into temptation- think about it, never before in history had the devil tempted a human and that human never gave in.

Jesus succeeded where all other failed!

The issue with the high priests before Jesus was at least 2-fold-

- 1- Sacrifices kept having to be made because the blood of animals did not really take away sins
(just like paying with your credit card isn't really paying off the debt, just postponing it and with interests)
- 2- High Priests were unreliable- they came and went (died), some were good others were not
(we see in the gospels the high priests playing a key role in the crucifixion of Jesus)

He became a merciful & faithful High Priest: **merciful** because He understands; **faithful** because He never gave in

¹⁸ For since he himself has suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted.

Jesus never gave in to temptation. **But that doesn't mean he did not feel it.** It means he felt it even more.

"...Jesus' sinlessness means that he knows temptation better than we ourselves do. CS Lewis made this point by speaking of a man walking against the wind. Once the wind of temptation gets strong enough, the man lies down, giving in and thus not knowing what it would have been like 10 minutes later. Jesus never lay down. He endured all our temptations and testings without ever giving in. He therefore knows the strength of temptation better than any of us. Only he truly knows the cost." – Dane Ortlund

It is natural to feel God is with us in the moments that everything goes well and our desires are what they should be, but we conclude that when we feel the tug of temptation, He must be far. Perhaps we went too far for His reach?

The verse says the opposite- it is in our moment of temptation that He offers help- His hand is stretched out towards weak, frail humans who are at risk of giving in, giving up, going out.

MAIN POINT- Our salvation depends as much on Jesus' humanity as it does on His divinity

It's natural to feel as if God isn't actually near- close- here.

Psalm 10:1 Lord, why do you stand so far away? Why do you hide in times of trouble?

But the doctrine of the humanity of Jesus comforts us that not only is God near, **He understands**

The encouragement of Jesus' humanity

God understands your struggle, and wants to help you

Jesus knows this weight of this life in this broken world-

- He heads into the wilderness to spend time with God, but finds the devil
- He allows Judas near to His heart only to be betrayed and by a kiss
- He felt the weight of being tired at the end of a long work day
- He felt the sorrow of losing a loved one as he wept over Lazarus
- He felt the unjust hatred from those who wanted to end His life

He had a brutally hard existence. He can relate.

Ever feel sad? He has too!

Ever cry over a lost loved one? He has also!

Ever feel abandoned? He did as well!

Ever have money problems? He had no where to rest his head!

Ever feel stressed? He sweated blood from his pores because of the stress he was under!

HE UNDERSTANDS! And furthermore- HE WANTS TO HELP!

((((CALL UP WORSHIP TEAM))))

A question to reflect on

Q: Where do you need God's help in your life?