

Weekly Reflection – The Humanity of Jesus – We Can Follow Him

- Why did Jesus live 33 years here on earth as a human? I believe that the primary reason Jesus lived 33 years on earth was so He could make disciples who would make disciples. So that He could give us a model to follow.
- “Did Jesus do anything in His time on earth that you and I, as His disciples, can not do?”
- Over 40 times the gospel of Jesus says, “Follow me” or do what I’m doing.
- ***1 Corinthians 11:1 Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.***
- ***1 Peter 2:21 For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.***
- ***1 John 2:6 whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.***
- Even when we believe that the Bible is true, it can be easy to think, “I can never actually live like Jesus and do the things He did, make disciples like He did, because Jesus was God.”
- Is it really possible for you and me to live like Jesus?

Jesus was fully God

- ***Colossians 2:9 For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily,***
- Jesus Himself claimed to be God many times.
- ***John 10:30 “I and the Father are one.”***
- ***John 8:58-59 Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.” [59] So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple.***
- The Jews Jesus was speaking to clearly recognized the title “I Am” as referring to the name of God from the Old Testament (Exodus 3:14), that’s why they wanted to kill Him for blasphemy.

Jesus was fully Human

- While the Bible teaches that Jesus was fully God, it is also clear from Scripture that Jesus was fully human.
- ***John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.***
- ***John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.***
- ***Hebrews 2:14 Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil,***
- ***Hebrews 2:17 Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.***
- Jesus experienced human emotions and sensations, Jesus grew physically and intellectually, Jesus became hungry and thirsty, He became tired, and He slept, and He physically bled and died.
- Scripture is clear, Jesus was fully human. He was a real human being. Jesus was just like us, except without sin.

Hypostatic Union

How can Jesus be fully God and fully man at the same time? Could Jesus have lived completely as a human being while remaining fully God? The answer is yes, Jesus did live fully human while remaining fully God.

Why does this matter? What does it have to do with making disciples who make disciples? If we don't understand that Jesus was fully human, then we can miss His example for us. If we believe that we can't become like Him, then we can't intentionally make others who are like Him, and so this is a real big deal for making disciples. If we don't really understand that Jesus lived a life that was meant for us to look at as an example, I believe we will really struggle being disciples and disciple makers.

Is God omnipresent, everywhere present? Yes. Jesus, in His humanity was He omnipresent? No. He had limitations. The implications of that are profound if you've never thought about it. Every morning, He had to decide, "Where am I going to go? Who am I going to spend time with? What are my priorities?" Feel the tension? How do you be everywhere present, omnipresent, and yet not at the same time?

Was, is God all knowing? Absolutely. There's nothing God doesn't know. Jesus, in His humanity, was He all knowing? No, He wasn't. Remember when he heard about his cousin John the Baptist being beheaded and He did not know until His disciples told Him and He went away for two days to grieve. The Bible tells us that Jesus increased in wisdom and stature. "***So Jesus said to them, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he, and that I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me."***" (John 8:28 ESV) How do you have two natures in one person, all knowing but not all knowing at the same time?

How does this work?

I suggest that the theologically correct way to answer this is found in Philippians 2. ***Philippians 2:5-8 - Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, [6] who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, [7] but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. [8] And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.*** Think of Christ's "emptying" of Himself as a laying aside of the privileges that were His in heaven. He voluntarily refrained from using His divinity.

Charles Ryrie describes this hypostatic union, as "never less than God, He chose to live His life never more than man." Bruce Ware said it this way, "His deity was unexpressed, so that His humanity could be fully expressed." Wayne Grudem gives his insight by saying, "Jesus refused to rely on his divine nature to make obedience easier for him." St. Gregory emphasized, "if Christ did not become fully human, then the redemption of man could not have been fully complete" (Hebrews 2-5). ***Hebrews 2:17 Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.***

So let me give you an illustration: Think of a credit card. Jesus had the ultimate Master's card. The God card. The number on Jesus' God card was 77777777, the perfect number. The credit limit on His God card was whatever He wants, because He created it all. He owns it all. The expiration date is eternity. Jesus had the God card because He was fully God. But in order to be like us in every way, He chose never to use it. He had the God card, always carried the God card, but I believe, He never used the God card.

- What about His miracles? Isn't that using the God card?
- Matthew 12:28 But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.
- Acts 2:22 "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know—

- The miracles that Jesus did, do not prove that He was using His deity. The apostles did miracles, does that prove their deity? No, it means God worked through them.
- Moses in the Old Testament did miracles. Does that make him God? No. God worked through him.
- What about all the things Jesus knew in advance? Isn't that using the God card?
- I don't think so. Could that be the gift of discernment? The Spirit of God revealing something to Him?
- The Lord does nothing without revealing His plans to His servants. (Amos 3:7-8)
- ***Proverbs 3:32 for the devious person is an abomination to the LORD, but the upright are in his confidence.***
- The idea of being in His confidence is the idea of being in His council. The KJV says, "His secret is with the righteous."
- That's why it is so important for you and me to live an obedient life, because I love to have God the Father, take me into His confidence and show me what He's about to do.

What does this mean for us?

- The resources or the means that were available to Jesus are the exact same resources available to you.
- First and foremost, He had the Holy Spirit.
- At His baptism the Bible tells us the Spirit of God descended on Him like a dove.
- ***Luke 4:1 And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness.***
- ***Luke 4:14 And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country.***
- ***Luke 4:17-21 And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, [18] "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, [19] to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." [20] And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. [21] And he began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."***
- John 3:33 says Jesus received the Spirit without measure.
- Jesus never grieved the Spirit and Jesus never quenched the Spirit.
- We have the Spirit of God in us, but often we quench and grieve the spirit because of sin.
- Jesus never did so He had the Spirit without measure.
- I do want to pause here and say this, Jesus did have something we don't have, sinlessness.
- We are sinful and that sin does affect our fellowship with the Holy Spirit, it often mutes our ability to hear clearly from God, sin clouds our ability to see the will of God as clearly as Jesus.
- So, I am not saying that because Jesus lived His earthly life fully human like us and we have all the same resources as Jesus that we can live in perfection as Jesus did.
- What I am saying is that we too have the Spirit of God and though I don't believe we will become sinless until we see Jesus face to face, we can sin less and become more and more like Jesus right now, today.
- Secondly, He had prayer. Over 40 recorded times Jesus slipped away to pray.
- Why? Because in His humanity, Jesus was looking for guidance, wisdom, help from His Father.
- Third, Jesus had the Word of God. Jesus was often quoting scripture. He studied and learned scripture and relied on scripture.
- Fourth, Jesus had fellowship with other believers. He had friends that supported Him.

Conclusion:

- Bruce Ware explains the significance of Jesus' earthly life this way: "So many people minimize or demean the obedience of Christ by saying, "Of course He obeyed. He was God and had God's nature in Him. He had no choice." Scripture does not let us draw this conclusion. It presents Christ as a man who faced every temptation and succeeded not because He relied on His divine nature, but because He relied on the Word, prayer, and the Spirit. And He succeeded all the way to the cross, even to death on the cross."
- The beauty of Jesus' life is that He gave us a model of how to live life in total dependence upon the Father.
- Jesus showed us how to live as humans: fully dependent, fully obedient, fully reliant on the Word of God, Spirit of God, and prayer.
- We underestimate what God wants to do through us.
- We look at the mission of Jesus as beyond our ability.
- But we can approach the mission Jesus has given us with great joy and anticipation, because we know now, like Jesus in His humanity, that the power is not in us, but within the resources that He has made available to us.