

GOD JUST TOUCHED ME - WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT

Chapter 4 - JESUS

Introduction to Jesus

If a God who is a Father to us seemed strange to humanity, the idea of a God who would stoop to become a created human was so foreign that many people rejected it. Two of the great heresies of the early years of the church were that Jesus was not human, just God appearing as human, and that Jesus was not divine, just a great prophet. One result was that early church councils developed the various creeds to clearly state the truth. One of the mysteries of our God is the doctrine of the Incarnation. God the Son became a human being, and lived life on our earth as one of us. The human He became was Jesus. It is a mystery we will not fully understand until we see Him face to face.

God Incarnate

God the Son became Son of Man (Isaiah 9:6). God promised to send a light who would shine on everyone living in the shadow of death. He is both Wonderful Counselor and Mighty God. This message of hope was fulfilled in the birth of Jesus. He is both fully human and fully divine. The Old Testament scriptures define Him as both a suffering servant and a conquering king. Most of all they describe Him as Savior and Redeemer.

The incarnation united God and man (John 1:14). Jesus was unique in all of history and creation. He is the one and only Son and has a relationship to the Father like no one else, ever. He was not partially human and partially divine, but fully human and fully God. He lived for a time limited to what we are capable of, but remains Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Redeemer.

Fully God

The Son is Eternal God (John 1:1&2). Jesus lived as a human but never ceased to be Eternal God. When God the Son stepped out of eternity into time and space, He left His divine attributes in the care of God the Father. He was born as an infant, had to learn to walk and talk, went through puberty and teen years, and became a young adult. He was both loved and hated, had good friends and evil enemies. He experienced everything common to man, including torture and death. We have a God who understands us, not just because He created us, but because He personally experienced life as a human.

Fully Human

God the Son become human because of His love (Philippians 2:6&7). God the Son set aside His right to glory and power to become the man Jesus. He learned the carpenter's trade from Joseph. Other than being an obedient teenager (Luke 2:51), He lived a pretty ordinary life, unnoticed until, at the age of thirty, He was baptized by John the Baptist.

The fullness of God existed in the man Jesus (Colossians 1:15-20). He is the visible image of the invisible God, revealing to us the very nature and character of the Father. He suffered great pain and degradation for us, even unto death. To date, He is the first and still only human raised to the eternal resurrection life. It is true that some have been raised back to their old earthly life, but had to die again and go to the grave to await the resurrection. It is through His work on Calvary that our relationship to God has been restored. The Son not only created everything, but He continues to sustain and protect it. In addition to everything else, He is head over the church. We are the body, His body, but the Head is the seat of decisions and actions.

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The Son of Man is the Son of God (Luke 1:35). Jesus was born of a virgin when "the Holy Spirit came upon her, and the power of the Most High overshadowed her." He did not have a human father and He was born without the sin that entered the world through Adam. Adam was created holy, and he disobeyed God. Jesus was born holy, and He obeyed God fully.

Spirit Filled

Jesus was a Holy Spirit filled human (Matthew 3:16). Throughout most of His life Jesus lived an ordinary human life, mostly unnoticed. All we really know about His first thirty years is His birth, a visit by the Magi a couple of years later, the flight into Egypt, the return to Nazareth and His visit to the temple as a youth. It was only later at the age of thirty, when He was baptized by John the Baptist, that we start learning about His life and actions. The great works Jesus did were not done in the power of God the Son, but as a human filled with the Holy Spirit. Had He done His works as God the Son, we could not hope to attain to it, because none of us is God the Son. However, we can be Holy Spirit filled humans, and we can do the things He did. Throughout the ages many people have done the things He did, and all Christians should live by that same power. John said that Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:11). Jesus told His disciples that they needed to wait for the power (Acts 1:4&5). How much more we need it! We are limited only by how much of ourselves we give to the Holy Spirit, and how much of us has a "Private Property, Keep Out" sign. Jesus gave Himself totally to God and had the Holy Spirit without measure (John 3:34).

Like the Father

The Son is the same as the Father (Hebrews 1:3). God the Son is the God who created the universe (Genesis 1:1-27), spoke in the Old Testament (Isaiah 41:8-10 & 13-14), commissioned Moses to lead His people (Exodus 3:13&14), and chose to become human. The Father and the Son are of one substance as is the Holy Spirit. Jesus sought only the Father's will. In all things, He was the same as the Father (John 14:8&9).

Has All Authority

Jesus has all authority (Matthew 28:18). God gave mankind authority over all His creation. Mankind lost that authority to the devil when they rebelled against God. That is why Jesus did not dispute Satan's rights when he offered it all to Jesus, if Jesus would but bow down and worship him (Matthew 4:8-10). Because of His atoning work Jesus was given authority over everything, and He now has the final word. God has given the risen Jesus authority over heaven and earth, and that is why He could commission us to go out and make disciples, and teach them all He taught.

Burden Bearer

Jesus bears our burdens for us (Matthew 11:28). He calls us to come to Him with all our troubles, doubts, and worries. Sometimes we are so swamped with events that we lose perspective on what is really happening. Sometimes we are upset to the point of senselessness trying to solve problems we can do nothing about. Sometimes we just wish the world would go away. The one who created the universe and overcame sin and death for us is well able to deal with our troubles. All we have to do is just give them to Him and leave them there. Whenever we try to take them back we slow Him down. Jesus frees us from all our burdens and changes meaningless toil into

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spiritual productivity. Do we ever get so weary of our daily struggles that we are sometimes tempted to just give up? When we feel overwhelmed by life do we ask "Why me", or cry out, "Jesus, save me?"

Creator

All things were created through the Son (John 1:3&4). The Father willed creation but it was accomplished through the Son, the Word of God. When the Father willed it, and the Son spoke it, the power of the Spirit moved and it was so. When God created He made every physical thing out of nothing, and the Breath of God breathed life into living things. Since we were created we have no basis for pride. With God we are something valuable and unique. Apart from God we are nothing. Since our God created the universe and established the laws by which it operates, nothing is too complicated or difficult for Him. What does it mean to be the Light of the world? What are we without Jesus? How do you answer someone who maintains that science and creation are incompatible?

Redeemer and Healer

Jesus came both to forgive and to heal (Luke 5:24). His shed blood was for our salvation and His suffering was for our healing (1 Peter 2:24). The Jewish leaders knew that only God had the authority to forgive sin so considered Jesus a blasphemer. They did not understand that He had God's power to heal both the body and the soul. He also came to bring good news to the oppressed, bind broken hearts, comfort those who mourn, and much more (Isaiah 61:1-3). He dealt with the whole person, body, soul, and spirit.

Self Sacrifice

Jesus gave Himself to save us (John 3:16&17). This is the entire gospel condensed into two verses. God paid dearly with the life of His Son, the highest price He could pay to get us back. We were all still in rebellion when Jesus accepted our punishment, paid the price for our sins, and offered us new life. Our Father credits us with what Jesus accomplished when we claim Him as savior. To believe in Him means to put our trust and confidence in Jesus, certain that He alone can save us.

Salvation is offered through faith (Romans 10:9&10). To many people this concept is just too simple and easy, because it does not involve any retribution or getting even, or paying or personal suffering. Salvation is as close as your own mouth and heart. You do not deserve it nor can you ever earn it. All you can do is accept it as God's love gift to you, then claim it and live it out daily. It is never enough to just mouth the words. You must also believe in your heart, and true belief demands a response.

Jesus died and was raised to new life (1 Corinthians 15:3&4). The resurrection is a historical fact witnessed by hundreds of people. The scriptures told us that He would die for our sins, and by His stripes we are healed (Isaiah 53:5-12, Psalm 22:14-18), and that He would be resurrected from the dead. He was raised up in power, having completed the work the Father had given Him.

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Jesus took our offenses on Himself (2 Corinthians 5:21). Jesus traded us His righteousness for our sins. He gave us something of immeasurable worth for something completely worthless. However, He did not take our transgression by force, but waits for us to give them to Him. What happened at Golgotha was sufficient for all the sins mankind has ever committed or ever will commit, but if we refuse to confess and repent, He will allow us to keep our sins to our own peril. When Jesus was crucified and was made to be sin, all of our offenses, and all records of them, were nailed to the cross and destroyed.

Intercessor

Jesus now pleads our case to the Father (1 John 2:1&2). When we stand before the throne of God, Jesus says, "I paid the price for that one, and there is no record to be settled." When we make a decision to follow Jesus we are starting life over with a clean slate. However, that does not mean that we will be free from temptation and sin for the rest of our lives here on earth. The spiritual battle rages on as long as we are here, and we will fall on occasion. Jesus' atoning work is sufficient to cover that last sin plus any future sins that we confess (Colossians 1:12&13). If we put on Christ (Romans 13:14) all the Father can see is His beloved Son, Jesus.

The Way

Jesus is the one and only way to the Father (John 14:6). There is only one source of life, one source of truth, one way to salvation. As the way Jesus is our path to the Father. As the truth He is the reality of God. As the life, He joins His divine life to ours, both now and for all eternity. Thank God for providing a sure way to return to Him. People try many different ways to eternal life, but only one leads to where we want to go. Though there are many other paths they are really the same road to destruction.

Our Example

Jesus came to be an example (John 13:15). His intent and desire was that His followers should act and be motivated as He was. His life was a living demonstration of how God originally intended His children to live. Since we did not seem to get it through the prophets, or get it through the law, He came to show us how. His work of redemption is complete, but His work of making disciples is still ongoing, and He is the example of how to do that. When He said He was our example, He had just finished washing His disciples feet.

Jesus lived life as originally intended for us (Hebrews 5:8-10). The constant theme throughout the scripture is one of obedience to God. Adam and Eve failed, and so has every son of Adam and daughter of Eve ever since. Jesus chose to live a human life of obedience and made the Father's will His own will. His obedience demonstrated His perfection to us, that we might imitate Him.

Glory Restored

The Son's original glory has been restored (Hebrews 10:12&13). Jesus had completed everything He was sent to do, and there was no need to limit His divinity and longer. Trying to add anything to Jesus' sacrifice, or taking anything away from it, denies its validity. Any attempt to gain salvation through good works is rejecting the significance of Jesus' death and spurning the Holy Spirit's work. When God the Son became human Christ lived for thirty-three years as a man. Then,

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in the Garden of Gethsemane, as His work was coming to completion, Jesus asked the Father to restore His glory and His authority as God the Son, to spend the rest of eternity in the Father's presence in the glory He had before time. He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords (Revelation 19:11-16). Jesus said of Himself that I am the bread of life (John 6:35), the light of the world (John 8:12), the Great I AM, (John 8:58), the gate (John 10:7), the Good Shepherd (John 10:11), the resurrection and the life (John 11:25), the way and the truth and the light (John 14:6).

What shall we say then to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? (Romans 8:31).