

The Messenger



“... How beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad tidings of good things!” Romans 10:15

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Dedicated to the Proclamation of the Truth in the Spirit of Love (Ephesians 4:15)

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Jesus Christ – Unique Among Men

by Bob Hutto

Jesus of Nazareth was a man unlike all others. His uniqueness is not necessarily to be found in His works or teaching (though He certainly had no equal in these things). His uniqueness is found in who He was (and is). Even if Jesus had done nothing extraordinary and even if He had taught nothing new, He would still be the only man of His kind in history and deserving of our devotion.

Deity

The Bible teaches that before He came to earth, Jesus existed in heaven as one of the three Persons of the Godhead. These three, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, constitute one divine being. Perhaps the word “person” is not the perfect word to describe what these three are. We might select another word. But we need to say three “somethings” and “person” has worked well through the centuries, so we will use it here. We should be careful, however, not to say that there are three divine beings. That would come close to suggesting that there are three gods, and that would be incorrect. The Bible teaches that there are three that make one. We usually say that there are three Persons that make one God. Jesus was one of these three before His birth into the world (John 1:1-3; Phil. 2:5-11).

When Jesus was born into the world He did not cease being what He had been throughout eternity. He was “God with us” (Matt. 1:23). He was worshiped as God (John 20:28) and exercised the power of God (Luke 5:17-26). Paul says that “in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form” (Col. 2:9). Whatever quality is necessary for someone to be God, Jesus possessed it. If He did not possess that essential, necessary divine quality while on earth, He would not have been God with us. He should not have been called God, He would not have been able to do what only God can do, and it would have been incorrect to say that the *fullness* of Deity dwelt in Him. Neither could He have atoned for sin.

Anyone who denies the deity of Christ makes a serious mistake. Anyone who persists in it teaches grievous error.

Humanity

The New Testament also tells us that Jesus was a man. Paul says, “There is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” (I Tim. 2:5), and, “For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many” (Rom. 5:15). Jesus looked like a man and acted like a man. He had hands and feet, arms and legs, and everything else that comes with a human body. He got tired, hungry, thirsty, and sleepy. He even sweated and bled.

But the humanness of Christ is not to be associated with his body only. There are many men who do not have hands or feet, legs or arms. In fact, many men no longer have physical bodies at all. They have passed from this physical world to the kingdom of God (I Cor. 15:50), but they are men nonetheless. There is a fundamental, necessary quality that all men have in common. Without it they would not be men. Whatever this quality is, Jesus possessed it while on earth and continues to possess it even now. If He did not possess it, He would not really have been a man. He might have looked like a man, but without this quality of humanness He would not have been one of us.

The Uniqueness of Jesus

The word “nature” has been used to refer to the quality essential to making a thing what it is. A chair possesses the nature of a chair. That’s why it’s a chair and not a sofa. God possesses the nature of God. That’s why He is God. A man possesses human nature, and that’s why he is a man. Jesus is the only Person to possess *both* the divine nature and human nature completely and simultaneously. This makes Him unique.

It involved immeasurable condescension for the Son of God to take on human nature. It made Him susceptible to many things He was not susceptible to before – thirst, hunger, and temptation, among others. This condescension is caught in Paul’s message to the Philippians, “... who, although existing in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men” (2:6-7). The participle “taking” expresses means in this passage. He emptied Himself by taking on human nature and living among men as a man. We usually think of emptying a thing by taking something away from it, but here God’s work is done opposite to what we would expect (as is so often the case when God works). The Son emptied Himself by taking on that necessary, essential quality that all men share. If He had not taken that quality, He could not truly be called a man.

It is difficult to talk about the deity of Christ without making statements that sound as though we’re diminishing His humanity, and *vice versa*. But the Bible affirms that Jesus was both fully human and fully divine. He did not lack one quality that was necessary to each. Aren’t you glad it’s true? As God, Jesus can atone for our sins on the cross. As man He can provide an example for us, sympathize with us, and advocate on our behalf. As God-Man He can be the mediator that brings us together with God. There are no truer words than those spoken by Thomas when he saw the body of Jesus. He confessed, “My Lord and my God!” May we be filled with the same sense of awe as we stand before Him.

News and Notes:

Remember to check the prayer list for those with ongoing spiritual weaknesses and physical illnesses.

“...Pray for one another...The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” James 5:16