

# The Mystery of Incarnation (1 of 9)

by Art Katz

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*The sermon explores the mystery of incarnation, highlighting the importance of humility, obedience, and the relationship between deity and humanity, as exemplified by Jesus Christ.*

**Duration:** 1:13:39

**Scripture:** Psalm 102:13, 1 Corinthians 15:23-24, 1 Corinthians 15:35, 1 Corinthians 15:37, Ephesians 2:15, Philippians 2:8

**Topics:** "Incarnation"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of having a relationship with God and being obedient to Him. They highlight the tension and delicacy of this relationship, stating that even after years of obedience, one should still approach God with fear and trembling. The speaker also discusses the concept of sonship, using Jesus and Paul as examples of how to follow God's will. They conclude by mentioning a specific instance where the speaker was called to speak on the subject of Israel and the church in the last days, indicating that the silence was over and they were on holy ground.

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## Transcript

So I want to begin by teaching you a word that you've never heard and never used. I want to ask for the show of hands, who knows what the word diffident means? To be diffident, or the noun diffidence, d-i-f-f-i-d-e-n-c-e. Know what it means? No? No fair.

No fair to anybody who's been in other schools. I'll give you a brief definition. Diffidence is where you believe yourself to be wrong, even when you're right.

Diffidence is an attitude, that even when you're right, you're wrong. Can you understand that? Would to God that that were a conspicuous trait of the Church, rather than this bumptious conceit, when we're right, we're wrong when we're right, if that's the attitude with which we express it. But to be right and see yourself as wrong is pleasing in the Lord's sight.

That's humility, that's diffidence, that's gracious, that's allowing that however persuaded you are, you're willing to consider that you might well be wrong, even though you're right. And even though you prayed and fasted, there's no guarantee that what you're going to speak or do is sanctioned or given of God. I know because I've tried to twist God's arm by fasting, as if to persuade him to confirm what I think I need to say or do.

So, file that word and rehearse it and consider it and ask the Lord to give you the grace to be diffident, that even when you're persuaded you're right, you're also acknowledged that you're wrong. That's appropriate to our humanity. And ironically, the subject this morning is the mystery of incarnation.

The issue of Jesus being both God and man. The Council of Chalcedon, do I pronounce it correctly, Roach? About 400 AD, had to wrestle through the issue of how could Jesus be both man and God. If he was not man, if you deny his manhood, you take away from God the sacrifice and the servant and the suffering servant and the priestliness and the identification that Jesus has with his people in his humanity.

But if you take away his deity, then he's only merely man. How could God allow himself to be crucified? Can God die at the cross? These were staggering questions that were coming to the church as a great challenge and threat of heresy. Those who denied the humanity of God, I think they were called D.O.C. Dossetists.

Dossetists. Dossetism. And those who denied the divinity of Christ were guilty of the other side of the same coin.

The Aryans. Aryans. So there was a remarkable thing that threatened the church in its early history.

So the great church councils, the Council of Nicaea that preceded it, the Council of Chalcedon, defined and wrestled through these questions. They gathered up the theologians and churchmen of that time and heard them out and debate and finally came up with a statement that a lot of which is expressed now in the confession. What do we call it? The Apostolic, the Apostles' Creed.

The creed is the summation of the findings of many of these church councils and the phrase very God, very man comes out of the Council of Chalcedon. Jesus was both very God and very man. Well, who has ever heard of that? It's unprecedented.

History has never provided an example of God and man in the same person. How important is that? Could the messianic ministry of Jesus be fulfilled if he were not a man? Could it have been valid if he were not God, if he were only man? And so how can both function in the same personality at the same time is a staggering conundrum not only about Jesus but about ourselves because the issue of incarnation is the issue still. What do we say? Christ in us, the hope of glory.

If Christ is in us, that's deity and us is humanity. So we are faced with the same essential issue in our own walk as is represented by Jesus in his. And is that not the reason why he's called the patterned son? That he's gone before us to show us that there's a way in which deity and humanity can be in union.

And in fact, if they are not, then there's no true manhood. It takes God to be a man. Not just by shoring us up, but by infusing us with those divine qualities that bring us to a full humanity.

That man without God is bestial. We've seen that in our modern history. The most celebrated of civilizations was reduced to bestiality without pity.

And we're told in the last days, a whole generation is being raised up without natural affection, without gratitude, disrespectful to parents, ungodly. Seek lovers of self rather than lovers of God. Without natural affection, without the capacity for pity or compassion, cruel.

They have lost their human distinctive. And a remarkable thing is when man loses his human distinctive, he sinks below the level of an animal. He performs those things for which we would never expect an animal to perform, and they don't.

But man, robbed of his humanity, becomes a grotesque. Becomes less than a beast. And to what degree then does manhood, real manhood, require divinity? Can you be a man without God? I'm not talking about just wearing pants.

What does man mean to be human? What are the qualities? And how are they to be obtained? How can God transmute what he is in himself into an earthen vessel? And is that unbecoming to God? Is that an appropriate vessel for him to be confined to a human body? That we say Christ in us. For me to live as Christ, Paul said. Is he just a woofing? Is he just mouthing a phrase? Or is he speaking about the uttermost distinctive that explains Paul as Paul, as the apostle.

If for him not to live as Christ, would be not to have an apostle. Because the chief apostle of our confession is Jesus himself. So you can't tell where Paul ends and God begins.

There's a remarkable union. And can you tell in the history of Jesus what issued from his humanity and what issued from his deity? When he said this or he said that or did this, from what source was he drawing? Of course if he's only exercising his deity, we can admire that conduct and those miracles and the great wisdom of the Sermon on the Mount. But of course we could never hope to emulate or aspire to that standard.

He has an advantage over us. He's both God and man and that's God speaking. Of course, what do you expect? Who else can give the Sermon on the Mount? But and if he lay aside his deity and is speaking out of his humanity, that opens questions of another kind entirely.

If he has lay aside his deity and everything that he's performing is by faith and trust in the Father who imparts to him spirit, words, and guidance, then we are in a position relative to his. What do we lack that is not available to us of the inspiration of God, his spirit, his example, his leadership, his guidance? What prevents us from being perfected in our humanity and acting and completing the messianic task that remain in the same way by which Jesus himself performed it? Don't think that the issue is over. It's still a very live issue.

John Murray, the Reformed theologian from who I quoted in the first week of the school, is dead against believing that Jesus forsook his deity because God cannot cease from being God. So how can he lay aside his deity? Therefore, his wonders and miracles can only be understood on the basis of that power uniquely his as being God as well as man. But let's take a look at Ephesians chapter 2 in the classic text that speaks about laying aside.

Philippians, what did I say? Oh, I meant Philippians. I'm reading from the Phillips edition that came out some years ago, J.B. Phillips, Letters to the Young Churches, a kind of paraphrasing of the scriptures in contemporary English. And sometimes when you hear it that way, you catch it in a way that is unfamiliar and penetrates the more deeply.

My translation adds a significant phrase. And having become man, he humbled himself by living a life of utter obedience even to the extent of dying. And the death he died was the death of a common criminal.

And having become man, he humbled himself. Let me read the whole Phillips translation of that statement. Let Christ himself be your example as to what your attitude should be.

See, why are we taking up the subject? Is it just historical curiosity? Or we want to learn of the early controversies of the church that were resolved in the great church crises and councils? Or is there still an issue? And how does it pertain to us? It makes a world of difference if Jesus had an advantage over us that we can't employ. And God cannot have an expectation that we should walk as he walked. But if he walked in his humanity, then God has every right to expect a comparable kind of walk from us.

So we have to wrestle through this question for its remarkable implications. And so here's Paul exhorting the church, let Christ himself be your example as to what your attitude should be. For he who had always been God by nature did not cling to his prerogatives as God or as God's equal, but stripped himself of all privileges.

I think some of your translations say he emptied himself. Raise your hand if yours says he emptied himself. Does anybody have some other word rather than strip or empty in their version? I kind of prefer stripped or emptied because it's a very graphic picture of a man who had every right in his deity to have certain things intrinsic to his life, but voided them and emptied himself.

Another author who I'll be bringing to our table next week, P.T. Forstein said, that's the very evidence of God. Only God would have the power to empty himself of his godness. See what I mean? A man could not do that, but God can do that and that he did do it in order to perform something of a kind that would have a lasting significance into the very present day into the end of the age.

This is humility. You know, it's humility for God to take the form of a man. Are you humbled by being a man? How many times do you have to go to the boys' room? And when you reach my age, even having gone, you still continue to dribble.

Excuse the reality. It's embarrassing. Wit to God, we had a glorified body already where the valve shuts off when it should.

A body is an embarrassment. Paul could hardly bear it. He wanted to shock off and be clothed upon with a heavenly tent.

He was tired of the infirmity of the body and its restrictions, its demands. It's got to be fed and attended and often it's in conflict with the things that are spiritual. It's a tension.

God submitted himself to that. We don't appreciate the cross until we understand that in order for the cross to have its work, God had to come in the form of a man. And had to empty himself of his divine prerogatives and privileges, even of his power, in order to suffer what could only be inflicted upon him in the weakness of a man.

Elsewhere it says he was crucified in weakness. How can God be weak unless he has forfeited his strength? And that he would do it for us is a remarkable statement of God. That's why the cross is the revelation of the righteousness of God.

Because he emptied himself. Even coming down from heaven, the pre-incarnate life of Christ is a neglected subject of the church. We think that he began with Mary.

No, he had an eternal existence with the Father long before he took upon himself human form. And to forfeit that long experience and come down into the earth and come out as a baby dependent upon parents wholly weak and all of the things which children are totally dependent is an unbelievable humility for God himself to perform. But the benefits of his godness that he emptied himself so that he would be wholly cast upon the Father for every provision to fulfill his earthly call.

He would have to be a man of the spirit. He would have to be a man of faith. He would have to pray.

He would have to go through the tensions and struggles that we do discerning is it God or is it me of the kind that we experienced this morning. That's a tension. That's a conflict.

That's a humiliation. When you lay aside divine prerogative that would always be absolutely perfect and act out of a humanity that is variable and questionable and frail that you never know with certainty and yet he had to perform certain things with utter exactitude. Overturning the money changes tables.

That word to the gentile woman about crumbs from off the Lord's table. There were significant moments. Every moment in the life of Jesus is significant.

What he said and did in any moment can make or break his messianic claim. As for example he went to his death as a lamb to the slaughter silently. If he but said one thing if he allowed his human irritation to be vexed by being mocked by his people in his suffering when you're most vulnerable the whole testimony written seven centuries before in Isaiah would be invalidated and his claim as Messiah would be negated.

If he had said one word he went to his death silently. He had something to fulfill and he fulfilled it perfectly. But if he did all that in his humanity what a remarkable testimony to the relationship that he had with the Father to his own dependence and trust of the Father even for his own resurrection that he had to live by faith that he had to be up early praying to catch the sense of the Father's heart and to trust for the enablement to walk as he was required to walk.

These are all issues for us but for which reason we're taking it up.

So he emptied himself of all privilege by consenting not only to be a man we need to ask the question when the devils were obedient unto him have you come before the time when he was able to cast out that which his disciples could not cast out was he then employing his deity and its authority or did he come to an appropriation of an authority with God by his walk that was effective in casting out those demons got the idea? because you remember when the woman with the issue of blood walked behind him and she had not been able to find a solution with doctors and her whole substance and fortune was spent in vain if I could but touch his garment she said I'll be healed and he was in the press of a crowd and she touched his garment and was healed but he knew in that moment someone touched me

they said what are you talking about there are people crowding all over but he said I felt the virtue go out from me that virtue was the healing power of God but if it was God how could it go out it would always be constant God cannot be subtracted from God but if it was something cumulative and I'm raising this as a question not as a verse of the Lord that he obtained by successive obediences so that what we call virtue is the residue of God that exists as authority in light of your history of faithfulness that when she touched him that's the power that went out from him it was a residue of what one receives in obedience well how do you mean that Cass because it says the Holy Spirit is given to them that obey him why because we need the power for obedience God never calls us to an

obedience that we can perform out of ourselves look my no hands every obedience which God calls us is beyond our human ability and therefore we're cast upon God and in our sons determination to honor God by obeying he grants his spirit and so I'm raising the question that when the spirit is given in obedience what else comes with the spirit that is retained even after the power of the spirit has been expended in the obedience these are thoughts we need to consider that something remains because the spirit of God is not just an abstract energy the spirit of God is God it's the Ruach HaKodesh it's the spirit of holiness which is to say the moral character of God is imbued in the spirit so when he extends his spirit for an obedience it performs it but the reality the character of what came

remains and so successive obediences form something of a cumulative kind that Jesus felt went out from him when she touched him and the early English language and some Bibles don't even say virtue but in some of the others it's a virtue went out from him well I love the word virtue but you know the kind of guy I am I like the word diffident I like the word virtue I like all words that have moral connotations I even like the word moral because if you take the word moral out of our vocabulary out of our speech out of our consciousness and out of our conduct we are no longer man we're an animal that's exactly what makes man man is the moral quotient no other creature no other animal thinks in moral terms or acts morally it's our privilege and it's the distinction that makes us human is our

moral consideration so I'm saying that virtue has a moral ring to it virtue is more than just abstract power virtue is character something that Jesus had not by virtue of his deity but by virtue of his obedience as a son in his humanity that's the point well what's the point cats that if he had a virtue that could be tapped as power not because of his deity but because of his obedient humanity what therefore is are we capable of having by our obedience I would prefer to think that power should be related to character and not just be an entity unto itself that anyone can perform independent of what they really are in their moral character before God because charismatically that's exactly what we have been seeing in modern times the men of faith and power but their lifestyle is hardly moral

they're living like barons in mansions and private jets and all that kind of stuff so contrary to the poverty of Paul and of Jesus himself it raises significant questions and yet they seem to express power so many have heard this from me before one of my most agonizing moments in my own history in a platform at Jerusalem in the 1970's with a lady then who was the most famed evangelist of her generation that brought her catchers with her men who caught the bodies that fell and the excitement when she reached behind the person being prayed for to touch the catcher and the catcher went down and the flashbulbs were popping and the excitement and I'm standing four or five feet away from this action out of my skull, I'm anguishing in my soul at the visible evidence of power, bodies going down

in the complete absence of any sense of God's presence, the failure to power without a sense of God, that country I took Inga by the hand and before 4,000 people I yanked her, we were on the platform off the platform and out the building I couldn't bear to remain a moment longer so I much prefer power in conjunction with character and I believe that's what Jesus exhibited and that's what sons are called to exhibit also power that is independent of character seems like a formula for deception and we have a power hungry church that is not too scrupulous or concerned about what is the source of the power so long as they see the evidence of power, they want excitement, they want titillation but they're not concerned with where it's coming from and through whom is it being expressed I love

therefore the episode of Jesus virtue has gone out from me if it went out from you dear Jesus, how did it come into you if you lay aside your deity, your prerogatives if you emptied yourself if you did not exploit or

employ your divine power by what means then did it come into you as a man this is why we're examining this subject, what's the implication for us if Jesus did it all by his deity well we could admire that but we couldn't hope to emulate that and yet he's the pattern son bringing many sons to glory and the word glory itself suggests God and his presence bringing sons to glory is bringing them to a place where they're in such union with the power of God as to demonstrate the glory of God but not in any way to touch or misappropriate it for themselves they can be trusted if we

are undiscerning and are not careful to ascertain the source of the vessel through which it's coming, we will be treated to demonic deception in fact we're told lying signs and wonders characterize the last days they are actual wonders but they're lying because they do not come from the source of God himself but his enemy who appears to and presents himself as being from God to the dupes who just want to enjoy the exhilarating sense of power because they're bored in fact can God be witnessed to and his image be expressed except through a man God has always required a tabernacle or a temple it was filled with his glory the priest could not minister they had to come out because glory is diffused unless it's in a structure created for its purpose that is sanctified and cleansed that he might

inhabit and possess it, that's why Jesus was so jealous with the money changes at the temple, they were corrupting the house of God it's not a house that God could occupy and in fact it's not long after that it's going to be actually destroyed and not one stone would be left standing on the other but the Jews died on the roof of the temple in 70 AD because they thought the building itself could not be destroyed, it was God's temple but he had vacated it, it was now an empty frame and the same thing happens to us we are the temples of God in our bodies but if we're not living in a way that's compatible with his holy presence we also will experience being vacated or forfeited but he needs a temple God doesn't need anything but in his own wisdom his glory has got to fill the temple to be

seen, to be made manifest, it requires a vessel, whether it's a building or a human being and so I'm saying not to say this, that the greatest revelation of God as God must come through a man whose vessel is totally possessed by God and is wholly in obedience to that God and in that obedience is expressing the very character of God and that in fact in laying aside his deity and his prerogatives he's exhibiting God because God himself is humble that when Jesus took that towel and girded himself and took off his robe and drew water and washed the feet of his disciples he was not just performing a novelty he was enacting decisively a statement of what God is in himself in his character God is humble folks he's so humble he's willing to occupy us what do you think of that? and so how would we

have known it if a man had not demonstrated it and how shall the world know it if we don't demonstrate it God doesn't need anything from man except that he himself humbles himself to require something for the showing forth of his own glory he didn't need the world he didn't need mankind all of this is God acting out of his freedom as God and what a revelation that is that a God who is totally entire in himself because he's perfect had no need of a world or a universe or an earth or a humankind created it for fellowship for relationship to show forth his greater glory the reasons that he has that are not even given us he didn't have to he's not under any compulsion he's entirely free as God he's voluntarily chose to create in the beginning God created he was not under obligation that he's

willing to do that and take the risk of his creation that backfired on him so to speak through Adam and has generated generations of sinners who have mocked his name and blasphemed him and gave rise to a nation whose track record is altogether a pitiful thing as we read yesterday in Psalm 78 and that he foresaw and foreknew that this was going to cost him an anguish of soul and yet it did not deter him from

creating and bringing Israel into existence as a nation for his name or the church how has the church failed him so he's a sufferer moral anguish maybe the greatest form of suffering even eclipsing the physical God is a sufferer God is humble God is gracious and generous he didn't have to share himself he didn't have to create anything he would still have been God and perfect and

completed himself everything that he does exhibits him and when he sends himself and his son that very sending is the statement of God because Jesus was not conscripted he voluntarily agreed with the father because the father and the son are one that there are purposes that need to be served in the earth that cannot be served by anyone else other than God himself it's not enough for God to judge and let calves and bulls suffer the consequence that's only a type to illustrate something that will come ultimately that eclipses the blood of calves and bulls and that must be the blood of a man who is also God if there's going to be blood it's got to be a man and a man therefore is free a man acts voluntarily in agreement with the father he's not compelled he exhibits what a man is in his own

freedom in agreeing to serve the purposes of God the father even at the expense of his own humiliation suffering and death see we can't celebrate the cross unless we configure the pre-incarnate history of Jesus with the father before he came to the earth because he emptied himself of that relationship just to come and in coming he takes upon himself the form of a man what a pitiful thing with all of that limitation hunger, thirst fear, anxiety opposition not only that Paul tells us in Philippians but the form of a Hebrew the most despised race on the earth he should have been a German at least Denmark would have been second best but a Jew becomes a Jew and there are many Christians today who will not acknowledge that and taking that then he becomes a slave what he did washing the feet was

not a little flim flam it was a statement of what he ever and always was even before he came to the earth he was always a servant because he reveals the father so the father is a servant the father is humble the father is merciful the father is love because how do we know it? the son exhibits and displays it all the more in his humanity he's not flashing his his credentials of deity that would only impress us but he's exhibiting it in his humanity for which we ourselves have the same prospect and that is altogether another story now we can become sons now becoming a son in the form of that son is ultimate honor to be conformed to the pattern of that son equally living sacrificially bearing suffering reproach, all the kinds of things that he bore in his humanity in order to show forth the

glory of God the father as servants what does it say in Psalm 102 when the set time to favor Zion has come when my servants shall have compassion on her stones and pity on her dust it doesn't say church of course it couldn't have said church generations would have been bewildered by the word but the word is significant servants, when my servants servanthood is God it's not a put on, it's not a something that he was required to adopt, it's what he was and is in himself because that's equally what the father is can you believe that the great God who is the creator of the heavens and the earth and all that in them is is by very nature a servant that's his nature that by very nature he's humble that he's love that he's a sufferer for others here's what Carl Barth says on the subject of Jesus

man for other men Jesus is the supreme man we don't know what manhood is it's got nothing to do with biceps or crushing empty beer cans in your bare hand or winning tennis titles a man *mamma mia*, a man is a supreme statement have you ever drooled about it I'm not talking about some romantic image of but man what a creature made in God's image a man is a supreme accomplishment a man is a supreme piece of the ultimate expression of God and his creativity God forbid we should allow that image to suffer loss and become a caricature or some drunken or some drug afflicted character who can't even walk straight

can't speak a word straight or we're raising a whole generation who can hardly do anything but mumble can't speak their speech is not incisive their minds are unclear they're limited in

their intention their ambitions are abysmal and low and carnal they are deformed in their humanity and are not reflecting the grandeur of God in creating us in his image as man and you know what Jesus in his eternal identity retains his manhood he didn't drop it off when he finished his functions in the earth and go back again to being an abstract entity as a son to the father at the throne now he still retains his body, he still retains his manhood and when he comes he comes in that manhood and we shall see him whom we have pierced, how come? because his body bears the scars and will eternally man is in heaven you guys at the very throne of God that's a statement of God himself that he allows man to be in the eternal presence of God the father it's an honoring of man which puts a little

obligation upon us to walk as men not as mere men why do you walk as mere men? which I spoke once in Denmark when they came into the building I saw these guys coming in and I said why do you walk as mere men? the meeting hadn't even begun yet but when they came in I was impressed, that's all they are is mere men there's something missing from their manhood, namely the divine quotient they're just believers of a kind, but not of such a kind that their humanity reflects the deity of God and until it becomes that we're not really man man is not man without God man is man with God, that's what Jesus displayed and that's what we are called to display, so listen to this statement from one of my favorite theologians the humanity of Jesus is not merely the repetition and reflection of his

divinity or of God's controlling will, it is the repetition and reflection of God himself, no more and no less, it is the image of God, this is not some inadvertent thing, it's the very expression of God man in his perfected humanity, in his obedience to God, through the provision of the Holy Spirit which is God, comes into a fullness that reveals God as God, that's what Jesus did, and that perfect piece of humanity was battered to a pulp and lost all of its shape, it had no beauty that any should desire him he was more than any man they destroyed that humanity, but when God raised him up, you can see the other painting here, every place where he suffered perforation in his flesh, beams of glory are pouring out and when the disciples saw him in his glorified resurrected body they

recognized him let me ask, when you receive your glorified body, see you're not going to ever shut this off you better learn to live with it without a body you lose your human distinctive, we mustn't be contemptuous of the body as if it's non-spiritual the spiritual thing is made manifest through it, but we mustn't idolize it, and pamper it, but respect it as a piece of God's creation and uniquely different with each one, so when the Lord comes and we shall see him as he is, in a twinkling of an eye in a moment, we shall be made like him, we shall be given glorified bodies, what does that mean? we shall all be stamped off the same production line? we will be given a glorified body of the body that we brought as a seed into the earth look at 1st Corinthians 15 disputing with those who

thought that the resurrection was passed, but in verse 20, but now is Christ risen from the dead, and became the first fruits of them that slept for since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead you know what I would do?

I would take my red pen and circle the word man isn't that remarkable? in the morning the Lord says develop a mistrust of man, be suspicious of your own man and yet God celebrates man, it's a paradox for by man came death, but by man also came the resurrection from the dead, the supreme man, Jesus the new creation the template and the paradigm of manhood for all successive generations Jesus is the

paradigm of what manhood ought to be and will be in all successive generations and our failure to conform to that image by sloth, by laziness by indifference, by careless living, by sin marring that image is doing despite to the grace of God we should be conformed to the image of the sun the template of a perfect humanity in relationship with deity by faith we also should exhibit and grow in

that but every man in his own order Christ the firstfruits, verse 23 afterwards lay there Christ that is coming then comes the end when shall the Lord of the king the God, even the Father when shall put down all authority, well he must reign he's put all enemies on his feet, now in verse 35 some will say how are the dead raised up, with what body do they come do they come in some kind of magical, classic form all stamped off the same production line you fool that which you sow is not made alive except it die, and that which thou sowest thou sowest not that body that shall be but a bare grain, it may chance wheat or some other grain but God giveth it a body as it please him and every seed its own body, what you sow will affect what you reap, what we sow as our body will affect the

glorified form of that body, that's as much as I know and as I understand from these verses but that we retain our humanity is clear, but in what form we retain it has a lot to do with what form it goes into the ground and dies but we'll recognize each other, in what form will you see me in my 76, 77th year, or the year of my death or will you see me at the flush of my youth or at the height of my young manhood in my early 20s or my mellow years through the 30s and 40s or 50s at what age will you see me or each other the scripture doesn't tell us but I suspect it will be the statement of the essence of what God has established and perfected through our earthly tenure will be the eternal statement in its glorified form and you'll recognize this is regiment, that's art we'll know each other

because the essence of what we are and what we have allowed God to perfect and through our discipleship and consecration and even our suffering will eternally be carried in that glorified form wait till I read you I have it in my briefcase now but I don't think we're ready yet Spurgeon's statement that when we have acquired the son we have acquired everything through which the son has passed his life experience, his maturity, the issues of his life are not just spent and done and fade with history they are communicated in the son perfected through that and when we acquire the son we acquire everything through which the son has passed and it opens to me some consideration like how is it that Spurgeon saved at the age of 15 or 16 is within a year already a preacher and before he's 20 or so

he's preaching to thousands in London in a building that had to be made for him to accommodate the crowds and when I read him even now his insight his knowledge the knowledge of God I can read you today as you'll be floored where did he get that because he was already talking and writing like this in his 20s what I'm saying is his wisdom and knowledge of God could not have been the product of his experience he had not lived long enough what then was he expressing he was expressing the experience of the Jesus who was his life just to come consciously in an awareness like this and to receive the benefit of all through which Jesus has passed that maturity is not just cumulative years, maturity is receiving the tested son of obedience and making that incorporate and internalized and part of

our own and walking in that we're living beneath the glory dear folks we're living beneath our inheritance the experience of Jesus is too precious to have been dissipated away after it was performed it came into him as character, as moral being the son being perfected through obedience through which he suffered, should not be lost to successive generations but be part of their inheritance P.T.

Forsyth says, Jesus became what he already was yeah by his obediences he came into his deity so to speak into the character of God which he lay aside, he then obtained humanly by obedience became the God man not by the supernatural thing that was his at the first but by the acts of his humanity and obedience so that the humility that he expresses is a divine character but is yet attained humanly through his experience now let me put this out if we are at a place where we can consciously inherit the experience of Jesus and come into maturity that is beyond our years what happens to our experience? am I 75, 6 years spent and gone and no one will receive the benefit and it all dissipates through the air or does the same principle pertain to us that as the experience of Jesus is mediated and passed on through inheritance as it were the same thing is possible to us that my children, not just biological but spiritual or the church to whatever degree that it can draw from and receive has the benefit of my experience even that which is lost to my own memory because it has settled somewhere in the being and in the person so that what is spoken and said carries a resonance and a weight of a history that you can inherit and we can do that for each other that the church ought to be one of the richest realities in the world if we have the advantage of each other's history as well as his it means that whatever suffering we're bearing is not just for the moment but for posterity that future generations should the Lord tarry will receive the benefit of that through which we have passed and therefore we will have a greater disposition to bear that suffering if it has a significance beyond the moment as it affects us but will affect all the future as I believe it will both in heaven and in earth see the implications of this? awesome to know that this treasure is available and that we have been ignorant and have bypassed it so to speak and just acting out of the limitations of our own lifetime is a remarkable loss so imagine the whole corporate body receiving this benefit and coming to that great maturity for which the Lord has invested himself, his investment is too great to be dissipated away and to be lost to successive generations or to the church in corporate which the powers recognize Jesus we know and Paul we know but who are you? what do they know about Jesus and Paul? and what could they know about Paul that they know equally about Jesus?

Jesus they could know by virtue of his divinity as the sent son but what could they know about Paul who is a human being? but they know exactly the same for Paul as they know for Jesus what do they know? that these men resonate God and resonate the authority of God independent whether they were sent from the father or they had a natural birth and were converted but Paul's relationship with the father through the son was of a kind like the son himself and brought dimensions into his life of authority that the powers recognized and feared so when they mock us and they say Jesus we know Paul we know but who are you? they say you lack what Paul exhibited and Paul exhibited what Jesus exhibited and both of them obtained it from the father who is ultimate authority not by virtue of birth but by

virtue of acquisition through obedience so when we mock you who are you? those powers are saying you guys are living beneath the standard you're not living in a way as sons by which you would have acquired the same resonance of God as both Jesus and Paul exhibited which we fear just to go back early in the life of Jesus even as a boy one of the first instances when they went up to the temple for the Passover and left in the crowd and thought Jesus was with them and found out after a few days that he was not and were panic stricken and they went back and they found him and he was both asking and hearing the doctors of the Lord I love that statement he was both speaking raising questions but also hearing isn't that precious for a son already exercising his humanity to obtain and they said

where were you and they were flustered and he said don't you know I had to be about my father's business already has this consciousness even as a 12 year old and they understood not it says in Luke chapter 2 verse 50 they understood not the saying which you spoke unto them the next verse says and he

went down with them and came to Nazareth and was subject unto them but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart this is a remarkable statement of the godly disposition already in Jesus as a son and as a boy that even though his parents did not understand him nor his call he submitted himself unto them to bear the indignation the irritation of parents who don't understand have you ever had to bear the humiliation of a wife who doesn't understand doesn't know what you're about and why

can't you tell jokes like other speakers and why do you embarrass me with your strange behavior and yank me off the platform before 4,000 people in front of all those celebrities whom I admire and I want to bless you're a strange man never understood you even to this day what does a man crave more in his humanity than that recognition that's what Jesus suffered the loss of by parents who didn't understand him but it did not hinder him from going down with them to Nazareth and it's a literal going down not just because Jerusalem is going up but Nazareth is the the anus of the world it's the bottom of the pile Nazareth can any good thing come out of it so he's not only going with parents who are dum-dums but he's going down to a place that is spiritually despicable he submitted himself and

the next verse says and Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man just the words Jesus increased indicates that this is not some full blown deity that can be tapped at will but it is as human as us in the prospect of growing and increasing or falling back or being depleted he increased in wisdom and in stature by God and man and he never stopped increasing he increased all the way through the 33 years of his life right to the final obedience in the garden of Gethsemane to the cross he kept increasing in stature he grew into his full deity so to speak through his human submission and humiliation was the key to increase if that was his mode of increase what is ours? why haven't we increased? because we're unwilling to go down we're unwilling to suffer indignity or

lack of appreciation or understanding or whatever our Nazareth is or whatever our unbelieving parents or spouses are there's plenty of opportunity if we will go down and evidently that's the mode by which Jesus increased in his humanity and it's the mode for us as well you see why it's so important to come to some understanding of this mystery of incarnation of God in the flesh there's got to be a flesh there's got to be God and there's a dynamic and a tension of relationship of discerning and being obedient to that God in which he'll allow you to trip and falter just to show you how delicate a thing it is and that you can't in the last analysis have an absolute confidence even if you have a 41 year history the next time is as perilous and tremulous as the very first time you ever obeyed

God it never gets familiar it's every time again as a first time of fear and trembling and yet when the hour strikes you've got to go up you've got to obey you can't cop out and say I'm not sure you're as sure as you're sure and even when you speak you're diffident because even if you're right you're wrong got the idea you guys that's sonship Jesus demonstrated it why? so that we would have a pattern as Debbie said, a model and Paul himself offered himself follow me as I follow Christ take my example to yourself and my ways it's not a man boasting in his vanity it's a man who's the replica of Jesus and his generation Jesus has not ended, he's continuing in counsel and messianic value through a son who has voided everything and counted it as done, that he might win Christ he's in the same

relationship with the Father through Christ as Jesus was in his own body that's why he can say I don't receive this by how does he say it?

I don't receive this as command I offer you this as my opinion and two thousand years later we are as fastidious and attentive to what Paul gave as opinion as we do to what Paul received as commandment

that's how close the man was to God that his opinion is not some chance arbitrary thing but has the same value as what he received as commandment because he was in that union with deity we avail ourselves of what God makes available but we have the same necessity to come to a wilderness place of radical separation from everything and to have that union with God by which we are instructed Jesus had to have a thirty year history in his humanity before his three year brief tenure in ministry a thirty year investment for a three year use what about us and our generation we go to a three month discipleship school and boom we're in ministry where is our investment where are we willing to be hidden and obscure and allow the Lord to instruct us in another kind of school before we ever take first steps in expressing ourselves this is an instant generation and everybody wants in three months to do, to do and to be that's why believers thought that I had died we haven't heard a thing about Art Cassius, he was such a flash in the pan this Jewish guy, he was soaring and what a spokesman and anointed and da da da and we haven't heard of him anybody know, when did he die he was in the boondocks ten years out here without ministry and even after the ten years there are seasons in which God has shut me down for a year at a time and there's no trip, no service no ministry, no speaking fourteen months of sabbatical silence where I was not allowed to speak anything before the first message on the mystery of Israel in the church so God has his ways of training us if we're willing to submit to death silence is death the flesh yearns for activity why is it that when the priests were consecrated and after much blood and sprinkling and washings and all kinds of things the last requirement for their ordination is seven days waiting at the tenth of meeting just twiddling their thumbs doing nothing and all Israel is looking on on that patented activity why? because they're young and there's an itch that needs yet to be brought into death and waiting is a form of dying a priest that will not wait is not a priest a priest who's impetuous and has got to say and do because the thought comes to him it must be God has not yet been tempered so we're rushing such young men into ministry youth for Christ youth with a mission my brother said how can youth even have a mission?

I admire there's not an organization that I admire more but their very title indicates the temper of our evangelical age youth with a mission there's another there's teenagers for Christ because kids are bored and need something to do and go to exotic places but how are they instructing others who have not been instructed themselves how can they give beyond the level of their own experience of maturity so it's a marvel the good that has been done and of course many come to maturity in the very process but there's a tinge of presumption that youth could have a mission why even the priest the Aaronic priest could not begin their ministries until the same age in which Jesus began his 30 all those good years listen at the age of 12 he was stupefying the priest and the doctors of the law he had such sagacity means wisdom and confounded them in the remarkable understanding but he had yet to wait 18 more years before he could express it I want to tell you dear saints that 18 years was death Jesus didn't have to wait for the cross to experience death his whole lifetime is an experience of death even going down with unbelieving parents to Nazareth is death but those deaths were obediences that sprung to life so even the Aaronic priest could not commence its activity until the age of 30, until the age of maturity and after 20 years they're finished they retire at the age of 50 they gave the cream of their choices they gave 60 years to their service the 30 years that preceded were preparation for the 20 years of activity and then retirement what a mentality, so other than our own we're doing, doing, doing, doing but it's sound and fury that signifies little if nothing as Shakespeare said so God can give you a wilderness behind the shades and curtains of your own home if you'll submit to it and welcome it but there must be a wilderness there must be a radical separation there must be a dealing of God in which you shut out those things that are distractions and God can actually send you into a physical place he brought us here to nowhere is where the travel agents didn't even know where Laporte is and so the one way or the other we've got to find our way back even to the pattern indicated by the Aaronic priesthood because even in the Melchizedek priesthood it says that Jesus being

in the form of a son of God was without father, mother, ancestry beginning or ending of days what does it mean?

He's separated from the most elementary natural soulish connections that are congruent to the life of men anywhere without father or mother, without ancestry without beginning or ending of days and what does it say? if he were in the earth he would not be a priest at all he was heavenly while in the earth, Paul's citizenship was in heaven while in the earth Jesus could say to Nicodemus the son of man no man ascends no man descends no man descends who has not first ascended even the son of man who is in heaven, speaking of himself in Jerusalem, his feet on terra firma to a man in that same city saying the son of man who is in heaven how can he be in heaven while he's speaking to Nicodemus on earth if you don't understand that you don't understand the subject at hand, you don't understand the mystery of incarnation that you can be physically in one place but the actuality that forms you that governs you, that inspires you that provides for you is another place and it's above even while you're here below and that this is God's normative intention for every saint and Jesus demonstrated that, Paul demonstrated that and we need to demonstrate that Paul said it's death that works in me but life in you there was a necessary season of death before the first expression of a holy message that has been withheld from the church until this time the mystery of Israel and the church, the key of Paul's apostolic perception of the faith given at the heart of his book of Romans was lost to the church and to the best leaders in it, men whom I knew and would confess it's a complete mystery to me, I never have understood it so where does God bring me in the years in which he shuts down Ben Israel to a Lutheran seminary in St.

Paul liberal, 65% female student body of which 99% were all witches or lesbians or both hating my guts that when I took a visiting brother into school with me into the classroom, he said the moment you walked in Art, I could feel the vibes coming out of these women against you, he said the intense hatred against you, they were everyday campaigning for my ejection because I had the audacity to say that God is he and him and that the pronoun is masculine as against their belief that it was an earth goddess that precedes the father oh and there was a tension everyday, I came home everyday from that school battered and bruised from the spiritual onslaught of these witches for two years so I mean there's a whole history and in that time at the seminary the Lord is beginning to open to me by

inadvertent means, by a book that I stumble upon where I'm looking for another required reading on the history of Israel of Jews in Germany and begins to factor things into my comprehension so that by the end of the first quarter the thought comes to me what are the implications for the church of the last days what are the implications for the church from the issue of Israel for the church of the last days and I'm in my 14th month of a sabbatical silence which by the way is not explained when God requires the sons of Israel now look Art, I'm not allowing you to speak publicly for 14 months you have no other source of income by the way and if you don't speak who are you you're a mouthpiece and you're a dead man you're a piece of cadaver if you don't speak but I'm not allowing you to speak

publicly for 14 months well I didn't even say how long and he doesn't explain why you just know the requirement did God say so? well not in so many words but it was clear but at the end of the 14 months at the school I'm coming to the realization the Lord has shown me something and what are the implications for the church in the last days with regard to the subject of Israel and boom the phone goes off and some guy whom I don't know from Sacramento Art my name is Pastor so and so we're praying here we believe God wants you to speak to us a seminar on Israel and the church in the last days I knew that the silence was over we're on holy ground you dear guys and we've not been on this ground before this is a first I feel like I'm walking a tight wire with a great precipice below because as

Reggie knows any undue emphasis of the one thing or the other can bring you into heresy by celebrating the humanity of Jesus unduly or by celebrating the deity to the disadvantage of its humanity can bring you into heresy it's a remarkable walk and yet if we forfeit the one or the other we miss the great mystery that we are called to exhibit in our humanity so much prayer that's why we fasted and prayed before the school began for several days sensing that we were going to be called onto a new ground that we had never before explored and we're on that ground right now that as Jesus now is eternally the man Christ Jesus at the throne of the father and will come again in his humanity and in his scarred body we also will eternally live with and continue in the humanity that is ours that God

is willing for that as a remarkable statement of himself that he's not embarrassed or offended that in fact he's glorified many sons being brought to glory through the sonship of the maturity in their humanity through the availability of God by faith in the spirit through the reality of resurrection it's a remarkable thing but we have not been stupefied and stunned and in awe over our calling in our humanity and humanity itself has been depreciated man is becoming a slop and a slur and a caricature and the enemy loves to mar man, he loves to make masculine men effeminate and make women masculine, he wants to destroy the image of God, he wants to stupefy and ruin and corrupt the image of man because the image of man is the reflection of God and we need to contend against it and that's why

in Africa the message to the church was stand for what God has made in his image don't allow these black people to be made merchandise and to be subject to disease and ignorance, go and present yourself before the legislature and demand those things that are minimal and essential to human dignity of man as man, whatever the cost to yourself you have to stand for what is made in man's image, that was the message so it needs to be our message also whether we're in Africa or not and to esteem our own humanity as the vehicle for God's revelation of his glory so Lord precious God oh we're on new ground my God and somehow the morning prayer time has everything to do with the class time, it somehow fits, there's something here, the paradox of to be suspicious of what is in man and the next

breath to celebrate the humanity of man as the very vehicle for the revelation of God's glory what a tension, what a contradiction what a paradox, is this faith, but we're not shunning it for that reason, we're embracing it for that reason, and we know we'll not come to that perfection of our humanity without a school of obedience, without a school of humility without dealings with God that we can't understand that perplex us, whether it's a long silence or a rebuke publicly that somehow it all fits in and is given and comes from the hand of God for the perfecting of sons in your image so Lord, help us help us Lord, we're just feeling our way here, and we don't want to miss this remarkable issue that has come with the advent of your son, and our call to be sons in his image thank you my

God for bringing us this far open our understanding, our appreciation for ourselves in our humanity and not to despise it but to esteem it as given of God the creator and so we're blessed Lord, thank you my God help us to continue today and in these days and bring us all the way through, and the things that we've been saying to you again and again in the prayer not just head knowledge Lord, but life change we thank you and give you praise, for a privileged time as this, in Jesus name Amen

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