

Humanity of Jesus - Part 1

by A.W. Tozer

A.W. Tozer's sermon explores the humanity of Jesus, emphasizing its importance for understanding His role as both God and man.

Duration: 34:25

Scripture: Acts 2:22-24, Acts 2:32-33

Topics: "Humanity Of Jesus"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes that the responsibility of spreading the gospel does not solely rest on any missionary society, but on the eternal Son of God who is always victorious. The speaker shares a story about Dr. Simpson and the Christian Missionary Alliance to illustrate this point. He encourages believers to have unwavering faith and continue giving and praying for missions, regardless of political conditions or challenges faced. The speaker highlights the simple message of the early Christians, that Jesus, who was crucified, has been made both Lord and Christ by God, and this message should inspire and ignite believers to be willing to sacrifice and even die for the sake of the gospel.

Transcript

I have been, as you know, preaching on Hebrews in the morning and Revelation at night, and that has ninety-seven factors on its advantages, but it has this disadvantage in that sometimes you want desperately to say something to the people that the Lord has warmed your own heart with, and you can't because you are already committed to the books. I have two messages which I want to bring, one tonight and one now and one tonight, on the humanity of Jesus. And I'll just take this opportunity, since it's missionary time, to intersperse these two talks on the humanity of Jesus.

I've got one left, which I'll give you some other time, but these two, and we'll look in Acts, the 2nd chapter, please, beginning with verse 22. 22. Ye men of Israel said, Peter, hear these words.

Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you, by miracles and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know. Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that he should beholden of it.

And then in verse 32. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear.

For David is not ascended into the heavens, but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made this same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. I want you to pray a moment.

Lord, we are before thee this morning with all our human limitations and our human weaknesses and even our human faults, and yet we are thinking in terms of eternal values, and we are thinking of thy kingdom, thy church, thy people, thy gospel, thy Holy Son, our privilege, our responsibility, our duty, and our joy. O Lord, help us, we be spoken, to enlarge our hearts, inspire our spirits, form our minds, and contribute to the cause of world missions. We trust thee now.

Thy blessing be upon us through Christ our Lord. Amen. I have preached a great deal on the Godhood of the man Christ Jesus, but I want this morning and tonight to speak on the manhood of the God Christ Jesus.

You know, the liberals, they don't make enough of the Deity of Christ, and the evangelicals don't make enough of his humanity. I've been convinced of that for a long time. I think I've mentioned it, but I want to give a little treatment of it, a sermonic treatment, this morning and tonight.

I want to point out to you that if we send missionaries to the foreign field, they are going to have to have something to tell the people they go to. What is that thing they are supposed to go and tell the people? One of the things they are not supposed to do is to go to places like Thailand and Laos and Cambodia and Africa and such places and make good Canadians out of them. And they are not supposed to go and make good Americans out of them.

That's sure. And it would not be sufficient to send our missionaries to the foreign lands to tell people to be good in order to be happy. Or if they brush their teeth with Pepsodent, they will not lose them.

Or it's better to take a bath than not to take a bath. Or to wear clothes than not to wear clothes. I wouldn't support any effort on anybody's part to change the social habits of the heathen, which we call them, the people of other lands.

But do we have a message? Is there anything that we can take them, and what is it we send them out to say to the people? In the passage which I have read to you, we have the simple message which those early Christians gave to the world. And this message they not only gave, but it was the message that inspired them. They said, This man whom ye have crucified has been made by God to be both Lord and Christ.

This simple message set them ablaze. They were ablaze with it. And they had boundless enthusiasm.

And this message made them unconquerable, and it made them willing to give up of their goods and even to die. And there was nothing heavy and profound about it. If we had said to them, Do you believe in Calvinism? They would have said, Pardon me, but I don't know what you mean.

I believe that a man named Jesus who was crucified is risen and is at the right hand of God and that he is there for me. Do you believe in the pre-tribulation rapture? They would have said, We don't know about the pre-tribulation rapture, but we know that there is one of us, one of our number, born into our world, taking on himself our humanity, and now he is at the right hand of the Father in the place of complete authority. This they would have said.

And this we must say. You never want to underestimate the ability of human beings to get confused and to get mixed up. We Christians are confused and mixed up with an accumulated barrel of trash that has come down to us through the centuries.

These early Christians did not have this heavy weight on them. They believed simply a simple truth. They said not only that Jesus was God, but they said that God was this man Jesus.

And they went telling that everywhere. And they said one of our number has been exalted to the right hand of God and he is there received and accepted and approved and sealed, and that he is there for us. He is our brother, he is our one of us, he is of our flesh and of our bones, and he is there.

And he's coming back again, they said, and if you'll believe on him you'll be converted and saved. And that was the message they took. Now it was a very simple message, but its simplicity put an edge on it, and it was this simple belief that caused them to rise and go with great authority and enthusiasm.

I found an illustration of this in the Old Testament which I want to bring to you, the illustration of Joseph and his brethren in Egypt. The brothers of Joseph sold him down into Egypt, and they thought that he had gone down there to die. Or they supposed he would, or at least be a slave down there.

And the years went by and the young pink-cheeked Joseph grew to be a man around 30 years of age. And you know too well the story of his getting into prison and then getting out again, and the wisdom that God gave him to explain the dream of Pharaoh, and how then it tells us this about the man Joseph. It says that Pharaoh said unto Joseph, For as much as God hath showed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art.

Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled. Only in the throne will I be greater than thou. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt.

And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck. And he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had. And they cried before him, Bow the knee! And he made him ruler over all the land of Egypt.

Now the brethren of Joseph, not knowing this had taken place, were forced by economic circumstances to go down to the land of Egypt to look for corn. They got down there, and you know how he shunted them back and forth and pretended to frown on them and be angry with them, or to test them out. And at last he told them who he was.

He said, I am Joseph. And he wept upon their necks and said, I am Joseph your brother. Well they hurried back to the land of what they used to call Palestine, which the Brother Rebuktas were saying the other night, Israel, land of Palestine, holy land.

And they said to Jacob, Father we have news, wonderful news. He didn't know what it was. And they said, you remember our brother Joseph? And he said, how could I forget? And they said, you thought he was

dead because we brought a bloodstained garment that belonged to him and gave it to you, and you thought he was dead.

We have news for you, he is alive and he is in Egypt. Jacob probably exploded upward by saying, he's alive, is he a slave? No, they said he's not a slave, he's Prime Minister down there. He's second in command to the King himself, and wherever he goes they say, bow to me, for this is Joseph.

And everybody goes to Joseph for everything, and nobody bothers Pharaoh, they just go to Joseph because Joseph has full authority in the land of Egypt, and the whole country is under his control. Well of course they hurried down there, and Joseph spoke to Pharaoh, and he got them Goshen to live in, and he got them everything they wanted. Because he had full authority and he wore the signet ring of royal authority.

Now there was a man named Jesus, they said, and that man Jesus was crucified, and we thought and the people thought that they were rid of him, he was gone as Joseph had been gone before him. But the Holy Ghost came down to tell us something, and what he came down to tell us was that this man Jesus has been exalted to the Father's right hand, and that he sits on the throne of the Father wearing the royal signet ring, and that you go to him for everything you want, and that he has full authority in heaven, so that anything you want you can get. Now that's exactly what he said.

He said this, he said, I go to the Father and anything that you want to ask for in my name my Father will give it to you. So this is our Joseph, one of the brethren. So when they went down to Egypt the old man saw his boy, he had grown a beard now and was mature, but he remembered him as the pink cheeked boy, the same nose, and the same general appearance.

He recognized a family resemblance there. This was Joseph his son. Now this is the simple message that we are sent to tell the world.

We are sent to tell the world that there is one God, and one mediator between God and man himself, man who is Christ Jesus the Lord. And we are sent to tell them that that man Jesus who sits at the Father's right hand is a man, that he is not only God but he is a man. You know, when he came from heaven to become incarnated as a man he did not void his deity.

And when he went back to the right hand of God he did not void his humanity. He is both God and man. I heard a man once preach a sermon, and I took a note down and thought about it later.

Now he's a good man and he's all right except I don't know why he said this. He said, Christ is man, Christ is not a man. He is man, not a man.

Now I want to tell you that he couldn't have been any more wrong if he had counted backwards, because there is no such thing as man apart from a man. There is no such thing as abstract human nature floating around some place looking for a place to get incarnated. There's no such thing.

For instance, there's no such thing as pure horse marching around on a farm somewhere. There's a horse, but there's no such thing as horse. There's no such thing as cow.

There's a cow. There's no such thing as just the essence of cow somewhere. Where would you find that, I ask you? Where would you go to find the essence of cow or the essence of horse? There's no such thing as that.

There is a cow and a horse, and when a horse has a little horse, or a mare has a little horse, you have another little horse. She doesn't have a horse, she has a horse. And so we're human.

And when the little one was born into your home, it wasn't humanity that was born into your home, it was a human being. So let's not get so poetic, we forget we're on the earth. It would be impossible for Christ to be man without being a man.

Christ is a man, and he is a man at the right hand of God. One of the old Puritan preachers said, Mankind hath a great dignity, in that one of us has gone to the right hand of God. Now this is the teaching of the scripture.

He is true man forever, and he can't void his humanhood. Now do we dare worship a man as God? Must we divide and worship with reservations? Must we, when we come to kneel before our Lord, remind him that we're worshiping his deity but we're not worshiping his humanity? That would be a kind of spiritual schizophrenia, and I admit that I was troubled by it for a long time in my Christian life, how I could get on my knees and say to a man, God, how could I say what the Jews said, my Lord and my God, speaking to Jesus? They said it, but how could I say it? Well, then I read back in the book of John, the first chapter, where John said this, That which was from the beginning, that which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life, for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us, and that, of course, was his Son Jesus Christ. So that John said about God, that eternal life, that eternal God who was with the Father, he said, They saw him, they heard him, and they felt him.

He the God appeared to all of the, or at least these three of the five senses. They saw him, they felt him, they heard him. He spoke to them, they touched him, and they looked upon him with their eyes.

They did not hesitate to call Jesus God, because he was and is God, but he also was and is a man. When the Church first went out everywhere to tell this story, they went to the pagans of Rome and the pagans of Greece and the pagans of Asia Minor, and everywhere they went saying, There is a man, one of our number, has died for us and risen, and he is at the right hand of God, our Advocate and Friend, pleading for us there. They told the world that.

They were simple-hearted enough that they didn't try to explain it. But you know, we can't enjoy anything very long until we start explaining it. So the Church Fathers had to explain it.

They said, How could it be? They said, If you add a man to God, you have a man and God, and you have two. So that Jesus being a man and Jesus being God, you have two persons. How then can it be? And the Church Fathers said, No, you have one person.

You have both natures in one person, Jesus Christ, who is both God and man, but only one person. And so they named it. And they thought when they had named it, they'd explained it.

They called it the hypostatic union. They said, This is the hypostatic union. Now by hypostatic union, they meant, of course, the union of the essence, all that was man and all that was God united in one man.

So they smiled and said, Now we understand it. It's the hypostatic union. If you don't understand it, give it a name, and then you'll understand it.

We'd have done the same with the incarnation. We'd have done the same with glorification. We don't know what happens to us when we rise from the dead.

We say, Well, we're glorified. What does that mean, I don't know what glorified means, but it's an easy way of getting out of a tough situation. I only know that I'm going to be like the Lord when I see him in that day.

But what does that mean? I don't know what that means. But I know that if I say, We'll all be glorified, everybody nods and smiles and says, That's it. We've got it now because we've named it.

But that hasn't explained it, and there's no explaining this wonderful mystery, this mystery of the union of God and man in one person, a man who is God. We can't explain it, but we can name it and go our way and say, Thank God, now we understand, when all we do is name it. It's the hypostatic union.

It's that before which we bow in reverence. It's that before which we set an eternal flame of worship that never goes out. I tell you, if we could see into heaven today, we'd see quite a number of creatures that we would recognize as having read about them in the Bible.

We would see angels, we would see seraphim, we would see archangels, we would see cherubim, we would see the various creatures there. But none of us would feel at home there, because we wouldn't feel at home with an angel, we wouldn't feel at home with a cherubim, we wouldn't feel at home with a seraph. Certainly I wouldn't feel at home with a seraph, nor with a six-winged creature there.

I wouldn't feel at home, and I wouldn't be sure which was which. If I were permitted to view with veiled vision the presence of the awful God and those around the throne, I would say, Well, I'm not sure which is which. I don't know which is cherub and which is seraph and which is archangel and which is angel.

There they are, these shining immortal beings. But then I would suddenly say, Wait a minute, I see one like unto the Son of Man. Now I'm getting orientated.

Now I see a man. Who's this man? How did he get there? He's a real man. He's a man with my form and my shape and approximately my size and my lineaments.

He has a face like mine and hands like mine and stands on his feet as I stand on my feet. He sits down as I sit down. He walks about as I walk about.

He smiles and he talks and he acts like a man. Though a glorified man, he's a man nevertheless. This truth has been lost to the Church in our day.

We have fought so hard to prove the deity of the man, Jesus, that we have forgot the humanity of the God, Jesus. But it'll be a great comfort to us if we'll restore to the Church again the doctrine of the humanity of Jesus, that he is a man at the right hand of the Father. He's God's Son, and he is the Son of Man too.

Look, ye Saints, the sight is glorious. See the man of sorrows now from the fight returned victorious. Every knee to him shall bow.

Crown him, crowns become the victor's brow. He's the victorious man there. Sometime I want to say to you that he is the model man, the sample man, and the representative man.

But this morning I'll only say in close that he's the victorious man. Now, he's not the victorious God, and I hope that you'll get this. I hope you'll see this.

Now, it would have been no news to rise and say, God has become victorious. How could God be anything else but victorious? God the Father Almighty, the Lord God Omnipotent. Would it be no news to rise and say to a congregation, God has conquered, God has conquered.

Everybody knows that God could conquer. Everybody knows that God can do as he pleases in the army of the heaven and the army of the earth. Everybody knows that no man can stay God's hand and say, what are you doing? Everybody knows that God is sovereign and that God sits on the eternal throne.

Everybody knows that. And the message of the New Testament is not that God is victorious. The message of the New Testament is that the man is victorious, the Son of God, Christ, the Son of Man.

One of us has gone to the right hand of God and holds in his hand now full authority in heaven and in earth. He is of second only to God the Father Almighty. Only in the throne, said Pharaoh, shall I be greater than thou? And he sits by the Father on the throne, and everything is in his hands.

The Father is not even going to judge the dead, for the Scripture says not that God the Father will judge the dead. The Father judgeth no man, said Jesus in the 5th chapter of John. But he has given all judgment unto the Son.

Why did God give all judgment unto the Son? Because the Son is going to judge men, and he is a man. And when he sits on his judgment throne to judge men, he will be judging people like himself. Only, of course, unlike him in that they are sinful and fallen and mortal, but he is immortal and sinless.

In all other particulars he is a man, as I am a man, and as you are a man. He belongs to us as a human being. He is the victorious Lord, and he is the victorious man.

I don't believe it will be possible for us to keep our spirits up and keep on believing and keep on giving and praying for missions unless we do this. If we believe that the work of spreading the gospel to the ends of the earth and to the last man depended upon political conditions, I believe that we would all fold up and quit now and say, What's the use? It's a losing game, and we're fighting a rear-guard action, and there's no use. What's the use? We're being chewed to pieces all over the world, and our mission stations and activities are being chewed to pieces all over the world.

There's no use. Our Lord said, The gates of hell shall not prevail against his church. And this man in whom God has given victory, he knows men.

And you watch him, and watch him with what utter skill and with what magnificent and overwhelming omniscience he plays men like checkers over the boards. I do not believe for a minute that the last word has been spoken in China. I do not believe that the Communists are going to shut off those 600 million humans from hearing the gospel of Christ.

I do not believe it. I don't know what it will take to again open those doors and get men in to tell the story. I don't know.

I do not believe that Russia with what is it, 200 or 300 million? I do not believe that Russia is going to be forever shut out. I do not believe that an evil economic system and political system combine into a

philosophic system called Communism. I do not believe that the great Christ who sits on the right hand of God and who looks down and who judges men and who holds and pulls the strings and who plays the checkers over the boards of the world, I do not believe that he's going to allow all of those simple, plain people in Russia who are as innocent as you are and as me and as all of us here on the North American continent, and have no more blame to lie upon them for the abomination of desolation in the Kremlin, no more than you have.

They believe what they're told. They're fed that vicious poison. I do not believe that God is going to allow them to die and continue to die like flies in the autumn without being told there's no God and that the story of Christ is a myth and the Bible is a book of nonsense.

I don't think so. I believe yet that Jesus Christ is going to so change things and turn things about and so move nations and generals and Presidents and Prime Ministers and Kings over the earth that the gospel of Christ will yet get into these places where it's been shut out. It's always been like that down the years.

The devil drove the missionaries out of one place and they went into another. And the Church went on and the Church will go on. It can't be otherwise, for he's the victorious man.

And because he's victorious and because he's one of us and because he understands us, we are sure to win. We can't lose. The Church can't lose.

A lot of so-called educated people now are saying, well, foreign missions are not being conducted right. We've got to change the whole business. Let's rethink the whole deal.

Let's start all over. We're getting nowhere. Listen to this missionary tell about the converts.

Look at the pictures we saw last night of Dr. Bailey, and you'll know better. It does pay. And there are witnesses all over the world.

The Lord has sent them, and the Lord is running his Church. If I thought that the whole hope of missions lay with the Christian Missionary Alliance, I'd go home and die of a heart attack, I think. At least I'd die of discouragement.

But I know better than that. I know there's no missionary society on the earth upon whom God has put all the responsibility and said, here, if you fail me, I'm sunk. No.

The Eternal Son sits at the right hand of the Father, and he's never finished, and he's never defeated. He's always conquered. I told you this little story.

I won't repeat it. It's just too good not to repeat. You know about the time Dr. Simpson was going big and started here in Canada, and then started the Christian Missionary Alliance.

Dr. Simpson had a friend, at least he was greatly influenced by this friend, whether they were ever close friends or not, I'm not sure. This man's name was Blumhart. He was a German pastor.

He'd go pray for people and they'd get well. I think he was a Lutheran, if I remember correctly. He was just a godly Saint.

He didn't spend his time arguing doctrine. He prayed and trusted God, and God went with him. One time they came to him and said, Pastor Blumhart, we have a girl over here, a teenage girl, and she's in a

terrible shape.

We're afraid she's demon-possessed. She shouts at us and screams at us and swears and blasphemes and uses awful language, and we can't do anything with her. He said, I'll come and pray.

So he went. He went down on his knees and prayed for her. Out of her mouth would come terrible, ugly, evil words, shocking words.

Beautiful young girl, but out of her mouth would come vicious, unbeautiful language. Then Pastor Blumhart, as he prayed on, the Lord spoke to his heart. He knew that here he had something on his hands he never could settle but by prayer and fasting.

He said, Let's pray on until we have victory here. So instead of going home and easing up the burden, they stayed on their knees. Suddenly in the middle of the night or later, this young woman lying there, writhing and twisting, suddenly shouted, Jesus is victor! And sat up with a relaxed look on her face, greeted the Pastor Blumhart and said, Why, you praying you here? He said, We're here praying for you.

Well, thank you. She said, if I'd been sick and so on, she'd come out of it. This evil thing had gone because Jesus is victor.

Well, the Salvation Army captain heard that story and he wrote, Jesus is victor, his work is complete crushing all enemies under his feet. Jesus is victor, the foe from the dust never can rise again if we but trust. We used to sing that song a lot.

We don't anymore. I think we only sing what we believe, and when we stop believing it, we stop singing it. We used to sing, Jesus is victor, and believe it.

We don't sing it so much now. But I believe it still, and I believe that Jesus Christ is victor at the right hand of God. This man, he knows us, he's one of us, he's one of our number, and he carries the victorious sign to God's right hand.

And there he's completely in charge of everything. For that reason we never ought to be discouraged, and for that reason we never ought to say, Well, it looks like the end. It'll only be the end when the Lord comes to make it the end.

For he's winning, he's on the throne, he's the glorious one. Let's believe that. Now, it was this simple message that they told everywhere they went.

He said, One of our number has been exalted to God's right hand. He died for us first and went to God's right hand, was received there, and if you'll believe on him, you'll have eternal life. It was that simple.

We have confused it, made it complex. But they simplified it, for it was simple. This is why we send missionaries.

We send them out to tell the whole world that one of our number has gone to God's right hand, and he's on our side, and he's there pleading for us. And if we'll believe in him and follow him and obey him, we'll have eternal life in this world and life eternal in the world to come and be with him someday in the Father's house.

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