

# A Exchanged Life

by Major Ian Thomas

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*Major Ian Thomas explores the concept of the exchanged life, emphasizing the importance of living through Christ to reflect God's perfection in humanity.*

**Duration:** 1:07:34

**Scripture:** Mark 10:17

**Topics:** "Deeper Life"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes that Jesus came to offer a new dimension of life, one that is abundant and shared with God. The speaker highlights the divine energy within humanity, which gives us the moral competence to fulfill our purpose. The sermon also mentions that our ultimate transformation into the likeness of Jesus will occur when we see him face to face. The speaker references 1 John 3:1-2, which speaks of the love of the Father and our future transformation into the likeness of Jesus. The sermon concludes by emphasizing that Jesus, while fully God, played the role of man to reveal the goodness of God. The speaker encourages us to live as Christians by following Jesus' example of living in complete submission to the Father.

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## Transcript

I am come that you might have life in an entirely new dimension, life more abundant. That life for which man was created to share no less as creature than the life of his creator. Every moment of every day.

Our humanity pulsating with the divine energy whose presence alone in man gives him the moral competence to discharge the office for which he was made. Supremely to reveal the likeness of his maker. So quite obviously if you and I are to know how to live as Christians, living through Christ, as he once in the sinlessness of that humanity in which was seen the perfection of the Father in deity, he lived through the Father.

Remember, God is not sinless. God is perfect. And Jesus Christ is God perfect.

But as man he was sinless. Because by virtue of his subjection in totality to the authority of his Father, he never did anything, he never said anything, he never was anything other than that which his Father motivated. Everything said he I say my Father says.

Everything I do my Father does. Everything I am he is. Now that won't surprise us.

Because when God first created man he made in him his own likeness and when God created man his own likeness and looked at the man whom he had made in his own likeness he said good. Very good. And if when God created man his own likeness he looked at the man whom he had made in his own likeness, who do you think God saw? Himself.

And there's been only one man ever that walked this earth since Adam fell into sin at whom the Father God in heaven could look and see reflected to perfection his own likeness. The Lord Jesus said he that has seen me has seen my Father. So who do you imagine the Father saw when he looked at the Son? Himself.

Not because Jesus Christ was God but simply because for your sake and mine though God, Jesus Christ was man. Not man as you and I are, not man as his fellow men then were, but man as he is God created man to be. The one in whom there would be totally reflected, unblemished, the absolute likeness, the perfection of deity.

That's why when a certain ruler asked the Lord Jesus saying good master what shall I do to inherit eternal life? The Lord Jesus said to him why callest thou me good? None is good save one, that's God. The Lord Jesus wasn't repudiating his deity. He was simply emphasizing to that young man that though God he was playing the role of man.

So he says don't call me good because the role of man is to reveal not his own goodness but the goodness of God. All said he to that man that you see in me is the perfection of deity revealed in the sinlessness of my humanity. Because my body, my soul, my spirit, my mind, my emotion is made available to my father in totality and therefore all that he is, is revealed in all that I am.

Look at me and see him. Oh by the way as my father sent me, I send you. And when you've been restored to normality, when you're once more functional for the purpose which is God I created you, have now redeemed you and by indwelling you, regenerate you.

When you're normal, others will see in me what they now see in me. Others will see in you what now they see in me. The perfection of deity.

Now we know that so far as you and I are concerned that will never be brought to its ultimate consummation until the day that we see the Lord Jesus face to face and seeing him, we shall see him as he is and we shall be like him. 1 John 3 verses 1 and 2. Beloved what manner of love the father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God. We do not yet know exactly what we will be that at least this we do know.

That when we see him as he is we'll see the perfection of deity revealed in his timeless humanity and we then will be like him for he is the firstborn among many brethren. And then we'll be man again as God intended man to be forever. And salvation will have gone full cycle from the redemptive act, Christ dying upon the cross to the regenerated purpose, the restoration by the gift to man forgiven through the death of Christ in the person of the Holy Spirit of that life that was forfeited in Adam, regeneration.

A redemptive act precipitating a regenerative purpose that ultimately finds its consummating climax. When once more delivered not only from the penalty of sin, not only from the power of sin, in that day we shall be delivered from the very presence of sin. And there'll no more be that Adamic nature to compete for your humanity or mine, the other candidate usurping the sovereignty of the one who as our creator created man

to be inhabited by his maker that he might be king in his kingdom.

Now this is what the Lord Jesus so magnificently demonstrated in the 33 years of his humanity on earth. He wasn't superman, let alone superstar. He was simply all that he as God created you and me to be.

He was just standard. He was just man, sinless. And because he was man sinless, no aberration, no margin of difference between what he was as man and the father is as God that was seen in him in the sinlessness of his humanity, the perfection of the father in deity.

There's nothing more complicated about the Christian life than that. You and I recognize, of course, in the moment we claim that the Lord Jesus lives within us, that there could possibly be no less going for us now than was going for him then. If Jesus Christ is God and you claim that as a God who lives within you, God, what kind of a God? Well, the only God there is, the God who created the universes and threw them into space.

The same God who indwelt his humanity, who made himself totally available to his father. So how much less have you got going for you as a professing Christian at this moment, cleansed in his blood, indwelt by his spirit, invaded by deity, how much less is going for you now than was going for him then? With the father as God in the son, how much less is going now for you than was going for him with the son as God in you? Well, of course, no difference. No less.

Then why the difference in the end product? If there's no less going for you at this moment with Christ as God living in you than was going for him then with the father as God living in him, why the difference in the end product? Why could the world looking at him see the father and when the world looks at us they see only a shabby, nasty, cheap imitation of the real thing? Where lies the difference? Not in his humanity or ours, for he was born a human being. It behoved him, we're told in the epistle to the Hebrews, in all points to be like unto his brethren. He assumed our flesh and blood.

Then where did the difference lie? In the mind, in the disposition, in the attitude. The disposition, the mind of the Lord Jesus was such that at all times and exclusively he refused to allow there to be any possible explanation for anything he ever did, said, or was but the father as God living in him. But you and I are too pig-headedly proud to adopt that disposition toward the Lord Jesus.

We insist upon perpetuating the satanic fraud. We insist upon perpetuating that devilish lie that you and I can get by without God. That's where the difference lay, in the mind.

That's why it's only by translation of the mind we can be no longer conformed to this world, but transformed into the image of God's Son by the renewing of our minds. If you turn to the 17th chapter of John's gospel, John chapter 17, and verse 17 said the Lord Jesus, sanctify them through thy truth. Sanctify them through thy truth.

Pause for a moment to consider the nature of the term being used, sanctify. It's a term that we've given a musty connotation. We're almost frightened of the word because we think it's sort of clouded with negativism.

That isn't sanctification. Sanctification is a very healthy, vera, practical proposition. Simply means used intelligently for the intelligent purpose which intelligently created.

That's all the word sanctification means. And anything can be sanctified as I've illustrated to some of you in times gone by. When you put your shoes on and walk down the road in them, you sanctify them.

When you put your umbrella up and shelter yourself in the rain, you sanctify. That's all that sanctification means. When you put your glasses on your nose, you sanctify.

You use them for the intelligent purpose which they were intelligently created. You could under certain circumstances, as I have done often, use them for another purpose. In an emergency, stir your coffee.

I did last night across the way because they gave me everything except a spoon. So I used my glasses. And it served a very useful purpose.

But you could hardly say that was the idea when my glasses were made. Very, very often I use them to open my letters. Very useful, but it wasn't really intended in the mind of the person who made them that it would be a letter opener.

They were intended to stick on my nose so that looking through them I could read more adequately in my old age. These are a little unusual because I don't need the top half. So in a sense these are only half sanctified when I wear them.

They just happen to be made that way. You sanctify your watch when you look at it and tell the time. You'll probably sanctify your watch many times before I finish tonight.

You're simply using for the intelligent purpose which it was intelligently made. And when the Lord Jesus said, sanctify them father through your truth, he simply meant father by revelation to them of the truth about man and God and the relationship that must exist between man and God and God and man. Sanctify them.

Restore them father to that relationship to ourselves that allows us as the creator to use them for the intelligent purpose for which we intelligently created them. And father you know that purpose which we intelligently created man. And that was that all creation looking at man would know what God was like.

Sanctify them through your truth. As thou father verse 18 has sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. Precisely as father you sent me now, precisely father I send them.

There's going to be absolutely no difference father between the relationship that does exist between them and myself than that which now exists father between myself and yourself. Because you know father we agreed that I though the creator should come into this world and play the role of creature. You know father that in the eternal age of the past before ever we created man the time would come when though God I would come to this world and play the role of the man I may.

We agreed upon that father. And having agreed upon it, for their sakes, verse 19, I sanctify myself. In that I'm going to demand of them father that sanctification which should demonstrate the relationship that must exist between them and myself.

I'm going to sanctify myself so that I may demonstrate that relationship in terms of my relationship to you. I'm going to sanctify myself. That they all also might be sanctified.

Through the truth. Because father when I have sanctified myself, they'll know the truth about sanctification. They'll be without excuse.

Not one of them father will be able to complain. That they never knew what it meant to be sanctified. Because I'm going to sanctify myself so that it will become demonstrably obvious to them what it means to be sanctified.

They'll know the truth. The principle that governs a man's sanctification. Quite obviously if the Lord Jesus is going to send us the way the father sent him, and if we're to live through him as he declared John 6 57 in the way that he lived through the father, then there's only one intelligent thing for you and for me to do.

And that is discover how the Lord Jesus lived through the father. Then we'll know how we on earth are to live through him. That is to say if you want to be functional.

That is to say if you want to be real. If you don't, if you want to be a phony, if you just want to play games, if you just want to make out, if you just want to wear a mask, then whatever you do don't examine the life of Jesus Christ. It'll disturb you.

It'll make you feel uncomfortable. That's why by and large carnal Christians always uncomfortable when they're being challenged to get back to where they belong. It gets underneath the skin.

They begin to rationalize. They want to find all kinds of excuses by what to prove to themselves that what that man says isn't relevant. They want to persuade themselves that it's an emphasis, a school of thought, just a peculiar philosophical concept.

Peculiar only to a few who are somewhat fanatical, but it doesn't apply to me or most average, you know, reasonable people. That's the way you'll always begin to argue in your mind the moment you're confronted with truth. And the devil will help you because he'll always give you a reasonable alternative to what God demands in faith.

But of course you're not going to end up where Moses ended up, in a funk hole, useless to God or man. Said the Lord Jesus, I'm going to sanctify myself, Father, so there'll be absolutely without excuse. Because in me they're going to see the truth demonstrated by which they too will be sanctified.

How did the Lord Jesus sanctify himself? Hebrews 10 verses 5 and 7. Christ, when he entered into the world, said sacrifices and offerings you have not desired. In other words, God isn't particularly interested in the pragmatics of externalistic religion. He's not particularly interested in sacramental religious observances.

He's not particularly interested in people walking the aisle or raising their hands, though all these things may have on occasions a certain value. But that isn't what interests God. He's not going to count how many times you go to a piece of religious real estate and put a dollar in the plate, because the biggest blag on on earth can do that.

Most of the men and women at this moment in jail in my country and yours have been baptized, christened or confirmed. Almost every one of them. You could hardly go to a jailbird in this country that you didn't find didn't have a religious background.

God isn't interested in playing church. He isn't interested in religious observances, sacrifice and offerings you haven't desired. Instead, Father, said he, you have made ready a body for me to offer.

You presented me with a body, a body, Father, that I could present back to you, conceived of the Holy Spirit, so that it might be given to me uncontaminated by that alien agency that prostitutes a man's humanity and distorts it to the ugly thing that it has become. That's why the Lord Jesus could turn to the Pharisee, to the scribe, the Lord Jesus could turn to his disciples and say, the prince of this world is come, Satan, he hath nothing in me. He's got something in you.

He's got territory in you, but he's got no territory in me. Because God prepared him a body, conceived of the Holy Spirit, fashioned only in the borrowed womb of that virgin girl and given by the Father to the Lord Jesus on that first Christmas morning, when he was born at Bethlehem, according to the scriptures. Thanks, Father, for the body that you prepared for me to offer.

Then I said, verse 7, lo, here I am come to do your will, O God, to fulfill what is written of me in the volume of the book. I haven't come to do my best for you, God. I haven't come to make an appreciation of the situation, then work out a plan.

I've come, O God, to do your will. All that has already been written of me in the volume of the book. The story has already been written.

In the eternal ages of the past agreed us between Father, Son and Holy Spirit before ever the world was. And now recorded in the Old Testament scriptures as holy men of God, spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, writing history in advance. Now, Father, you've given me the body in which that story is going to be told.

And I've come to do your will. So my body is available, my hands, Father, to work with, my feet, Father, are yours to walk with, my lips are yours to speak with, eyes to see with, ears to hear with. And mine, Father, is yours to think with, and my heart is yours to love.

My body is available. Is yours? This is sanctification. It simply means the flesh and blood of your humanity is being made available intelligently to an intelligent God who intelligently created you for an intelligent purpose.

So there might be told in terms of your humanity the story already written. For we are recreated now as those who have been reconciled to God, recreated in Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath before ordained that we should walk in. Story is written, waiting to be told.

All he needs is the body to tell it in. The hands with which to work, the feet with which to walk, the lips with which to speak, the eyes with which to see, the ears with which to hear, and the mind with which to think, and the heart with which to love. He just needs a body.

There's nothing he wants you to think up, just instructions to obey. And that's not being super pious, that's being normal. That isn't being fanatical or extreme, that's just being man.

For the intelligent purpose which an intelligent God intelligently created us. But of course you and I live in an insane world that's rushing to its own self-destruction. That's why anybody who wants to be normal appears to be queer.

To those who by their own deliberate choice are on the way out to a lost eternity. John's gospel chapter 12. And verse 27, said the Lord Jesus, now is my soul troubled.

Father, I have presented my body to you, in which you may tell the story. But I have to admit, Father, that in presenting my body, without which of course I have presented nothing, my soul is troubled. For I'm fully cognizant of what is going to be involved in presenting my body.

It wasn't the physical agony of being nailed to a Roman gallows, that never would have redeemed you or me. The physical death of Christ never could have reconciled us to God. If all the Lord Jesus came to do was die the death of a martyr, that's mere humanism.

Plenty of others have done that. He was made sin for us, who knew no sin. And the Lord Jesus had deliberately to incur in his person what had already occurred in Adam.

He died. What happened to the Lord Jesus on the cross is precisely what happened to Adam in the day he fell. In the day that Adam believed the devil's lie, that a man could be man without God, and kicked over the traces and embarked upon the mad experiment of human self-sufficiency that has been perpetuated by fallen men all down the centuries.

The Father, Son and Holy Spirit had absolutely no option but to withdraw their presence from Adam. And when the Lord Jesus, God's incarnate Son, on the cross was made sin, for you and for me, the Father and the Holy Spirit had no option but to withdraw their presence from him as he, Christ, together with the Father and the Holy Spirit, had had no option but to withdraw their presence from Adam. He died.

And when the Lord Jesus hung upon the cross, he was a man physically alive, just as you and I are right now. Physically alert, mentally alert, soulishly alert, emotionally alert and volitionally alert. He was alive, physically alive, but he was dead.

He was as dead, being physically alive on the cross, as you and I were dead when we were born, alienated from the life of God. That was the agony of the cross. That a man who in the sinlessness of that incarnation, in which he walked this earth as man, to reveal the perfection of the Father in deity, that man was made sin.

And being made sin forfeited the divine presence. And the Father and the Holy Spirit left him dead on the cross. He died.

We might be forgiven. And for three hours the heavens were in mourning for the Son of God, made sin, physically alive, soulishly active, spiritually dead upon the cross. The Lord Jesus knew perfectly well what it was going to involve, to redeem your soul and mine from hell.

That's why he said, Father, my soul is troubled. Because with my mind, with his mind, he was fully cognizant of what he would have to incur in his person for that young lady and everybody else in the world. With his soul, he was deeply stirred at the prospect of being severed from his Father and the Holy Spirit for that young lady and the rest of the world.

All down time. And his will was challenged. So much so that he could say, Father, shall I quit? They're dirty, they're nasty, they're totally ungrateful.

They couldn't care less. Why should we bother? Let them go to hell. Let them perish.

Shall I come home? He could have done. He didn't have to go through with it. When Pontius Pilate said, don't you know that I have power to release you, said the Lord Jesus, you have neither power to release

me nor to condemn me.

You cannot take my life from me. I'll lay it down. And one word from me and my father would send ten legions of angels to make a fool of you.

That wasn't an idle boast. The Lord Jesus Christ, as God incarnate, knew perfectly well that any time if he had so desired as God, he could acquit. And let us reap the consequence of our own stupidity and perish in our sins.

My soul is troubled. What shall I say, Father? Save me from this hour? Shall I come home? But for this cause came I unto this hour. I was fully cognizant, Father, when we embarked upon this mission of what it would involve for me to pay the price of a man's redemption.

And I'm going through, Father, even though my soul is troubled. And body and soul, mind, emotion, and will, he made himself available to do his will, all that had been written of him in the volume of the book, as the lamb slain before the foundation of the world. Luke 23, verse 44, And it was about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour.

And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst. Now you'll read in the ninth chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews that so long as the veil of the temple was intact, the Holy Spirit thus signified that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest. That no boy, girl, man, or woman till then had any right whatever to enter into the holy presence of a holy God.

The way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest. But in that moment of time, after those three hours of darkness in which the Lord Jesus was made sin for you and for me, and then the Holy Spirit restored to his human spirit, the Lord Jesus came alive upon the cross. The veil of the temple was rent from top to bottom, thus signifying that by his shed blood, his life laid down.

You and I now may have boldness of access into the holiest of all by the blood of Jesus. And in triumph, the Lord Jesus before he bowed his head and left that body to be taken from the cross and placed for three days in a tomb, he cried, it is finished. Mission accomplished.

It's all over father. The price has been paid. And leaving that body that they took from the cross and placed in a tomb, he went to paradise.

To return three days later into that body that he might appear risen from the dead, both spiritually and physically, to his disciples and for 40 days instruct them concerning the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. Before from the Mount of Olives he ascended once more into the presence of his father, there glorified at his right hand as he is now, to come in the person of his other self, the Holy Ghost, to invade the humanity for the first time in all human history since Adam died, the humanity of 120 men and women who at his command had been waiting to enter into the good of that for which he died, the restoration of that life for which man was made, the presence of the creator within the creature. And on that day, Pentecost, 120 men and women, the first in all human history, were born again and became the first 120 members in particular of the new body corporate of which Christ alone is the head, whose life they shared.

By the presence of the Holy Spirit restored to their human spirits, and that very afternoon 3,000 others who in repentance toward God, putting their faith in Jesus Christ, received the Holy Ghost were added to the Lord. And then daily such as were being saved, and all down the centuries out of every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue and race and creed and class and color, any boy, any girl, any man, any woman,

anywhere, who recognizing their guilt claimed in Christ's redemption, immediately become the recipients of his life through the gift to them of his Holy Spirit and are added to the Lord, members of his body. It's finished.

And said the Lord Jesus, Father, verse 46, Luke 23, into thy hands I commend my spirit, body, soul and spirit. And having said that, he died. So the Lord Jesus in sanctifying himself, setting himself apart as man for that intelligent purpose for which by agreement between himself, the Father and the Holy Spirit, God had sent him, presented himself unreservedly, body, soul and spirit, the whole man.

He sanctified himself. How did the Lord Jesus sanctify himself? How did he present his body, soul and spirit to the Father? By that agency, by whom alone you and I can be sanctified in presenting our bodies, souls and spirits to the Lord Jesus. Hebrews 9, 14.

Ninth chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews, 14th verse, how much more shall the blood of Christ, that is to say, his life laid down, who through the eternal spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God. How did Christ offer himself without spot to God? Through the eternal spirit. The agency was some body, the Holy Ghost.

How did the Father make himself available to the Son while he was here on earth? Born a human being, assuming our humanity. Tells you in John 3, verse 34. John's gospel, third chapter, 34th verse.

Since he whom God has sent speaks the words of God, that is to say, because God the Father in heaven could be absolutely certain that the Lord Jesus in his sinless humanity on earth would always make exactly articulate everything that the Father as God had to say, because he whom God has sent speaks the words of God, proclaims his own message. God does not give him his spirit sparingly or by measure, but boundless is the gift God makes to him, his Son of his spirit. So the Lord Jesus in his humanity made himself totally available to the Father through the eternal spirit, and the Father as God made himself totally available to the Son through the eternal spirit.

The Holy Ghost is that agency whereby a man makes himself available to God, and whereby God makes himself available to a man. The Holy Spirit was the agency whereby the Lord Jesus was conceived. He was born of the Holy Ghost, and the Holy Spirit was that agency whose presence within the Son was indispensable to his sinless humanity.

Luke 4.1, Jesus being filled with the Holy Ghost. In other words, the totality of his being, body, soul, spirit, mind, emotion, and will was wholly and consistently and always monopolized by the Father, indwelling his humanity through the spirit. So the presence of the Holy Spirit and his activity was indispensable to his birth, and the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit was indispensable to his being, the man he was born to become, every moment of every day.

Oh, said he, as my father sent me, I'm sending you. My Holy Spirit and his activity will be absolutely indispensable to your spiritual new birth. The wind bloweth where it listeth.

You hear the sound thereof. You canst not tell whence it covereth, whither it goeth. So is everyone who is born of the spirit.

For that which is born of the flesh is flesh. That animal life that you receive from your animal parents by animal birth, that which is born of the flesh is flesh. But said he to Nicodemus, that which is born of the spirit is spirit.

By divine conception, I am to be born within the redeemed humanity of a forgiven sinner, so that my divine nature may be clothed by them on earth, on the grounds of my redemptive transaction. That's why we're told, 2 Peter 1, 4, that by the exceeding great and precious promises, we are made partakers of the divine nature. Because the moment you claim cleansing through the blood of Jesus Christ, a divine conception takes place, and as once the Lord Jesus was born of Mary, he now is born in you.

Then his humanity to be detached from hers. Now our humanity to be that humanity in which he walks with hers. He has no other hands but yours and mine.

He has to date no other feet but yours and mine. He has to date no other lips but yours and mine. We are his body.

It's called the church. It was born at Pentecost. And as the activity of the Holy Spirit is indispensable to our spiritual new birth, when Christ is conceived in us to be fleshed out in our humanity, so is the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit indispensable to our being, moment by moment in the process of time, what in the crisis of a moment we were born again to become.

The children of God. He sanctified himself. Body, soul, and spirit.

The total man. And Father, I'm sanctifying myself so that they in me will see the truth whereby they too may be sanctified. Because they will be sanctified, Father, precisely on the same basis that I'm being sanctified.

Now in order, of course, that the Lord Jesus might clothe himself with the flesh and blood of our humanity and sanctify himself in that humanity and set himself apart totally to be available to his Father, demanded of him, of his own free volition, his willingness to forego on earth as man, those attributes of deity that would have been incompatible with his humanity. What are some of the attributes of deity that were his, rightfully, to exercise that he deliberately forewent? Because those attributes of deity would have been incompatible to his humanity. What do you know about God? Well, we know from the 16th verse of the last chapter, the sixth of the first epistle of Paul to Timothy, that alone God has immortality.

Only he is not subject to any form of death. When's God going to die? When are you and I likely to be invited to his funeral? Well, you'd say the suggestion is preposterous. God can't die or he wouldn't be God.

God alone hath immortality. He's not subject to any form of death. Christ died.

If he didn't, you're lost. If he didn't, you're on the way to hell. If he didn't, your sins are not forgiven.

He died. Not just physically, he died spiritually. Otherwise, he never paid the price of man's redemption.

Because the penalty of sin wasn't physical death. God said, in the day that you eat thereof, you will surely die. He didn't die physically that day.

He died spiritually. He forfeited the divine content for which man was made God in the man. He was on his own and has become the beast that he now is in the world in which you and I live.

Christ died. You read in the same verse, the 16th of the first epistle of Paul to Timothy, in the 16th verse, nor can see him. So who has seen God? Nobody.

Who can see God? Nobody. Did anybody see Jesus Christ? Who was in the beginning with God and was God and by whom all things were made? Without whom was not anything made that was made? In whom alone was that life which alone is the light of men? That life which alone gives to man the moral competence, in other words, to reflect the glory and shine in the brilliance of God's perfection? That word was made flesh and dwelt among us. John goes on to write in the same first chapter of his gospel, and he says, that word being made flesh, who was with God, was God, by whom all things were made, the creative deity, we beheld his glory.

We saw him. But no man has seen God. Four verses later says he, John 1, 18, no man has seen God at any time.

Well, who did they see when they saw Jesus Christ? If no man has seen God at any time. What does the apostle Paul mean in the first chapter of his epistle to the Colossians when he tells us of the one through whose blood you and I are redeemed, 15th verse, he is the visible representation of the invisible God. How can he as God who is invisible be the visible representation of an invisible God? Only because in assuming your humanity and mine, being born a human being, he deliberately, for your sake and mine, forwent the exercise of that attribute of deity that would have made him invisible.

He assumed your flesh and blood and mine, knowing that he is God, created man with a physical, visible body, so that in that physical, visible body, man might give a physical and a visible expression of an invisible God. And being born a human being, assuming our flesh and blood, in all points being like unto his brethren, he presented his body, he presented his soul, he presented his spirit so to the Father that in his physical, visible body as man, there could be seen a physical, visible expression of an invisible God. Who does God obey? Who bosses God around? Who tell God what to do? Well, you say God wouldn't be God if any bossed him around.

The Lord Jesus was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. We told in the epistle to the Hebrews that he was obedient, though a son he learned obedience, learned obedience, because as man he had to learn to do what as God he had never done nor could obey. God neither tempts with evil nor can he be tempted with evil.

First chapter of James epistle, but the Lord Jesus was tempted in all points like as you and I are and yet without sin as God or man. He never once repudiated his deity. He said, my father and I are one.

There's no question of doubt in God's word as to whether the Lord Jesus is timelessly God in co-equality with the Father and the Holy Ghost in the triune Godhead. That goes without saying. He was God.

He is God. He always will be God, but he deliberately chose, though never ever less than God, to come into this world and behave as though he were never ever more than man, setting aside those attributes of deity that would have been incompatible with his humanity. He submitted himself the criteria of your humanity and mine and became a human being.

Sanctified himself so that you and I might know what he had in mind when he as God created you and me, so that recognizing what we were intended to be when God made us, we may recognize how far we have fallen short of normality and so that we may recognize the malfunction that God sent his son into this world to remedy, so that you and I might be restored once more to normality. We sang about it in the fourth chapter of the book of the Revelation. Revelation in chapter 4, verse 11.

Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power, for thou hast created all things, and you are part of his creation. So what do you think God created you for? Well, he created you for that purpose for which he created all things. What was there? For his pleasure.

Thou hast created all things and for thy pleasure. They are and were created. When do you then fulfill the function of your creation? When you please God.

Whoever you do please, whoever you don't please. Your supreme priority is to please him. It's the only thing that matters if you want to be functional.

And of course anybody who dares to say I'm a Christian, anybody who dares to say I'm saved, anybody who dares to say I've been converted, I've changed my mind, couldn't dare to want anything other than to be functional from God's point of view, without deliberately, maliciously, willfully intending to be a phony. All creation made to please God. The moment we dare to step out of Adam into Christ, the moment we dare opt out of a fallen society and claim reconciliation to God, we immediately advertise in the fact it is now my supreme concern and my prime preoccupation to please him.

He made me that way. That's why the Lord Jesus, John 8, 29 said, I do only always those things that please him. Because though the creator, I've come to play the role of creature.

And though I'm the God who made man, I've come to be the kind of man that I as God created man to be. And man in all creation was created to please God. So I do only always those things that please him.

And the father echoed from heaven, this is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased. Because the Lord Jesus, though God, assuming our humanity, was sinless. He was normal.

He was functional. This was the supreme liberty that the Lord Jesus enjoyed as man on earth. And it is that liberty to which he invites us.

For he said, if the son shall make you free, you will be free indeed. Because when you've allowed the son to monopolize your humanity, you will be as free as he was. Free always, only to do God's will.

That is perfect freedom. The Lord Jesus said, I've entered into no engagement. I have indebted myself in no measure at any time to anybody that would make it at any time less than possible for me to please my father.

That is freedom. Are you free? Have you sold yourself? Indebted yourself? Engaged yourself? Committed yourself in such a way that it is now impossible for you to please Christ? Then you're not free. You're a slave.

You're in bondage. Christ was free. Always, only, at all times, to please his father.

Because he was man. Sanctify. Set apart for the intelligent purpose which an intelligent God created man.

Hebrews 11, verse 6. In reference to Enoch, who was translated that he should not see death, verse 5 was not found because God had translated him. For before his translation, he had this testimony. He pleased God.

But then by way of qualification, it goes on to say in the 6th Enoch pleased God. But without faith, it's impossible to please God. It isn't that you may not please God.

It isn't that you only partially please God. It's a sheer moral impossibility to please God, apart from faith. That's why faith is an option.

That's why faith isn't up for auction. It isn't a subject for debate. It isn't a matter of taste.

Faith is the essential ingredient in a man's experience by which alone he can be functional to God's holy satisfaction. Apart from faith, it is impossible to please God. That's why one of the most important things as a believer is for you to understand the nature of faith.

And it's one of the few things that anybody understands. The nature of faith. We've reduced it to the reciting of a creed, giving mental consent to a few theological concepts.

That isn't faith. The fact that you've got an evangelical statement, you know, a creedal statement of what you believe, that doesn't mean you exercise faith. Faith is active.

Faith is demonstrable alone by virtue of the fact that the object of your faith is in action in response to your faith. That's the nature of faith. Faith invokes the activity of a second party.

It brings somebody, something into action. Your faith is never ever demonstrated by what you're doing for the object of your faith. Your faith is only exclusively demonstrated by the activity of that in which you've put your faith.

When on Thursday I fly to Denver and then on to Fresno, I'm going to put my faith in the pilot. But my faith in the pilot won't be evidenced by what I'm doing for him or for anybody else on that plane, for which they would be profoundly thankful. But if you saw me sitting in that plane with a belt around my tummy, drinking Coca-Cola, wanted to know what I was doing, I'd say I'm exercising faith.

But you're not doing anything. No. That's how you know I'm exercising faith.

If I were doing anything in the faith that I'm exercising, this plane would have crashed long since. I'm exercising faith and the only person who's competent to fly this plane, he's in action in response to my faith, in his faithfulness. That's the nature of faith.

And when you go to a dentist because you've got toothache and you want him to do something about it, you put your trust in him because you feel that he's competent for the job. But who grabs the drill? Do you or does he? When you sit in the dentist's chair, do you say, open wide? No, that's what he says to you. And he gets to work.

In other words, your faith in the dentist is demonstrated not by what you're doing for him, but what he's doing for you. And faith in God is demonstrated alone by what God in his faithfulness and response to your faith is doing in you, through you and for you. Never ever by what you're doing for him.

That's why the Lord Jesus, who pleased God, lived by faith, the faith that let God do it. He says, without my Father, I can do nothing. The Father, John 14 10, who lives in me, he does the work.

Because I know that I, as God, created man in such a way that he can only be functional by virtue of the activity of God in the man. And I'm letting my Father do it. That's the difference between the Lord Jesus in his disposition toward the Father and us in our disposition towards the Son.

That was the difference of the end product. He let God do it. And you and I are too pig-headedly proud, too self-interested.

We've got too many other irons in the fire to let him do it. He pleased God and walked by faith. That at all times allowed the Father alone in the Son to get into action.

Now tell me, if God created you to please him and without faith it's impossible to please him, what's the only alternative to that disposition in the Bible called faith that lets God do it? What's the only alternative? Tells you in Romans 14 23. Romans 14 23. Whatsoever is not of faith that lets God do it is sin.

Sin. Because that's exactly what the devil told Adam. You can do it yourself.

You've got what it takes. You don't need God. Whatsoever is not of faith is that which perpetuates the satanic fraud.

Whatsoever is not of faith, the disposition that lets God do it, is that which perpetuates the Adam creed of human self-sufficiency. Whatsoever is not of faith is that which is humanistic, purely and simply, humanism, where man becomes his own God, author of his own destiny, king in his own kingdom, master in his own house. God created us to please him.

Without faith it's impossible to please him. And whatsoever is not of faith is sin. But the Lord Jesus was sinless.

He was without sin. Which means, of course, there was never a word he spoke that the Father did not speak of. There was never anything he did that was not something that his Father had done.

There was nothing that he ever was that did not always reflect what the Father is. He let him do it. And as my Father sent me, said he, I'm going to send you.

Father, I'm going to sanctify myself, that they may in me see the truth, whereby they too may be sanctified. In other words, the life of the Lord Jesus was a derived life. As a man on earth, there was only one source from which his activity sprang, the Father, 24 hours a day.

And when you allow him to send you the way the Father sent the Son, there'll only be one source of your activity, Christ. His was a derived life. Just as last evening we saw that his was a derived authority.

Not an authority that derived from who he was or what he knew, though God he is. It was an authority that derived from his submission to the Father's authority. And when you live the Christian life, and I do, on God's terms of reference, it's a derived life for which there can be only one valid, legitimate source.

Christ himself. Allowed now to be to you and to me, all that he allowed the Father then, to be to him. This was the discovery that transformed the life of Peter and the others on the day of Pentecost.

In the day of the Lord, Jesus came to indwell their humanity, to make himself through the Holy Ghost as available to them, as the Father through the Holy Ghost had made himself available to the Son. Peter suddenly saw the truth of all that Christ for three solid years had been trying to teach him and the rest. Acts 2.22, you men of Israel, hear these words, Jesus, Jesus of Nazareth, a man, a man, I see it now, a man.

I long since settled for the fact that he was God, the Christ, Son of the Living God. I told him that long before I wandered the cross or believed in the resurrection. I believed that he was the Messiah, but now I see Jesus of Nazareth, a man, a real man, approved of God, a God-approved man.

I see it, says Peter. This is on the day of Pentecost. This is after the Holy Spirit has come to invade his human spirit.

This is after that moment in time when he was born of the Holy Ghost and became a living member of the new body corporate, the Father presented to the Son, a body of 120 members. And Peter, excited, says, I see it, Jesus of Nazareth, a man, approved of God. What are the characteristics of a God-approved man? Approved of God by miracles, signs, and wonders, which God did by him.

Who did? God did. By whom? By him. I see it now, said Peter.

This is what he was trying to teach us, that without the Father he could do nothing, that the Father who lived in him, he did the work. He was a man approved of God by the miracles and the signs and the wonders which God did by him. And I realize now why God, by him, did those things.

He let him. He let him. And now he, the same Lord Jesus, risen from the dead, as God, has come to live in us by the Holy Spirit.

And if only we as men will now be to him what he as man was prepared to be his father, he now and us as God will be to us what all the Father as God was to him. As God by him, so now he is God by us. Peter says, I've got it made.

For three miserable years I sweated it out and did my best for Jesus. Ended up by cursing and swearing that the Galilean fisherman I had been and denied him to his face. But Peter says, I've got it made now.

He's going to live his life in me as once he allowed the Father to live his life in him. And all that he as God now was prepared to be as the Father in the Son, he now as the Son is prepared as God to be in me, a forgiven sinner. Peter discovered what it means to be a Christian.

He discovered where he belonged and got back to where he belonged. And you see, from the moment that any boy or girl or man or woman is prepared to see in the Lord Jesus the truth about sanctification and is prepared now, cleansed in his blood and dwelt by his Spirit to be to him all that he for 33 years allowed the Father to be to the Son, the sky is the limit. Every horizon beckons him, heavy with blessing, golden with prosperity.

Life becomes the hilarious adventure it was always intended to be. A man on earth sharing the life of his Creator every moment of every day. That'll change your clothes.

That'll change your friends. That'll change your values. It'll change the place where you live.

You'll become a new creature in Christ Jesus. Old things, the old clothes, the old friends, the old values, the old place pass away. Everything will become new.

And the old things, 2 Corinthians 5, 18 come from God, divine origin. A derived life. Christ living in your heart.

Your only hope of being restored to glory. God's likeness. His image.

God in action. Truth behaving. That's righteousness.

Then you can say, I'm a Christian. I'm a Christian. Let's pray.

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