

The Humanity of Christ

by Rick Leibee

Jesus Christ became a man to recapture our lost destiny and dominion, and to restore us to our rightful place as rulers and reigners.

Duration: 1:06:06

Scripture: Hebrews 3:1-4, Hebrews 3:6, Hebrews 3:14-15

Topics: "Christology", "Spiritual Renewal"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the difference between those who are born again and those who are not. He highlights the importance of having a relationship with Jesus Christ and being indwelt by the Spirit of God. The preacher encourages the listeners to consider the superiority of Jesus over Moses and the significance of the moral code given by Moses on Mount Sinai. He also discusses the innate desire of mankind to have dominion over the earth and explore its depths. The sermon concludes with a call to read and reflect on specific verses from the Bible, emphasizing the importance of holding fast until the end.

Transcript

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Greetings of grace and love be multiplied to your heart today. It's the second day of Bible school and already some of you are not the same as you were 24 hours ago. Isn't that true? By the power of God and through His Son, Jesus Christ, He has spoken to some of you and changed you.

But we still have more to do, don't we? And God does as well. So open your Bibles this morning to the book of Hebrews and we'll pick up where we left off yesterday in verse 5. And as we look at the passages we're going to look at today, we're going to probably try to go through chapter 3 verse 6 as we pick up the

flow of what's going on here. We will see, as it is emphasized quite a bit in this passage, that Jesus Christ came as a man.

And so we will emphasize the humanity of Jesus Christ. It's right and it's good that most of the time when we talk about Jesus Christ, we emphasize that He is God and He was God when He came. But it's also right that we look that He came as a man so that there would be an identification in our hearts concerning His incarnation as flesh and blood as you and I live today.

So the title of the study today is The Humanity of Christ. And we'll begin by reading 5 verses here, I think, 5-9, starting in chapter 2 and verse 5. Paul writes, For unto the angels hath He not put in subjection the world to come whereof we speak, but one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? Or the Son of Man, that thou visitest Him? Thou madest Him a little lower than the angels. Thou crownest Him with glory and honor, and didst set Him over the works of thy hands.

Thou hast put all things in subjection under His feet. For in that He put all in subjection under Him, He left nothing that is not put under Him. But now we see not yet all things put under Him.

Verse 9, But we see Jesus. See, in verses 5-8, He's not talking about Jesus. He's talking about you and I. He's talking about man.

But in verse 9, He switches here. He says, But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man. And we'll stop reading there and make some comments.

Notice there, two times the word death is used. That five letter word is going to be mentioned five times today in the passages that we're going to read. And understanding that word death and what it means in connection with our lives and Jesus Christ's life is going to be very important as we look at the verses we need to look at today.

This section of Hebrews proclaims in these first five verses here that Jesus Christ became a man in order to recapture our lost destiny, our lost dominion. When man fell into sin in the Garden of Eden, he didn't just fall in sin, he fell out of a position that he had. God not only put him in the Garden of Eden, He not only made him in a perfect state, He put him in a position of dominion and He said to him, I need you to rule, I want you to reign, I want you to have dominion over all the earth.

So man's providence, man's place in the economy of God as originally set up in perfection was that he would be in a place of ruling and reigning and dominion. But, when man fell into sin, he not only severed a relationship with God, he also lost that which was rightfully his. And these first three or four verses here, it says in verse 6, but one in a certain place testified saying, what is man? Thou madest him Lord of the angels.

It's actually pretty much word for word a repeat of Psalm number 8 which tells us about the earth being a subjection to man which has really been a reference back to Genesis 1 and 2 there when God put man in that position. So some people read these verses and they're confused and they think it's talking about Jesus. It's not.

It's talking about you and I and what we lost. Notice here that angels are mentioned here too and the reason for that is this. God never gave to angels the right to govern or have dominion.

Did you ever notice that in the Bible? It's very interesting. They do not have the right to rule or reign over the earth. That was given to man.

Now there was one angel in heaven who tried to exercise dominion and right to rule. His name was Lucifer, the son of the morning. And he tried to take rule and he tried to take dominion that was not his.

And we know what happened to him as he was flung out of heaven and his name was changed to Satan. So sin has a lot to do with dominion. You notice the connection? Satan tried to rule with dominion.

He was thrown out of heaven. Man rejected the authority or dominion of God in his own heart and he was thrown out of the Garden of Eden. So there's some connection here between authority and all of that.

And as long as man in the Garden of Eden was subject to the dominion of God within him and in his place and position and under the Word of God and God's commandment to him... Actually, there was only one commandment in the Garden of Eden, wasn't there? Really? There was only one thing that he couldn't do. You can do anything you want basically, man. You can rule.

You can reign. But of this tree, you shall not eat it. And so as long as man was in subjection to the dominion of God and the authority of God in his own life and his own heart, he then had a delegated authority to then have dominion over everything else.

But the minute that he rejected that authority of God... Because see, disobedience isn't just some theory. It's rejecting the dominion and the authority of God. It's saying no to God.

That's what Adam did and Eve did on that day. They said no to the authority of God. And when they did that, immediately, they lost the right to have dominion.

So as long as we allow God to have dominion within us, then God trusts us to have dominion as well. We can illustrate that in many different ways. One way that I see it worked out is this.

Sometimes I have a young man come to me and he'll say that he feels like God has called him to find a wife. And we'll talk about many things, but one of the things we always talk about is this. I find out if he has learned how to be under authority.

Because see, before a young man can be in authority and exercise it, he better learn how to be under authority. You see? It's the same principle here. It's the same principle.

It's one that you need to understand. And it's key to understanding the whole Bible because man broke it right at the very beginning. And now here in Hebrews, years after Jesus has died, the same principle is being brought up so that we can understand part of the reason Jesus Christ came wasn't just to deliver us from our sins, and that's enough, amen, but to restore the providence of man, to restore the destiny of man, to restore him to that right relationship with God where we are subject to God, but also we have a place of dominion to rule.

That is part of our heavenly calling is to rule and reign, to be joint heirs with Christ, right? And so all of these things begin to flow together and the connections are made back from Genesis what we lost to what now God is trying to recapture in your life and in mine. Dominion. You know, man was given this instinct.

I'm not sure of the right words here. To rule. To have dominion over this earth.

And in a way, in a strange way, it seems like we haven't totally gotten rid of that. Have you ever noticed how interesting it is that in every age there's men that just can't seem to help themselves? They've got to climb that mountain. They've got to go to the deepest part of the ocean.

We've got to go to the deepest reaches of outer space. There's this pioneer spirit to get control over, to explore, to have dominion, to try to rule, to try to reign, and all of these things. And yet, as I've studied history a little bit, it's interesting that no matter how far out man goes in space or how deep he goes under the ocean or what dominion he may have over this planet and all the amazing things that man can do, no matter how far you go back in recorded history, and right up to the present day, with all the wonderful advances we've made today in technology, we as men have made absolutely zero progress when it comes to morality.

Isn't that true? In fact, the Bible says things are going to wax worse and worse. It seems like that the more we try to exercise dominion in our own way instead of God's ways, the more the spiral goes down according to the Bible. And as I observe society, it seems true, doesn't it? It seems true.

The world is not getting better. The humanist would tell you things are getting better and better. That's a lie.

Things are waxing worse and worse as far as the world system, as far as the way the world functions and works. What is man, this says, that thou art mindful of him? Well, it says that he was made a little lower than the angels. It seems to me, again, I don't understand it all, but it seems man is finding ways to go even lower and lower and lower as time goes by.

What is man? Well, man of himself physically is what? I don't know how many elements make up this human body, but I looked up a few things. And 95% of your body weight and my body weight is made up of just six elements. 95% is made up of oxygen, nitrogen, carbon, hydrogen, phosphorus, and calcium.

That's 95% of what we are. Now, if you were to sell that on the open market, do you know what you'd get? Not very much. You know? What is man that thou art mindful of him? What is man? What does man actually know about this universe? What has man actually accomplished? You know, as we've spent billions of dollars on medicine, you know we still can't cure the common cold.

I think sometimes God does those kind of things just to show us who we really are and who we're really not. What is man that thou art mindful of him? You know, we like to think we are masters of the domain of this earth. We've got cell phones.

We've got artificial hearts. The list goes on. And all these things that we try to exercise in a futile effort to try to gain control over how long we live and how we communicate.

Now we've got the world wide web that we've got all this information and all these things. But the more we try to take control in our own self, the more frustrated it all gets. Because even the world wide web, as wonderful as some people may think it is, has infected more garbage in the human mind and heart than I think anything else since the history of mankind.

You know, in this effort to try to kind of bring the whole globe together and tie it together, really what has it done? What has it done? It's caused the failure, the moral failure of millions and millions and millions. There's some connection here again between this dominion thing and sin and God's part in all this and man's part in all this. Now it says something very interesting here at the end of verse 8. It says, "...he left

nothing that is not put under him." But then there's a but in the Bible.

It says, "...but now we see not yet all things put under him." Now, I don't know what all those things are. I could make a list. But because of the flow of the passage, it seems clear what Paul is trying to get at here is there's one big thing.

There is one big problem that man does not have the answer for. What is that in this passage? Does anybody know? Death. That's right.

Is death under man? Or is death ruling man? You know? Death. What is death? Death has conquered man. It triumphs everywhere.

Death strikes infants, old people, politicians, preachers, carpenters, business executives. It's not a respecter of persons. Death is not under man.

When all is said and done, all the famous people die. Doctors even die with all their knowledge of medicine. They still die, don't they? Death.

Death is not subject to man. The sting of death has mocked mankind since Adam fell. Since Adam fell.

Christ was above the angels, but when He became man, He became, the Bible says here, in verse 9, but we see Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels. He allowed Himself to be put in a position where He was a little lower than angels. Now, again, depending on what your thought on all that is, we could talk about different things, but obviously in this passage, what it's saying is Jesus allowed Himself to become a man.

A little lower than angels. Just like man was referred to as lower than angels, Jesus is. For the one purpose, it seems like according to this passage, that He could taste death.

That He could taste death for every man. Why did He do that? Well, it seems like Jesus being fully God, definitely He brought God to earth in a new way. But also, because He came, He is able to take man to heaven in a whole new way too, wasn't He? And if you and I get to heaven, it will only be because we are in Christ.

We are in Christ. Let's continue to look at man here just for a minute. I want to talk about Jesus a little bit more.

But I want to make sure that we again see that man in his sinful natural state, which is the picture that I'm painting right now, is not capable of ruling. As we look at the world today and all the capitals and all the rulers, all the political men, man cannot rule and accomplish what he thinks he can. The reason he cannot is he has adopted Satan's viewpoint.

Do you know what Satan's viewpoint of ruling is? I can do it without God. I will make myself like unto the Most High. He tried to exclude God from the equation of ruling and dominion.

It's not possible. It's not possible to do that. And so the men today that try to rule with all their decisions and all their worldly wisdom, they're frustrated.

It doesn't work. They work so hard for peace, and it's like the whole thing mocks them and laughs at them. Because they're trying to rule and reign and have dominion and leaving out God.

Man, not just modern man, it's always been that way. I lived in England back in 1978 and 1979. And while I was there, I visited a lot of castles and historical places and studied a little bit about English history.

And I always thought of the English as such nice, civilized people. You know they weren't. I mean, what a bloody country that was.

Everybody that got to the throne, it seems like, ended up collecting all their relatives and having their heads taken off in the Tower of London. That was their way of ruling. Isn't that amazing? Isn't that shocking? I mean, when man tries to rule and get God out of the equation, he's worse than an animal, isn't he? He's worse than an animal.

And we need to understand, there's again, some connection between this whole thing of dominion and what we lost back there in the Garden of Eden. What is it that keeps man from ruling the right way? First, it's sin. And sin then leads to death.

Let's look at verse 9 here again for a minute. Jesus, it says here, a couple of interesting things. It's made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death.

We've talked about that. We'll talk about it again later. But it says here, He's crowned with glory and honor that He, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man for the suffering of death.

For the suffering of death. Why would He do that? First of all, let me ask you an important question. Do you believe that Jesus Christ died? Physically, bodily, that He died? Amen.

Good. Do you understand that in the Bible there are three types of death? There are three deaths in the Bible. There are three deaths.

You remember Adam and Eve in the Garden? We already talked about that. When He fell into sin and He also fell out of position. There's something else that happened that day.

He died that day. The Bible says that death entered the world through Adam. And if you read that at first, you think, well, wait a minute.

When He sinned, He didn't die. Yes, He did. Spiritually, He was dead.

The Bible teaches us in the New Testament and throughout the Word of God that we are dead in our sins. That when He sinned that day, there was a ripping and a tearing in the veil of His relationship with God and spiritually something died in Him. And so He was spiritually dead.

Why do you think you have to be born again? Listen to the phrases that are in the Bible. It's because you're dead and you need to come back and be quickened, it says in Ephesians, quickened to life, meaning spiritual life. When you're born again, when you're quickened to life, it's not that you're dead and you're resurrected, but spiritually it's as if you are resurrected.

Do you understand that? So that's the first death. The second death is the physical death. We all understand what that is.

The physical death. And of course, the third death or the final death is at the end of the ages in the final judgment when all of those, the devil and all those that have rejected Jesus Christ will be thrown into the pit into everlasting judgment. So that's the third death.

Now here's the thing you need to understand about Jesus Christ. I believe that He experienced the first and the second death. That on the cross, He had a unique experience that His whole life He lived totally in tune with the Father.

He said, I and the Father are one. I mean, He didn't know what it was to be separated from His Father. He says, if you've seen Me, you've seen God.

Right? And so He and the Father were one. He said, the words I speak, they're not even My words. They're My Father's words.

But do you remember when He was on the cross? Right before He died, He said two things. The first thing He said was He cried out in a great anguish and agony, My God, My God, why hast Thou... What did He say? ...forsaken Me. And at that moment, I believe on the cross, as sin came upon Him, God cannot be where sin is.

God had to depart for the first time. There was a split in the Trinity. There was a split in the Trinity.

There was a tearing and a separation. And for just a moment, I believe Jesus Christ tasted the full dregs of that spiritual death. And for Him, I believe it was a much greater agony than later when it said He gave up the ghost, the physical death.

I believe that. If I understand His relationship with God based on the Word of God, that was a moment that we cannot even understand. He felt the full fall of Adam as it crushed upon His own soul and cried out in bitter agony, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? Though He knew this had to happen, yet it was such a tearing in the fabric of who He was, it was almost more than He could bear.

But He did bear it. He stayed on the cross, didn't He? He stayed on the cross. And that's why the Bible teaches us that it actually pleased God to bruise Him and to crush Him.

Because at that moment, He who knew no sin became sin and God had departed that we might become the righteousness of God, right? And so all these things you begin to see. So when it says Jesus tasted death, it didn't just mean He had a little sip of it. He drank the full cup.

And the full cup was that spiritual separation from God. Why hast Thou forsaken Me? And then later, He did I believe also, as you agreed with me, suffer a physical death as He gave up the ghost. He didn't swoon.

He didn't faint. And even part of our understanding of the Gospel says in Romans 10-9 that if we confess with our mouth and believe in our heart that Jesus Christ, what? That He died. You actually have to believe that He died and was resurrected.

Part of our believing the Gospel is believing that He died. And Paul here in Hebrews is making sure that point is understood again that He did die. He actually experienced death.

But it goes on here in verse 10, For it became Him for whom are all things and by whom are all things in the beginning in bringing many sons to glory. The Captain. And the word Captain there means the originator or the forerunner or the first of their salvation.

Perfect through suffering. So what it means here is that Jesus Christ when He did this, He opened the door to bring with Him many sons and may I say daughters. The word sons there is an all-inclusive term

like mankind.

Into glory with Him. That's why He had to taste death. That's the humanity of Christ.

See that Christ is God is so important. But may I say it's equally important that He was a man. The humanity of Christ is equally important.

He is the God-man. And being a man, He died. Well, at the end of this verse 10 is a phrase we need to look at just for a moment.

The Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. Now if you're like me when you read a phrase like that in the Bible, you first think, wait a minute. Wasn't Jesus perfect? Wasn't He sinless? Did Jesus ever sin? No.

When He was born, even His birth was perfect. He was born of a virgin. Was He perfect as a baby? I believe He was.

Was He perfect as a boy? I believe He was. Well then, how can He be made perfect? What does this mean? When Satan tried to tempt Him in the desert, was He perfect? Yes, He was. What does this mean then? Does it mean that He was sinfully imperfect and that through suffering He got to be perfect? No.

No, Christ was free from sin. Christ was free from sin. What this is saying here is this.

This does not mean perfect as in He became sinless. But it means that when He came, He had untested obedience. Untested obedience.

But through the suffering that He endured in the Garden of Gethsemane and on the cross, His suffering tested. And the word tested there may be a better word to think of as it proved His obedience. And this proving, and the word perfect here meaning it brought it to fulfillment.

It completed what God already knew was in Him. It was tested or proved what it was. You know, sometimes when we prove something, we don't do it to show that it's not right.

We actually prove it to show that it is right or that it will work. Let me give you an example. Growing up in eastern Kentucky, as a small boy, there's a lot of hills and rivers and streams and creeks.

And there's bridges everywhere. You know, every little nook and cranny and holler as we called it back there. There's bridges everywhere.

Well, when I was a boy growing up, I forget my age, I think I was 12 or 13, there was a pretty good sized bridge called the Silver Bridge that fell. It collapsed during rush hour traffic and a lot of people were killed. Well, soon after that, there was suddenly a lot of tax money freed up to repair and rebuild a lot of the local bridges that were in pretty bad shape.

A lot of them were old wooden bridges. This is, oh my, 35, 36 years ago. And near my house, there was this creek called Hood's Creek and it had this old wooden creaky bridge on it.

And we'd used it for years and never thought a thing about it. But after this other bridge collapsed, it was like everybody was avoiding it. They didn't know what to do with this bridge.

Well, the state came in there, they replaced the bridge, all steel, steel girders, steel posts, concrete pilings and everything. And back then, things weren't as tight because of liability as today. And a lot of the boys in the neighborhood, like myself, we would go down there and watch.

They'd even let us help, you know, carry rocks out of the creek and all this sort of stuff. And I remember after they finished building this bridge one day, they did a strange thing. They had all these big concrete trucks and the bridge wasn't very long.

It was only about 50 feet long, if that. And they put two concrete trucks on it full of concrete and let them sit there all day and all night. And the second day, some of us boys, we said, what are you doing? Why are you leaving those trucks on there? Isn't the bridge going to collapse from all the weight? No, they said, no.

We're trying to show to all the people that live around here, we're trying to prove to them, just the opposite, that the bridge won't fall. And so if you get the point, God allowed Jesus to go through this to prove that He was perfect. To show that He wasn't going to fail.

And so that we could look back on His life and see He was tested. He was proved. Not to show that He wasn't perfect, but to show that He was perfect.

And that's what was going on there. Alright, let's keep going here. Verses 11 and 12 and 13.

I think I'll just... We already read them. I don't think... Well, no, I haven't read them, have I? Let me read these here quickly. For both He that sanctified and they who are sanctified are all of one, for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren.

See, something happened. When He became the Captain of our salvation, we entered into a new relationship and we were restored back to Him. And He now calls us brethren.

You know, there's a wrong teaching or a wrong thought in the world today. The world tells you that all men are your brothers. There's even songs like that in popular culture.

You know that's not right. There is no universal brotherhood of man. There is no universal.

It's man against man. It's a dog-eat-dog world out there. That's the way the world operates.

But here, if you're born again, if you come into the Kingdom of God, not only are you restored to life and dominion, but you now have a relationship with Jesus Christ, with the God of Heaven. He's not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name, my brethren, in the midst of the church while I sing praise unto thee. And again, I will put my trust in Him.

And again, behold, I and the children which God hath given me. Now, we're going to pick up here in verse 14, 15, and 16. Let me read 14 and 15.

There's some things that we need to say about here. Verse 14, why don't you stand up for just a minute. Stand up quickly.

Leave your Bibles open. I'm going to read 14 and 15. For as much then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same.

What's same? He became flesh and blood. That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetimes subject to bondage. Alright, you may be seated.

Now, what it's saying here is because we are made of flesh and blood, Jesus Himself took on and became a partaker of flesh and blood, the humanity of Christ, and He came into this world by human birth. But what you need to understand as you read all this and not get confused is Jesus just becoming a man, that alone doesn't save us. His virgin birth, though it's very important, doesn't save you.

Do you know the Sermon on the Mount doesn't save you? It's through His death that you're saved. Did you see that little phrase through death? Through here means like there's this doorway. Through it.

He had to actually go through death. He had to not just experience, He had to enter into it and He had to actually die. Through death.

Through death. If all we had was the Sermon on the Mount, He came down, taught that, and went back to heaven, do you know what we would have? A religion. A religion.

But we don't have a religion. We have a Savior. We have a Redeemer.

We have a High Priest that is touched with your infirmities. That has experienced death for you and for I. That song we sang this morning, what was it? Lift Up Your Glad Voices? I mean, what an appropriate song to sing this morning, Tim. Lift Up Your Glad Voices.

Because He has died. We don't have to die. That's what happened there.

That's what happened. That's what happened. Through death.

Now, there's an interesting part of this verse here that we do need to deal with. We do need to talk about a little bit to have a clear understanding of what Paul is saying to us here. I know this can bring some confusion to some people.

Maybe we can just ask the Spirit of God to illuminate this to us a little bit this morning. When it says that through death, He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. Now what do you do with that verse? What does that mean? Is there a devil today? Is Satan still alive? Well then, what does this mean? Because this says it destroyed him.

Well, now if you look up the word destroyed, it doesn't mean eliminate. Sometimes we think of destroy as eliminated, as in gone forever. What this means here is Satan has been in effect rendered impotent.

Rendered unable to do great harm. Now, that's a wonderful thing. But, he still is capable of great harm.

But not if you're in Christ. Not if you're in Christ. The devil has not been eliminated, but he's been stripped of his power and the fear and the bondage of death is destroyed.

Because Christ, through death, has destroyed that ability to cause us that fear and to live and to quake and not know what to do with Satan. Let me illustrate it this way. When I was nine years old, my father built a house.

We moved into a new neighborhood about five or six miles away from where I grew up. We had a neighbor. They had a nice big yard right beside ours.

I used to like to play baseball. My ball would go into their yard sometimes. Right after we moved there, I didn't realize they had a dog.

I didn't like dogs back then very much. They didn't seem like they liked me. One day I went over there chasing my ball and this big, ferocious dog comes tearing out after me.

And of course, I go tearing the other way and all of a sudden I hear this... I look back and there's a chain on this dog. I didn't see the chain. And he stopped about three feet away from me.

And my heart was racing and everything. And then the neighbor came out and introduced himself and apologized. He said, look, the dog is kind of mean.

He does bite. I'm sorry. But we like him.

But as long as you don't get in his domain here, his chain is just so long, he'll never bother you. He'll bark at you. He looks ferocious.

And if you get in his area, he is ferocious. And he'll bite you. Just stay over here.

Well, that's the way it is with the devil. He is a mad, rabid dog. And he is ferocious.

And he can hurt you, but only if you allow him by getting in his territory. Do you understand? There's a chain put on him. His power has been destroyed in that it's limited or stripped.

But if I flirt with the devil, if I play with that dog, I would have gotten bit. And when you flirt with the world, when you play with sin, you're where you don't belong. You're going to get bit.

And it's going to hurt. And you're going to lose. Because he is stronger than you.

Because the devil is still alive. This is not saying he is eliminated from the scene. That day is coming.

That day is coming. But that's not today. And we need to see that.

You need to understand what you're reading when you see this. Because we do need to be very careful how we deal with the devil. I can tell you I was very careful how I dealt with that dog.

I lived there nine years, and I never got bit. I stayed out of that territory. Are you staying out of the devil's territory? Don't read this and think you can flirt with the devil.

Don't read this and think you can play with sin. See, sin belongs to the devil. You're in his backyard then.

You need to understand what the Bible is saying here. Well, the Gospel. The amazing, wonderful power of the Gospel and the cross is what delivers us from this power, this destructive power.

You know, we said earlier there were three types of death. And with men in America today, there are so many people walking around and they're dead and they don't know it. And they're under the power of the devil and they don't know it.

They're pursuing what they call the American dream, but they're dead. They're dead. They're dead in their sins.

The American dream. Get a good job. Build your own house.

Get a nice car. They're dead and they don't know it. But Jesus Christ is here to deliver us.

He is the Captain of our salvation. And that salvation doesn't just mean you have a home in heaven. It frees you from the bondage of death here.

Spiritual death? Yes. Physical death? As well. Freedom is not having what you want in the American dream.

It's doing what God wants you to do. And you get that power through Jesus Christ and what He did on the cross. Jesus said in John 14, verse 6 that He is the way, the truth, and the life.

He is the way that you need to go. This whole thing of death is spoken about a lot here. And as I think about people in America and my own life, I wasn't born again until I was 29.

Death is a frightening thing. It's so frightening. And the reason I'm talking about this is you see this phrase here, through fear of death.

You know, you would think as you go around in normal America that there is no fear of death. But you know, Americans are so afraid of death they never talk about it. If you go outside of Lancaster County to a typical funeral in the world like I used to go to in Florida, you know they never say the word dead.

They say things like, well, he's asleep. He's passed away. You know, I used to go to funerals of my friends that weren't Christians.

And you know, if one of them was into motorcycles or fishing, they'd say, well, he's just fishing forever now. I mean, it sounds so silly, but that's just the way the world talks. And you know, the reason they do that is they're so afraid of death they won't even talk about it.

They hide it. No open caskets in those kind of funerals. It's not like Lancaster County.

The plain people, God bless them for that, they do that for a reason. They know their children need to understand that death is real. But the world, they're so afraid of it they pretend it's not real.

Have you laid your death on the altar? I wonder. You know, if you're born again, you don't need to have any fear of death. Because that fear of death, the bondage of it has been destroyed in Jesus Christ.

O death, where is thy sting? The answer is, it's gone. It's gone if you're in Christ. You have no need to fear death.

You have no need to fear death. Paul said, he'd rather just go on. You know? He'd rather just go on than be here.

And that's the true destruction of the fear of death. Well, let's move on here. Got a few more verses to cover.

Verse 16 and 17. Well, let's read verse 16. It's a repeat of something we've been over a few times.

For verily he took not on himself the nature of angels. And the reason it's repeated so many times is so that you'll get it, Bible School students. Jesus Christ didn't come as an angel.

You know, there's cults that teach that. And it seems like God knew 2,000 years ago that that would be even still happening today. And it is.

It's not an old thing. You read this and you think, well, nobody believes that. They do.

There's cults today that have been started in the last hundred years that teach this stuff. They teach He just came as an angel. He didn't come as an angel.

He came as a man. And the purpose of this verse is that we'll see the humanity of Jesus Christ that He died. That He lived.

And He knows how you feel. He knows how you live. But He took on Him the seed of Abraham.

Verse 17, Wherefore, in all things... Notice the all. In all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren that He might... Here's the reason, besides entering into death, be a merciful... Oh, I'm so thankful for the mercy of God. Sometimes I think I need more than anybody else.

But you know the good thing is there's plenty left for everybody else even after I've used up what I need. And so on and so on and so on. Isn't that wonderful? Be a merciful and faithful, high priest, in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

For in that He Himself while hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted. And we need to understand a few things here. Jesus Christ could have been born in a lot of different situations.

Even His birth teaches us that He wanted to suffer and He wanted to experience the full breadth of human life so that nobody could say He doesn't understand. He was born with a silver spoon in His hand. He was born in the palace of some king and raised in ease and comfort.

And what does He know of real life? Well, He was born in a stable. And He lived a normal life in a little hick village called Nazareth back up in the middle of nowhere. I mean, Nazareth was even the laughing stock of Israel.

Can anything good come out of Nazareth? I mean, even the town He grew up in was a nothing town, a nobody town. Nobody comes from there. But that's where Jesus and God and His providence chose to put Him.

Isn't that amazing? But it's so that this Bible verse here could be true so that we could understand. In all things, you think that He doesn't understand you? That's the devil whispering in your ear. He understands you.

We had the great joy of adopting three of our children. We have five adopted children. Not counting our Hutterite adopted children.

But we have five adopted children. And three of them come from the country of Columbia. I remember the first time I went down there.

It was about 15 or 16 years ago. And I went down there with a man that used to be a missionary down there by the name of Carlos Guerrero. And he would take me to places down there.

It's the first time I was ever out of the country except to Europe. But I'd been to Europe before, but I'd never been to South America. And he took me to places in Columbia that aren't in the tourist brochures.

And we went on the backside of Cali, Columbia into what they call the barrios. And the first time in my life, I saw people living in cardboard houses and tin and just pieced together and a whole family living in an area 8 by 8. We walked down some of those streets. You know, I've never been the same.

If you've never walked down a street like that, a picture doesn't do it. A picture doesn't do it. While we were walking down one street, we heard a baby cry.

And we kind of stuck our head in there. It didn't sound quite right. And it turned out a woman had just had a baby in there.

And I'd only been a Christian then two or three years. And I had to think. Jesus was born in the stable because there wasn't any room.

He would understand this little baby boy that was just born. He would understand it. You know, that boy now is probably some of you all's age.

He's 15 or 16. And he might be tempted to think, Jesus Christ, what would He know about my life? Well, He would know. He would understand, wouldn't He? Because of the way that He was born into this world.

He would understand. He took on a human body so that He would be like unto His brethren. He knows and He understands.

And He knew that the devil would try to tempt us and make us think that Jesus doesn't understand. But He does. Then it goes on here in verse 18 to say that He Himself has suffered being tempted.

And again, that word tempted there is tested. Tested. Secure them that are tempted or tested.

And I believe this verse in particular is talking about what we call today the temptation of Christ in particular. I believe it's talking about other things. But as you think about what He endured for 40 days and 40 nights as He fasted, you've got to remember, Jesus was man, but He was God.

He could have turned those stones into bread. And the temptation, the test that He was put under is greater and was greater than anything. You think, well, Jesus doesn't understand what it's like.

The temptations I have are so overpowering. I mean, today, we have the Internet. And you start making your excuses.

But the Bible is here saying that He was tested in all points like you were. He understands. He understands.

The temptations He experienced, I believe, were greater than any man that has ever lived because He could have done something about each one of them. He could have done something about each one of them. But He endured them.

He simply endured them and resisted them. And that testing, again, was to prove who He was and what He was. But it was also done here, and the point they're trying to make sure that you get here, is that as your High Priest, He knows you.

He understands you. When you wake up in the middle of the night and it's dark and you're tossing and you're turning and you can't sleep and you think nobody understands, you can cry out to heaven, to Jesus Christ, and I guarantee you, He'll understand exactly what you're going through. That's what this is saying here.

You know, if you studied history at all, you might remember that in the history of Europe, there was a horrible disease that swept through Europe back right at the end of the Middle Ages called the Bubonic Plague or the Black Death. How many here have heard of the Black Death? You know what I'm talking about. One of the interesting things that historians wrote about the Black Death is that sometimes it would come in a village and half the village would die.

Sometimes 90% of the people. Millions of people died. Millions.

It decimated the population of Europe. But one of the interesting things that historians of that day noted and wrote down and recorded for us today is that those people who got sick were the first ones that went and took care of the other people that were sick because they could understand what they were going through. They could understand what they were going through.

Isn't that interesting? I remember a little over seven years ago in July of 1996, we had a child born to us. Her name is Lydia Faith. And she has Down Syndrome.

And a lot of people came over and visited. A lot of people came over and they prayed for us and said, you know, God will give you strength. This will be a blessing in your life.

And she is. She's a wonderful blessing. If you know her, you know what I'm talking about.

But you know, within 24 hours, two or three people came over that had a Down Syndrome child and their comfort, their understanding was of such another level, I can't describe it to you. When they would walk in the room, they would just look at me. Before they said a word, it was like a million words were spoken between us.

You know what I'm saying? And that's what Jesus Christ... that's what this verse is saying about Him. You know, He understands. He empathizes.

He knows. He is a faithful high priest. He can succor you.

And to succor means to come to your aid, to help you. He can, you know, rest your tired head in His lap. He understands.

He cares in a way like nobody else that has ever lived or died can care. That's what this is saying. Now, we want to finish here in the last little bit of time left to us We want to look at verses 1-6 here of chapter 3. We'll stop at verse 6 I think today.

Chapter 3. Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling... Isn't that wonderful? You know, you can partake of a lot of things in this life, but there's nothing better than this. Consider the apostle and high priest of our profession, Christ Jesus. Consider Him.

Behold Him. Perceive Him. Gaze, meditate upon Him.

Who was faithful to Him that appointed Him? As also Moses was faithful in all his house. For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath built the house hath more honor than the house. Now, this word house is going to be used I think it's either five or six times here in these verses.

Just listen for a minute and see if you can understand what the house is. For this man was counted more worthy of glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath built the house hath more honor than the house. For every house is built by some man, but he that built all things is God.

And Moses verily was faithful in all his house as a servant for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after. It's as if all of Moses' life was just an example for something that was going to happen later. Verse 6, But Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

This house here that it's talking about is not a physical house. The house of God is never a building. Amen? The house of God is never a building.

No church building is the house of God. And so, the answer to this is clearly given here in verse 6. We are His house. We are the house that Christ has built.

We are the house that Christ has built. Do you see that? We are the house that He owns. God never intended to dwell in a building.

He dwells in people, in men and in women, and in young people like you. That is part of the divine intention of God in making man is that we would be the tabernacle of His indwelling. If you go over to Revelation 21 in that wonderful revelation of what is going to happen as the end of the ages draw nigh, it says, Behold, the dwelling of God is with men.

The dwelling of God is with men. It's not in a building. It's you and it's I. What a wondrous thought.

But what a humbling thought. But we have to be built by Christ. We are His house, a fit habitation, only as we are in Christ.

There are many other religious houses being built in this world. Take your pick. You know, you can even start a new one if you want to.

People are starting new ones all the time. But those houses, may I say, are all house of cards. I mean, they just blow away.

They just blow away. They won't make it through eternity. The great message of the Gospel is that it takes God for a man to be really a man like He was intended to be and that is indwelt by God.

And so, I say you, you cannot be who you're supposed to be without God. Do you understand that? You cannot be who you're supposed to be without God. And it takes Christ to be a Christian.

Christianity is not a religion. It's a person. It takes Christ to be a Christian.

And when you put Christ in the Christian, you put actually God back in the man where He was supposed to be. Do you see how this thing comes full circle back in the Garden of Eden? When you put Christ in a

man, then really what you're doing is putting God back in the man where He was meant to be all along. That is part of the wonderful good news of the Gospel.

Yes, yes, we get to go to heaven. Yes, we get cleared from our sins. But we get to go back to that original purpose to manifest the glory of God because we are created in His image and in His likeness.

That's the good news. And now in this house that it's talking about here, God has servants. He has a Son, Jesus Christ, but He has a servant.

And remember, the title of this book is simply Hebrews. The Jewish people. And so the Jewish people, they kind of held Moses up on a pedestal.

You know, we do those things too. We hold certain men up on pedestals. Shame on us.

And God wasn't saying Moses was a bad guy. He's saying he was faithful. But you know what? He's just one of the hired help.

He's just a servant. He's just a servant. But the Son, the Son is coming.

The Son is here. And what a servant sort of tidies up and sweeps the floor and cleans up and puts the beds in order, but the Son comes in and possesses. He owns.

He administrates. He gets provisions. He has the funds.

He has the resources to make that thing work. That is what Jesus Christ has come to do. He's come to indwell and inhabit us.

Christ needs to dwell in your hearts by faith. There's such a difference in a man who has Jesus Christ indwelling in him and a man who does not. Do you understand the difference in that? You know, I can meet someone, and it seems like in three seconds, there's either this connection, and it's like you just know there's something of Christ here.

Or you know, uh-oh, something seems off here. You know, both of them look the same outwardly. They might even act the same sometimes.

But there's a difference there because when God is at home there, when God is at home there, everything is suddenly different. You know, earlier I said I lived in England for a while, and like I said, when I was living there, I liked to visit castles and history and all that kind of stuff. I remember one week I visited two different castles.

One of them was Windsor Castle just west of London about 30 miles which was built hundreds and hundreds of years ago. I think about 700 or 800 years ago. And you know, people are still living there.

And the grounds are kept. The flowers are planted. Things are painted.

The metal is polished. It's kept in working order. There's light.

There's heat. Food is served there. I mean, there's life there.

About 10 miles from there, there's a castle built within 10 years of the same year. But there, nobody lives there. And nobody's lived there for hundreds of years.

Same style of architecture. Same time period built. Nobody lives there.

The battlements are broken down. All the metal is rusting. There's no food served there.

There's no light. There's no heat. When you go in there, it's just cold and dank and dark.

And it just sort of penetrates into your bones. And you think, what is the difference? You know, the only difference is this one is indwelt and lived in. And this one is not.

This one is not. And so the difference that God alive in you makes is radical. Just as radical as those two buildings.

They were as different as night and day. And a person that's being indwelt by the Spirit of God is radically different than a person that is not. Are you radically different? If you're not, you need to find the answer this week.

And I tell you, the way to God is through the Son. The way to God is through the Son. And that's what this passage is all about.

Consider Him, it says in verse 1. Gaze upon Him. Consider Him. Consider His superiority over Moses, it says here.

You know, Moses gave us... the whole world would basically agree that on Mount Sinai, Moses gave us one of the greatest moral codes and legal system the world has ever developed just in the Ten Commandments and all the other things that flowed out of them. They were wonderful. They were good.

But then Jesus Christ came along, and He, on the Sermon on the Mount, another mount, gave also the world some amazing teachings. The difference is, Moses' teachings were based on conduct. Thou shalt not kill.

Thou shalt not do this. Jesus' teachings dealt with the heart. Blessed are the pure.

Blessed are those that hunger and thirst. It was written that thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say, if you have looked upon a woman to lust, you've already killed her.

See the difference? The reign of Christ in your life, in you, now deals with who you really are. Not just with your conduct, but with your heart. When the Son comes, He cleans house in a way Moses never could.

Do you see the difference? He's better than Moses. He took everything Moses did and lifted it up into a spiritual realm. Into a new place.

That's why He could say, I didn't come to change one jot or tittle, but rather fulfill. And that word fulfill is the same word as perfect. He came to make it what it was meant to be.

And that's what it means to be perfect in Christ. To be what you're meant to be. To be what I'm meant to be.

And that's the difference between Moses and Him. Is conduct and heart issues or character. Now, something else I'm glad of on those two mounts there.

On Mount Sinai with Moses, there was thunderings and rumblings. And God said, don't even let the cattle touch this mountain. If they do, do you know what would happen to them? They'd be struck dead.

This is a holy place. And I'm glad for the Ten Commandments. But I'm glad I don't have to live under them to get accepted into Heaven.

But then God also came down thousands of years later on another mount. On another mount. Mount Calvary.

And there God also met with man that day on the cross. And on that day on that mountain, a broken, bruised, and dying man died. But the difference was He wasn't just a man.

Although He was a man, He was God. And His death, through His death, He opened the way that we would have the power to live. And that those laws would be written on the tables of flesh in our hearts.

Two men, two mountains, two manifestations of God into the world. Both good. One better.

One giving you and I the power to be free from the bondage of sin. The other simply being a schoolmaster to show us who we really are. Because our conduct is not going to measure up.

Your conduct is never going to measure up. So Jesus is better than Moses. That's what He's trying to teach you here.

And I'm thankful that God does not save by the law. Because if He did, if works worked, Jesus didn't need to have to die. But works don't work, young people.

Works don't work. And this finishes here with what I would call a cry or a plea, and I would make it as well as I close here. But Christ is a Son over His own house.

Whose house are we? And are you? If... Now notice the if. An if is a conditional prepositional word. And it's a very powerful one here.

You need to listen. If... If... If... If... We hold fast. And the word hold fast there, it's a word of faith.

But such faith, the word fast is a word of seizing and gripping with a holy grit that you're never going to let go. It's not just on the day you get born again saying, well, I want Jesus in my heart because I want to go to heaven. I'm sorry, that's not it.

It's such a trust and such a belief in Jesus Christ that you realize that He is the only answer. He's better than the prophets. He's better than the angels.

He's better than Moses. In fact, He's the only thing I can hold on to and I'm going to hold on to Him so fast, I'm going to hold on to Him and endure to the end. And that's the plea here.

Hold fast the confidence, which is the faith, and then the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end. I hope something comes in your spirit and your heart and your soul this week, a resurgence of faith that you could hold fast and firm unto the end, never wavering, because Jesus is worthy of that faith. I'm not asking you to trust me.

I'm not asking you to trust the Bible school this week. But I'm telling you, you need to hold fast to Jesus Christ firm unto the end. And then, there's a hope.

There is a hope. Not a hope as in it might happen, but a hope as in it's going to happen. Jesus will not let go of you.

The question is, will you hold firm to the end? If you do, and I know you can, because there are so many that have gone before us that have, that have died and gone on to heaven and been able to say, O death, where is thy sting? Because of their faith and holding firm to the end, meaning the end of their life, they didn't waver. They held on to Christ all the days of their life. It's possible in Jesus Christ.

Amen. Thank you for listening this morning. May God continue to add His blessings.

Let me give you just, if I may, those of you that can, a little assignment for tomorrow. This is Bible school, right? Tomorrow, we're going to try, by the grace of God, to go through Hebrews 3, chapter 3, starting in verse 7 through the end of chapter 4. Okay? So we've got about 11 or 12 verses there, 14, so maybe 28 verses, give or take. Try to read those over twice by tomorrow.

I don't want to take a lot of time reading tomorrow. I will read them anyway, but I want to move along and make a couple of very important points that are going to tie directly into what I just said about holding fast until the end. So if you get a chance sometime late tonight or early tomorrow morning when you wake up, you read those.

Amen. God bless you. Thank you for listening.

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