

God Became Man

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[0 : 00] Please be seated. Take your Bibles and turn to the New Testament book of Hebrews, chapter 2. Hebrews, chapter 2. This morning we'll be reading verses 5 through 18.

Our memory verse this week. Every word of God is flawless. This is the flawless word of God. Hebrews, chapter 2, verse 5.

It is not to angels that he has subjected the world to come, about which we are speaking. But there is a place where someone has testified, What is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him?

You made him a little lower than the angels. You crowned him with glory and honor and put everything under his feet. And putting everything under him, God left nothing that is not subject to him.

Yet at present, we do not see everything subject to him. But, but, we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

[1 : 37] In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering.

Both the one who makes men holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers.

He says, I will declare your name to my brothers. In the presence of the congregation, I will sing your praises. And again, I will put my trust in him.

And again, he says, Here am I in the children God has given me. Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death, he might destroy him who holds the power of death, that is the devil, and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.

For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham's descendants. For this reason, he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people.

[2 : 55] Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted. Well, are you a little bit sad that the holidays are over?

Are you sad that Christmas is over? There seems to be such anticipation, and then all of a sudden it's come and gone, and now it's just winter out.

It's cold, and it's dark at 5.30, and it's easy to be sad. But I want to say we don't have to be sad that Christmas is over, because it's not.

Not really. Well, why do I say that? Because right now, right now, just as we sang, at God's right hand is a man.

A man. Right now, ruling and reigning is a man. And so just because maybe all of your decorations are coming down, I don't know, things are getting put away, and all your stockings are being put into their, their, back into storage.

[4 : 21] It doesn't mean that we have to stop remembering and cherishing that the Son of God became man, because that's what he is now.

The importance of remembering Christmas is not so much to remember a one-time event that is now over. It is to remember something that has happened and is happening right now.

One of us is in heaven. Our brother has the Father's ear. one of us has the angels at his call. And he speaks, and they, they come, and he speaks, and they go. One of us is our great high priest, and he is presenting his sacrifice, his body, to God on high for our forgiveness, for our peace.

That is happening as we, as I, speak. As we sit here now, in this time, and in this place, at the same time, in a different place, Jesus is a man, our king, and our priest.

[5 : 41] And, and I really have been praying that the Spirit who does give spiritual sight would help us to see the glory of our Emmanuel, our God with us, because that's what he is right now.

You know, the water turned into wine. Jesus' very first miracle that that wine is long gone. The five loaves of bread, the two fish, long, that he multiplied and fed 5,000 people, long gone.

But, but the greatest miracle of all that God became man is going on right now. Is, is happening.

Now, I, I have three big points I want to cover this morning. And, we read Hebrews chapter 2, and I want you to see these, the first here, the first big point is this, that what the Son of God wasn't, he became.

That's our first big point. So, if you're taking notes, I hope you are, what the Son of God wasn't, he became. What he wasn't, he became.

[6 : 56] Now, how does Hebrews chapter 1 begin? It begins with, in the beginning was the word, that's John 1, 1, but that's where Hebrews begins with that sort of thing. Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days, he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom he also created the world.

He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of its power. That's who the Son of God is.

That's who he is. He isn't a part of this creation. It says that whatever was made, he made it. So that excludes him.

So through him, God created all things. All things that were created, he created. Hebrews 1 says he's the radiance of God's glory. He's the radiance of God.

He's the beam of God's glory. And so, you can't see the sun right now, but on a sunny day, you can stand outside and you can see the sun.

[8 : 12] Well, how can you see the sun? Well, that fiery ball, 93 million miles away, sends out particles of light, photons of light, radiating heat, and you feel the heat.

You see the light. What the sun is, you feel, you see, you understand. So the sun's heat, the sunlight, travels from there to here.

And Jesus said, if you have seen me, you have seen the Father. He's the radiance of God's glory.

And so, what was the Son of God before he became a man?

Well, he was a pure spirit. Did not have a body like men. I believe that's what the shorter catechism says, or the children's catechism.

Well, what is God? Well, he's a spirit. He does not have a body like men. So, he's one with the Father in glory, in power, in majesty.

[9 : 17] In a certain way, nothing is lost when you see Jesus, when you see the Son of God.

There's nothing lost. He's upholding the universe by the word of his power.

And so, what he wasn't, he became. That's our first point, remember? Well, he wasn't flesh and blood.

He wasn't flesh and blood. He's a pure spirit. So, verse 14, since the children have or share in flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity.

That's what it says. The ESV says, he himself likewise partook of the same things. Now, he took up flesh and blood.

I want you to notice that when he became a man, it was not subtraction, it was addition. It was not subtraction so that he became less God, he became man.

[10 : 18] So, he took up flesh and blood. He didn't become less, he became something more. And so, I want you to think with me and I want you to let this glory, this glory fill your hearts.

Think with me about a question. Verse 14, you have it there. Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity.

He took up their flesh and blood. Think about that reality. Think about this question. How did he, how did he become flesh and blood?

Well, he took up flesh and blood through Mary's womb. And I want you to think of the humility of our God.

I want you to think of his condescension. Because if you can appreciate that, how this, this condescension, this glory will fill your heart.

[11 : 22] The son of God became truly the son of Mary. So, in her womb, a little clump of cells attached itself to the wall.

And there, an umbilical cord grew. And the son of God who upholds the universe by the word of his power.

Attached and now dependent on the body of Mary. Now, the son of God needed, if I can say that, now needed a poor teenage girl's strength and her life.

He's shared in flesh and blood. That's what it means to become human. That's what it means to take part in humanity. Donald MacLeod wrote, through the umbilical cord, he is this particular man, the son of this particular woman, woman, the bearer of the whole previous genetic history of her people, and the recipient of innumerable hereditary features.

And so he truly became a son of Abraham, a son of David. Now, he didn't look like Joseph. He had no biological connection to Joseph.

[13 : 04] But he very well may have had traces of Mary in his eyes, and in his hair, in his build, in his smile.

The invisible son of God became this man, this son of Mary. Not man in generic, not mankind in general, he became this man.

And so over nine months, he grew in her womb, and his bones developed, and his blood developed, and his organs, and his fingers, and his feet grew, just like me, just like you.

He was sewn together in the secret place. Now, what he wasn't, he became. That's what I'm saying. He wasn't any of those things, but that's what he became.

He became one of us. Hebrews 2.11, both the one who make men holy and those who are made holy are of the same family, one origin, one family, the same stock.

[14 : 13] That's other ways of translating it. In Greek, it's just all from one. All from one. All of us, him included, from one, one stock, as it were.

And that's why he's not ashamed to call us brothers. That's why he's not ashamed to call us brothers, because he is one of us. And to be ashamed of us would be to be ashamed of what he is. And he's not ashamed of what he is, and so he's not ashamed of us. To scorn us would be to scorn himself. So, I wonder, is your heart starting to burn?

He came right into the family of men. What he was that he became. So, right into our environment. Dwelt among us, is how John puts it.

Now, where does the family live? Where does humanity live? Well, most of us don't live in palaces. Most of us don't live in wealth.

[15 : 27] Most of us are nobodies from nowhere. nobody's from nowhere. And so that's where he came.

That's exactly where he came. And that's exactly what he became. His parents were poor. So, on the eighth day, he was circumcised.

poorest and the poorest offering that you could give, his parents gave for him. His hometown was nothing.

Does anything good come from Nazareth? his natal hospital is a barn. Sometimes you see documentaries and people in Africa or wherever and they're having their babies out in the bush or whatever.

And we say, how can they do that? Well, Jesus wasn't much different. But he went down to Egypt before he was two years old and he was a refugee.

[16 : 45] He went down to Egypt and his parents didn't speak the language. They were poor immigrants. And they had a little Jewish baby boy on their hip. He didn't have an estate.

He didn't have a trust fund. He didn't have the honor or respect of his hometown or of the leadership. He wasn't trained in their schools. He didn't have access to the Sanhedrin or to political leaders.

He didn't have access to the secret rooms where the deals are made. The only time he met a political leader is when they beat him and mocked him.

In other words, the Son of God became a normal man. Normal man. Our true life brother.

So the highest of heaven stooped into the humility of humanity. And so he lived his incarnate life experiencing pain and poverty and temptation.

[17 : 50] And he witnessed squalor and he witnessed brutality. He witnessed Roman soldiers telling, just grabbing people off the street and making them go and carry something for them a mile.

He lived his life hearing obscenities, blasphemy, and profanity. And he lived his life hearing the hopeless cry of the oppressed.

Jesus lived looking at beggars and cripples and women that couldn't get better no matter how many doctors they saw.

He lived with us crowded and busy and harried and stressed and harassed. There was no large plantation that he lived on to give himself some personal space.

There was no financial capital that guaranteed that his daily bread was going to be taken care of every day. He didn't have any sort of personal staff that could keep people away.

[19 : 01] No power or influence protected him from injustice. He saved us right alongside of us. Right there with us.

And so what he wasn't, he became. Doesn't that make you love him? Doesn't that make you love him? Doesn't that make you love him?

Doesn't that make your faith in him swell? Here's one you can count on. Here's one that can understand you. Here's one that's not going to glibly respond to your problems, talking about things that he doesn't know.

He's just like me, yet without sin. So what he wasn't, he became. Now, second point, second big point, what he became, he still is.

Second big point, what he became, he still is. He still is that son of Mary. He's still flesh and blood.

[20 : 06] Yes, it is glorified, and it is different, but right now he is not something that we also won't become someday.

He right now is not some sort of distinguished different sort of man. He still is flesh and blood. So Hebrews chapter 4 verse 14, we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus, the son of God.

So how do we know that that's what he is? That it didn't become something different? That he's now still one of us and someone that we can still trust and love and relate to and he can relate to us.

Well, how do we know? Well, he passed through the heavens, this says. Remember his ascension. Remember his ascension. The disciples are there with him.

He's talking with him. And remember his disciples, all of a sudden they're watching him and all of a sudden his feet are three feet off the ground. And then six feet.

[21 : 13] And then nine feet. And then 12 feet. And then 50 feet. And then 100 feet. And then he's becoming so small you can't hardly see him in a cloud. Covers him and he's gone.

And then all of a sudden, snap of the fingers, twinkle the eye, an angel is there. An angel who wasn't there is now there. And there they are staring at the sky and an angel appears right next to them with a message.

He says, why are you looking at upward? Why are you looking? This Jesus who was taken up from you into heaven will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.

So he bodily went up into heaven with his body. You couldn't see through it. It didn't flash out of existence.

He didn't turn into a ghost. ghost. How did he go? Well, he didn't fade away and become a spirit. Just as he went, he'll come.

[22 : 18] That's the angel's message. He didn't sort of, you know, fade away.

So Colossians says, set your minds on things above where Christ is, where the son of God is, the son of David is, the Messiah is, where he is seated at the right hand of God.

Where is Christ? He is bodily in heaven. What he became, he still is. he wasn't slumming it for 33 years and then went back to his old pre-incarnate state.

You know, he didn't just become a man for a short time and then, well, that's enough of that. Going back to the way it was, he became a man to be a priest for us forever.

That's what Hebrews says. He is a priest for us forever. And Hebrews says very distinctly, like, priests cannot, priests come from men.

[23 : 29] God can't be his own priest. God alone can't be his own priest. A priest has to come from humanity, has to be one of us, so that he can represent us.

And that's what he is right now. So he's a priest forever. So right now, there is a man praying for us, praying for you. There's a man glorified and sitting and ruling above the angels right now.

That's the whole point of Hebrews chapter 2. Hebrews 1, the big main point is, well, the Son of God is greater than the angels. He's greater than the angels.

By his divine nature, he is above angels. Now, the people in Hebrews, the author is writing to, obviously have some sort of fascination with angels.

And what the author is really trying to get across is, Jesus is better than angels. Chapter 1 is, the Son of God by his divine nature is above angels.

[24 : 32] But then the question sort of becomes, well, he became a man. Are angels greater than him now? And the author says, not at all. And he goes back, well, verse 5 says, it wasn't to angels that God subjected the world to come.

And then he quotes Psalm 8. That's what he's quoting there in Hebrews chapter 2, verses 6 and 7. What is man that you are mindful of him, the Son of man that you care for him?

You made him a little lower than the angels, but now you've crowned him with glory and honor, putting everything in subjection under his feet. And the author, he's not stupid.

He reads Psalm 8 and he says, how can that be? We don't see that now. We don't see that now. We don't see everything in subjection to man. You know, the very COVID 19 screams the fact that man is not in subjection or man is not keeping everything in subjection.

[25 : 48] Man is not ruling over all. We can't even manage the smallest things. So who can untie this knot? How will Psalm 8 ever be really fulfilled? We don't see that now.

And the author says, Jesus is that key. He's the answer to that question. one of us has broken through. One of us has broken through.

One of us has taken the throne. Verse 9, we see him. Now, in verse 9, he's not talking about mankind in general. He's talking about a very particular man. We see him who for a little while was lower than the angels, namely Jesus, now crowned with glory and honor.

Jesus is the answer. When you're reading Psalm 8, you should read Jesus is the first person here, and then we're going to follow. He's the fulfillment of Psalm 8.

But the only way that he can be the fulfillment of Psalm 8 is if he's a man, and if he's still a man. So do you get the author's logic and his implication?

[26 : 59] If he's not a man anymore, then Psalm 8 isn't true. And it won't be true. And it can't ever be true. But there is a man right now ruling over the angels.

One of us. And he is the first of many to come. Hebrews is always making that little picture of Jesus is the forerunner.

He's the author. He's the pioneer. He's the one that goes in front. And all of his people follow him. And so we run looking to him because he's in front of us.

The first of many to come. Or don't you know that we will judge angels? Is what Paul says to the Corinthians.

hands? We will judge angels. He's the first. The first of many. And so what he became, he still is.

[28 : 03] His body is different. It's glorified, but it's still a body and he's still a man. What he has become, he'll never, ever stop being. The ages will go by.

And the son of God will forever be a man. Now that's where I want to get to our third point. What does this mean for us?

What should this do in us? Those are these truths. So I'm asking like, what should they do in my heart? What should they do for me?

Well, brothers and sisters, this should shock us. It should shock us. What kind of love is this?

What kind of love is this? You know, it might be one thing for the son of God to become man for a short while. That would be amazing and awe-inspiring.

[29 : 08] That he would stoop so low for a short time to become one of us so that he could live among us and see what that's like, to feel our pain, to walk in our shoes, to suffer temptation, to die.

Even for a short time, that would be incredible, shocking love. But here's something more. The son of God is never going to stop being a man.

He's never going to stop being our Emmanuel. The son of God has invested himself completely into his people forever.

He's signed the 10 billion, billion, billion, billion year contract and even further. He's all in 100% forever. And that's too much for words.

That's amazing love. He didn't do that for angels. angels. He did that for you. The son of God is forever altered because of the love that he has for his people.

[30 : 16] He's forever altered because of his love for us. Now, if you have ever really loved someone, you know that that changes you.

there's no going back when you see that baby. Michael and Monica had their baby this week. and I know that Michael and Monica are forever changed when they saw that baby. Nothing can be the same anymore.

Love alters you. You know, I've cleaned up things that I would never have cleaned up before.

Thousands of dollars I'm paying without even thinking twice about it.

something in me is broken now. Something has changed in me. And so if I have to choose between one of my daughter's happiness and my own, well, I'm going to be miserable.

[31 : 25] And she's going to be happy. And I guess I'm going to be happy with her happiness. You know what I'm talking about if you love someone. Love does something to you, doesn't it?

But look at what it did to him. Love, what have you done? The Son of God has scars now.

The Son of God has a body, a forever body that he will bear down for the ages for us. I really, I don't know what to say except isn't that glorious?

Shouldn't we love him? Shouldn't we say that you're someone that I want to live for? Oh, the deep, deep love of Jesus, vast, unmeasured, boundless, free, rolling as a mighty ocean in its fullness over me.

What he was that he became, and what he became, he still is. And so at the very least, at the very least, how we should love him, how we should adore him.

[32 : 36] What kind of love is this? It's God sized love. And so the question is, will you worship him with me?

Will you worship him with me? Is there something in your heart that says, Lord, you are worthy, you are beautiful, you are lovely, you are glorious? Well, what else?

This should give us great encouragement. This should give us great encouragement to make our confidence in him. And this should really make our confidence in him swell, grow, blossom.

Mighty God, wonderful counselor, prince of peace, everlasting father is a man like you, tried and tempted in every way, yet without sin.

And so he suffered and he learned obedience by what he suffered. And he offered up his prayers, Hebrews says, with loud cries and tears.

[33 : 45] He's crying out to the one who's able to save him from death. He knew the fear of death. He knew the fighting of faith.

Hebrews 2.13, I will put my trust in him. Why is that verse there? He's talking about how Jesus is one with the brothers.

And there's this little phrase, I will put my trust in him. Why is that there? It's there because those are the words that Jesus said and those are the words that we say. Those are words that we say together.

He knew what it was to say, I need you, God. I need you. I trust in you. So he knew the fear of death. He knew the fighting of faith.

In the garden, he was greatly troubled and on the cross, his body burned with pain and his soul cried out in misery. My God, why have you forsaken me? And all that pain did something to him.

[34 : 52] Hebrews has the audacity to say, and we have to have the audacity of faith to believe this, that it made him a complete high priest.

He wasn't ready. He wasn't ready yet to be a sympathetic high priest, but in his pain and in his suffering and in his prayers, he became ready.

He was made perfect. He was made complete, a sympathetic high priest and now he tenderly enters into all your pain because he knows exactly how you feel.

He knows it not as God who knows everything, but as a man who felt the strings of his heart breaking, who knew what it was to be afraid of death, to be greatly troubled, to feel physical pain.

Does your body hurt? Well, he can look at his own scars. His body isn't a memory to him.

[36 : 10] He can look down and see it right now. He can feel the weight of his arms. He can put his hand over his side. look back over the memories in his mind of what it was like of those hours in the dark crying for help.

As vividly as you remember some of the most terrible days in your life, he vividly remembers those hours. hours. And so when he sees you doing the same, something rushes out of him.

Something rushes out of him to help you. In the hours of your distress, in the hours of your pain, when you really are heaving out prayers like great sighs, and there's no words, there's only tears and moaning, there is something that rushes out of him to you.

He knows how you feel, and as a man, and as a God-man, he begins to pray for you. How powerful those prayers must be for you.

You know, when you're Paul, crying three times or three seasons of prayer for this thorn in the flesh, to be taken away, Jesus knows how to answer.

[37 : 47] Do you think Jesus glibly said, stop crying, stop hurting, don't you know my grace is enough for you?

How do you think Jesus said that to Paul? Imagine the tone of voice. How did Jesus say that to Paul?

He said it with perfect gentleness and sympathy. My grace is sufficient for you for my power is made perfect in weakness.

Paul, I'm not going to take this away. And I know it hurts. And I know it hurts. And I know it's killing you. And I know you see 10,000 reasons why I should, but I'm not going to.

I know it hurts, but I'm going to tell you my grace is going to be more than enough for you. I know he said it with sympathy because that's the only way Paul would have said, I have been answered.

[38 : 47] Glib doctrinal answers are no answers at all when you're weeping for relief.

relief. And you remember Eli was a priest in 1 Samuel and in his callousness he chastised Hannah. And in his callousness he hurt Hannah while she wept. Well, Jesus is not Eli. Thou hast the true and perfect gentleness.

no harshness hast thou and no bitterness. So brothers and sisters then take your wounded hearts, your wounded bodies, your wounded spirits to him.

You're coming to one of your own, a perfect priest who hurts when you hurt, who rejoices when you rejoice. He knows pain and he knows pleasure.

[39 : 56] And I think we need to say that side of things too. life is not all about pain. We need to learn to live with Jesus when things are going well. Jesus knew what it was to go to parties.

He knew what it was to eat and to drink. He knew what it was to celebrate and to be happy. He entered into all of human life. He didn't come like John the Baptist.

Remember John the Baptist came, he's out in the desert and he's eating locusts and honey and it's hot and all he has on is this camel skin cloak and this leather belt.

Well, Jesus said, I didn't come like that. I wasn't this esoteric kind of, I mean, this, whatever, I won't say it.

Not like John the Baptist. the son of man came eating and drinking and you call him a glutton and a drunkard. He didn't, he wasn't hidden away.

[41 : 00] He entered into full social life and so he remembers what it's like to eat and drink and to be happy. He remembers what it is to celebrate and so when you feel the same way, you can do those things and you can do those things with him.

You know, in the Old Covenant, in the Old Testament, a priest's job was not to just be there on the bad days. If you read it, the priest's job was on both sides.

In the Old Testament, when the people were happy, so some guy has a wonderful blessing happened in his life and he wants to celebrate. Well, he would go to the tabernacle, he would go to the temple and they would sacrifice a fellowship offering and they would celebrate and they would eat the meal before the Lord and the priest would get some of the offering.

He would celebrate with them. He wasn't there just for the bad times. He was there for all the good times as well. And so Jesus is not less than they are.

Jesus can enter gladly into all of that feeling. So, you know, just as I can look at parents with a very brand new baby, and it's been years and years since I've had a baby, but I can enter into that feeling.

[42 : 18] I know exactly how they feel. And when they're happy, I enter into it and I'm happy with them. I'm thrilled with them. Their joy is my joy and their smiles make me smile.

There's nothing better as an old parent than being with a new parent. You're like, oh, they're so happy. They aren't doing anything I can't understand, that I don't remember myself.

So, brothers and sisters, our Lord, our Savior, is a man, and he's still a man. And he's not a stranger to that joy.

He's not some sort of rarefied spirit in heaven saying, why aren't they just like me, just pure spiritual being, with just pure spiritual kind of joy.

he isn't like that because he is a man. And a man with a past. A man with a past of joy.

[43 : 18] And a man with a past with sorrow. A past of joy and of family and parties and food and banquets and walking through the field with his disciples, talking with his friends.

That's who he was and that's who he is. So what am I saying here? This is where I'm wrapping this up. Whether you are neck deep in sorrow or you are neck deep in joy, Jesus is a friend for you. Jesus is a savior for you. Jesus is a priest for you. That's who he was and that's who he is. And so what a savior. What a friend.

love him. Love him. Trust him. Treasure him. You remember Mary again and again in Luke. It says she treasured all these things in her heart. She just stewed over them and they were precious to her. They were the photo album of her heart and she looked back and she thought about it and she it meant so much to her.

[44 : 35] What the angels said. What the shepherds did. It meant so much to her because her baby meant so much to her.

So she treasured all these things in her heart and so what I'm saying is we need to do that with Jesus still. So yes he's he is away but he's coming back.

But he's away as a man and he's praying for us and he's he's he's ruling for us and so we can treasure him. Now in a sense that's the gospel. In a sense he is the gospel.

Here's good news. The son of God became what he wasn't and he became a man. And then he died for his people.

He so invested himself with his people that he just took on their sin. And then he was punished for their sin. And then he was raised for their justification.

[45 : 37] And now he's ruling and reigning on high. And he was willing to do all of that for us. That's the good news and so that's why we say trust him. He didn't hold anything back from us and so the answer is our response should be we don't hold anything back from him.

He gave us all of his love. He invested himself completely in us so what do we do? We give him all of our love. And we trust him completely. So he's good news for me.

He's good news for me right now. So out of my sin, out of my sadness, Jesus I come. Jesus I come to you.

Let's pray. Our Lord Jesus I pray that you would take this word and this truth and by the Holy Spirit that you would apply it to us and give to each one what they need.

And I pray that you would leave none here without encouragement, without a blessing. Raise our affections to you.

[46 : 39] Raise our desires to you. Exalt yourself in our hearts I pray for your namesake. Amen.