

The Purpose of the Incarnation

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[0:00] Hebrews chapter 2, we are going to read from verses 5 through the end of the chapter. 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. He put everything under his feet. And putting everything under him, God left nothing that is not subject to him.

Yet, at the present, we do not see everything subject to him. 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.

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.

[1:07] 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 and 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.

Because he himself suffered when he was tempted. He is able to help those who are being tempted. So do you have an answer for your problem of death?

[2:30] That it is appointed unto man once to die, and then the judgment. We're constantly being reminded of that, whether it be the shooting in Connecticut, or a mother and her two daughters in Marshall County out driving, and Friday night, an accident, took the mother and the oldest daughter.

These reminders, perhaps of something that we're trying hard to forget, that it is appointed unto man once to die, that death is the destiny of every man, that the living should take this to heart.

That's you and me. We should take this reality to heart, rather than shoving it into the background of forgetfulness. Well, we're calling a time out from our study in Isaiah during the month of December, and we're studying the incarnation, and for the past two weeks, we've been looking at the wonder of the incarnation.

And it's all wrapped up in what the Son of God was before He was born, and what He became. That the eternal Son of God, without ceasing to be God, became a man, a real man, becoming like us in every way, with a body like ours, and a soul like ours.

Human mind, human emotions, a human will. So that the Jesus we meet on the pages of the New Testament Gospels is at one and the same time God and man.

[4:11] And the writers are quite at home in saying both, often in the same breath. It's not like in one corner of the early church we had a group of people who believed that Jesus was God.

And then over in another corner of the church, we had another group of people that believed that Jesus Christ was man. Rather, what we find as we read the New Testament is that the whole church, the true church, always believed as these apostles of Jesus spoke and presented who this Christ is.

They believed in a Jesus who is God and man. And they bring those two things together continually. So we find Jesus so tired that he's sleeping through a storm in a boat.

He's man. And a few moments later, he's commanding the winds and the waves and they're obeying him. He's God. He's touched by someone and they're healed and he turns around to look and see, who is it that touched me?

A mind with limitations like yours and mine. And yet, a few moments later, he's raising a girl from the dead.

[5:35] In the same story, in the same event, we have the God-man, two natures, inseparably united in the one glorious person of Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God.

And we've been looking at the wonder of it, the mystery of it. Meekness and majesty, manhood and deity, in perfect harmony in the one person, Jesus, the man who is God, Lord of eternity, dwells in humanity.

humanity. And he lifts our humanity to the heights of his throne. Oh, what a mystery. Now, this morning, we shift gears from the study of the wonder of the incarnation to the purpose of the incarnation.

We're answering the question, why? Why did God become man forevermore? So that today, there is, on the throne of God, a real man.

Whose humanity is as real as yours and mine. And who is also God. Why did he do that? Why this shocking change of the eternal Son of God to take on our humanity forevermore?

[6:59] Well, we might answer in several different ways. We might answer, well, it was to reveal God to us close up. So that God is no longer out there.

but he has come and he's dwelled among us where we could see him, hear him, touch him, handle him. No one has ever seen God, but God, the one and only, who is at the Father's side has made him known.

John 1.18. So Jesus has exegeted God. That's the word there. He has opened up to us as a preacher tries to open up the word of God and explain what it means.

Jesus has exegeted God. He's brought God into our knowledge so that we know who he is. No one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

So Jesus comes to reveal the Father. He comes to teach us truth about God. He comes from heaven, from the Father's side. He knows God. And he comes to teach us about God, to reveal God to us close up.

[8:09] True enough. Or we might answer the question of why the incarnation with the answer to leave us a perfect human example of how a man ought to live.

It's in Jesus that we learn what it means to love God with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength and what it means to love our neighbor as ourselves. It's in Jesus that we learn what it means to remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.

It's in Jesus that we learn what it means for children to honor their father and mother, to value life, human property, to not covet.

We see all of that in the person of Jesus. Jesus is the law of God in our skin. He is the law of God on two feet so that we can see and have this human example of how it is that God means for us to live.

Sure, that's all part of why Jesus came. Or we might say he came as a, to, he took on our humanity to give us a fuller assurance of his sympathy with us in all of our troubles and trials in life.

[9:26] Now, before the incarnation, God the Son in heaven knew exactly what we were going through. Because he's omniscient.

He knows all things. And that means he knows exactly what every one of us are going through. He knows what we're feeling as we go through the trials we go through.

So it's not like he was lacking information that he became a man. but the sympathy that Jesus has with his people here on earth is not just his omniscience that he knows.

It is rather that he became one of us and experienced the trouble firsthand himself. So that now in heaven, throned in bliss and the praises of heaven, he does not forget what it felt like to lose a father.

He does not forget what it felt like to have a friend turn on him. He doesn't forget any of those ways that he was tempted in every way like we are. So he is able to sympathize with us, not just out of omniscience, but out of firsthand experience.

[10:34] He's lived here where you live. He suffered when he was tempted. Yes, and we would say that's the purpose of the incarnation. He's come to assure us of his sympathy with us in life's

troubles.

And all of these answers are true, but they do not penetrate to the heart of the matter. They leave the greatest answer of all unspoken.

So someone says, well, I know why the eternal Son of God became a man. He did so so that he could obey the law for us. Remember, we saw weeks ago that the thing that man needs to get into heaven is righteousness, a perfect righteousness.

righteousness. He needs a report card with nothing but straight A's to get in before the righteous judge. But because Adam failed to obey perfectly, and he was our representative, and all of us have also failed in Adam and with Adam, therefore, we need a perfect man to live that perfect life that we never could.

So the eternal Son of God becomes man to become the second man, as he's called in scripture, to become the last Adam, that in the same way that the first Adam failed, the last Adam might succeed in perfectly obeying God.

[12 : 10] And so God's gift of righteousness comes through the one man, Jesus Christ, Romans 5 tells us. God's gift of righteousness comes through the one man, Jesus, who perfectly kept the law.

For justice through the disobedience of the one man, Adam, the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man, Jesus, the many will be made righteous.

And indeed, Paul connects these two things. He connects Jesus' obedience to the law, to his incarnation. Galatians chapter 4 and verse 4 and verse 5, but when the time had fully come, God sent his son born of a woman.

There's his incarnation, real man, born of woman, born under the law to redeem those under law.

So, God sent his son, his eternal son, having existed forever with the Father in heaven. He sent him into the world. And it wasn't just a change in locations.

[13 : 27] He was born of a woman. He took on our humanity and was like us. And he was born under the law.

So, Jesus, the eternal son of God, who is the one lawgiver, the one who, who through Moses spoke those ten words, the one who has, is behind every commandment in scriptures, that eternal son of God, the lawgiver, is born under the law, under its obligation, under its authority, so that now as a man, he must obey those laws.

He is duty bound to give obedience to what God has said. The lawgiver, born under the law, that he might become the law keeper.

And he perfectly keeps the law, that he might have a righteousness to give to every repenting, believing sinner. Why?

Why does the lawgiver become born of woman under the law? To redeem those who are under the law. That's you and me, who, being obligated to keep the law, haven't done it and couldn't do it.

[14 : 47] We've all come short and so he is born under the law and he keeps the law to save us lawbreakers through his law keeping. Yes, that helps us understand the why, doesn't it?

That means that when we watch Jesus being tempted the man, Jesus, being tempted by the devil in the wilderness, we're not just being given an example to follow in our temptations.

Yes, that, but far more. We're watching our representative obeying God's law, working out as our representative, as the last Adam, a righteousness that we desperately need.

And so we watch Jesus being tempted like a Hebrew soldier would have watched David fighting Goliath. He's their representative out there as they fight.

If he wins, we win. If he loses, we lose. And as we see Jesus throughout his earthly life being tempted, that's how we watch. We watch as those who desperately need this perfect God-man to obey every command without fault for us who have broken the law of God.

[16 : 09] Why the incarnation? That he might obey as a man, obey the law for us. Certainly that's another reason for the incarnation. But even yet, we've not come to the fullest answer of the Bible as to why God became a man.

The Bible's supreme and most repeated answer of why the incarnation is to die for sinful men.

Jesus becomes a man in order to die.

He was born to die. He took on our nature to die. That's the answer that the Bible keeps pounding home.

It's the united testimony of the four gospels. We started out our study in John chapter one. That this eternal God, the creator of all, was made flesh.

But why? Well, John would say, keep reading. Go beyond chapter one. Keep reading. You come to chapter 10 and you find that this word made flesh stands and says, I have come to lay down my life for my sheep.

[17 : 22] To lay down my life in death. He's come to die. And what happens in the gospel of John is something that happens in every gospel. That it proceeds right along, moves right along until the final week of our Lord, the week of his death.

And then it's like everything goes into slow motion. And we have about a third of the gospel taken up with the events of that last week leading up to his death and including his death.

What are the gospel writers saying to us? They are saying by the very form in which they put together their gospel accounts of the life of Jesus that the reason the word was made flesh and dwelt among us was in order to die.

The very amount of ink that they spilt on that point proves to us that the Bible is screaming to us, the eternal son of God became man to die.

To die. And now we're at the heart of the incarnation. We're right at the very center, the nerve center of this reason. The thing that moved heaven to send God the son to become like us.

[18 : 31] As Paul says, Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. Had to do with a saving mission. And how did he do it? By dying for sinners.

The son of man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many. To give his life. Or as the epistle to the Philippians says, in very nature God, yet he stoops to become a man.

To what end? That he might humble himself and become obedient unto death. The death of the cross. And so when we ask the question, why the incarnation?

The Bible keeps shouting. He's become a man in order to die. Indeed, his supreme act of obedience was obedience unto death.

God's law. Because to have a perfect obedience was not enough for us. We'd already broken God's law. If we were starting out fresh, then maybe the perfect obedience of Jesus would be enough to get us into heaven.

[19 : 36] But we ourselves have sinned. We have inherited Adam's sin. We have sinned ourselves. So there's a penalty for disobeying God's word that we have to pay.

We not only need someone to obey for us, we need someone to die for us, to pay the price of disobeying God.

So believers, the good news of the incarnation is that the Son of God took our nature in order to die for us. Now death is so universal that we sometimes miss it.

we've grown accustomed to it. Ten out of ten people die. Some from a bullet. Some from an accident.

Some from a disease. But we all die. But let's remind ourselves why this is so. It's not just that that's the way things are.

[20 : 37] No, not at all. This was once a world without death. So why do we die? death only made its entrance into the world because of sin.

That's why we die, because of sin. God had said in the beginning in the day you eat of this forbidden tree you will surely die. Death is God's punishment of man's sin.

Therefore justice sin entered the world, Romans 5 12. Sin entered the world through the one man and death entered through sin. And in this way death came to all men because all sin.

So Adam was the first one to open the door to let sin into this world. And as the door was thrown open to let sin in, right in its hip pocket came death. Death entered through sin.

Because where there is sin, there must be death or there is no righteous judge upon the throne of the universe. Sin is the only reason we die.

[21 : 43] The wages of sin is death. The soul that sins, it shall die. So sin is the reason we die, but it's also the reason we're afraid to die.

Have you thought about that? Why do men fear death? It's because of sin. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15, the sting of death is sin.

The thing that makes death so painful, the thing that makes death such a dreadful, fearful thing is sin. Because death brings us as sinners before this holy God in judgment, a God who hates sin, a God who is so holy and righteous that he is determined to damn the sinner.

He must punish sin. A God who's gone on record saying that he will punish it, not only with physical death, but with the second death, the eternal torments in a lake of fire.

This is what makes death fearsome, sin. It's sin that makes death that door to everlasting damnation.

[23:04] And so the devil holds sinners in slavery all their lives by their fear of death. Death is the instrument by which he threatens us and he causes fear in us because it's the instrument that will damn us forever.

Now it was to remedy our problem of sin and death and hell that the son of God took on our humanity that he might die in our place.

Notice that in Hebrews 2 verses 14 and 15. Since the children, that's the children that God had given to Christ, since the children have flesh and blood, that's humanity, 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.

He's talking about the son of God. Chapter 1, he calls him God. Chapter 1, worship that only God is to receive is given to this son of God.

That's chapter 1 of Hebrews. Then we come into chapter 2 of Hebrews and we find this same son has been made a little lower than the angels. He's taken our humanity. Why has he been made man a little lower than the angels?

[24:31] That he might taste death. That he might experience death. He might suffer death. Verse 17, for this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way in order that he might make atonement for the sins of the people.

He had to become a man. Once the mission of heaven was to save sinful men, the incarnation was an absolute necessity. He had to become a man.

In order to save men, to atone for their sins, he himself had to become man. That's what the writer is telling us. God as God cannot die.

The Bible teaches us that he is immortal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God. 1 Timothy 1.17, 6.16, God who alone is immortal.

Kids, we're learning what God is here. He is. This is his very nature. This is who he is. He is immortal, and that simply means he's the eternally existing one, the one who has life in himself, the one who is imperishable, the deathless one, the one who cannot die.

[26:03] He is immortal. So in order to save us, the immortal God who cannot die took on our nature in order that he might die.

That's what was required. It could happen no other way. It was in order to die for us that he became man for us, and we're at the very heart of the reason, the purpose for the incarnation.

Now, the time that remains I want to give you several points about this relationship of the incarnation to the death that Jesus died. Several of these points come right from a message I heard at the General Assembly last spring from Pastor David Campbell, and I found great profit in it.

The first thing we need to see is that Christ's humanity was capable of dying. His humanity was capable of dying, just like Adam's was in the garden before sin.

It didn't mean he had to die yet, but his humanity was capable of dying, even as he came forth from the hand of God. That means then that Jesus, in becoming like us, took a body, a humanity that was capable of dying.

[27:19] And so the body that Jesus took in the womb of the Virgin was capable of death. If the instruments of abortion were used in the womb of the Virgin Mary, Jesus would have died in the womb.

He had a body capable of death. And once he was born, his body was still capable of death. That's why it needed to be fed and protected.

Remember King Herod sent his soldiers out to kill every two-year-old boy and under in the region of Ramah? If those soldiers had come sooner and with their spear or sword had pierced the baby Jesus, the young child Jesus, he too would have died.

He had a body that was capable of death. And so during his ministry, we find him capable of death. One time he said, before Abraham was, I am.

And they all got stirred up over that and picked up stones to stone him. And if those stones would have hit their mark, he would have died. And so the Bible says, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds.

[28 : 39] He slipped out of their hands because he had a real body that feels stones the way that your body is. He didn't have a superhuman body that the stones just would have bounced off without feeling them.

No, he had a body, a humanity that was capable of dying. And that's seen most clearly when he's finally beaten and nailed to a cross.

And he dies. He really dies. He had a body, a humanity capable of death. And it's only by taking that humanity that God the Son could die.

Now the second point we need to see is that Christ's humanity was made deserving of death.

Christ's humanity was made deserving of death, liable to death.

Sin is what makes us deserve death at the hands of God's justice. But now ponder this, Jesus has no sins and yet he dies at the hand of God's justice.

[29 : 46] sin causes death. Jesus has no sin yet Jesus dies under the just judgment of God.

The only way to unravel that mystery is to understand what the scriptures say when they teach us that he took the sins of his people upon himself.

that the Lord laid on him the iniquities of us all. And that once our sins were laid on him, they became his.

So that he is now guilty and deserving of death. His humanity was made liable to death, made deserving of death.

It was all pictured for us in the Old Testament sacrificial system. When the sinner sinned and came before God and brought his sacrificial lamb there, he would lay his hands upon the head of that animal and confess his sins over that animal.

[30 : 56] And it's a picture to us as if his sins could be transferred onto the head of that animal. Imputed to that innocent lamb, counted his.

And from that point on, that innocent lamb was no longer regarded as innocent. It was rather regarded as guilty of those sins that had been transferred to it.

As guilty as if it had committed those very sins itself. And what then? Well, his throat was slit. His life was taken. He was killed.

Death is the punishment for sin. And if sin is found on him, then death is the just response of Almighty God.

He's treated as the condemned sinner. He deserves to die. And so the eternal Son of God was made flesh for us and then made sin for us.

[32 : 08] He bore our sins in his body on the tree, Peter says. He died for our sins. Our iniquities were laid upon him.

And when our sins were laid upon him, he was regarded by the justice of God as no longer innocent, but guilty. when our sins were laid upon him, Luther says he then became the greatest sinner ever because he took all of my sins and made them his own.

All the sins I've committed in my past and I'm committing this day and in the rest of my life below, they were put on him and became his.

all the sins of all of his people from the very first Adam to the last believer, those sins were put upon him and when they were, he became, as Luther says, the greatest sinner ever.

He who knew no sin was made sin for us, Paul says. And that's why the sinless son of God dies. Because those sins of his people were counted his own as much as if he had committed them himself.

[33 : 34] And so he dies, taking on our sins in a nature that is capable of sin, but now is deserving, or that is capable of death, but now is also deserving of death.

He must die. Sin requires punishment. But why not more animal sacrifices, dying in the place of men? That brings us to the third point.

Because animals dying in the place of men were totally insufficient. Flip over to Hebrews 10 and verse 4. Why not more animal sacrifices for men's sin?

Because it is impossible for the, Hebrews 10 4, it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. Now they pictured to the believing heart the effective work of the coming one sacrificial lamb of God, but they themselves could not take away one sin.

It's impossible. Why? Because there is no one to one correspondence between an animal and a man. If man has sinned, then man must die.

[34:47] His goat, his bull, his dog won't do. If a murderer came and murdered your son, and then had the audacity to say, well, let's even the score, you can kill my dog, why would you object?

You'd object because those aren't equal. And that's why Jesus had to become a man. Man is sinned, man must die. No animal is capable of paying for the sins of a man against a holy God. Pure justice requires that it be man substituted for man. So any man who would die for another, it must be a perfect man at that.

Because if he's not perfect, that means he's only dying for his own sins, and his death has no merit for anyone else. So in verse 5 of Hebrews 10, we have the last words of Jesus, the Son of God, as he's leaving heaven, ready to come down and become a man.

Here are his words to his heavenly father. Verse 5, they're the most significant words, they point us to the very purpose of the incarnation.

[36:04] Therefore, because it's impossible for the blood of animals to take away sin, therefore, when Christ came into the world, he said, sacrifice and offerings you did not desire.

He's talking about those animal sacrifices of the old covenant. You didn't desire them, but a body you prepared for me. A human body you prepared for me.

With burnt offerings and sin offerings, you were not pleased. Then I said, here I am, it's written about me in the scroll, I have come to do your will, O God. No amount of those animal sacrifices could please and satisfy God's justice against men for men's sins.

So something new is here being done to actually accomplish God's will, not just to foretell and picture God's will being done. Here's something new being done to actually accomplish God's will of salvation.

God the Father prepared a body for his eternal son, a real humanity capable of dying, and the son willingly takes that body.

[37:11] I've come to do your will. That's how he comes down into Galilee, into the womb of the virgin. I've come to do your will, O my God.

You aren't satisfied with animal sacrifices, so you've prepared a body for me, and I willingly come and take it up to accomplish your will.

And what was that will? Verse 10, and by that will we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

The sacrifice was to be a human body dying in the place of men. And so Jesus comes and assumes the body, the humanity, the Father gives him, and then makes that humanity the sacrifice that takes away sin once for all.

The incarnation gives him a real body in which to make the ultimate sacrifice for sin. No animals could suffice. The fourth point is that Christ in his humanity fully experienced death.

[38:20] He tasted death. That means he went through it. He suffered it. He died. And there are two deaths that he died. There's first physical death, the separation of what man is in his constitution, body and spirit, and death is to tear apart what God put together, body and spirit.

So James says the body without the spirit is dead. That's death, and Jesus experienced it. On the cross, he said to his father, into your hands I commit my spirit.

And then he died. He breathed his last. And Pilate would not take men down from crosses unless he had proof that they were really dead.

So he sends them the message. You be sure that these guys are really dead before you bring them down. And when they came to Jesus, they didn't break his knees so as to suffocate him on the cross like they did the other two thieves.

Why? Because they saw he was already dead. He had experienced physical death. And one soldier just jabbed his spear into his side and outflowed water and blood so that John can tell us he really died.

[39:35] he really experienced death. That's physical death but there's a second death that Jesus experienced and that separation of his whole person, body and spirit, from God and from his love.

Jesus suffered the essence of this second death. The Bible says that the second death is the lake of fire and the torments that are there forever and ever.

And Jesus suffered the essence of that death if not its duration. The essence. He suffered in compressed time. He suffered it in concentrated form and that's what made him cry, my God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

That's the essence of the second death, to be cut off from God forever and ever. Cut off from his goodness, cut off from his grace, his mercy, his love, his faithful.

There is nothing good in God in the second death of the sinner. He was being treated as a condemned sinner deserves, cursed by God, cut off from him, forsaken when he needed God the most, and his cry goes unanswered.

[40 : 57] His cry, why have you abandoned me, just is swallowed up in that dark hole of darkness. He's being treated as the sinner deserves to be treated forever.

He's left alone as the damned thing, the accursed thing that God cannot even look upon, and he dies under God's wrath and was spared nothing.

So the author of life is killed and dies. The one who gives life to every man that comes into the world became a man that he might die for men.

And it's by this real death of Christ that he has forever freed his people from sin and from the devil who by our fear of death had taken us captive. He can no longer wield death as the instrument to damn us if we're in Christ, for there is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

If you're in Christ Jesus, the devil can't rattle the saber of death and scare us anymore. Death is no longer the door to damnation. And so Christ sets us free from the power of death that Satan held over us.

[42 : 19] There's no second death for us to die. There's no eternal separation from God to suffer because Christ suffered it for us. We never have to die the second death in the lake of fire.

There's no fear in death. It cannot harm us. The worst it can do is bring us into the arms of our Lord Jesus Christ. And so there is no second death for the Christian, but there's also been a dramatic change in our physical death.

Our physical death is no longer what it would have been outside of Christ. Outside of Christ, it would be the door to hell for us. But in Christ, death is but my entrance into glory.

In Christ, I do not die under God's wrath, but I die under his love. And he says, precious in his sight is the death of his saints.

This death is no longer something to be dreaded. It is rather now a precious thing, precious to God, should it not be to us that death brings us to him. Oh, father, he prays on the night before he's crucified.

[43 : 29] I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory. And death is the answer to his prayer that brings us to him. What a change Jesus has made for his people, not only in taking away the second death entirely, but changing the very face of this great enemy of death.

Yes, it remains the last enemy. And yet, what a change he has wrought upon it. And one day, when he returns and raises our bodies from the dead to be reunited with our spirits, forever and ever, we will see just what a savior he is, for there will be no more death.

There will never be a time when we will be separated, body and spirit again. But in a body and spirit, exalted and glorified like Christ's body, we will enjoy our God for all the endless ages.

So our great problem with death is solved by the death of Jesus. And in order for the death of Jesus to happen, there had to first be an incarnation.

And that was the purpose for which Jesus came. Taking our flesh that he might die for us and thereby save us from death. But this man is also God and so his death has infinite merit to cover all of his people, all who trust in him.

[45 : 01] He's the only worthy substitute for guilty man and there is enough merit and value in his death to cover anyone who believes. And that's why the offer of the gospel is to all.

Come to me. You will never be turned away. believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved. So receive him.

Receive him at once as your Savior and Lord. He didn't come to tell us how to save ourselves. He came to do the work himself of saving. And all that's left for us is to fall into his arms, to trust him. Upon a life I did not live, upon a death I did not die, another's life, another's death, I trust my whole eternity. You willing to do that?

Just to throw yourselves into the arms of Jesus and to be saved by his life and death? That's saving faith. Trust yourself to him and find in Christ your salvation from the second death and even from the fear of death that yet awaits all of us unless the Lord Jesus should come first.

[46:13] Christ. So we've looked again at the incarnation. We've seen this morning something of the purpose. The very heart of the purpose of his coming was to die for us.

And isn't it a wonder to think that he did that willingly? That he took the body, the humanity that our father prepared in order to die for us? That he would give himself to dwell in that body forever, not just for 33 years, and then ditch it and go back as he used to be.

No, to forever now exist in our humanity, world without end. Let's worship him. We're going to sing together, Did God become a man?

Let's pray. Well, Father, we do sense again that our minds buckle under the weight of your revelation when you tell us who this Jesus is that you've sent into the world, God of gods and yet like us in every way.

We do thank you for him. We thank you that he was born to die. We thank you that many of us here have had our eyes open to see the merits of his blood and to venture our entire eternal life upon this Savior and his death for sinners.

[47:38] I pray you would open up further eyes and even in this time when men are taken up with the thought of Jesus' birth, that the reality of his substitutionary death would captivate our hearts and make us lovers of this Savior.

We thank you for coming, Lord Jesus, so willingly and dying for us. Help us then to live for you. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.