

The Gospel of Mark.

Study Week 3 – Jesus’ humanity – One of us?

1. Historical Controversies/Heresies

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| a. Jesus was a created being, subordinate to the father | - Arianism |
| b. Jesus was God, but only appeared to be human. | - Docetism |
| c. One God is revealed in 3 ‘modes’ Father, Son & Holy Spirit | - Modalism |
| d. That Jesus was a man, but God descended on him on baptism and then theft him before he died. | - Adoptionism |
| e. Jesus is 2 persons, son of God and the son of man | - Nestorianism |
| f. Jesus is one person divine & human but the deity absorbs the humanity. | - Eutychianism |
| g. Jesus body was human, but his intellect and will were divine | - Apollinarianism. |

Orthodox Christianity/ We believe that Jesus was both God and man.

2. Chalcedonian Creed

Our Lord Jesus Christ:-

- Perfect in Godhead, perfect in manhood – truly God and truly man
- Acknowledged in two natures
 - Without confusion
 - Without change
 - Without division
 - Without separation
- Concurring in one person and one subsistence.

The language and the concepts are difficult to understand, beyond human comprehension. Last week we looked at Mark’s gospel and saw many evidences that Jesus is the son of God, is God himself. This week we look at Mark to see the humanity of Jesus and assess its implications

3. Jesus was Flesh and blood

- a. He hungered and ate meals...2:15 in the house of Levi. 11:12 fig tree
- b. Walked and talked... sometimes long distances, even when walking on water and disciples thought it was a ghost “don’t be afraid”, climbed on the boat. Resurrection body was different yet physical
- c. Slept 4: 38 (calming storm) 6:31 called his disciples aside for some rest.
- d. A couple of times Jesus spit 7:33 8:22
- e. Bled and died

John 1:14 says “the word became flesh and made his dwelling among us”. It is of immense importance, Jesus wasn’t an angel or a phantom, he was a real man. Phil 2: 6,7. He is connected to the human race. He becomes flesh, that which was made according to Genesis from the dust of the earth!.

4. Jesus shared our human emotional experience

- a. Anger & frustration 3:5; 8:12 11:15,16. A righteous anger at the exploitation of the poor, at the hypocrisy of the religious leaders who laid heavy burdens of guilt to the spiritually needy, at the destructive effects of sin.

- b. Jesus withdrew sometimes from the crowds 1:35; 3:7
- c. Jesus showed compassion 6:34... feed 5,000 and 8:2 feeds 4,000
- d. Jesus had family issues 3:20, 21 ... they thought he was mad.
- e. Jesus Loved children
- f. Jesus experienced sorrow and grief. The sorrow, the grief that Jesus experienced as he approached his death was a greater sorrow that any other person experienced – the death he faced was the most significant, the most terrible death. Jesus faced the wrath of his Father as he bore the sin of the whole human race in his own body. He became the greatest sinner that ever was Luther; What Christ saw in Gethsemane was God with the sword raised Macleod.

5. Jesus engaged in spiritual discipline

- a. Jesus went regularly to synagogue, to the place of worship 3:1 6:2
- b. He prayed 9:29, 14:32.
- c. He read and studied the word of God
- d. He was baptised

It is an essential part of being human that we engage in spiritual activity, we might even say that Jesus was seeking God. Did Jesus need to pray? Yes. Did Jesus need to go to synagogue, to read the bible? Yes. Did Jesus need to be baptised, yes, not for repentance of course because he was without sin, but of obedience, of identification with sinful human beings, His baptism also is an acknowledgement that he will accept the mission that God has laid out for him. Paul later speaks of us being baptised into Christ Jesus, being baptised into his death. Rom 6.

6. Jesus was tempted

- Heb. 4:15... for we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are – yet was without sin.
- Mark gives us a 2 verse statement of Jesus temptation 1:12,13. Matthew and Luke give more extended versions and describe the nature of the temptation
- Maslow hierarchy of needs
 - Basic needs – food, shelter, warmth etc.
 - Psychological needs – love affection, praise, community, encouragement
 - Self – actualisation – be somebody. Place in history.

Satan tempts Jesus in the core of his humanity – just as we are!

Jesus resists these temptations

- To fail would be denying his humanity and thus aborting his mission
- To fail would be to disobey his Father.
- Paul describes Jesus as a 2nd Adam. Where Adam failed, Jesus succeeded, Satan was defeated.

Important for us because when we are tempted, our strength is not that we are strong and can therefore resist temptation, but our strength is that Jesus overcame temptation, and his victory is our victory. When we fail and Satan points his accusing finger. We don't hang our heads in defeat, we point to Jesus who resisted temptation. We are in Christ and his victory is our victory, his obedience is our obedience.

Question is sometimes asked – could Jesus have sinned? Difficult and there are different opinions. The problem is if that if Jesus could sin, then the argument goes he is not God. If he couldn't sin then he is not truly human. Don't know ... but perhaps we can consider that the reason why Jesus didn't sin was not that he couldn't, but that he loved his Father so much that he wanted to obey his will. He loved us so much that he wanted to accomplish his mission.

7. The People Jesus met

There's an old saying ...you can tell a person by the company he keeps. Jesus came into the world and got involved with people

- Jesus disciples – fishermen, a tax collector, a revolutionary. Amongst them were sceptics, doubters, deniers, cowards, betrayers. Ordinary people from different backgrounds – certainly not people of high status or obvious piety. Good news for people like us.

- Jesus in his ministry
 - The outcasts from society – lepers, demon possessed, sinners & tax collectors.
 - Gentiles – people who were excluded from worship, who were not God's chosen.
 - The poor and the sick

Jesus talked with them, he ate with them, he touched them, he healed them, he loved them.

Often we see Jesus in his daily life, interacting, befriending, ministering to the marginalised, the disenfranchised, the poor, those for whom life was difficult because of their own circumstance, which was compounded by the oppression of their overbearing Roman overlords and a hypocritical religious 'mafia' who he words of Jesus 'loaded people down with burdens they could hardly carry, not lifting one finger to help them' Matt 11: 46

What some people saw – he's demon possessed, he's mad, he's a sinner, a blasphemer, a trouble causer, a rabble rouser, a threat to the peace, a lawbreaker.

What Mark shows us, what we see, is compassion, love, sacrifice, anger frustration, hope, freedom.

Another key verse in Mark 10: the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

8. The son of Man

This is the title that Jesus most often used in reference to himself, but what does it mean? Doesn't really mean the boy next door, the kid from down the street... just any man.

We find it in the Old Testament in Daniel 7:13, 14. The son of man to Jesus hearers was a messianic figure, one who was endowed with authority from God to inaugurate an everlasting kingdom.

Psalm 8:5 ... one who was made lower than the angels

Mark records Jesus using it in 2 senses

- i) As The Messiah sent from God, appointed by God and anointed by God with the authority of God

Authority to forgive sins 2:10; lord of the Sabbath 2:28; comes in his father's glory with the holy angels 8:38 ; sitting at the right hand of the Mighty one, coming on the clouds of heaven

- ii) In relation to his mission and calling
9:12 must suffer; delivered into the hands of men 9:31, betrayed, mocked flogged, killed and rise again and 10:33,34; 10:45..to serve and give his life as a ransom 10:45.

A strange title and a slightly difficult one to understand, but seems that Jesus is stressing his humanity, but also in referring back to Daniel, identifying himself as Israel's messiah, but not only for Israel extending this to the whole human race.

Tom Wright suggests that Jesus uses this title to portray himself as 'the representative of God's true people.

Jesus as representative of God's true people, The first representative man, Adam sinned and thus all sinned in Adam, a

Jesus the second representative man did not sin, but through his suffering and death, leads his people to salvation and eternal life.

9. One of Us

Tom Wright (NT Wright) is a popular writer and theologian in the UK, he often draws attention to the political aspects of Jesus message. Wright notes that one of the reasons why Jesus drew such opposition to his message was because it threatened the powerbase of the political and religious elite of his day.

Jesus in chapter 2 when Jesus tells the lame man – your sins are forgiven, he challenged the authority of the system. If a man needs forgiveness, he should go to the temple and make the appropriate sacrifice and the priests could declare him forgiven on behalf of God. When Jesus heals on the Sabbath, he challenges the scribes and Pharisees interpretation of the Torah, he challenges there authority. When Jesus proclaims a new kingdom, he challenges Herod and Rome. He says that the temple will be destroyed, the powerbase of the Saducees.

Week 1 we noted 4 groups all these were expecting a Messiah

- The Pharisees who called for obedience to the law, they thought the Messiah would do the same
- The Saducees who were centred on the temple. A Messiah should be one of them, a priest king, who would restore the nation around the new temple and true worship of Jahweh
- The Zealots, who were focussed on driving out the romans, their Messiah was to be a revolutionary, a military man to establish a kingdom by force.
- The Essenes – the monastics, who were looking for a teacher of righteousness.

But Jesus came as none of these, he came to a working family, he chose his disciples from those of no great status, of no recognisable piety or qualifications. He went to the outcasts, to the outsiders, to the poor and needy...he came to seek and to save that which was lost.

Jesus came as a real man and preached to the common people...Jesus was one of us.