



# Message **Transcript**

## The Humiliation of the Incarnation

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Father in heaven we give you all the glory, honor and praise for who you are, and for all you're doing. And God, we pray that as your word is opened this morning and as you speak to us that we would have ears that are ready to hear and we would've hearts that are ready to obey, because Lord, we believe that every time your word is opened and faithfully and accurately proclaimed that you have a message for us. And so Lord, our invitation this morning is speak Lord, for we are ready to hear. Lord, we pray for our world. It's in trouble, it's been in trouble since the fall, and we're seeing it played out, but Lord, we know that you're in charge of all things. And Lord, we just pray in this season that you would use this opportunity to let the gospel of Jesus Christ spread through your church and advance your kingdom in ways that we have never seen before.

And so now Lord, as we gather for all who are gathered, who desire to hear the Lord speak, who will believe what the Lord is saying to you and will by faith put into practice what he shows you, will you agree with me very loudly this morning by saying the word, Amen.

Amen.

Amen. How far would you go to show your love to somebody else? How low would you stoop to show your love to somebody else? How much rejection would you endure to show your love to somebody else? How much suffering would you go through to show your love to somebody else? There's no greater story in the Bible than what Jesus Christ did to demonstrate his love for us. And that while we were yet

sinners, that Christ died for us. The simple truth of the scriptures is that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whoever believes in him would not perish, but would have eternal life. And for us as believers, we know this truth and we believe this truth, and we say that's a great truth.

We also understand this word incarnation, that Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity, that God had made up of father, son and Holy Spirit, that this second person of the Trinity Jesus Christ about 2,000 years ago put on flesh, and he became incarnate flesh. And when the word became flesh, he made his dwelling among us. So that as we looked to Jesus, we get a true picture of who God is. And you can study religions the world over and you can try to find a story of God coming to man and it just doesn't exist because Jesus Christ is unique in his incarnation in coming to us. And we believe that story, that being found in the appearance of a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death even to the point of death on a cross, therefore God highly exalted him and gave him the name that's above every name, that at the name of Jesus, every knee would bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the father.

What we believe is that God became a man, and yet what we often don't understand is the humiliation that came along with that. Because we are human beings and created in the image of God and rightly so, we understand that and that we are different than all of the other created order that God assigned, that we as male and female are created in the image of God and we are the crown of his creation, we need to understand something, that the distance between us and Almighty God is far greater

chasm than us and any other part of God's created order. And for God to stoop from God to become the God the man, not only was his incarnation, but showed his humility and his willingness to do this.

And in Hebrews chapter two, as he finishes the chapter, this author is pointing out to us not only the truth about the fact that Jesus Christ identified himself by putting on flesh as being fully God and fully man all at the same time for all eternity, but he describes the humiliation of what took place to make that a reality. Because sometimes as Christians we don't think about what it costs Jesus Christ to do that. And in this texts today, that's deeply theological that we could spend weeks on talking about all these different nuances of theology, I want to highlight to you the humiliation of Jesus Christ in his incarnation, that you would understand his great love for you and how he was being willing to be humiliated so that he could demonstrate his love for you.

And while there's not a ton of application, if you'll understand this truth, this will change your life. And so I invite you to open your Bibles up to Hebrews chapter two, Hebrews chapter two, starting in verse nine, I'm going to read through and finish the chapter. And then we'll highlight four different ways that Jesus Christ experienced humiliation during his incarnation. Here's what it says, "But we do not see him who was made for a little while lower than the angels, namely Jesus, because of the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, so that by the grace of God, he might taste death for everyone."

"For it was fitting for him, for whom are all things and through whom are all things

in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings. For both he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all from one father. For which reason, he is not ashamed to call them brethren saying, 'I will proclaim your name to my brethren in the midst of the congregation, I will sing your praise. And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, behold I and the children whom God has given me.' Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death, he might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is the devil, and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives."

"For assuredly, he does not give help to angels, but he gives help to the descendant of Abraham. Therefore, he had to be made like his brethren in all things so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in all things pertaining to God to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For sins, he himself was tempted in that which he has suffered, he is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted." And here in this story we read about how Christ humiliated himself on our behalf, and willingly did so. And to understand what he went through on our behalf because of the great love with which he has for us. And as we highlight these four different ways in this great book that's becoming one of my favorite books in the entire Bible, we're going to see how humiliation involves four different things.

And the first is this, that humiliation involves the substitution of Christ who suffered for our salvation. The humiliation involves the substitution of Christ who

suffered for our salvation. As we ended our text at the end of verse eight last week, we talked about how Jesus Christ is ruling and reigning, but we still haven't seen everything subject to him yet, but we're going to. Jesus Christ is going to rule and reign on this planet and we will see it, but what we do see is we see him who is made for a little while lower than the angels, namely him, Jesus, because of the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor so that by the grace of God, he might taste death for everyone.

Make no mistake about it, if you want to say, "Why did Jesus Christ come to earth?" He came for one reason and one reason only, to die for the sins of the world. That's why Jesus came. He not only came in humility and identified himself as a human being, but he came on purpose to die. He came on purpose to be rejected by those that he created, whom he loved, the very people he cared for, and the very ones he came to save were the very ones who were yelling at the end of his life, "Crucify him, crucify him." And even as he was being nailed to the cross, people were giving their approval to his death. Jesus Christ came in humiliation to die for the sins of the world. The Bible says, "Cursed is anyone who's hung on the tree."

Jesus Christ became the curse for our sin. Jesus Christ on the cross took all of our sin. And the writers of the New Testament saw and knew who Jesus was and knew that that was the reason why he came. And it's important that you understand that. Don't we hear stories in our day of people served in the military who are alive because someone in their platoon gave their life for them? And when you hear one of these men or women speak, they'll say something like this, because I've heard several

of them, "We were in a platoon, we were in Vietnam, we were in a Fox hole and a grenade rolled in, and our friend, private first class," and they'll name his name. They'll say who he was without thinking about it, "Dove on that grenade as we all jumped out of the way and he took the brunt of all that and was killed instantaneously. And the reason I'm here today is because he took my place in death."

And we hear stories like that and the patriotic nature of our hearts go off and say, "That's incredible. He gave his life so that you could live." Friends, that's the story of the substitutionary atonement. Jesus Christ gave his life so that you could live. He is the substitute for your sin. Now, the Bible makes clear in Romans 3:23, "For all has sinned and fallen short of the glory of God." I'm here to tell you on the authority of God's word for you and for everybody sitting around you today, that you're sinners, whether you knew it or not. And because you're a sinner, you're guilty before Almighty God. And God does not welcome unredeemed sinners in his presence. You cannot get to God.

The Bible says, here's what's even worse about sin, Roman 6:23 tells us the wages of sin is death. So because of your sin, you will die. Whether you think about it on a regular basis as you age or whether you don't give it any thought, I can assure you that if Jesus doesn't come back soon in your lifetime, you will die. It's a promise from scripture. And what Jesus Christ came to do is to pay the penalty for your sin and to offer the perfect sacrifice to his father so that you who are dead in your sin would have a payment for your sin. And the only payment for your sin is the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, here's what we understand. Sometimes if we received a ticket from a

police officer, we have a certain amount of time either to argue that ticket or to pay that ticket.

And sometimes we just say, "Well, I was guilty, I'm paying that ticket." Maybe the ticket's \$100 and you think to yourself, "I was speeding, I'm going to pay that \$100." But if somebody just walked up to you, if a policeman just walked up to you and said, "Hey, you owe me \$100." You would be offended at that because you would say, "Well, what did I do wrong? I didn't do anything wrong. Why are you telling me what I got to pay?" Most people in the world don't realize that there's a penalty to pay for their sin. Most people don't realize in this world that they're sinners. Most people don't realize that they're blind to the deadness inside their soul and that they're not getting to heaven no matter how good they may deem themselves to be.

And there's a penalty that has to be paid. And the only payment that can be made is Jesus. He is our substitution, which means this, study religions, the world over, listen to everybody that you want, Jesus Christ is unique. He's the only payment for your sin. No one can cleanse you, wash you clean or make you right with God. You say, "Well, how did that happen?" You think about this for a second, that God became a man. God became a man. When we read that, our jaw should drop and be like, "Whoa, I don't even understand that. How could he stoop to that level?" If we could make ourselves like someone in the animal kingdom for all eternity because of our love for that species, that step wouldn't even be as low as Jesus fully God becoming man.

And Jesus Christ did not put on flesh for 33 years, make no mistake about it, he



put it on for all eternity. He died as the God-man. He rose as the God-man, he ascended as the God-man and he's coming back as the God-man. And my Bible says, "There is one mediator between God and man, and it's the man, Jesus Christ." Jesus loved the world so much, he was willing to put on flesh for all eternity, fully God becoming human. Amazing, amazing. And we're aware of the fact that he came here and we're aware that the Bible testifies to that, and we're aware that he died on the cross for our sins, but we're not aware of the glory of the story. Sometimes we don't think about the humiliation.

Think about the greatest athlete who plays for the Broncos or the Colorado Rockies or something like that and they get released from their contract, but they say, "You know what, I love this team so much that instead of going and playing for another, I'm just going to humble myself, I'll become the towel boy, I'll do the laundry, I'll take out the trash. I'll do whatever's needed. I don't care if I make another dime, I just want to show this organ how much I care for them." Would that make national news?

Yes.

That would make news all over the place, who would humble themselves to do that after being mistreated? What if that story went on to say that then the people within the organization started mistreating that person and speaking bad about that person, and beating that person, and ultimately killing that person? That's the humility that Jesus Christ had for us in an even greater way. He became human on purpose to be rejected, on purpose to suffer, and on purpose to die, to let you know how much he

loves you, how much he loves you. Now, most of us don't have a military story of somebody dying for us in our place or being at a mall when there's a shooting and somebody else dying in our place, but every single one of us who threw repentance in faith have trusted in Jesus Christ have that very story, that I was dead and now I'm alive, not because of me, but because of what Christ did on my behalf.

He was the substitutionary atonement for my sin. Well, how can a God who is eternal, who's always existed die? 2 Corinthians 5:21 tells us, "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us so that in him, we might become the righteousness of God." God the father placed all of the sin of the world on his son, Jesus Christ is the only sacrifice that would satisfy the wrath of the father. There's no other way that we could be saved. And notice what it says, it says, "Because of the suffering of death, he's crowned with glory and honor so that by the grace of God, he might taste death for everyone." Now, what does it mean to taste? We're going to come up with this word in Hebrew chapter six, it's important you know it.

Taste means to experience, it means to experience. Jesus experienced death to the full, he truly died. Some people say, "Well, he got tired on the cross, they took him down, but he wasn't really dead." He was dead. He was totally dead. He was pierced for our transgressions. He was wounded for our iniquities and by his stripes, we have been healed. Jesus Christ is the sacrifice. He tasted death. And notice the last word in verse nine, I want everyone to say it out loud and loudly. Look at your Bible, "That he might taste death for who?"

Everyone.

Say it really loud.

Everyone,

He tasted death for everyone. You know what that means? Everyone in the original language means everyone. That means any person at any time can repent of his or her sin and call upon the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ, and be saved.

Everyone. He died for the world. Now, notice what it says in verse 10, "For it was fitting for him, for whom are all things and through whom are all things in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through their sufferings." It's saying that all things were created by him and for him, just like it says in Colossians, just like it says in John 1:3, that all things were made by him and for him. This creator of all things came and humbled himself so that we could experience salvation.

He created a perfect world, he never did anything wrong. We as human beings are the ones that have screwed it up. It's our sin that has done that, and Jesus in his grace still comes and says, "In spite of what you've done wrong, I'll pay the price so that you can come back to God." It's justice and mercy being fleshed out together. Some of us are aware of God's justice. Some of us are aware because we have a really strong conscience, "Man, I don't know if God still loves me, I don't know if he do that because I did wrong. I know I was wrong." And that's good. That's good that you're aware of that. But you also need to be just as aware of the fact that when you're steeped in your sin, you can come running to God and receive his mercy and

grace in time of need.

That his mercy and grace are still as lavish, that he comes to us in our sin. And notice what it says about who he is. We're going to read in chapter 12 about how he's the author and perfecter of our faith, but this word author, do you know what it means? It means a leader or initiator, or originator, or chief, truly a pioneer. I like the word trailblazer. It means there was no method of salvation until Jesus Christ came and made the way. That's why Jesus said, "I am the way the truth in the life. No one comes to the father except through me." Why? "Because I'm the author of salvation. I'm the one who's made a way." There is no other way to be saved apart from repenting and trusting in Jesus Christ and in him alone.

You say, "Well, you're just saying that because you're in Denver and you're in a church." No friends, I would tell you no matter where I'm standing in my feet, that is true for all people everywhere at all times. That's what he's saying. So Jesus was willing to humble himself, become obedient to the point of death, even death on the cross, the most shameful, humiliating way to die. Here the creator of the whole universe ends his life on the earth by being stretched out naked after being beat to a pulp and gives up his last breath because of your sin and my sin, and shamefully dies on a cross.

But three days later, friends, I got great news for you. Because he paid for your sin and he truly is the one and only son of God, he rose from the dead three days later to offer life to any sinner who would repent and place their faith in the Lord Jesus. That's who our savior is. He became your substitute. Yes, it was more than just

providing an example of how to love. It was more than just laying down his life. He said, "I have come that in me you might have life and have it to the full." Have you ever taken your sin and turned from it? Have you ever turned completely to Christ and said, "I know that you're my payment and I want you to pay for all my sin?" That's his substitution.

He came as a substitute for you. He came to die in your place so that at your death, you would never have to truly die. Now, think about this as Christians, Christians die, non-Christians die, but for a Christian, it's different. Because if you truly know the Lord, the Bible says, "To be apart from the body is to be with Christ." At the moment that a Christian dies, they are immediately in the presence of Christ. While you may lament and hurt over people that you know and you may cry tears for people who have been close to you, I have news for you. If the person who died as a Christian, they're not thinking about you anymore when they die. They're not looking down from heaven hoping that you live a good life. They're so captivated by the glory of the Lord Jesus and so drawn to him and love that that's all that they can consume themselves with.

And they're happy. They're happy. You may wonder, well, they're a Christian, I hope they're... They're happy, they're healed, they're whole, and they love God. And the glory of their faith has now come to fruition. Jesus Christ became our substitute so that we would not fear death anymore. Jesus Christ became our substitute through the suffering for our salvation. Now, here's a word, I've read it twice in these two verses, but it doesn't jump out at us. In verse nine, it says the suffering of death. In verse 10, it says salvation through sufferings. We don't like to talk about sufferings. Quite frankly,

most of us don't know what it even means to suffer.

Some of our stories suffer go like this, "I was in line the other night at the drive-through, it was twice as long as usual and they couldn't get their act together." Or, "My job, they let us out late the other day, I was really suffering." Or, "Traffic was backed up on the road, I was suffering." Suffering means pain, calamity and misfortune. Jesus came on purpose to suffer. His life came on purpose to experience pain, he came on purpose to experience calamity, he came on purpose to experience misfortune, by who? The very ones that he created. He suffered, don't miss that. His substitution meant that he had to suffer for our salvation because that was the only way he could pay the perfect penalty.

And he paid the perfect penalty. That's why salvation is only through the Lord Jesus Christ. Make no mistake about it, Jesus Christ came on purpose to die for the sins of the world, but die for each individual person who would turn from his or her sin and turn completely to Christ. Has Jesus Christ become your substitute? Has he become your salvation? Have you turned from your sin and turned to Christ and realized it's only through him that you can be saved? The humiliation of the incarnation involves understanding Christ as a substitute for our sin, who suffered for our salvation. Secondly is this, humiliation also involves the sanctification of Christ who identifies as our brother. The sanctification of Christ who identifies as our brother.

Notice verse 11, "For both he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified or are being sanctified are all from one father. For which reason he is not ashamed to call

them brethren." Now, think about this, if you study the life of Jesus Christ, the thing that you'll see him do the most in his ministry is desire to spend time with his dad. He wants to spend time with his father. He's sneaking away to pray to his father. He's always talking to his father. When he is 12 years old, we see him back in Jerusalem, his parents have to come back from Galilee on their trip home to find him. And he says, "Did you not know I had to be in my father's house?"

He wanted to be around his dad, all throughout his ministry. He's seeking his father. He said, "I only do what I see my father doing." When he picks his 12 disciples, he stays up all night praying to hear what his father says about these 12 men that he's going to appoint as apostles. In the garden of Gethsemane, he's praying to his father to see if there's any other way that salvation can be wrought, and then he's obedient to his father. On the cross, who's he talking to the whole time while people are mocking him and making fun of him? His father. Some of his last words were, "Father, forgive them for they do not know what they're doing." His whole life was centered upon his relationship with his dad.

Now, what's this text tell us? This text tells us that in Jesus Christ humiliation, there's a sanctification process that takes place, one who is sanctified and one who is sanctifying others. Sanctification means that you're holy, that you're set apart, that you're consecrated. Jesus Christ is always the holy one, he's always been set apart, he's nothing like us. And yet, when we are justified by faith, when we are made right with him through the gospel, we are positionally sanctified. He declares us holy, he sets us apart, and then guess what he does, through his Holy Spirit, he spends the rest

of our lives, growing us in a sanctification process. He grows us into holiness, he grows us into the likeness of Jesus.

And because of that, the reason he can do that is because he's says we share the same dad. One of the ways the Bible talks about salvation is that we've been adopted into the family of God. When we're adopted, guess what? We all share the same father. And if we share the same father, that means we're all brothers and sisters in Christ. We're family. Did you know we're family? How many know family, that blood is thicker than water? Even in family, there's certain people within your family that you may not get along with as much as others, but you can say whatever you want about them, but they're family and nobody else better say that.

I'm here to tell you on the authority of God's word, if you trusted Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and savior you're family. Some of you think that, "Yeah, I might be family, but I'm the outcast in the family and God would be disappointed in me." No, he is not. He loves you as his own brother or sister. He cares about you because we share the same father. You said, "Well, what end of this adoption process take place?" When you've repented and trusted in Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and savior, when you've taken ownership of the fact that he's the substitution for your sin, that he suffered for you.

You change fathers. You say, "Well, how do you know that?" Because Jesus makes it very clear to a bunch of religious leaders of the day that we have one of two fathers. We either have our father God, or we have our father who is the devil. And all of us are born with our father being the devil. Notice what Jesus says in John 8:42,



when he is talking to the religious leaders who say that our father is Abraham, we're spiritual. Here's what Jesus says, John 8:42, he said, "If God were your father, you would love me. For I proceeded forth and have come from God, for I have not yet even come on my own initiative, but he sent me. Why do you not understand what I am saying? It is because you cannot hear my word."

And here's why, verse 44, "You are of your father, the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature for he is a liar and the father of lies. But because I speak the truth, you do not believe me." Here's the question, who's your daddy? If you believe the truth of God's word, that Jesus Christ is God's one and only son and he's the only way of salvation, then God is your father. If you don't, the devil is your father. And what is he the father of? The father of lies.

He's constantly lying. That's all he knows how to do. We'll talk more about it later. He is a liar and he doesn't want you to understand that not only positionally are you sanctified, but that God is growing you in holiness, that God has set you apart for a purpose greater than what you ever knew. And he's doing that in your life because he identifies as our brother. Some of you don't understand that, some of you picture of Jesus Christ was here in all of his glory, that he might put his arm around some of you and say, "Hey, this is my brother or this is my sister." But if he brought you up here, he'd be like, "Oh yeah, I know you. Hey, come on. You've had a tough life, but I don't

want to hang out with you."

That's not who our God is. Think about the stories that Jesus told about the love of his father in Luke chapter 15 about a lost coin and a lost sheep and two lost sons. And when the younger prodigal son went away and spent everything he had and lived his life in wild living and comes to his senses as he's sloping the hogs saying, "Even the slaves in my dad's house do better than I'm doing here. I know what I'll do, I'll go to my dad and I'll give him a three point sermon. Father, I've sin against heaven and against you. 0.2, I'm no longer worthy to be called your son. Three, just make me a slave." And so after he hasn't seen his dad in a period of time after wasting all of his inheritance and basically telling his dad, I don't love you he goes home.

And the next scene we see is from a long distance, his dad sees him and starts sprinting at him. And if we didn't know the end of the story, we'd be like, "I know what his dad's going to do when he gets his hands on him." And yet, here's his son that's been covered in pig slop and manure who comes home to his dad and his dad sprint to him, which is undignified for a Jewish father to do. And what's the first thing we see, he throws his arms around him, hugs him, kisses him. And while his son's going through his rehearsed three-point sermon, the dad is just like, "No, I'm not listening. Quick, do this, bring the best robe and put it on, put a ring on his finger, sandals on his feet for the son of mine was dead and he's alive, he was lost, he's now found. Let's kill the fat and calf and celebrate."

That's who our God is. He is a sanctifier. He promises that we are holy and that he's growing us in holiness. If someone asks you the question, are you holy? What

would you say? If you're a believer in Jesus Christ, your answer is a resounding yes, I am and it has nothing to do with who you see in the mirror, how you've acted this week. It has everything to do with who you are. Jesus Christ is the sanctifier, who is sanctifying his bride to make her holy. Christ is our brother, he's not ashamed of us, he's not embarrassed of us. I love what Jesus Christ half-brother Jude says at the end of his New Testament book, Jude.

He says, "Not to him," Talking about Jesus, his half-brother, the God-man, "Who is able to keep you from stumbling and to make you stand in the presence of his glory blameless with great joy, to the only God, our savior through Jesus Christ our Lord be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority before all time and now and forever more. Amen." What does it mean? It means if you're in him, he's going to sanctify you and bring you all the way home. And when he gets you home and he brings you forward, he's going to present you with exceedingly great joy to his father and saying, "Dad, completed work." Awesome. So glad, family, they're home. It's awesome.

And see, we don't get a big enough picture of how much the father pursues us, we don't see how much he loves us. I officiated a wedding yesterday afternoon, it was a really unique wedding. This couple had met in Venezuela three years ago, the husband, the groom, spoke only English and the bride spoke only Spanish. They couldn't communicate, but God put on his heart, that's your wife. So they begin to get to know each other and they had to get to know each other over the internet on Zoom. That's how their relationship got built. She started learning English. He started learning Spanish. They wanted to honor God. He ended up leading her to Christ. They're

coming together, for three years, they've had a long distance relationship.

Yesterday at the wedding was only the third time they had ever been together in person. I'd never even met the bride. And as the bride was coming down the aisle, I almost had to hold the groom back as he was almost going out to chase her. I was like, "Bro, she's coming. Just chill." Because there was such an excitement for his bride coming that he couldn't contain himself. He was just giddy the whole service, she was giddy the whole service. That's what it's going to be like in heaven. Some of us think, "Well, I'm just saved. I know God will take me." No. When you see the father's love for you through his son on the day that you meet him, there'll be a pursuit of you.

Jesus Christ is pursuing you, he loves you with a love that you've never even experienced before. And no matter how much you think God loves you, he loves you even more than that. There's a pursuit, there's a love. And there's a desire to be pursued. That's Jesus Christ and his bride. That's what God wants us to know. We have a father. We share the same father and we know we have all that, not because of anything we've done. Ephesians 2:8-9 says, "For it's by grace you have been saved through faith. It's not your own doing." For those of us who are believers, none of us are believers because we've made ourself believers. We're only believers because Jesus Christ has revealed himself to us. We're only believers because Jesus Christ has shown us the way that he's the way, the truth and the life.

We're only believers because he's given us grace and lavished us with mercy so that we can know our sins are forgiven. We don't gather because we're good people,

we don't gather because we're better people, we gather because we're redeemed to people. We gather because we're sanctified people and God's growing us in sanctification, and he's setting us apart for a purpose. Jesus Christ was willing to become incarnate flesh and humiliate himself, not only through suffering for our salvation, but through identifying with us as a brother. Jesus Christ identifies with you. He'll hang out with you. It means this. He not only love you because theologically that's a truth, but he likes you. He's proud of you. You may be disappointed in yourself, you may hear the lies, the enemy tell you how worthless you are, but that's not the voice of God.

God would say to the believer you are chosen, and you are loved, and you are redeemed, and you are forgiven, and you are adopted, and you are mine. Isn't that good news this morning? The good news this morning is Jesus was willing to suffer for our salvation and he identifies as a brother. And this third one is one of my favorites. This third one is absolutely one of my favorites, that Jesus Christ through his humiliation, it involves the emancipation of Christ who destroyed the power of death. The emancipation of Christ who destroyed the power of death. Now, these verses leading in, we see some Old Testament scriptures from Psalm 22:22 saying, "I will proclaim your name to my brethren in the midst of the congregation. I will sing your praise. And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, behold, I and the children whom God has given me."

We see that identification. But notice this next part. Notice this emancipation of Christ. Notice this freedom that God has given us, "Therefore, since the children share

in flesh and blood, he himself likewise also partook the same. What it's saying is, because we are flesh and blood and God created us as flesh and blood that Jesus Christ humbled himself, he became flesh and blood too. The difference in Jesus Christ incarnation, he didn't have a mom and a dad, he was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born the Virgin, Mary. He didn't have a sin nature on the inside like you and I have. He wasn't destined to die because of his sin. He came to die in place for your sin because that was his purpose. But check this out.

He became flesh and blood in his incarnation. But notice what happened on the cross, "That he himself likewise protect the same that through death, he might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives." This emancipation of Christ who destroyed the power of death. Well, who had the power of death? The devil did. The devil had the power of death until Jesus Christ died on the cross. You say why? Because all the way back in the garden, God told them, "Do not eat off the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In the day that you eat off of it, dying, you will surely die." And Satan knew this that's why he deceived Eve and Adam.

And when they ate the fruit, Satan could speak the word back to God and say, "They're going to die now, because your word says they have to die, and I'm going to hold the keys to death. And I'm going to make sure that they died." It's why in John 10:10, it says, "The thief comes only to steal and to kill, and destroy." But why did Christ come? That you might have life and have it more abundantly. Satan knew that he held the power of death. He wanted every human being conceived to die, that he could

hold them captive in hell. That's what he wanted to do. But I got good news for you. I got really good news for you, that at the cross, that through death, Jesus Christ might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil."

You know what render powerless means? Render powerless means to invalidate, it means to put an end to, it means to destroy. I love this definition, it means to leave unemployed. When Jesus Christ died, the devil had a going out of business sale in hell. It meant that he no longer held power, that Jesus Christ held the power to life. And that there was no way that anyone else had to go to hell anymore. That everybody who lives through repentance and faith could come to him. He paid the penalty so that hell could be emptied, which means if you're here today, God never intended you to go to hell. God sent Jesus Christ on the cross to die for your sin so that Satan would no longer hold the power of death in hell. Isn't that good news?

Yes.

He came to set you free from death. And notice what this passage goes on to say because I love this. This gripped me all week. It says in verse 15, "And might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives." Do you ever fear death? As a Christian, I'm just here to tell you on the authority of God's word, don't ever fear death. If you know Jesus, the day you die will be the most glorious moment you've ever lived. Now, you may be curious and fearful about how you're going to die, I'm always hoping maybe I'm preaching and fall over, maybe I'm watching a game on TV and snore away or something. We sometimes concern ourselves about

how are we going to die? Is it going to be painful, those kinds of things.

But dying itself should not scare you. Why? The Apostle Paul told us, "For me to live is Christ and to die is gain." For the Christian, death is the goal of your faith. It's being with Jesus Christ in all of his glory. That's why Paul says, "For me to live is Christ, to die is gain." And then I'm paraphrasing. He says, "But what shall I choose between living and dying? I don't know what to choose. For it'd be far better to die and be with Christ, but in order to serve you, it's probably better that I keep on living." Convinced of this, I know I'll keep on living because you need me to teach, but I'd rather be with Jesus than you. That's the paraphrase version, paraphrase version there. Why are we so afraid of death?

Christians, Listen to me, you should never fear death if you're a Christian. One of the most disappointing things to me in the past two years is not that people in our world fear death, because they fear death every single day it's been watching the church act like those in the world. That's been disappointing to me. Why are we as Christians afraid to die? Why are we afraid to die? Well, we might die. Let me tell you something. You're going to die, every single one of you. It doesn't mean don't have wisdom, it doesn't mean don't make good choices. You make good choices for yourself. You want to wear a mask, wear a mask. You want to get vaccinated, get vaccinated. You want to do all those things, but quit putting your fear on everybody else because I'm not afraid to die, and neither should you be.

Now, there's wisdom in how we live. I don't drive like 100 miles an hour on I-25 when it's icy. We're called to use wisdom, but we're not called to tell other people to



live in fear. Jesus Christ abolished fear at the cross. If you're not afraid of dying, what else can happen to you? You shouldn't be afraid of dying, you should be afraid of dying apart from Christ, because it's a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Use wisdom, be smart, use your brain, God gave you a brain, but don't live in fear and don't put your fear on anybody else because Jesus Christ isn't putting fear on anybody. And this is what he tells us to do. He tells us to live with this emancipation, this freedom in Christ who destroyed the power of death.

Now, let me tell you about this because some of you don't truly believe this because you're going to verses in your head like 1 Peter 5:8, "For we have an adversary the devil that prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour." Pastor Jeff, the devil's real. Yes he is. Yes he is. He is a real being and he has power. But notice what else, he's been rendered powerless, he's been left unemployed. 1 John 3:8 tells us that the son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil." 1 John 4:4 tells us this, that greater is he who is in us than he who is in the world. The devil still roars. We've already read passages from John 8:44. Here's the devil's superpower. Are you ready? He roars and he lies, and that's it.

Christian, listen to me, he roars and he lies. That's it. The only way he can touch any part of you is to get permission from Almighty God. If you read through the Book of Job and all the sufferings he went through, Satan had to get permission from God to do it. If you're going through something physical, if you're going through something where the devils come after you or whatever, he had to get permission from Almighty

God to do that to you. He can't just roam and do what he wants. He is a toothless beast. He can roar. How many of you ever heard a lion roar, I've been told they can be heard from up to five miles away.

I've had a friend that's gone and seen the lions on safari and fortunately there was a fence ahead of him, but he heard one roar right in front of him, startled him to death. And I know if I heard a lion roar in front of me and didn't see him, it would scare me too. I'd probably need a change of shorts. But if I knew that lion was toothless and I knew that all he could do was roar and all he could do is tell me, "I'm going to kill you," but he couldn't do anything to me, and I really believe that and that was actually true, I would live differently than if I thought he could attack and kill me. Friends, most of you live in fear from the enemy for things he can't even do to you.

Think about all the fears we have, I can't list them all this morning, it would take a whole series to do that, wouldn't it? Some of us are fearful of our future, some of us are fearful of punishment, some of us are fearful of comparison with other people, we're fearful of the unknown, we're fearful of death. Friends, Jesus Christ took all that away, why do you live in fear? Fear turns itself into anger, worry, doubt, resentment, guilt, all these things. It's because you're listening to the voice of the enemy. The voice of the Lord is how much he loves us and how much he goes with us and what he does for us. Think about this verse, Deuteronomy 31:8 when you're fearful.

It says this, "The Lord is the one who goes ahead of you." That means he's in charge of the future just so you know, "He will be with you." That means he's present,

"He will not fail you." That means he never lets you down, "Or forsake you." He won't leave, "So do not fear or be dismayed." Do not fear is all over your Bible. Do you know why? Because the one way the enemy lies to you is to get you to fear. I'm not going to get in the right college, I'm never going to get married, we're never going to have kids, I'm never going to get the house I want. Oh, look at the world right now. I even know if we're going to make it another five years. Look, fear, fear, fear, fear. I don't live in fear, you shouldn't live in fear.

Not because of what could happen, but because of who is in control of what happens. Jesus Christ is still in control y'all, and we don't even need to fear death because at the moment that a Christian dies, to be apart from the bodies is to be with Christ, you'll be with him, you'll be the happiest you have ever been. He emancipated us from fear. We don't need to live in fear, "Pastor Jeff, you don't understand, I don't know how God's going to provide for me this week." I don't know either, but my God will supply all of your needs according to his glory, riches in Christ Jesus. There's scripture to show how God takes care of his own all the time. It's the enemy's voice that lies to us. I learned a long time ago not to compare myself as a pastor.

Comparison's a horrible thing. If you start asking yourself, "How do I measure up as a..." and then insert the word, husband, wife, child, pastor, athlete, you're going to be really disappointed, because the enemy will show you all the ways that everybody's better than you in every way. But if you just rest in the fact that I'm the Lord's, he made me just the way he made me, all my strengths, all my weaknesses, they belong to him. All I want to do is honor God. I'm not comparing myself with anybody else, I'm just

going to be me. There's a lot of freedom in that, isn't there? And you can either live in freedom or fear, but you can't live in both. And if the church of Jesus Christ was unleashed to live in the freedom that we have in Christ, to say the truth that we want to say, to call out the things that are true in the world and to live it with all vigor and passion, our world will change.

I believe it with my whole heart and so do you, that's why you're here. That's why we call our church BRAVE Church. BRAVE is not a machismo thing, BRAVE is not an outward thing, BRAVE is Jesus Christ on the inside and what he's done by suffering and dying for our sins, calling us his brothers and sisters because we share the same father, and knowing that we're free in Christ to live all that God wants us to be. That's who we are. He destroyed the power of death, he destroyed the power of death. He goes on to say this, in verse 16, "For assuredly, he does not give help to angels, but he gives help to the descendant of Abraham." That's hard to read. He's really talking about, he doesn't lay hold of the angels. It means this, he delivers humans, not angels.

He gives aid to angels, but human beings are the purpose of God's creation. Human beings are who he's after, he delivers humans. And he's talking about the physical descendants of Adam and the spiritual seat of Abraham. That's who he's for. Friends, he's for us. Who does he want to free? Us. Who does he not want to live in fear anymore? Us. That's who our God is. He wants to do incredible things with each and every one of your lives. And you need to understand that the father of lies, the devil, doesn't want you to know that. He wants you to think you're under his thumb, he wants you to think he has all power over you, and I'm here to tell you on the authority

of God's word, that all authority and heaven and earth has been given to Christ.

Therefore, go, you have all authority in him.

In this humiliation, this final one, as Christ became incarnate, this humiliation involves the propitiation of Christ who helps us in our temptation. This propitiation of Christ to helps us in our temptation, he says in verse 17, "Therefore, he had to be made like his brethren in all things." Here we see the incarnation again. He had to be like us, he had to put on flesh and blood, he had to come to the earth, "So that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in all things pertaining to God to make propitiation for the sins of the people." Now, propitiation is a big word. Propitiation literally means this, it means to appease, or placate, or expiate, or wipe out sins.

It means to make you right before God. It means that God is satisfied through Jesus Christ's death for your sins. That's what propitiation means. It means when God the father to pour out all the wrath on his son, if you believe in Jesus, that means there's no more wrath for you, God's completely satisfied in who you are. Not because of what you've done, but because of who you are, and who you belong to. Some of us think, "Well, God's really angry at me. And one day when I meet him, he's going to really pour out..." " If you're a Christian, all of his wrath has been poured out on Jesus. Can God be disappointed in you? Yeah. Can God be angry at your sin? Yeah. Will God pour out his wrath on a Christian? Never. He's a good parent, he's a good, good father. That's who he is. I want to sing a little bit.

God loves you. Jesus Christ made it right. He was the only one that could satisfy

the father's holiness, he's the only one that could satisfy and pay for your sin. And notice what else this does, because God is satisfied with us and he sees us through the lens of his son as being perfect, not because of our behavior, but because of whose we are, he says this, then I'll help you with your temptation. For since he himself was tempted in that which he has suffered, he is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted. We've all been tempted. Jesus Christ was tempted in every way we have been, yet without sin. And here's why, because he's fully God.

Jesus Christ wasn't tempted from the inside out, he didn't have murderous thoughts or lustful thoughts, or hateful thoughts because he is God, he didn't have that, but he was tempted on the outside in every way we are, yet he was without sin. And because he's lived in this world and because he is fully human and fully God, it means this, he understands everything we're going through and he's able to help us or come to our aid when we're in temptation. You know what that means? We can't just say, "Well, the devil made me do it." It means when we're tempted, he's there to help. Now, 1 Corinthians 10:13 says something really interesting. It says that, "No temptation has ever seized you except what is common to man?" Common means everybody struggles with that. What is common to man, 1 Corinthians 10:13.

But notice what he says, "And God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape so that you will also be able to endure it." You're not doomed to continue to sin, Jesus Christ will help. He's a merciful and faithful high priest. He can present you to the father and say, "You can't get through that, but I can get through that. I can help

you change even though you can't change yourself." Isn't that good news this morning? Because sometimes when we're in church, we think that a few of those people out there struggle with something like this or the devil will lie to us and let you think you're the only one that struggles with something like this. That's arrogant.

Whatever you're struggling with, it's common. He's not creative. If we had time this morning and authenticity this morning, I would ask this a question like this, who here struggles with sexual thoughts and lust that give into their temptation? And about a third of the room would stand and I'd say, "Hey, go ahead and sit down." Who here has ever been on I-25 and struggles with thoughts that come out of their mouth that are hateful? And about a third of the room would sit up and they go down. Who here struggles as a husband? Who here struggles as a wife? Who here struggles to love their kids? Whatever we would say, it's common. And we would leave and say, "Thank goodness, I'm not alone." Jesus wants to let you know, not only are you not alone in your struggle, but you're not alone in having to deal with your struggle.

God will give you the help you need if you ask him. He humiliated himself to come down to the earth so he could identify, so we could never say, "God, you don't know what that's like." He'd say, "Oh yes I do. I know exactly what that feels like. I know exactly what you're talking about. I've seen that, I've watched that, I've experienced that." And friends, it's powerful when you understand that. For many of us, we think we're doomed to continue to live our sin and I'm here to tell you on the authority of God's word, you don't have to anymore. You have a helper, you have Almighty God in your corner and understands and can sympathize with your weakness.

He is and was fully God, so when he was tempted, he didn't sin, but he understands that we're sinners and that we sometimes succumb, and he's like, "I understand you're not me, but in me, you can have victory over that." Isn't that good news this morning? And I know this is deeply theological and I think I had about 12 TION words as I was talking about this and felt like I was doing a seminary class, but as we're going through this, it's important that we understand this, that Jesus was willing to humble himself for you, that Jesus was submitting himself to the father for you. How would that play out in your life? What would it look like for you to humble yourself? What would it look like for you to go lower? What would it look like for you to serve if nobody else saw?

What would it look like for you if you're the most talented person at BRAVE Church, and what you get offered is to clean toilets during the week? Is that beneath you? Or because of who you are in Christ, you would joyfully do that just for him. Do you see what I'm saying? This has great application if we're willing to embrace it. Now, I learned this. I began to learn this, I should say, when I was in college at the University of Illinois. I played football there, had a career for five years. After my fourth year, I thought I was going to be the starter or the backup quarterback. And in the spring of that year, the coaches sat me down and said, "Hey, not only are you not going to be the starter or the backup, but we're going to put you back on the scout team for your fifth year you're never going to play."

And I was so devastated, I remember telling the coach, "If that's the way you're



going to treat me, I quit." And so in the spring I left. And I was angry with God because I'd given four years of my life to do this and I didn't have to do that, and why did I go through this? I was angry at him. Finally, I remember telling the Lord, "Fine. I know you got this call in my life to ministry, I'll just do ministry, no big deal." And when I finally got ears to hear, here's what I heard the Lord say to my spirit, "I'm not asking you to quit, I'm just wondering if you'll be my servant on the team." And he heard me, because I remember saying back to the Lord, "Lord, that will be humiliating and embarrassing to be a fifth year senior on the scout team."

And I heard the Lord say to me, "I know exactly what it feels like to be embarrassed and humiliated, will you serve me?" So I'm back to my coach and I said, "Listen, if you'll have me back on the team, I'll come, I'll never say another bad thing. I'll serve you, I'll do whatever you want me to do. And I know I'm probably never going to play, but I just want to honor the Lord." And he brought me back. And that year I can tell you, I only got to play in one game, but I'll tell you this, I led more people to Christ in that four month period than I did my entire college career. Because here's what happened, people would ask me, "Why didn't you quit? Why are you still here? If I would've been treated like that, I'd have been gone a long time ago."

And I said, "It's because of Jesus that I'm here." And if you look back at the 1993 record of the Fighting Atlanta Football team, you'll think I should have started too. But God was using that in my life to show that humbling and being what he wanted me to be in that season was for his glory, not for mine. And there's different seasons, there's seasons of God's favor and blessing, and there's seasons where God's building

something else, but none of us are above suffering and none of us are above humiliation, and none of us are above serving because no matter how humble we think we are or serving we think we are, we haven't done it at the level that Jesus Christ has. And when we can lay it down our lives for others in the sense of helping them or putting them first, we can't die for anybody else's sin, only Jesus Christ could do that.

But because he was that model for us, what are we going to do? We're closing this service today with the song, *Death Was Arrested* because I think it's appropriate, that when Jesus Christ died on the cross and rose from the dead, death no longer has power in this world unless we let it. Satan no longer has power in this world unless we let him. I don't have power over Satan, but me in Christ, I have power over him. You in Christ have power over him. And the beauty of the gospel is, death was arrested. And guess what? Our life in Christ began. Would you stand with me as we pray? And as we sing this final song, let's sing it to the glory of our Lord.

Lord Jesus, we give you all the glory, honor, and praise for who you are. And Lord, we ask, even as we sing this gospel song, would you remind us of who we were? And would you also remind us of who we are and that we in you have authority and power to live in the freedom that you've designed for us. And Lord, would you glorify your name in and through each person here, in and through our church, and that we'd be a witness to the world that you indeed are king of kings and Lord of Lords. In Jesus name. Amen. Can we praise him this morning for who he is.