

He's No Angel

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Date: 10 January 2021

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[0 : 0 0] Okay, so in Hebrews chapter 2 we have part of the scripture teaching about a flesh and blood Jesus and I think that's very important. I think it's very important to think about that and maybe particularly just now because I've done about you but I often ask the question, who can possibly understand God? He is so far away from my everyday existence at every level and that makes him difficult to understand. He's eternal and he's invisible and I can't see him. He sees everything and I can't, he knows everything. I certainly don't, he even knows my thoughts when I'm lying in bed at night and that's a weird and quite a scary thing to think about someone who knows us at that thought level of our lives. He's not created, he has always existed, he's always right, he's always good, he's the source of all life, he doesn't change, he's not like us at that level and he exists everywhere but beyond his creation and he's personal, he's a spirit but he's personal and he's separate then from his creation. He exists outside the 100 billion galaxies that are so far being discovered in this universe and he understands at the other level, I mentioned this the other week, one of the 30 trillion cells that each person has with each cell containing the 3 billion DNA-based pairs making up the human genome. I hope you're impressed with my knowledge there. And that begins to help us to recognise how beyond our understanding God is and yet we are image bearers of God, we're made for him, we're spiritual beings but we're not made to be him, we're made for him and we're made to be accountable to him. And I think if you summarise the genesis of sin, it's where it all went wrong, isn't it? It's where it all went wrong when we moved from being made for him to wanting to be him.

The seed of sin is wanting to be like God, not in the created image way that we were but to be like God in who God was and his glory and his power. We wanted to be equal with God, humanity wanted that and in many ways sin even in our own lives now has that core reality, it's an overreaching into something that is not possible for us to be. I'm a bit of a hasher when it comes to DIY, not great and I've got great ideas of what I could do with DIY but quite often I'll overreach myself and I'll take on something that's far beyond my ability to do and much better at destroying things than actually building and creating things. But in a sense a million times more than that is what we've done with God is that we've completely overreached as human beings and tried to take God's place.

We want to be Lord of our lives, I want to decide what's right and wrong, I want to be a judge and you know we see that coming across so much in our lives and even if I muck up I want to be the one who's in control of my life. We push God off the throne, we reject him and we choose not to believe him and in a sense that's the core reality of where we are but the trouble with that is in the world in which we live we're not able to control our destiny in the way that we've been deceived to believe that we can. We can't be sovereign, we see that all the time whether it's with illness or with COVID just now or with death whether it's post death or sorry pre birth or post birth whether it's with unrequited love or whether it's being made redundant or being opposed by people or restrictive laws in the society in which we live there's a million things every day that expose our overreach trying to be what we can't be and we recognise our vulnerability and our brokenness in our lives and the response to that so often in our day to day living I think is threefold very quickly is rage is anger and frustration and maybe just denial so very often this lack of ability to be God or to be like God in our lives makes us very angry with life. We see it very much just now well we see it always in society and we see it in our own hearts but we see it with a lot with key keyboard warriors don't we we blame there's always someone to blame for our inability to live the way we want to live and it may be leaders it may be family or inner families it may be our boss and maybe drivers on the road or cyclists or pedestrians at kind of trivial level it may be the incompetence of other people or it may be God himself we're angry and we blame and we blame and we blame all the time and I wonder if sometimes we reflect on our anger and when we when we when we display anger and as a response what that's saying about us and what it's saying about why we want to be in control and why we often blame God for what is happening in our lives so it can be rage or it can also be frustration and we're often frustrated in life because we we make really bad gods we're we're not good gods and so we're often frustrated we don't understand what's happening we crave kind of that independence that would allow us to do what we want and the control but then sometimes even when we get that independence and control well life just sucks anyway and there's always that shadow of impermanence attacking us or we can just be in denial you know we can suppress the reality of God and just almost forget that whole reality and not face up to him and just live in a kind of shallow existence happy enough trying to make a difference judging ourselves by our own standards and many in the world do that hoping that it'll all turn out in the end okay ignoring death as an enemy as if it will never happen and just we can even do that as believers stop praying stop growing stop obeying and just live in a kind of shallow

[8 : 00] neutrality as it were and all of that step these issues these problems I think that we face stem from us stem from our sinful desires to try and be God to try and be in control and try and almost ignore him and ignore his reality because maybe we don't understand him or he's just it's impossible for us to grasp what it would be like to be God and I think I do believe that's why we need a flesh and blood God that's why we need Jesus Christ coming in the flesh and verse 14 I'm going to look at 14 at the end and that section since therefore the children share in flesh and blood he himself likewise per took of the same things so and that same things are flesh and blood and the Bible continually reminds us that if we're going to understand God then we needed him to become flesh and blood in order for us to understand so there's something uniquely expressive in the nature of God through the incarnation when Jesus became flesh Jesus becoming flesh makes him someone got it makes him a God that we can understand it reveals him it glorifies him in a way that nothing else could ever have done it's the only way he could have expressed his grace his sacrificial love and his commitment to redeem us to save us it's the crucified

God is the greatest revelation of the supernatural character of God and helps us to understand him in our lives so it helps us understand and he we needed a flesh and blood God to redeem us to bring us back from a lost eternity and from the effects of sin and what sin was and what sin is and what sin does in our lives angels couldn't do that Jesus the title of this address is Jesus is no angel angels and don't cut it it's not good enough for a spiritual being to have come and told us about God as as the only way angels themselves are a bit mysterious and separate from us and they're not like us they're not image bearers they're not sovereign they're not they're not like God they're not sovereign they're infinite and they're not eternal they're servants who are sent to serve those who believe but Jesus was no angel and I'm going to try and be a little bit theological for a moment here and it's impossible for us to be gods okay it's impossible for us to be God and to be human

God alone can be God and human and that's the deep mystery of both having God Jesus having a divine nature and a human nature and he alone can be God in the flesh and he shows us what we need to see the only way we could grasp the character of God and his love and his worthiness is by seeing Jesus is by coming to know and understand Jesus Jesus is God translated into our language Jesus is God that we can come to know not only in his life but through his work because he's come to he has come to show us God but also to set us free from sins great companion which is fear verse 15 it says he came that we might destroy the power the one who has power of death that is the devil and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery and that's the great reality of not having God in our lives is that we live with great fear a fear of not being in control a fear of the future a fear of failure a fear of rejection a fear of not meeting somebody's standard whether it's in a marriage or in a workplace or whatever it might be and fear of the future and fear of judgment and fear of death he came to release us and free us from that because of his great work all the all the all the all the out working of sin in our lives he came to redeem us from and he could only do that by becoming the

God man becoming Jesus Jesus Christ flesh and blood God and we make miserable flesh and blood gods we can't do it we we simply can't save ourselves by claiming God's throne but he left his throne to open up the way back for us to be truly human made in God image but not trying to become gods so the exercise of God becoming flesh requires God emptying himself of his glory it involves humility it involves servanthood it involves obedience it involves controlled power it involves amazingly hiding his glory and Philippians 2 speaks a lot about that and you can read that at your leisure and so the interesting thing is the only way we can see God's glory is if God hides his glory if he veils his glory Philippians 2 speaks about that and there's so that's the remarkable truth is the only the only way we can grasp begin to grasp the glory of God in Jesus is because

God has hidden his glory because it's beyond us to grasp unless it's in the person of Jesus Christ and that's an astonishing relative you ever get time to read a short small book that's an old book by a man that I knew briefly as a boy it's called the cross in the experience of our Lord by Ari Finlessen he's to be a professor in the free church college and has got a marvellous insight into the person of Jesus and him being a flesh and blood Jesus our longing for being self-sovereign for wanting all the glory without God it destroys us absolutely destroys us because we are human the only person that could live out the glory of God as a human being is the person the son of

[15 : 43] God Jesus Christ and only as we see Jesus Christ the veiled glory of God in Jesus Christ and put our trust in him are we able to reflect to the glory of God in our lives as we were created to do so only God can become a God man Christ took on flesh and blood he had to he had to become one of us he was conceived he spent nine months in the womb he was a newborn he was a toddler he had to learn to talk and to walk and to read to understand family dynamics he had brothers and sisters and cousins and aunts and uncles he worked he made friends and he lost friends he knew grief and loss and he became dependent he was misunderstood he was hungry and well fed he was thirsty and his thirst was slaped he was poor he was cold he was naked he was clothed he was hated he was loved he suffered he was tempted he laughed he cried he slept he got up and he went to bed why because he had to become flesh and blood because only a God man can die God can't die in heaven

God is a spirit can't die only God in the flesh can die and there was no other way for us to live and have death defeated except for Jesus except for God to pay the price and in order for God to pay the price he had to become a human being to die he had to have flesh and blood and that's the astounding reality of the cost and the commitment of Jesus to you and to me he's perfect yet he is punished in death for grasping for our grasping at sovereignty and our our trying to replace him in our lives as we rejected God God the Father rejected Jesus in our place he's rejected by the infinite and he's rejected by all on the cross God the creator of all life and the person of his son is crucified and only God only God can defeat death as it says and the and the power of death in the devil only God can do that and only God can be raised to a new life for a humanity that tried themselves to become God or like God in the wrong way and because he's raised from the dead we can become like God in the right way as image bearers and that is how we were designed to live and for you and me that reflects the overwhelming and sacrificial love beyond anything that we can ever experience and if you're tempted to give up on your faith in Jesus Christ I simply ask you to fix your eyes on Jesus this flesh and blood savior whose glory was veiled so that we could see it and who becoming flesh and blood was able to die and was able to redeem it couldn't have happened any other way therefore because he himself has suffered when tempted and becoming flesh he is able to help those who are tempted so I close just by asking these questions today in your own experience what temptations do you face and I don't know what they'll be but know that he is able to help you because he is a flesh and blood savior because of the incarnation you know what is it are you tempted to be hugely selfish am I tempted to be hugely selfish and not to consider others and not to love God or love others well he knows that he's been tempted in that way and as overcome he is able to help us he attempted to be proud because we find humility tough he knows he's experienced that he's able to help us when we're tempted to overcome you tempted to go your own way it's much easier isn't it especially maybe just now to reject

God or to reject his word and to struggle and find obedience impossible he knows he's been tempted and yet he's able because he's overcome these things because he's tempted without sin you angry going back to us at the beginning or frustrated or living in denial the angry at others or at God or at lockdown he's able just one day at a time he is able frustrated that so much is out of our control frustrated at your health or frustrated at your situation he knows because he's a flesh and blood savior he is able and it's the great temptation just to live in denial maybe just like everyone else seems to be living and to turn your back and just encourage you tonight to fix your eyes when Jesus that's all we can do during this pandemic much has been stripped back from us but he is this great flesh and blood savior and he's able and remember that and know his power and his resurrection glory in your life we're going to look at a lot of different aspects of his life and why he is such a suitable savior and why this is the only way it could have been for us I'm going to pray Lord we pray that you would help us to understand and know what it means to begin to grasp a flesh and blood savior we sing about a lot great words that we were singing there earlier we talk about it a lot at Christmas time in the incarnation but to think of God becoming flesh as being the only way that we could know God because of our sin and the only way we could begin to understand God and have a God who could save us by paying the price for satisfying God's own anger against our sin and being a propitiation and atonement for us by his blood he had to have blood he had to have a body and we rejoice that he is a glorified body now and is real and is interceding for us today help us to see that more clearly we pray in Jesus name Amen