

## Hebrews Chapter 2C

*(Last year in Phila)*

An elderly man named Alfred McNamee walked a little too close to the edge of the subway platform at a downtown station. Tragically he fell onto the tracks where he suffered multiple injuries including a broken back. Things could have been a lot worse had Charles Collins not quickly jumped down to help the man off the tracks. The humble hero told channel 6 news, *"I just saw him fall down and jumped, it was instinct. I'm not a hero; lots of people would do the same thing."*

### Pizza Rescue

Cheryl Treadway was being held hostage with her three children by her boyfriend. Seeing no other way out, she convinced him to let her use her phone to order a pizza and included the message, **"Please help. Get 911 to me"** in the section marked delivery instructions. Thankfully the employee at the Pizza Hut who received the message, took the plea for help seriously and called 911. The hostage negotiator was then directed to the scene of the crime where he was able to convince the boyfriend to come out peacefully, saving Cheryl and her kids.

- There is something about a HERO that stirs our hearts.
- There is something about a HERO that resonates within us.
- There is something about a person who, without thought for their own wellbeing performs an act of selfless courage for the sake of someone else.

Pastor Brian Borgman said: "I would suggest to you that the thrill that we feel at the demonstration of heroism is simply the reverberations of the image of God in us. Our praise for the heroic is an echo of the image of God in us."

R.L. Dabney "Jesus Christ is the divine pattern and fountain of all true heroism."

- If true heroism is seen as laying down your life without regard for your own wellbeing, but for the good of others, then indeed Jesus Christ is the greatest of all heroes.... The divine pattern and fountain of all heroism.
- As children we fantasize about heroes like Superman, Spiderman who lay down their lives to save the weak and oppressed.

For the heart that longs for a hero, the soul that is hungry for a Savior, Jesus is the reality of which all of our fantasies are mere shadows. He alone can faithfully deliver us from evil.

At the very heart of the redemption story is the glorious truth that God became a man in order to deliver helpless men from certain death through the sacrifice of himself.

- The beauty of the Gospel is found in the fact that the omnipotent, all powerful creator of the universe, the Lord of the angelic host, the object of angelic adoration humbled himself and became a man in order to give his life a ransom for many.

That brings us back to our study in Hebrews.

Hebrews 2: 9 **But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.**

- It was grace, divine loving-kindness that motivated Christ to put on human flesh and die on our behalf.
- What we did not deserve (that is salvation) we have received, and what we actually did deserve (which is death) we did not receive, and that is grace.
- What was it that prompted Christ's amazing expression of grace? It was LOVE, unconditional, unbound, exceedingly abundant love.

This is our Savior, this is our Lord, this is our Hero.

Jesus Christ the eternal second person of the trinity became a man: Today we return to the question we began to answer last week: *"Why did God become a man?"*

1. To Secure our path to glory
2. To Subdue our enemy
3. To Sympathize with our Sufferings

Let's consider how He secured our path to glory

Hebrews 2: 10 **For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering. 11 For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers,**

What Jesus did was fitting, it was suitable for God, it accomplished His purpose. In essence what the author is saying is this,

- God did through Jesus that which was consistent with his divine character.
- The plan of salvation was consistent with God's wisdom. Through the Cross God solved a problem that no human or angelic mind could have solved.
- What God did was also consistent with His holiness, on the cross God clearly displayed his hatred for sin and love for sinners.
- It was consistent with God's power. Jesus was able to endure in a few hours on the cross what would take an eternity for unrepentant sinners to endure.
- Lastly it was consistent with God's love, in that He loved the world so much that he gave his only Son to accomplish redemption.
- Christ's work of salvation was fitting, it was consistent with the character of God and therefore able to accomplish God's purpose.

What was that purpose? To display His glory in bringing many sons to glory.

Literally: “Leading many sons to glory.” The wording inspired by the Holy Spirit speaks of travel; it describes a journey in which Jesus Christ LEADS the way with many sons following him into the realm of glory.

- It is a beautiful image when you think about it. Jesus goes before us; like a pioneer he clears the path, provides a way, leading many sons into heaven.

Over the years, I have lead many a caravan of cars on family or church outings and everyone except my wife trusts me to lead them in the right direction.

For a few years Sharon and I led a caravan of young missionaries to work at a Native American Bible camp in Red Lake Minnesota.

- I may be able to lead you to Minnesota BUT only Jesus can Lead you to glory.
- The writer of Hebrews affirms this truth again in Chapter 6:

Hebrews 6: 19 We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain, 20 where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf,

- Jesus is our forerunner, (the word is a synonym for the word bringing, leading)
- He leads the way into that sacred place behind the curtain into the Holy of Holies, into the very presence of the Father.

Along those same lines, in Vs 10 Jesus is called, “the founder of their salvation.”

Different translations of the Bible employ different words for “Founder”

RSV – “Pioneer,” KJV & NKJV – “Captain,” NIV – “Author.”

- At its very essence, this is a word that describes a HERO. Someone who blazes a trail for others to follow. The title always refers to someone who leads the way for others and includes them in his effort.
  - It is used to describe the founder of a city in which others come to live.
  - It is used to describe a pioneer who blazes a trail for others to follow.

Jesus Christ has blazed the trail of our salvation through the very heart of the devil’s domain, enduring suffering, hardship and death in order to win the victory as the captain of our salvation, opening the way for us to follow him into the very presence of God.

- IN order for Jesus to accomplish the will of God, in order for him to lead many sons to glory, in order for him to blaze the trail for all who would follow he had to leave his home in glory and put on human flesh.

There is only one path, only one Captain, Jesus alone is the way the truth and the life and no one comes to the Father but by him.

- If we would follow Him, we must cast aside the Pluralistic Ideals of our society and follow hard after the hero of our faith.

Hebrews 12:1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

- Like children following the footsteps of their Father through the thick dark woods we FIX our GAZE on Christ who leads the way.
- HE endured the sufferings and shame of this fleshly existence and rose victoriously from the grave, and ascended to the right hand of the Father.
- In doing so he overcame the enemy of our soul.

2. God became a man in order to Subdue Our Enemy.

Hebrews 2: 14 Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, 15 and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.

- Since all human beings share (*partake together of*) the same nature which is described here as “Flesh and blood.”
- Jesus likewise partook of the same things. He who is eternal God put on flesh and blood. Interestingly the author uses a different word to describe Jesus:
  - We all share (Koinonia) in the same flesh and blood.
  - BUT Jesus partook (different word: Metecho – He took hold of something that was not naturally His.)
- We are by nature flesh and blood but Christ was not. Yet he willingly took hold of something that did not naturally belong to him.

Even though it was foreign to him, Jesus put on flesh and blood for the specific purpose that he could die and through his death destroy the one, namely Satan who held the power of death.

- Satan’s primary power over man, his supreme weapon against man is death. Of course sin gives Satan his power over us but the power itself is death.
- The way to destroy Satan was to disarm him of his weapon: Physical death, spiritual death eternal death.
- Because the whole of mankind had been corrupted by sin, man had no ability to overcome death on his own. He was truly a prisoner under the dominion of darkness.
- As the Apostle Paul writes: Ro 5:12 Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned
- So for sinful man, death is an absolute certainty.

Ben Franklyn affirmed this when he said: “Nothing is certain except for death and taxes.”

- As long as man remained under the bondage of sin he would surely die and go out of God's presence into hell forever.
- Satan does all he can to hold on to men until they die because once they are dead the opportunity for salvation is gone forever.
- If man is to have any hope at all God must remove the power of death from Satan's hands. And that is why Jesus had to put on human flesh.
- Because Jesus was a perfect man, because he lived a sinless life, death had no hold on him.
- SO BY yielding his body up to death he was able to defeat the one who held the power of death and provide eternal life to all who believed.

Luke 11: 21 **When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are safe;**  
 22 **but when one stronger than he attacks him and overcomes him, he takes away his armor in which he trusted and divides his spoil.**

- Satan was the strong man guarding his palace, but the Lord Jesus, the stronger man came to bind him and carry away the spoils. (power of death)

When you have a more powerful weapon than your enemy, his weapon becomes useless. That is why they say you don't bring a knife to a gun fight.

- Satan's weapon (death) is extremely powerful. BUT God has a weapon that is even more powerful it is eternal life and with it Jesus was able to destroy death.

1 Corinthians 15: 55 **"O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?"**  
 56 **The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.**  
 57 **But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.**

The author of Hebrews tells us that the thing that terrifies people more than anything else is death.

Woody Allen summed up humanity's uneasiness with death when he said, "It's not that I am afraid to die, I just don't want to be there when it happens."

One Psychologist expressed his own fears over death after experiencing a traumatic illness:

"Whenever I've tried wrapping my mind around the concept of my own demise—truly envisioned the world continuing on without me, the essence of when I am utterly gone forever—I've unearthed a fear so overwhelming my mind has been turned aside as if my imagination and the idea of my own end were two magnets of identical polarity, unwilling to meet no matter how hard I tried to make them."

- It is true that apart from Christ the soul of man is held in the grip of unyielding terror that cannot be adequately reasoned away.

- It is only by the Grace of God that the soul of man is released from the fear of death and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus provides the assurance of death's demise.

through His death on the cross, Jesus destroyed the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, 15 and (He) delivers all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.

- Evident in Paul writings – To live is Christ to die is gain

Back to our question, “Why did God become a Man?”

- He came to regain lost creation
- He came to redeem lost sinners
- He came to secure our path to glory
- He came to Subdue our enemy
- AND LASTLY:

3. God became a man in order to Sympathize with our Sufferings

Hebrews 2: 16 For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. 17 Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. 18 For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

- Jesus did not become an angel. He didn't float 6 inches off of the ground or walk around with a strange glow beaming from his head, he became a man a real man.

From the Gospel record we know that Jesus experienced hunger, he endured thirst. He labored among men so hard that he was overcome with fatigue.

- At one point He was so sound asleep on the back of the boat that hurricane force winds didn't wake him.
- He sighed in his heart when he saw the ravages of sickness and affliction in men.
- He stood and wept at the graveside of a dear friend Lazarus.
- He expressed anger at the injustice and corruption of the Sadducees.
- He was despised and rejected by men a man of sorrows acquainted with grief.
- He was so troubled in the garden of Gethsemane, so overwhelmed with what the next day would bring that he literally sweat drops of blood.

As we walk along this pilgrim's path, enduring the difficulties and hardships of this present life we have great confidence in knowing that the God to whom we pray, our great High Priest truly understands our frailty. He endured hardship and HE was tempted in every way like us but without SIN.

Hebrews 4: 15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

16 Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

We can never say to God, “You don’t know what I am going through.”

- First, he is omniscient, he knows everything. And the one who knows everything is the very one who put on flesh and endured all of the trials of man.
  - Loss, rejection, temptation, poverty, loneliness, abandonment,
  - So He is well able to sympathize with ALL of our weakness.

The writer of Hebrews describes with great emotion the prayers of our Lord Jesus during his time in the flesh.

Hebrews 5: 7 In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence.

8 Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered.

9 And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him, 10 being designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek.

- The Priesthood of Jesus is an important and reoccurring theme in this book of Hebrews so we will return to it again. But this morning there is one final point I would like to bring out.
- That is the fact that Jesus was “Made perfect” through the things that he suffered? As he said in Chapter 2 verse 10:

Hebrews 2: 10 For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering.

- When we speak of Jesus being “made perfect” we are NOT insinuating, in any way that he was experientially, emotionally or morally imperfect.
- He did not lack anything in his character. He wasn’t missing anything in his divine nature.
- It is NOT That Jesus needed this experience to gain knowledge, He is omniscient.
- It is not that He needed to obtain wisdom, HE is the embodiment of perfect wisdom.
- So what does it mean that He was made perfect through sufferings?

I believe it means: BY putting on Flesh and suffering he became uniquely fitted to serve as the perfect mediator between God and man.

To help us understand let’s consider the complaint issued by Job long before Jesus took on human flesh.

JOB 9: 32 For he (GOD) is not a man, as I am, that I might answer him, that we should come to trial together. 33 There is no arbiter between us, who might lay his hand on us both.



- Job was seeking a mediator, someone who could put his hand on Man and God at the same time, someone who could voice Job's deep concerns to God.
- But there was none!
- We can't say that..... Jesus Christ has been perfectly fit for the job, perfected through his sufferings to serve as the mediator between God and man.

Jesus our hero, God in human flesh, has defeated the enemy of our soul. In doing so He destroyed death and gave us eternal life.

- The pioneer of our salvation has cleared the way for us to follow him all the way to glory.
- AND as we walk along this pilgrim's way we travel with Great confidence, knowing that the one who has gone before us is able to sympathize with our weakness and he actively, continually intercedes for us as our great high priest.

Heb 4:16 **Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.**