

INTRODUCTION. In this service we focus on the Lord Jesus Christ and what He did for us - so that we can more **meaningfully** honour Him at the sacrament. Christ **had** to be made like His brothers (ie, you/I) in order to be **merciful** and to make a **proper** sacrifice and atonement (**propitiation**) for us! Let us look at how He was made like us, and yet at the same time **remain** the Son of God in very **essence** God.

IN the BEGINNING of HIS LIFE on EARTH

In **conception** in His mother's womb! He **had** to be born as we are - and **we began** life in our mother's womb! As a 2-day old **embryo** He was **no less** the Son of God than He was on the Cross suffering for the sins of the world. It is wonderful to read that **John Baptist**, when he was **only 6 months old** and still in the womb, **acknowledged** Christ, hidden from **our** eyes, but nevertheless truly alive - as we all were in our mother's womb, and he, John, "**leaped for joy**" [Luke 1:44]. That is **amazing!**

APP Do **you believe** John Baptist as a 6-month old in the womb jumped for joy at meeting the pregnant Mary? Then, if you do, what does that **tell** us and **teach** us? It surely tells us that Jesus is very very special!

Notice how Mary responded "*My soul **magnifies** the Lord and my spirit rejoices in **God my Saviour***" [Luke 1:47]! She recognised that God was at work in providing a Saviour! And then Elizabeth said an amazing thing "***why** is this granted me that the **mother** of my **Lord** should come to me*" [Luke 1:43]. She could not have meant anything else but that the Lord, God, was in the womb of Mary!

And yet, there was this '**awful** thing' hanging over them - the **immoral stigma** of expecting a child to be born out of **wedlock!** There was great **shame** and

disgrace attached to this which has left western society! That stigmas never left Him - years later His own fellow countrymen would say "*as for this man we do not know where he has come from?*" [John 9:29] But be sure Joseph and Mary felt the full brunt of this dishonour! But they **willingly endured** it for **Christ's sake!** They **were** prepared to be **fools** for Christ's sake! And so should you/!

*His **birth** into a **lower class** home was part of the beginning of being made like His brothers! We know Mary/Joseph were poor because they could not offer anything more than "*two young pigeons*" [Luke 2:24 with Lev 12:8]! No **DHSS** assistance for Mary/Joseph! No **incubators** to **monitor** Baby's pulse! **No** warm air-conditioned ward with a comfy bed attended by experienced **maternity** staff - just a **common feeding trough** in a common **bier!** That **sort** of situation **still happens** today - that is why "*He had to be made like His brothers*" so that He could be **identified** with us in all our circumstances! In that manger He was God made in **our image!**

*At **8-days** old He was **circumcised!** Why did He need to be circumcised? Apart from having to "*be made like His brothers*" He was an Israelite. The law of Moses - which was the Law of God at the time, stipulated all Israelites were to have this **symbolical** mark of **belonging** to God! He had to be made "*under the law*" in order "*to redeem*" those who were under the law! Jesus was **representing**, not Deity, but **sinner!** Sins were "*laid on Him*" by the Father! Circumcision was the rite for **entry** into the Church!

*At **12 years** old, He went to the **Temple** with His parents! In the hustle and bustle of Church life, He was **forgotten** and He was left behind! **APP** Just as today, parents, at communion times, or conference times can '**forget**' about their children because they are taken-up with the mundane (but often necessary) duties! Perhaps, in fact probably He **told** His parents where He was going - but they were not

listening! It must have been quite **embarrassing** for Mary/Joseph to go round relatives asking did they see lately? So the Son of God did not have a **perfect** upbringing - He too, was in part '**neglected**'!

It may have been, as is often the case still, Jesus went back to meet the elders in the Temple for private **fellowship, because** He was not spiritually fed at the Passover! For Him, it was essential to **touch base** in God's house! He wanted to meet with His Father in heaven - but didn't! So He sought His own private fellowship!! He was "*sitting among the teachers **listening** to them and asking them questions*" [Luke 2:46]. As well as having to be 'made like His brothers', He also has "*to be about His **Father's business***" or "*in My Father's house*" [Like 2:49].

IN the MINISTERIAL YEARS

Part of the ministerial years was His **training** for His ministry. He had **30 years** of **growing up** - in the **world** He was going to save! Before His birth, He had **no experience whatever** of being '**in the world**'! He was not 'called' by God to minister **until** He was 30 years experience of living in **sin-darkened** world! So **different** from myriads of angels worshipping Him purest light! As the years passed, He was '**increasing in wisdom and stature**' in **proportion** to the **human** experiences He was undergoing! The Son of God **needed** to learn the way you and I learned - through **contact** with and **interaction** with human beings - **and human life!**

Look: "*Although He was a Son, He **learned** obedience through what He **suffered***"! [5:8] He had no suffering whatever in heaven! Jesus was learning about human **nature** as opposed to Divine nature! Jesus had **feelings** as you/I and from these feelings He learned so much! He **learned** that even with an **unfallen humanity**, there is a great

need to pray! Sensing in the Spirit, and being **led** by the Spirit into the wilderness **to be tempted**, He spent 40 days and 40 nights in prayerful preparation! **APP** We need to **prepare** for spiritual battles! If the Son of God **needed** to pray for so long about the attacks of the evil one - how much more do you/I need prayer? Christ 'had to be made like His brothers' in preparing for life's challenges - only His preparation was conscientious, faithful, accurate, strict, exact in every detail!

*He had to be made like His brothers' in **temptation!** 'In **all** points of temptation! He also **particular** temptations that you/I do not experience. Regarding His **divinity** - *"If You are the Son of God....."*!! And in that connection, to suffer the correct quotation of Scripture but the **erroneous application** of it! The **abuse** of Scripture promises! After asking Jesus to throw Himself down from the pinnacle of the Temple, Satan quoted to Him from [Psa 91:11,12] saying, *"it is written 'He will command His angels concerning You.....they will bear You up, lest You strike Your foot against a stone'!"*! 'You will be all right, nothing can happen to You! Proper quote - improper application!

*Let us look at Jesus in a **social setting!** His **first public act!** Most of us, when called to 'witness' would seek an opportunity to **preach** - especially when we would have a captive audience who perhaps never heard the gospel before! A good subject might be 'The **holiness** of God! Well lets look at Jesus' first opportunity in public to 'have the floor'! It was a **wedding!** They ran out of wine! Have you ever been at a wedding when they ran out of **food?** I have! **Embarrassing!** Well Jesus' first public 'action' was **helping** this friend in an embarrassing moment An act of **kindness!** Whatever you think of this 'wine-making' miracle, we are told *"it manifested His glory"* [John2:11]. **APP** We too must be *"be ready to every good work"*! It seems Jesus took this 'golden opportunity' to display His love and mercy and care rather than thunder

forth on the many Laws they were breaking!

***Cleansing of the Temple!** He must have been looking forward to going to His Father's house. What a **shock** He would have got when He arrived! It was the **money changers** that disturbed Him **most!** The **outward** and **overt** breach of any of the Ten Commands is far **more** injurious to God's Cause than any legalistic practice and custom. It is the sins which the **public know** to be sins, that do the most damage. The sins of the Ten Commands are sins against God - thus *"the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on Me"*! And therefore the *"zeal of Your house has consumed Me"* as we have in [Psa 69:9]!! **Concern** for His **Father's house!**

Finally - Christ's **private ministry!** Oh, so **approachable!** No one seemed to have had any inhibitions in approaching Him - did they? Children always seemed to be near Him! Nicodemus had no problems in coming to Him (apart from his own personal inhibitions!) Zacchaeus found him so **understanding!** The **Woman of Samaria** found Him so gentlemanly. and gracious in correction! The **Woman** taken in **adultery** found Him so **forgiving!!!** We could go on, and on!! He had to be 'Made like His brothers' in order to save and bless them all!

AT the TIME of the CROSS

Well, He had to be 'Made like His brothers' **in order to** be a *"faithful high priest.....to make propitiation for the sins of the people"* [17]. That meant He had to suffer what all breakers of the Law had to suffer! God's **wrath** and **curse!** There were **two others** beside Him who were suffering that wrath as well! **What** was the grand **object** of Christ's Mission? What was the **one** overbearing **burden** in His life? *"I have a baptism to be baptised with and how great is My distress until it is accomplished!"* [Luke 12:50].

Jesus had to **remove** that curse that lay on His people! That involved two things - as the Second Adam, it meant taking the curse on to Himself, and doing what the **First Adam failed** to do - fulfilling the law on His people's behalf. As John Bunyan says He has a 'righteousness' for Himself, and a 'righteousness' to **give away** to others! You and I need to be **covered** with **that righteousness - Christ's!**

*When the time came for Him to go to make that - "*He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem*" [Luke 9:51 AV]. He was **no coward**. Now many humans have done most courageous things, many people have done great acts of heroism, but **no human** has ever had to **face**, far less **experience**, what Jesus Christ had to face and suffer on the Cross! Being 'made like His brothers' meant He **felt** every single pang just as any other human would have felt it! And so.....

When He **most needed companionship** He **longed** for it! He **asked** His 4 closest friends to **join** Him in the Garden before the crucifixion. But oh, what **hopeless comforters** they were. In **Gethsamane - too sleepy!** When **captured - "they all forsook Him and fled"** [Mark 14:50]! And being 'made like His brothers', Jesus **understood** that! He knew how ignominy, humiliation, suffering, disgrace, was **unpalatable** to human nature - so He understood.

But here is the difference - there **came** a point when He could **not understand** the pain He was suffering! It was the apex of His sufferings - when His Father turned away from Him "*Why have You forsaken Me*" You can imagine Him saying 'I can understand, and I can **bear**, Peter, John, James, Andrew, turning away - but Father - why You? I cannot understand that'!!

And yet in the midst of all that 'weakness', he was fully **conscious** and **aware** of all that was happening for we read that "*Jesus, knowing that all was now finished*

said (to fulfill the Scripture), I thirst” [John 19:28] And then after tasting the the sour wine, we read of the **positive active bowing** of His head in Holy submission to death - “he said, “It is **finished**,” and he **bowed** His head and gave up His spirit” [John 19:30]!

There is a sense, in which they did not kill Jesus for he **gave His life** - He **laid it down** - they did not take it away. This shows the **greatness** of our Saviour! It was, in fact, **when** He was ‘made like His brothers’ that He did the **greatest things** in His life!

EXPLANATION

The Lord’s Supper was instituted by Jesus Christ Himself. It was **designed** and **instituted** for **believers**, for their **spiritual nourishment**. It was to help them **grow** in **spiritual maturity**. It is a **feeding** and **strengthening** ordinance.

Therefore the person with the **minimum** amount of faith, **ought** to take the Lord’s Supper. It is **specially** for **that** person!! Because it is for the **increase** of his faith!

The Lord’s Supper is of **no use** or any value whatever to the person who **disbelieves** in God, in Christ, and in the Holy Spirit.

If you do not believe that there is a God, and that He has a Son, Jesus of Nazareth, and you do not believe in the Holy Spirit, then the Lord’s Supper will not benefit you at all! In fact, **judgement** comes on those who do **not believe** in God but nevertheless take the Supper. A person who **mocks** or **miscalls** or **ridicules** those who believe the Bible/God/Jesus, should not take the Lord’s Supper.

Those who **hate** the Bible/God/Jesus - and those who are **resolved** not to believe in these things should not take the Lord’s Supper. It is not for those who do **not believe** Jesus **died** on the Cross **to save** sinners from their sins.

The Lord's Supper is a **feeding** ordinance for **believers**. It is **spiritual food** for them. It is **only** believers who can possibly benefit from the Supper! In a mysterious way, Christ is present, and nourishes the souls of **believers**, ie, those who have **faith** in Him.

The Lord's Supper is appointed to be a **help** to us **to be more committed** and **to be more faithful** to God! Isn't that wonderful? **Have** you been praying for **more faith** and **love** to Jesus Christ? Then this is the place for you! This the **means** that God has appointed for you to receive more grace!!

Read – Romans: 3:21-24

1 Cor 6:9-11

Gal 3:10-14

Read – 1 Cor 11:23-26

Prayer “...set apart from a common to a holy use, such as of the bread and wine that will be used in this sacrament...”

BEFORE EATING

God said to Jeremiah: *"I have loved you with an **everlasting** love"* [Jer 31:3] And God says that to **all** of His people. Christ's love for you, for you who believe and trust in Him, is astounding. Not only is His love from 'everlasting to everlasting' in **time**, but it is **deep** in essence! Deep as the ocean! He will never forsake you! That is why He has asked **you** to come to His table and have fellowship with Him now!! It is because He loves you deeply and wants more of your fellowship that you are invited to His table. He has endowed **you** with some gifts! And He wants to **see** these gifts 'at work' in you, for Him! When stood at the door of the Church at Laodicea and knocked in [Rev 3:20], it was **not** an **evangelistic** invitation to come and believe the gospel! It was an **invitation** to come and have **fellowship** around a meal. It was Christ asking the ones He loved to 'Come and dine with Me!' That is what we have here - Jesus inviting His people to come and taste that the Lord is good, who trust in Him is blessed!

AFTER EATING

"I have loved you with an everlasting love"! That **ought** to keep you going for the rest of your life. Although you may forget it, He does not forget it and He will **practise** His love to you in all the circumstances you will find yourselves in. Remember, His ways are **not** your ways, and all the 'difficulties' of your future life are **planned** by Him for your good - in the long run! Apostle Paul said: *"I am **sure** that neither death nor life...nor **anything** else in all creation, **will be able** to **separate** us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord"* [Rom 8:38]. The **context** of these words are: *"...we are more than **conquerors** through Him who **loved** us"*!! Your salvation is based - **not** on your love to God - but on His love toward you!! That is known as **eternal security**!