

What's the Message – Lesson 93

Our study today is the second lesson from Jesus, and is entitled: Jesus as True Man.

Greetings in the name of Jesus, our Savior. Lord, we pray that You will open our hearts and minds to understand what it means to be a true man in Your sight, and with this understanding, help us to be the blessing to others that You have called us to be. Amen.

Last time we focused on the lesson that Jesus is True God, and this time our lesson title is “Jesus as true man.” Teacher, right away there is the implication here that being a “man” and a “true man” are somehow distinctly different. Would you explain that to us, please?

You are absolutely correct, Dale. There is a difference, but don't jump ahead of me too fast. There are two points that I want to make in this lesson, so let's take them one at a time.

First, in the early days of the Christian church there were heresies about Jesus being God but only appearing to be a man, that He wasn't really a man at all. But what does the Bible teach us? He was born into this world just like every other descendant of Adam and Eve. The angel Gabriel appeared to Mary as St. Luke records it in chapter one of his gospel, beginning at verse 26, and says: *You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give Him the name Yeshua.* As we explained in our last lesson, Yeshua becomes Jesus in English and the name means “God saves.” As Luke records the event, the birth of this “branch out of the stump of Jesse” (Is. 11:1), occurs in Bethlehem to signify the human heritage of being of the house and lineage of David.

Then a host of angels appeared to the lowliest of the low in that society – the shepherds of the region – and they came to witness this newborn child. It was a very humble beginning, but then the wealthy magi came from Persia to give honor to this very special baby, and referred to Him as “the King of the Jews.” We aren't told much of His early years, but when Jesus was 12 years old he, like other young Jewish boys, went through the bar mitzvah ritual and publicly

professed His faith as a follower of Yahweh by reading from the Torah. That same year he accompanied Joseph and Mary to the Passover Feast in Jerusalem, and amazed the teachers in the temple with His understanding and answers.

Then when he became an adult and began His ministry, He experienced a broad range of human emotions, as listed in the gospels. The list of descriptive words I am about to give our listeners each have a specific Bible reference, which I will not read here, but it will be included in the transcript of this study.

Jesus not only looked like a man, a typical Jewish man of His time, but He also experienced hunger from fasting and temptations from Satan (Mt. 4:1-2) . . . sorrow and fear in the Garden of Gethsemane (Mt. 26:38-39; Mk. 14:33) . . . exhaustion and fatigue in the boat to the point that He slept amidst a storm (Mk. 4:38) . . . thirst while on the cross (Jn. 19:38) . . . loneliness as many disciples left Him (Jn. 6:66) . . . hatred and rejection, yet love for friends that led Him to weep at the death of Lazarus (Jn. 11:5). He also wept over Jerusalem, knowing of the destruction that would come to it in about 30 years (Lk. 19:41), but in His State of Humiliation expressed His limited knowledge of when Judgment Day would come (Mt. 24:36). And He definitely felt pain and suffering at His death (Mk. 15:37). Jesus was not pretending to be a man, He was a man.

And that brings us to our second point. When we say that Jesus was “true man” we mean that He was in every way man as God had originally created him, with all the abilities that Adam had in the beginning.

As this “true man” Jesus stood in the face of Satan and the power of evil and resisted it. Contrast this behavior with that of Adam. Both Adam, and Jesus as “second Adam” were created in the fullness of the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27). Both knew the will of God and had the ability to walk within that will. The difference is not in their endowments, but how they used those endowments. Jesus resisted evil. Adam did not.

Jesus was content to let God be God, and man be man, and always put God’s will first. His total dependence upon the Father was

demonstrated on countless occasions; His thankfulness was constant; and His determination to do God's will knew no ends. As Rev. Swiggum has expressed it, "The tragedy of Adam's rebellion, from a human vantage point at least, was that he lost the capacity to be what he was meant to be. Wanting to be something that he was not, he became immeasurably less than he could have been."

"What can a man be under God? Behold Jesus and see! This is the thrilling claim of Scripture. The scope of His courage, the strength of His character, the stretch of His compassion, His unbending loyalty to decency, to justice, to integrity and to honesty – all are attributes which belong, by divine right and by divine decree, to men who give up their rebellion against God! The Heavenly Father has not just said that . . . He has demonstrated it in His Son, Jesus the man.

Behold the man . . . true man . . . man as he was created to be !"

Next time we will combine these two lessons and consider the question, why did Jesus need to be both God and man?