

Confidence in Christ – Jesus is our Pioneer

Goldstone Church – 09-Oct-16 10:30am

Hebrews 2:5-13

Introduction

We're continuing our series in the book of Hebrews, looking at the first 6 chapters. Hebrews 2:5-13 continues the focus on Jesus, but the focus moves on to Jesus' humanity.

Describing Jesus as the 'pioneer' of our salvation (v.10='author'), indicates that Jesus led the way and opened up the road for everyone to follow him – and is continually involved in bringing us along and showing us the way.

1. THE PIONEER'S HUMANITY (Hebrews 2:5-9)

The previous chapter emphasises Jesus' superiority, i.e. Jesus is better than the Old Testament prophets, and Jesus is higher than the angels. But some might argue that, when Jesus became flesh, this would make Him *lower* than the angels.

Not so! This is what makes Jesus so unique – Jesus is fully God *and* fully man. This is what makes Jesus the Pioneer of our salvation. The writer to the Hebrews emphasises this point (v.7-8) by quoting Psalm 8. Jesus really is the '*son of man*', who became '*a little lower than the angels*' for a short time; this was the *only* way that Jesus could achieve our salvation.

When Jesus stepped down from his throne in heaven and assumed our human nature, He willingly took upon himself three aspects of our humanity:

a) Jesus took on **Our Frustrated Humanity**.

Genesis 1:26 describes how Man was intended to be: "*Then God said, 'Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.'*"

Sadly, when sin came into the world, this image was corrupted and damaged. The result is our present frustration.

The verses from Psalm 8 outlines God's original purposes:

- i. Mankind was intended to be in a place of "*Supreme Favour*" with God, a place where God was mindful of him and cared for him (v.6b). Sin had messed that up.
- ii. Mankind was intended to be a creature with a "*Special Privilege*", only for a little while lower than the angels (v.7a). Sin had messed that up.
- iii. Mankind was intended to be a creation of "*Unique Dignity*", a treasured part of God's creation, crowned with glory and honour (v.7b). Sin had messed that up.
- iv. Mankind was intended to have "*Unrivalled Dominion*" over all creation, and to have everything under his control (v.8a). Sin had messed that up.

When Jesus came into the world, He knew he was entering a humanity characterised by frustration. Jesus had to take on our nature and become like us, but without the sin that ruined what we should have been.

b) Jesus took on **Our Suffering Humanity**.

Jesus was exposed to all the dangers of life. He was not protected from all the stresses, strains and troubles of life; His muscles ached, His family badgered him, the authorities persecuted Him.

When we're going through a dark valley, Jesus knows exactly how we feel.

c) Jesus took on **Our Threatened Humanity**.

The immediate consequence of Jesus taking on a human nature, was that He was exposed to the fear, agony and the pain of death. Jesus went through the physical sensation of dying (v.9).

If Jesus had remained in heaven, He would not have been able to die on a cross for you and me.

Today, let us remember Jesus' humanity. He knows exactly how it feels like when a close friend abandons or insults us. What it feels like when people misunderstand what we say or stand for. What it feels like to be hungry, tired, homeless, sad, disappointed, frustrated, etc.

Jesus knows all about our humanity – because He has experienced humanity himself.

2. THE PIONEER'S MISSION

(Hebrews 2:10)

This verse outlines Jesus' mission statement. *"In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the [pioneer] of their salvation perfect through suffering."* (Heb 2:10)

Jesus came, not just to share our humanity, but to *transform* it. Jesus came to remove the cancerous sin in our humanity, and to reinstate us to the perfection that God wanted us to be in the first place.

v.10 tells us three truths about Jesus' mission:

- a) In "*God's Wisdom*" and in His grace, God decided and He initiated this rescue plan. The plan for Man's salvation came from the very heart and mind of God. Jesus is the Rescuer; we are the rescued.
- b) God's desire is that "*Man's Destiny*" is to spend eternity with Him in heaven. The end product of God's rescue plan, is that Man is brought into the presence of God's glory.
- c) Even though everything Jesus said and did in His life on earth confirmed "*Jesus' Perfection*", the only way for Man to be brought into God's presence, was for Jesus to suffer the penalty that our sins deserved.

God's desire for each one of us, is that we spend eternity with Him in heaven. The proof that God is fully committed to this mission, is that He sent His one and only Son, Jesus, to provide the way for our salvation at Calvary.

3. THE PIONEER'S ACHIEVEMENT

(Hebrews 2:11-13)

v.11 tells us what happens when someone becomes a Christian; when someone accepts Jesus Christ as the Lord of their life.

"Both the one who makes men holy" ... (Jesus)... "and those who are made holy" ... (you and me)... "are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers [and sisters]."
(Heb 2:11)

When we are made holy through the blood of Jesus Christ on the cross, we become members of the same family as Jesus. In fact, Jesus is *shamelessly* pleased to have a close, personal bond and love-relationship with each one of us. Because of what Jesus did on the cross, we become his sons and daughters. We are part of God's eternal family; we are enveloped within a love-relationship that will never fail.

Today, even if our earthly family is imperfect and a constant challenge, as Christians, we are grafted into God's perfect family. Even though we don't deserve anything, Jesus has made us holy – we are clean, forgiven, and fully acceptable and right before God; a welcomed member of his family.

CONCLUSION

Some years ago, one of the most popular songs that was being sung in churches around the world was, 'Lord, I lift Your Name on High'. The chorus says:

You came from heaven to earth, to show the way
From the earth to the cross, my debt to pay
From the cross to the grave, from the grave to the sky
Lord I lift your name on high.

These words summarise and provide a wonderful insight into what Jesus has done for each one of us. The same Jesus that was enthroned in heaven, came to earth to pioneer a way for our salvation. He was lifted up on the cross, died a sinless death, and was buried in a borrowed grave. But the best was yet to come: Jesus rose from the dead, and ascended back into heaven, to sit again at the place of authority and honour, at the right-hand of God. What a Saviour!

- Despite the frustration, frailty, danger and sinfulness that Jesus' humanity had to wade through, out of His great love, Jesus still came down from heaven and pioneered the way for our salvation.
- Despite the shame, abuse, suffering and agony that Jesus' humanity had to suffer on the cross at Calvary, out of His great love, Jesus came down from heaven and pioneered the way for our salvation.
- Despite our undeserving nature, out of His great love, Jesus came down from heaven and pioneered the way for our salvation. The result being that Jesus can now call us holy. We are His brothers and sisters.

Our response can only be to bow down in worship and adoration of Jesus Christ, our wonderful Lord and Saviour. Jesus pioneered the way for our salvation, so it is only right that He has the first claim on our lives. Jesus rescued us – so let's give Him all the glory by the way we live our lives for Him - this week, and throughout our lives.

AMEN