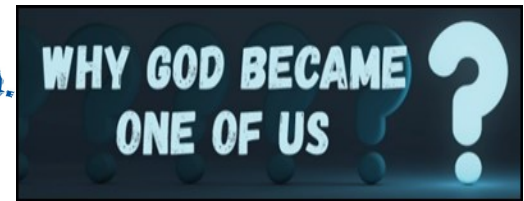


- ❑ Answer, “Where do I catch Jesus elevating the dignity of individuals?”
- ❑ Join Us Next Week for Part 4– Putting Religion in its Place



Classless
John 1:14; Luke 7:39-40; Romans 5:7-8
Message from Pastor Martin Hawley
December 9, 2018

The Bottom Line: Jesus came to elevate the dignity of the individual.

Introduction:

If you’ve ever been picked on for something you had no control over, it’s dehumanizing. It’s a strange thing, but it’s a human thing.

We want to feel superior, and the best way is to find a person or group we feel is inferior and power up.

We’ve probably all been guilty of this behavior outwardly or inwardly. Respect for the **individual** is not **natural**.

It’s way better than it used to be, and it’s better here than many other areas of the world.

Declaration of Independence

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed ...

This is self-evident only to those who choose to view humans through the eyes of our Creator. One reason Jesus came into this world was to help us do just that.

Review:

One of the unique things Christians believe is *God became one of us*.

John, an eyewitness, who believed and then disbelieved ... then wasn’t

sure what he believed ...then was exiled by Emperor Domitian to Patmos, where he had a long time to think about what he believed.

John was banished for what he believed because of what he saw. John 1:14 (NASB), “And the Word became flesh, and dwelt [pitched his tent] among us ...”

Jesus came as one of us, but he was treated as **less** than one of us. Why did he become one of us?

The Sunday school answer is he came to die for us, but there’s more to it. The first reason (we covered in weeks one and two) was to **communicate** and **demonstrate** what God is like.

When you read the Gospels, you can’t help but come away with another reason Jesus became one of us: to **elevate** the **dignity** of the **individual**.

Jesus entered a world where people were commonly treated as property.

There was even a slavery paradigm so deep that slaves had a pecking order: household vs. field vs. salt mine.

There were lower-class slaves.

Jesus came to address this distortion.

Jesus elevated the dignity of the individual through his **teaching**.

1. The Good Samaritan
2. The Trilogy of Lost Things
 - a. The Lost Sheep
 - b. The Second-Born Rebellious Son
 - c. The Woman with a Lost Coin
3. The Sermon on the Mount: Blessed are the poor in spirit.

Jesus elevated the dignity of the individual through his **interactions**.

1. Samaritan woman
2. Roman centurion’s servant’s healing
3. Zaccheaus and Matthew’s home
4. Interaction with children
5. Healed Peter’s mother-in-law

6. Sinful woman at the Pharisee’s home
7. Touched sick people and lepers
8. Promised paradise to a dying criminal

Jesus elevated the dignity of the individual through his **death**.

Romans 5:7-8, “Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates **his own love** for **us** in this: While we were still sinners, Christ **died for us**.”

Jesus saw only people not labels.

The Implications:

The Christian community should be the most non-discriminatory, it-doesn’t-matter-to-us-who-you-are group of people on the planet.

We should be famous for how well we treat people. Outsiders should be envious of how well we treat one another.

Taking our cue from Jesus, we believe ...

Everybody is somebody.

Everybody is somebody God loves.

Everybody is somebody for whom our Savior died.

Conclusion:

Repent: You lost your right to discriminate at the cross.

Repair: Is this a conversation or an apology? Stop denigrating and disparaging.

Homework: Continue reading the Gospels asking...

- What do I learn about the Father from the Son?
- Where do I catch Jesus elevating the dignity of individuals?

NEXT STEPS:

- Memorize: Romans 5:7-8**
- Read the Gospels**
- Answer, “What do we learn about the Father from the Son?”**