

God. In His providential care for us, He will not allow life circumstances to place tempting situations before us which cannot be overcome. If we place such temptations before ourselves it is our fault, not God's. The fact that Jesus has experienced being tempted **"in all points as we are, yet without sin"** (4:14) allows Deity to have an even greater awareness of what temptations pose the greatest dangers to us.

V. Giving More Earnest Heed (2:1-4). The great beauty of the Hebrew writer's encouragements to us is the fact that they are more than simply theological dissertations. There are very practical considerations that these truths should motivate. Chapter two begins with the words, **"Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away"** (2:1). All that Jesus has done for us; all that He became and endured will mean nothing to us if we "drift away." The writer reminds us that the **"signs and wonders"** together with **"various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit,"** were the means by which God was **"bearing witness"** to the validity of what Jesus and His apostles and prophets spoke (2:4). Just as punishment was demanded for those who violated the Law of Moses (2:2), the practical question which the Hebrew writer places before us is **"how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation"** (2:3)? May we in our own lives allow what Jesus became for us to motivate an ever earnest heed to all that God has spoken.

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November 6, 2016

Faithful Sayings



Services

Sunday: 9:00 AM
10:00 AM
11:00 AM
Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Elders:
Pat Ledbetter
Jeff Nunn

Deacons:
Steve Dixon
Ryan Ferguson
Arend Gressley
Ben Hight
Blake McAlister
Brady McAlister
Walker McAnear
Sam Nunn
Lance Purcell
Rusty Scott
Justin Smiley
Trevor Yontz

Evangelist:
Kyle Pope

Made Like His Brethren

By Kyle Pope

In Shakespeare's *Henry the Fifth* king Henry disguises himself before battle and goes among his people. While the people don't realize who he is, he speaks to them about himself saying: "…I think the King is but a man, as I am. The violet smells to him as it doth to me, the element shows to him as it doth to me, all his senses have but human condition." (IV.i.105-108). The second chapter of the book of Hebrews tells us about a time when the King walked among us; a time when His senses felt the "human condition."

To a generation, like our own, that was fascinated with angels (see Colossians 2:18), the Hebrew writer begins the book by showing that Jesus was superior to angelic beings (1:5- 13). While those divine messengers had carried the oracles of God (1:14-2:4), man was the focus of His plan of salvation (2:5-8). The writer offers as proof of this the fact that Jesus Himself, did not become like the angels, but **"lower than the angels"** in order to **"taste death for everyone"** (2:9 NKJV). The writer brings out four facts about this that serve as recurring themes throughout the book:

I. Perfection through suffering (2:10). The writer tells us that Jesus, the Author of salvation, was made **"perfect through suffering"** (2:10c). Jesus was not immune to pain. He was not sheltered from the harshness of the human condition. His humanity allowed Him to feel what it was like to suffer while **"being tempted"** (2:18). This put Him in a position to **"sympathize with our weaknesses"** (4:15). The perfecting to which the Hebrew writer refers was not the attaining of flawlessness, Jesus already possessed that. Rather, it was the completion of the task which made Him a

worthy High Priest. The Greek lawmaker Solon once said, "you must learn to obey before you command" (Diogenes Laertius, i. 60.6). While Jesus did not have to experience human suffering to become worthy of the right to command, having done so He more than deserved to be **"crowned with glory and honor"** (2:9b). The writer declared later: **"though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things that He suffered"** (5:8).

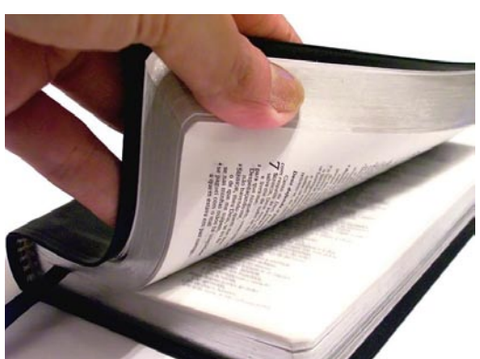
II. Unity with those sanctified (2:11- 13).

The word *hagiazō,* translated "sanctified" means, "to separate from profane things and dedicate to God" (Thayer). In most cases the one who sanctified something was distinct from that which was sanctified. An owner of a flock or herd dedicated the first-born from the sheep or cattle to God (Deuteronomy 15:19). The owner of a field dedicated it to the Lord (Leviticus 27:22). God set apart for Himself the Sabbath (Exodus 31:13a), the priests (Exodus 30:30) and the Israelites (Exodus 31:13b). Christ's humanity accomplished something quite different. In **"bringing many sons to glory"** (2:10b) through the gospel, He set them apart in sanctification to God. He did this while sharing their humanity. The writer tells us, **"both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are one"** (2:11a).

This oneness with the sanctified effects both mankind and Jesus Himself. The writer tells us because of unity with the sanctified, **"He is not ashamed to call them brethren"** (2:11b). While Christians certainly can bring Christ shame through sin (6:6), His humanity made our own adoption as sons possible. We are not illegitimate children. We are not the "black sheep" of the family. Because of who Jesus is He, the Son of the ruler of heaven, need not be embarrassed to acknowledge us as family. What a beautiful statement the writer recounts from Psalm 22:22, **"I will declare Your name to My brethren."** John, centuries after the Psalmist declared, **"what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God"** (I John 3:1). As children of the same Father, what love the Father has bestowed upon us that we and His Son Jesus are called "brethren!"

III. Shared flesh and blood (2:14-15).

Before the gnostic heresies that denied that Deity could become flesh; before the unauthorized church councils that sought to creedalize, rationalize and encapsulate the humanity of Christ; before the false doctrine of original sin forced theologians to claim that Christ's humanity was in some way distinct from the rest of Adam's seed; the Hebrew writer declared simply, **"as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same"** (Hebrews 2:14a). The word translated "partaken" ("share" NASB) is the word *koinoneō,* the verb form of the familiar noun *koinonia,* translated "fellowship" or "communion" in most translations. The word translated "share" ("took part" KJV) is the word *metechō* which combines the prefix *meta* meaning "with" and the verb *echō* meaning "to have." Jesus participated with us in humanity. He had, together with us, flesh and blood. He was **"in all things"** made like His brethren (2:17).



Olsen Park church of Christ

Jesus' sharing our flesh and blood was important for a number of reasons. First, as noted above, this fellowship with us in a fleshly body made Him fit to command those who are flesh. Second, without a shared human nature kinship with humanity could not be fully realized. We wouldn't be His brethren. Yet, the Hebrew writer points out a third thing that demanded shared humanity: the destruction (2:14b), release (2:15a) and liberation from bondage to death (2:15b). Three times in the Old Testament we find the simple assertion that God is **"not a man"** (Numbers 23:19; I Samuel 15:29; Job 9:32). The Hebrew writer will remind us later **"it is appointed for men to die"** (9:27). God could not have simply taken away man's subjection to death without compromising His own holiness. Only when God in the flesh chose to **"lay down"** His life and then **"take it again"** (John 10:17,18) could the justice and mercy of Deity be satisfied, and bondage to death be overcome. In doing this Jesus became a **"merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God"** (2:17b).

IV. Aid to the seed of Abraham (2:16- 18).

Near the end of chapter two the writer makes one final point which demonstrates Christ's superiority to angels and His focus on human salvation. He writes, **"He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham"** (2:16). God gave Abraham the promise, **"in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice"** (Genesis 22:18). In the New Testament we learn that this promise pointed directly to the coming of Jesus (Galatians 3:16) and indirectly to those who would have faith in Jesus (Galatians 3:29). A Christian is of the "seed of Abraham" because they have a kinship of faith. The Hebrew writer shows us that Jesus' humanity enables Him to "give aid" to the children of Abraham. The primary way that Jesus does this is in His capacity as our High Priest. In His death Jesus was "**offered once to bear the sins of many"** (9:28), but this did not end His efforts on behalf of mankind. The Hebrew writer tells us that Jesus **"ever lives to make intercession"** for His people (7:25). In this capacity Jesus' humanity is of great importance to us. An advocate who knows nothing about the problems, circumstances, pains and trials of the one he represents is in a poor position to stand before the judge on behalf of that person. On the other hand, a mediator who has shared common experiences with their client brings to their representation a passion, empathy and awareness which can affect the outcome of judgment.

In addition to this, the Hebrew writer suggests that Jesus can offer aid **"to those who are tempted"** (2:18). Paul told the Corinthians that God will not allow us to be tempted beyond what **"we are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape"** (I Corinthians 10:13). This tells us something about the expectations of God. He is not going to ask anything of us that we do not have the ability to do. It also tells us something about the oversight of