



RED HILL LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL

THE WEEKLY BRICK

February 21, 2010.

As you come to him, the living Stone, rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him—you also, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. - 1 Peter 2:4-5

Lenten Sermon Series: “Jesus Who?”

“How Human Was Jesus?”

Luke 4:1-13

Context:

Historically, Jesus has been understood to “possess” two natures: true God and true man. On Ash Wednesday, we examined the nature of Jesus’ deity. Jesus is God in human flesh that comes for His creation—you and me. Today, in this text from Luke’s gospel, we see that Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert where He is tempted by the Devil. Jesus, “true man,” endures physical hunger and is tempted by the devil in the very core of his being. Jesus’ resistance to the devil designates Him as the true Son of God.

Relevant Scriptures:

What does scripture say about Jesus’ humanity? Jesus was:

Born of a woman: Galatians 4:4

Had a normal body: Luke 24:39

Was stressed: John 13:21

Went to parties: Matthew 11:19

He was hungry and he was tempted:

Luke 4:1-3 Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert, ²where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry.

To understand this event, it is important to understand Jesus’ vocation as the “Son of God.” The Son of God in Luke’s narrative is the one who will carry out God’s mission of redemption in absolute allegiance to God.

Luke 4:3 The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread.”

1. Jesus’ fidelity to God is our salvation.

Luke 4:4, 8, 12 Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man does not live on bread alone...’⁸” Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God and serve him only...’”¹² Jesus answered, “It says: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”¹¹ ...¹³ When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time.

2. The temptations of Jesus are our temptations.

Luke 4:3, 5-7, 9-11 The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread.”⁵ The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world...⁶ And he said to him, “I will give you all their authority and splendor, for it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to.⁷ So if you worship me, it will all be yours...”⁹ The devil led him to Jerusalem and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. “If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down from here.¹⁰ For it is written: ‘He will command his angels concerning you to guard you carefully;¹¹ they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.’”

3. Jesus, as “true man,” knows and shares our circumstances.

Hebrews 4:15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. ¹⁶Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Prayer/Implications: Jesus as true man was tempted as we are yet without sin. Jesus takes up the battle with the devil and wins where Adam and Eve failed in the battle of obedience to the Father. Through the power of His Spirit, Jesus helps us to resist temptation and be faithful to our Heavenly Father as he was faithful.

□ **Day #1--Monday, February 22nd** Read: Jeremiah 29:11; Ephesians 1:4; Isaiah 44:2

As we begin this first week of Lent, the sermon will focus on a question about Jesus and that question’s impact upon our lives. In the BRICK, will be considering various aspects of our relationship with Jesus Christ. On Wednesday evenings during “Wednesdays in the Word” the study will be on “Ianity:” What would the church be without “Christ”

First, a little more background on the season of Lent. The word Lent originally meant “spring” and is to be understood as a time to reflect on Baptism and its basis in the death and resurrection of Jesus. Does the cross of Jesus define my life as a Christian? Do I see in the cross both God’s grace—how far God went to get me back and the claim of God on my life? Do I see in the resurrection both God’s condemnation of sin and death and God’s promise of new life in all of the “little deaths” that I will encounter? During Lent, you are called to change. What changes can I make in my life during these next 40 days that can lead me TOWARD God rather than AWAY from Him? During Lent, we are called to seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness—to strive for what God desires for us. What does God desire for you? God wants you to know and BELIEVE that He loves you with an everlasting love and that He has a plan and purpose for your life. Also, Lent is not just a season we reflect upon and apply only to ourselves. Our acts of self-denial and sacrifice are directed not only to Christ, but also to our neighbor. Christ himself told us wherever two or three are gathered in my name there I am in the midst of them. During this Lenten season, we will explore how we relate to and grow in our relationship with our Lord Jesus.

Going Forward: What am I willing to change in my life in order to grow closer to Jesus?

Prayer: *Out of the dust from which I was created may I experience your redeeming love, O God. As I begin this week, let me seek your desires and your will. Make me a vessel of your love. Amen.*

□ **Day #2--Tuesday, February 23rd** Read: Luke 14:27

In the movie, “City Slickers”, there is an exchange between the characters played by Billy Crystal and Jack Palance regarding the “meaning of life.” In the movie, Jack Palance holds up one finger and says to Billy Crystal, “The meaning of life is this one thing.” Billy responds, “The meaning of life is your finger?” “No”, says Jack Palance, “the meaning of life is this one thing.” What’s the ‘one thing’? asks Crystal. “That’s what you have to figure out,” replies Jack Palance. The Bible tells us that the “one thing” that is the meaning of life is Jesus. Jesus asks you to trust him with everything that you are and everything that you have. Everyday we have to decide if Jesus is going to be the center or if the center is going to be something else.

I know what you’re thinking, “Great. I can’t do this! How do I do this? How do I know when I’m doing this?” I am glad you asked. This is the spiritual life! You and I are challenged daily to surrender all to Jesus. We are to consistently ask the question, “What would Jesus want me to do in this situation and what would Jesus have me say to this person?” Let’s be clear. The goal of the Christian life and being a disciple is not “trying harder” but “training better.” What does “training better” mean? It means that we seek to make space for Jesus in our lives so that we can learn to live like him. We will be looking at specific “training tips” in the weeks to come. Jesus came to this world with the invitation and announcement that it is now possible to live in the presence and under the reign of God. It is the kind of life where people can look at us and say, “I didn’t know life could look like that!” God’s way is the “one thing” that is truly the meaning of life.

Going Deeper: Philippians 2:12; Philippians 4:4-9; John 8:31-32

Going Forward: What is the “one thing” that I am willing to live for?

Prayer: *Be our light in the darkness, O Lord, and in your mercy, defend us from all perils and dangers of this day and night; for the love of your only Son, our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.*

☐ Day #3--Wednesday, February 24th Read: Psalm 23:1

‘He that followeth me, walketh not in darkness,’ saith the Lord. These are the words of Christ, by which we are taught to imitate His life and manners, if we would be truly enlightened, and be delivered from all blindness of heart. Let therefore our chief endeavor be to meditate upon the life of Jesus Christ. Whosoever then would fully and feelingly understand the words of Christ, must endeavor to conform his life wholly to the life of Christ...Endeavor therefore to withdraw thy heart from the love of visible things, and turn to the invisible...He is truly great who hath great love...Do what lieth in thy power, and God will assist thy good will. (Thomas A’ Kempis: *The Imitation of Christ.*)

Going Deeper: Revelation 7:17; Exodus 15:3.

Going Forward: The purpose of my life is to live like Jesus lived and to love as He loved. God will give me the ability to do this as I turn to Him and let Him work in my life.

Prayer: *O God, who art truth, make me one with thee in everlasting love. Amen.*

☐ Day #4--Thursday, February 25th Read: Matthew 11:28

Remember the old “Uncle Sam” poster with Uncle Sam pointing and saying, “Uncle Sam wants you!” Guess what? God wants you! Read that again three times and each time accentuate one of the words: GOD wants me. God WANTS me. God wants ME! Do you believe that? At times in life it’s hard to believe that anyone wants us. Yet this is the message of Jesus: “I want you.” You are not beyond Jesus’ love, healing, or power. The beginning of any spiritual transformation or discipleship is ACCEPTING this truth. God desires you for His family today. This is the reality of grace. Martin Luther said it this way:

Now we have received from God nothing but love and favor, for Christ has pledged and given us his righteousness and everything else he has; he has poured out upon us all his treasures, which no man can measure and no angel can understand or fathom, for God is a glowing furnace of love, reaching even from the earth to the heavens.

God loves you and wants to change you. It’s because of God’s love for you that he wants to see you be renewed, changed, and healed. Christian author and writer, Max Lucado, reminds us of this when he writes, “God accepts us as we are. But He refuses to leave us that way.” Now that is something to celebrate!

Going Deeper: John 3:16; Romans 5:8.

Going Forward: God wants me for His family.

Prayer: *God, thank you that you want me. You want to change me and set me free. I turn to you and ask for your love, joy, and presence to begin to change my heart and mind so that I can live for you. Thanks for this day! Amen.*

☐ Day #5--Friday, February 26th Read: Deuteronomy 10:12

Why did God create you? To love you! You were created for God’s pleasure. When God formed you in your mother’s womb God smiled and couldn’t wait for you to grow and love Him back. We begin this week with three Biblical affirmations of why you are here on this earth.

1. You were created because God wants to love you. God wants to have a personal relationship with you! See Ephesians 1:4.
2. God has a plan for your life. God has created you with certain spiritual gifts, talents, and abilities. Part of living is discovering and learning what God has put you on this earth to do. One thing is certain, it always involves others. See 1 Corinthians 12:7-11.
3. You were made to last forever. This life is not our only level of existence. We will either live eternally with God or eternally separated from God. Rick Warren, in his book *The Purpose Driven Life*, says, “Life on earth is just the dress rehearsal before the real production. You will spend far more time on the other side of death-in eternity- than you will here...This life is preparation for the next.” See Ecclesiastes 3:11. When you remember these three truths, life takes on a whole new focus.

Going Deeper: Ephesians 1:4; 1 Corinthians 12:7-11; Revelation 4:11.

Going Forward: God put me here on this earth because He wants to love me!

Prayer: *My God, I pray that I may so know you and love you that I may rejoice in you. Lord of all, I worship and praise you for all that you are And if I may not do so fully in this life, let thy name go steadily on to the day when I come to that fullness. Amen.*

☐ Day #6--Saturday, February 27th Read: Matthew 4:10; Revelation 14:7.

God is the object of praise. Does it sound too simple? It is, yet it is also something that we need to be reminded of. My life and your life are about God, not about us. God put us here. God has a plan and a will for us and for this world. We can choose to live for God or live for ourselves. When we worship, either corporately or in the other aspects of our lives, we are saying, “God you are the reason I live

Going Forward: What obstacles sometimes hold me back from making God the object of my worship?

