

The Everyday life of Jesus Christ: *A Reflection on its Implications for Christians Today*

Scripture: *Hebrews 2:14-18 & 4:14-16.*

Exegetical Big Idea: The *reality*, the *reasons*, and the *results* of the everyday life of Christ were so that He would completely identify with us both in His sinless life, and in His self-sacrificing death on the cross to make the gospel experiential in our lives.

Introduction

Christmas is a just little over a month away. At Christmas we celebrate the first coming of Christ to live in our world for approximately thirty-three years. The NT Gospels, however, cover only about three years of the earthly life of Christ. From **Luke 3:23** we know that Christ began to minister at the age of about thirty years old, and from all the four Gospels, we know that He ministered for a period of about three and a half years before He was crucified, buried, resurrected, and ascended to heaven.

Because the four NT Gospels only offer us the record of the three-year ministry of Christ, we have naturally tended to ignore the unrecorded thirty years of the everyday life that Christ lived here in our world. This has created a gap in our understanding and our appreciation of what the everyday life that Christ lived here in our world means for our Christian faith and our Christian lives.

Heb. 2:14-18 and **4:14-16** help us, in three ways, to fill in this gap that we have in the Gospels about the everyday human life that Christ lived here in our world. First, these two passages remind us about the *reality* of the everyday life of Christ. Second, they point us to the *reasons* for the everyday life of Christ. Third, they present to us the *results* for us, of that everyday life of Christ.

So, Godfrey will come down and read these two passages for us now and we'll then reflect on what these **3R's** from the two passages teach us about the everyday very human life that Christ lived in our world, and the implications of this for our own everyday Christian lives today.

I. The Reality (Heb. 2:14 & 17)

- 1) We read in **Heb. 2:14** and **17** that Christ Jesus shared in our humanity, and that He was made like us in every way. With these words these two verses remind us about the reality of the everyday human life of Christ.
- 2) First, these verses remind us that Christ Jesus, like all human beings, began His human life as an embryo in his mother's womb. Like all human beings, He was born after nine months and, as He was coming out of the womb of Mary, like all human babies, He cried in the same way that most human babies cry when they are being born. Like all human babies, He was breastfed by his mother, and He had his nappies changed by His mother.

- Luke 2:40** says this about the infant Christ: *And the child grew*. How did he grow? He grew up like all human children. Perhaps, like all of us who resemble one or both of our parents, the face of Christ Jesus bore a resemblance to the face of His mother Mary.
- 3) We read in **Luke 2:41-50** that Jesus was presented in the Temple by His parents at the age of twelve. **Luke 2:51** tells us that as a teenager Christ Jesus chose to submit in complete obedience to His parents. After that we read nothing again about His everyday life until we read in **Luke 3:23** that He began His ministry at the age of about thirty. So, we have these eighteen long years of silence about the everyday life of Christ. What happened in those years?
 - 4) Well, when we read in the Gospels that Jesus was a carpenter, the Greek word that is used for the word *carpenter*, is *tekton*. *Tekton* refers to someone who was skilled not only in woodwork, but also in the use of stone, metal, and other building materials. In the days of Jesus, the *tekton* was a versatile and skilled craftsman who made or repaired agricultural implements, domestic furniture, and fishing boats. The *tektons* were frequently hired for contract work in public building sites. They would normally have a village workshop as a home base, but often they would travel around the countryside with the tools of their trade, seeking employment from private or public employers on the farms, with the fishing fleets, and in the cities on new building projects.
 - 5) During His twenties, therefore, Jesus must have traveled extensively around Palestine working as a *tekton*. This is why His parables display such familiarity with so many aspects of everyday life in the Palestine of His day. As an itinerant *tekton*, Jesus was likely to have been a familiar figure around the shores of Lake Galilee and Capernaum, using his skills among the fishing fleets to make and mend boats, furniture, and farm implements for the local people. When Jesus eventually embarked on His public ministry, it is quite possible that some the boats he frequently preached from on the shores of Lake Galilee were boats that He had mended or actually helped to build! And it is very possible that some of the fishermen He would later call to become His followers were men who would have known Him earlier as a *tekton*. Isn't that interesting?
 - 6) The Palestine of Jesus' day faced many social, political, and economic problems, just like our own world today. For example, there was a great deal of tension between tenant farmers, and wealthy absentee landlords who owned large tracts of land because the tenant farmers often had to pay exorbitant land rent to these wealthy land owners. There was continual tension between the Jews and the Roman colonial government because the Jews had to pay taxes to the Romans that they considered to be very unfair. Sound familiar?
 - 7) Christ Jesus, in other words, was not some isolated holy ascetic who suddenly burst on the scene out of nowhere at the age of thirty to begin His preaching and teaching ministry. He lived an everyday working life within the cultural, social, political, and economic struggles and tensions of His day, just like we do today.

We can therefore summarize **our first R** by saying that when **Heb. 2:14** and **17** tell us that Christ Jesus shared in our humanity, and that He was made like us in every way, they remind us about the *reality* of the everyday life of Christ.

II. The Reasons (Heb. 4:15 & 2:17-18)

- 1) **Heb. 4:15** and **2:17** give us two reasons for the every day life of Christ.
- 2) We find the first reason in **Heb. 4:15**, where we read this: *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 He never sinned.* Here, the writer is informing us that Christ lived a normal everyday life just like we do, but without sin, so that He could totally identify with us in all the frustrations, weaknesses, difficulties, and temptations we face in our everyday lives.
- 3) For example, Christ grew up in Nazareth where there was a Roman military base just outside the city. The historical records indicate that the Roman soldiers routinely discriminated against the Jews who lived in Nazareth and its environs. This suggests to us that, as a resident of Nazareth, Jesus could very well have been the victim of racial discrimination, and that he can therefore identify with everyone of us here who today, at one time or the other, has been a victim of tribalism or racism.

Or, think of the anguish Christ Jesus must have experienced to obey the call of God the Father and leave His home and family to go into full-time ministry. From **Matt. 12:48** we get the impression that His family repeatedly tried to get him to stop preaching and return home. It seems they never came to terms with His leaving them to go into full-time ministry.

Again, we know from **Mark 6:3-6** that when He began His ministry, the people of His hometown could not accept Him because they kept saying: *But this is our tekton, we know Him, and we know His family!* We know from **John 6:66** that even those who believed in Him often disagreed with what He preached and they often walked out on Him. Again, think of His betrayal and His abandonment by His followers just before He went to the cross.

- 4) So, Christ Jesus experienced in His everyday life the frustrations that come from being misunderstood by friends and family and the pain and suffering that we experience from our frustrated efforts in life's tedious and wearisome everyday routines. He can identify with us not just because He is God, but because He went through it all just like we do every day. This is why the writer declares in **Heb. 2:18** that: *Because He Himself suffered when He was tempted, He is able to help those who are being tempted.* This total identification with us is therefore the first reason we draw from these passages for the everyday life that Christ Jesus lived here in our world two thousand years ago.
- 5) We see the second reason in **Heb. 2:17** that reads like this: *For this reason he had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people.* You've heard me say this before, but please allow me to say it again.

Because God is completely holy and righteous, our sins spiritually separate us from Him and place us under His righteous judgment. This is why Paul wrote in **Rom. 6:23** that the wages of sin is death, meaning spiritual separation from God. In order for us not to die for our sins, we need God's forgiveness of our sins. This is why, throughout the OT, the people of God had to sacrifice the blood of bulls and goats to atone for their sins.

- 6) This same writer of the Hebrews epistle, however, reminds us in **Heb. 10:4** that *it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins*. This is obviously because it is human beings like you and I who sin against God, not the innocent sacrificial bulls and goats. So, ultimately, it requires the blood of a human being to atone for the sins of human beings. So, either we die for our sins ourselves, or we find someone to die for us who has no sin of His own to die for. Because only God Himself has no sin, and because God, being our Creator, is the only one who can represent all of us, because of His great love for us, God became this real human being in the form of Christ Jesus who lived this very normal everyday human life like you and I, so that the blood of a human being who had no sin, and who could represent all human beings, would be shed to permanently atone for our sins, as the writer informs us here in **verse 17**. This is the great good news we call the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- 7) So, we can summarize **our second R** by saying that the two *reasons* for the everyday life of Christ was first, so that He would completely identify with us both in His sinless everyday life, and second, that He would identify with us in His self-sacrificing death on the cross to atone for our sins.

III. The Results (**Heb. 2:17** & **Heb. 4:14-16**)

- 1) We see two wonderful results for us of the human life of Christ in both **Heb. 2:17** and **Heb. 4:14** where Christ is referred to as our merciful and faithful High Priest in heaven.
- 2) In the OT, the high priest, on the Day of Atonement entered the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle or the Temple to make atonement for the sins of the Israelites with the blood of bulls and goats. Whenever the OT high priest entered the Holy of Holies, he wore on his chest a breastplate containing twelve precious stones that represented the twelve tribes of Israel. This meant that, spiritually speaking, he carried the twelve tribes of Israel on his heart into the presence of God. The Israelites could enter God's presence only because they rested on him, the high priest. He represented them before God, and he bore and he brought all their burdens with him before God.
- 3) For us, the first result of the human life of Christ, therefore, is that, as our merciful and faithful High Priest in heaven, Christ made a perfect and one-time atonement of our sins on the cross, not with the blood of bulls and goats, but with His own sinless human blood. When we place our faith in what He did for us on the cross, and we repent of our sins, we receive God's forgiveness, and we are indwelt by the Holy Spirit to become spiritually born again. This is the first result for us of the everyday human life of Christ.

- 4) The second result for us of the everyday human life of Christ is that, as our merciful and faithful High Priest, just like the OT high priest, Christ brings us on His heart before the throne of God, and we enter God's presence because we rest on Him. Christ Jesus, as our faithful High Priest in heaven, is our representative before the Father, both in His sin-bearing death, and also in the sinless everyday life He lived here in our world.
- 5) The Apostle Paul explains this in **Rom. 6:1-3** by writing that, spiritually speaking, when we place our faith in Christ, when Christ died on the cross, *we* died on the cross with Him. In this same way, as far as God is concerned, when Christ lived His perfect sinless life here in our world, *we* lived a perfect life. This is why Paul declares in **2 Cor. 5:21** that God regards Christians as righteous because He has credited to us the righteousness of Christ. We never stand before God based on our own merit, but always and only, on the sinless merit of Christ, our heavenly High Priest! Christ Himself put it like this in **John 14:6** - *No one comes to the Father except through me*. That declaration refers to our relationship with God both *before* and *after* our salvation. Listen to how the hymn writer, Charity Bancroft, put this in her hymn that we just sang; *Stanzas 1 & 3*.
- 6) This is why in **Heb. 4:16** the writer declares that, in Christ, we can now approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. This teaches us that all of God's spiritual and material blessings come to us, not because of our good deeds or our religious performances, but only through Christ. This includes every spiritual and material blessing we receive from God in answer to our prayers. The Apostle John affirms this in **1 John 1:9 to 2:1** where he writes that, if and when we do sin as Christians, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the Righteous One, so that when we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and He will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. *Hymn – Stanza 2*.
- 7) So, we can summarize **our third R** by saying that the profound spiritual results of the everyday life of Christ for us are first, to win our salvation when we place our faith in His atonement for our sins, and second, that it is through Him that we now receive all of God's spiritual and material blessings.

Conclusion

I hope that these **3R's** give you a renewed appreciation of why and how Christ came to live and die and rise again for our salvation and spiritual transformation. I also hope that these **3R's** give you a new understanding of why, in a little over a month, we will once again celebrate at Christmas the first coming of Christ into our world.

I'll end with an illustration of these **3R's** that I hope you'll find helpful.

Let us pray!

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Tigoni,
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