

In this morning's reading, we encounter the humanity of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ was (actually is) fully human. God, took on human flesh, and became a man. And Jesus was **fully** human. He started out as an ordinary baby – don't you believe for a minute, that Christmas carol that says, "But little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes". The bible never says that – It's just poetic licence, that strips Jesus of His true humanity.

Jesus never sinned, so I'm confident He **was** a very well behaved child, but He still cried when He needed a feed. He would have cried when He filled His nappy with poo... Can you imagine that? Can you understand, what it cost a Holy and Powerful God, to become fully human – without cutting any corners... If I was doing it, I would've skipped the part where I had no bowl control... But God didn't... The Lord our God – God the Son – became fully human, and He didn't cut any corners...

And we see this, in today's reading:

- He had a home town.
- He had a family.
- He suffered rejection.
- He suffered grief, when His good friend and cousin, John the Baptist, was beheaded
- There were times when He just needed to get away from everybody, and just be alone with God...

Jesus Christ, is fully Human. And it's actually important, that we understand this, and here's a few reasons why:

1.

Firstly, Jesus had to be fully human, so He could redeem those who were condemned by the law.

Galatians 4:4, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, ⁵ to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.

God's law is perfect. But you and I, well we just can't seem to keep it. But Jesus did. That doesn't mean that Jesus wasn't tempted – He was tempted alright. Otherwise there would have been no victory over sin, if there was no battle. For Jesus to defeat sin, He had to battle it...

And Jesus was born under the law, He lived under the law. He kept the Law, and so He could die as the perfect sacrifice, to redeem (to buy back) those who **were** condemned by the law.

2.

A second reason, it's important for Jesus to be fully human, is because this allows Him to sympathise, or empathise with us, in **our** weakness. We cannot say to Jesus, "You don't know what it's like"... We can't say that, because He does....

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

Because Jesus knows and understands, the struggles and pressures of being a human, He's very willing to give us

mercy. He's very willing to give us grace. He sympathises with you and I in our weaknesses – He knows all about it, and so Jesus Christ is ready to be merciful.. to us.

3.

Thirdly, another reason that it's important that Jesus is fully human, is so that He could lead the way with the resurrection. 1 Corinthians 15:35-49, talks about how through the first Adam – an earthly man, death came. But how through the last Adam – the heavenly man, life...

And the fact that Jesus was fully human, and was raised from the dead, to eternal life, is a demonstration of the resurrection for us. A dead man has already been raised to a heavenly body – eternal life... So too will those who believe in Him

4.

And the 4th reason I'm going to share with you today, that it's important for Jesus to be fully human, is because Jesus is the mediator, between us and God.

Where I'm working, often with the Fulton Hogan crew, there's a whole bunch of people, at whole different levels of authority...

- I haven't even met the big boss (in St George here)...*
- Unlikely to meet the big boss of Australia...*
- But even (Barnesy is his name) who is one of the managers who floats around the sites – even he, isn't really approachable for a pleb like me....*

- *If I had an idea that I thought was worth while sharing, I don't actually feel I could take it to him... He's too high up the food chain, and he wouldn't even know who I am.*
- *And if I felt a need to offer a suggestion to this fella, I reckon I'd feel a whole lot better going through an intermediary... I'd take my idea to my boss of Trimroads, and if they thought it was a good idea, they would approach the Fulton Hogan managers on my behalf...*
- *I would need an intermediary, because they're high up the food-chain, and I'm pretty much at the bottom...*

Now, if that's the case in a simple work place, how much more do think, that we might need an intermediary to represent us before God?

1 Timothy 2: ⁵ For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,

When we pray, we pray to God, through the Son – through the man Christ Jesus. **He** is the one who takes our prayers, makes them acceptable, and presents them to God.

- We do not ask an angel to take our prayers to God
- We do not ask another man to take our prayers to God
- We do not pray through Mary
- We do not pray through someone who's been 'canonised' as a saint
- We do not pray through a pope or a guru
- You do not pray through me, or any other minister

Yes, we do need a mediator to get our prayers to God, but – and there is **one** mediator between God and men, the

man Christ Jesus. There is an unbiblical teaching in some denominations (most notably the Roman Catholic), that says your prayers will be more effective if you put them through what they call a saint....

Rubbish... you have a mediator far more effective and far more powerful – Christ Jesus... Your bible says “**there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.** Go straight to Him... Pray to the Father, But Christ brings you and makes you fit to be in the presence of the Father – He is our mediator.

Isn't that wonderful???

- Jesus saved us from the death penalty that we deserve, by having lived under the Law
- He sympathises with us in our weaknesses, and is ready and willing to give us grace and mercy in our time of need
- Jesus the man has been raised from the dead, opening up the way for **our** resurrection;
- And Jesus mediates between us and God, making our prayers worthy and effective.

So, this morning, we had plenty of evidence of the humanity of Christ.

Jesus **is** fully human....

But He is also fully God.... And once again, in this morning's reading, we see Jesus doing things that only God can do:

- Jesus performed miracles
- He filled a king with terror

- He fed 5000 men, plus women and children, with just 5 loaves and 2 fish
- He had compassion
- He healed the sick
- He walked on water
- And simply by touching His clothes, people were made well

Yes, Jesus **is** fully human, but at the same time, He is fully God. Now, I can't get my mind around that – I don't think anyone **really** can...

But it's important that Jesus is fully God, because God did not send a nobody to do his dirty-work for Him. God loves us, and in Christ, He demonstrated the depth of that love...

God loves us so much – He loves the world.. so much, that He himself, came to save it... God, lived as a human. God was rejected by the town of Nazareth. God was mocked and beaten and ridiculed. It was God who was nailed, naked and humiliated to the cross.

God went through all that, to save us from our sins.

Fully human. Fully God... Read this section of Matthew, and you can only come to that one conclusion – Fully human, and yet fully God.

That's what we discover about Christ, but what about ourselves? Where do we fit into all this? What lesson can we possibly have from today's reading? ...

Well, I feel today, is a lesson on rejection, and faith.

(play little clip of “Coming Home” theme for “Local Hero”, Mark Knopfler)

Can anyone guess why I played that little clip? Does anyone know what that piece of music is?

It’s the first movie score that Mark Knopfler ever wrote – “Coming Home”, the theme from the movie, “Local Hero”... Do you know why I played it now?

Jesus came home – their local hero... But when He got there, it wasn’t like a valiant football team coming home – He just wasn’t that welcome... Oh yeah, the locals came along for a bit of a look (I mean he was a **bit** of a hero – he’d gone away, and he was making a name for Himself), but they just couldn’t get past the fact that , “Who does he think he is? We know who he is He’s just one of us”.

Jesus is God, and yet His home town rejected him. And many of us know very well, the quote “*a prophet is never welcome in his home town*”. ... But the unfortunate thing is, most of us take that as an excuse to do nothing... Yeah, I can’t do anything much for God here, because everybody knows me... and doesn’t the bible say, “*a prophet is never welcome in his home town*”?

But the point and the emphasis of what Jesus was saying, wasn’t that He shouldn’t have gone to his home town – the word of God still had to be preached there , and He did it. I think what He was saying to us, is “Don’t be disappointed, when those who are closest to you reject the message of the good news.

When Jesus said “*a prophet is never welcome in his home town*”, He was **not** saying “Give up on it”... What He was saying is, “You’re in good company”... When you read the Old Testament, most of the time, the prophets of old were rejected by Israel... Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, and the list goes on and on, and largely, these men were rejected by their brothers.

But in contrast to that, there’s one prophet who was listened to... Do you know his name?... Jonah... And out of all of the prophets, Jonah was the one who was sent to a foreign nation...

The prophets were not welcomed in their home town... But does that mean that they stopped? No... And neither does it mean that we should... Keep on sharing the good news of Jesus Christ, and if you get rejected, well that’s fine – you’re right there in the company of the prophets...

But what makes us keep going, even if we get rejected????
I’ll tell you what keeps us going – Faith.

All things are possible in God. When Peter stepped out of the boat and kept His eyes on Jesus, he walked on water too... but as soon as he took his eyes off Jesus, He began to sink.

Now, do you think Jesus wants us to have faith so we can do magic tricks like walking on water??? I don’t think so... He’s got bigger things than that in mind.

Last week, we had the parable of “the hidden treasure” and “the pearl of great value”... The good news of the gospel is

really really good... It's worth giving up everything else to pursue...

It's even worth sharing... As long as you love people that is, and want to see them saved... It's worth sharing... even if you do get rejected most of the time...

- Because by faith, we believe that this is true
- By faith we know the predicament that we all need to be saved from
- And by faith, we know that, although many will reject this good news, others **will** receive it, and they will be very glad that we didn't give up....

By faith, let's keep our eyes on Jesus - fully human and yet fully God – the saviour of the world.

Amen.