

## **The Humanity of Jesus and Temptation**

The combined deity/humanity of Jesus is somewhat difficult for our finite minds to comprehend. However, that he was human is an undisputed fact of Scripture (and secular history). He was born of woman (Jeremiah 31:22; Galatians 4:4) in a body of flesh (Hebrews 10:5). The same particular word for "child," is used to describe both him and his fully human cousin, John (Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:66). He was given the male gender (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:5). The Scriptures give evidence of his humanitarian and spiritual growth and progress (Luke 2:52). The Bible describes for us many events and thoughts in the life of Jesus that point to his human inclinations: sleeping, eating, attending weddings, shows of emotion, spending time with friends, etc. That being the case, it still makes it little easier to understand how he could be both man and God at the same time.

Obviously, Jesus had powers and abilities exceeding that of mere men; but it must be understood such powers were not available for personal satisfaction or desire. For example, during his wilderness trial with Satan, it becomes apparent his ability to exercise the miraculous for personal benefit was a temptation he had to overcome in the flesh (Matthew 4:3-4). He had to face it with his knowledge of and relationship with his heavenly Father. We see he developed this from a sincere devotion to the truths and assurances of God's Word (Luke 4:16; Matthew 4:4, 7, 10).

Have you ever wondered how Jesus was able to overcome not only the physical agony of the cross, but the very real temptation to exercise miraculous power on his behalf (Luke 23:35)? He had assurance from God's Word. Make no mistake, the anxiety of certain physical death and bearing the crushing weight of sin was overwhelming, but in his heart, he knew that the Holy One of God would not be left in Sheol (Psalm 16:10). Although he felt forsaken (Psalm 22:1), he knew God did not truly hide his face from him (Psalm 22:24). He knew he would rise again from the grave, victorious through his Father over death (Acts 2:31). Though Jesus, the man, did not see his resurrection, by faith he accepted its truth and was sustained by the truthful words of God through the darkest hour of history.

Understanding that he faced temptation as a man should afford us much strength, and help us accept his merciful intercessions on our behalf (Hebrews 4:15; 7:25). As we follow his example (1 Peter 2:21), we take heart that our temptations truly will not be greater than we can bear (1 Corinthians 10:13). We are given no less information, and certainly no less assurance concerning God's promises than was "the man" Christ Jesus. And with every temptation, God has made, or will make a path of retreat, that we might "resist the devil" (James 4:7) in the mighty example of our Lord, Jesus the Christ. Jesus Christ overcame the world (John 16:33), so that we might do the same through him (1 John 5:3-4)!

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