

The Human Face of the Cherubim

by Keith Malcomson

This sermon delves into the human face of the cherubim, emphasizing the message of the four distinct seasons in the human Christian life. It highlights the importance of understanding and embracing our humanity, the individuality of each person, and the weakness of humanity, all while recognizing the compassion and intervention of Christ in our lives.

Scripture: Ezekiel 1:10, Luke 19:10, Luke 7:36, Luke 15:11, Luke 22:44, Luke 19:41, Luke 10:30, Luke 16:19, Luke 24:30

Topics: "Embracing Humanity", "Seasons of Christian Life"

Description

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Transcript

I want you to go to Ezekiel chapter 1 and verse 10 again this morning. We're going to part 3 in our series, the four seasons of life, the four seasons of life. We've already dealt with two messages on nine aspects of these four cherubims that speak to us.

We don't even have time to list them here this morning. Go back and listen to those two messages in order to give you the backdrop of this, but I want to move straight on here. My message here this morning is part 3 in this series, dealing with the four seasons of life.

I've called this, I might change the title before we post it online because I think I had another title, but it's just gone from my mind. There's some things I do ad-lib as I go along Roland, but the title I'm going to give you now, it may change by the time it hits online, is the human season of life, just to give it a title. We're going to deal with this first of the four faces, the human face of the cherubim.

I believe there's a message here for us, but let's just read one verse together, Ezekiel chapter 1 and verse 10. As for the likeness of their faces, they four, all four of them, had the face of a man and the face of a lion on the right side, and they had the face of an ox on the left side. They four also had the face of an eagle.

Let's pray. Father, I do pray that again this morning that you'd speak to us individually and cooperatively as the church, the body of Christ, that you'd show us what you want to say through these creatures, through these living creatures that dwell in your very presence. Lord God, they're zealous for your glory and for your honor.

Lord God, I pray, will you speak out of the midst of the fire? Will you use them to bring us a message to the redeemed of the Lord? Now, what we are to be as Christians, what the reality of this Christian life is, and how we walk as Christian through every season and realm of life. Father, I pray that this human face of the cherubim, Lord God, will you speak by your Holy Spirit? Will you open up our eyes that no matter the season, we can live for Christ. We can live this Christian life, Lord God, with the same faith, the same love, and the same obedience, whether it's summer or whether it's winter, whether the leaves are falling off the trees in autumn.

Lord God, we can live for the glory of the Lamb of God. Father, I pray, put a shout in our heart, Lord God, concerning Zion this morning. Now, victory shout, O God, that you've redeemed us by the precious blood of the Lamb, that our sins are forgiven.

That's more than feeling our emotions, our circumstance. My God, we are redeemed men and women, and Lord God, we give you glory, O God, that we're not perishing in hell, that we're not sitting, O God, with our brains blown with drugs, our immorality, our dead religion, but O God, that we have a living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Lord God, bless your word this morning.

Let your Holy Spirit open up the word of God and lead us into all truth, that you might be glorified in Jesus' mighty name. Amen. This one simple verse, we've gone through these creatures, their hooves, their wings, their eyes, extraordinary vision in Ezekiel 1. But now, this morning and over the following three weeks, I want to deal with the four different faces of each of these cherubims, because I believe there's a message in these four faces.

It says here in verse 10, as for the likeness of their faces, now the word likeness means the closest resemblance. And hear this very carefully, it's not saying this is exactly what they look like. It's not saying that this vision is explicitly and literally exactly as it appears.

In fact, in Ezekiel 1, we're told very carefully that this is the likeness. This is as close as we can get. This is the only thing that we can use to describe these living creatures.

As best as I can, I have to use the face of a man, the face of an eagle, the face of a lion, and the face of an ox. That is as best as I can describe it. In other words, this is a glorious, spiritual, supernatural vision.

And in the midst of seeing these literal, actual, living creatures that are real beings, this is what they are. As Ezekiel looks at them, he says, as best as I can describe them, this is their likeness. So I want you to be aware of this.

And this is the reason, because here in Ezekiel 1, the cherubims have four wings. When you go over to Revelation chapter 4 to chapter 6, they have six wings. So there is a distinction here.

They are the same creatures, the same four creatures. And yet in one place, four wings, the other place, six wings, and there is more symbolic meaning behind that. When you read Ezekiel chapter 1, each of the four creatures have four distinct different faces.

But when you go over to Revelation chapter 4, you don't have four distinct faces. Each creature is a different creature. In other words, the first living creature looks like a lion, the second like an eagle, the third like an ox, and the fourth like a man.

And yet they are the same creature. Now this could partially be that they are shape changers. You remember what Christ taught us, concerning angels, or what the apostle taught us concerning angels, that you ought to entertain strangers, visitors who come through, Christians who pass through the city or through our midst.

You ought to entertain them or have them in your house or make them a cup of tea or make them a meal or have them to stay over and be careful because it could be dangerous. I'm saying that just as one aspect. But why are we told to entertain strangers? Do you know why? Some have entertained angels unawares.

In other words, an angel came to visit them and they were utterly unaware. They couldn't tell it by the features or the conversation. There was nothing to give that away.

It seemed like a man, looked like a man, spoke like a man, and yet it was an angel that was there in your home. And so the Bible teaches you ought to be pleasant. Can you imagine that you shutting the door on the face of an angelic being? Can you imagine that you missed the opportunity to have a cup of tea with Gabriel or Michael or one of the cherubims? I'm not being silly or flippant, but I'm saying what the Bible actually says is a real potential that some unawares have entertained or have provided for an angel not realizing what they're actually doing.

So we realize that angelic beings can take other forms. They can change their shape, their appearance, their likeness, their form. Maybe if we've seen some of these angels, we would tremble like Daniel did in the Old Testament or like John in the New Testament.

He fell down and began to worship. And what did they say? Don't do that. Don't worship.

You only worship God. But the appearance of the angelic realm can be so extraordinary that you would quake or get sick or collapse. It is an extraordinary thing.

And so we have here is the likeness of these creatures. As Ezekiel looks at these living creatures in Ezekiel 1, each one of the four creatures has four distinct faces. It also says in Ezekiel chapter 10, 14, and every one had four faces.

Each one had four faces. The first was the face of a cherub. The second, the face of a man.

Notice it comes second here. In chapter 1, the first face looking at you is that of a man. In chapter 10, it's the second face that's listed.

And the third, the face of a lamb. The fourth, the face of an eagle. Then over in Revelation chapter 4 and 7, it says, and the first beast was like a lion.

The second beast like a calf. The third beast had the face of a man. And the fourth beast was like a flying eagle.

So whether we look at this first, second, or third doesn't really matter. But we're going to deal with these four faces because they represent something. We've already seen that the cherubim, all of their faculties

have a message for you and for I. They actually reveal something of redeemed humanity.

Of what it is to be born again, washed in the blood, saved out of this world, made a spiritual being. Remember, being full of eyes is to be filled with the Spirit. Remember those wings is the heavenly life that you're not living as a part of this world.

Each of those nine things show us something and they have a message. It's not just a vision of a creature. It has a message.

All these things were written for your learning. They're written to correct you and encourage you and to instruct you and to help you. They're literally revealed to us so we learn something about the spiritual life.

But when you look at Ezekiel chapter 1 verse 10, let me just explain it for a moment. The four had the face of a man. In other words, in this description in verse 10, what it seems to be saying is the front face looking directly at Ezekiel is the face of an actual man.

The front face looking forward on each of the creatures, the most prominent, the first face, the one that you see first. You know, you don't recognize someone by their hand, do you? My hand is my hand. It's very personal.

But you rarely look at someone's hand and say, oh, that's Keith or that's Jason or that's Tom or that's Sally Ann or whoever else. You rarely do that. You know what you do? You look at the face and go, ah, I reckon that is such and such.

In other words, the face reveals who you are. It's the countenance. It's the identification.

It's the personality. The face reveals who I am. It identifies me.

In other words, if you can see the face, you understand the person. You know who the person is. You know the character of the person or the ways of the person.

And so in verse 10, what we have is the face of a man was the most prominent, the forefront one. The first one or the one that met your gaze at the first and the face of a lion on the right side. So think about you've got four faces.

The front is a man on the right side is the lion's face. And then on the left side is the ox's face and the eagle is on the back of the head looking back the way it was the four faces. But the face of the man is the most prominent and it's looking forward.

I want you to see that each of these creatures, they had one body, they had one head, but they had four faces, one body, one personality, and yet they have four faces. I believe the four faces represent four distinct seasons in the human Christian life. Very, very different, radically different, yet the same person.

This is one creature with four faces. And what we're going to deal with in these four messages is one person or one church or one preacher with four distinct faces. And every Christian is going to experience this at a different stage in your Christian walk or a different time throughout each year where you're going to walk through a season.

And I'm not being mathematical or measuring this out or giving you dates or months of the year. I'm not doing that. I'm just talking there are seasons and periods of time that you see all through the Bible.

These four beasts represent the four seasons of life that we're going to look at. We know that our entire year is broken into winter, spring, summer, and autumn. We've just left summer.

I was very sad about that. We began to enter autumn and I thought we'd missed autumn and jumped to winter. At first I thought we'd literally jumped straight there and forgotten autumn.

Then suddenly autumn begins to come in. The beauty of autumn. I've forgotten how beautiful it is.

Everything changes color. All the leaves begin to fall. I am enjoying autumn season.

It's different than summer. It's different than winter. All of them have their disadvantages.

All of them have their good points. But you know what? Nobody can live in summer. Nobody can stay in summer.

Nobody could survive in winter by itself. And so in the Christian life or the spiritual life, you cannot just dwell in one season of life. You can't just dwell as a man only.

Neither could you be like a lion all the time. Or you couldn't function like an eagle all of the time. If you ever meet an eagle Christian, there is always an eagle.

Every meeting is an eagle manifestation. There's something wrong with that. If you get a church and it's always summer, every meeting, every preaching, every experience of life, all of it is mountaintop experience.

I want to tell you that's a shallow church. There's something very wrong. I'd want to know why aren't you going through a winter season? Oh, I don't want to walk through a winter season.

Don't you know that God has ordained winter? Don't you know winter is good for you? Don't you know autumn is good in your spiritual life? When all of the leaves begin to fall off, everything changes color. And here you are trying to hold on to everything. Don't you realize if you don't pass through death, you can't enter into life again? If you don't have an autumn, you can't have a springtime.

If you don't have a winter, you're not going to come back through to summertime. And so all of this balances out in a tremendous way. And I believe in these four distinct faces of each cherubim.

There is a message here. The Bible speaks about four very often, the four corners of the earth. It's not saying the earth is flat.

For anyone online, the earth isn't flat, okay? Don't send me emails or make comments on any video. I'm not interested. But the earth isn't flat.

I want to tell you. It's a globe. It's circular.

I've been up in a plane. I've got eyes. Anyway, cut that out.

There are four winds of the heavens talking about the influence of God on the earth. There are four gospels in our New Testament, which give us four different faces of the Lord Jesus Christ. In other words, the number four speaks about entirety or the global worldwide aspect or a fullness or entirety.

In other words, when you look at four, you've covered everything of the full circumference of the year, or the full vision of the Lord Jesus Christ, or the full aspect of the different seasons of the Christian life. This is what God is trying to show us. God has set four seasons in our year.

You see, He is sovereign. He is mighty. He is powerful.

You know, He's got a purpose for the four seasons of nature. When you go back to Genesis chapter one, and you read of the six days of creation, notice day four. What is day four? I believe day four ties into this.

On day four, God created the sun, the moon, and the stars. Genesis chapter one and 14. And listen to what it says.

Why did He create them? To divide the day from the night and let them be for signs, for seasons, and for days and years. When were the four seasons created? On the fourth day of creation. In other words, God had a divine purpose.

He split light from darkness, night from day. He actually introduced seasons that had unique, unusual purposes, and where these four seasons are going to work together. You know what the Bible says? Until the end of time, seed time and harvest will never cease, no matter what man does, no matter all the chaos, and the pollution, and the wars, and the weapons.

You know what my Bible says? There's always going to be seed time and harvest. All of this process, no matter what man does, no matter if it looks like he's going to destroy everything. I want to tell you, God has put in His purpose different seasons of time.

And you know what? You are going to get sun in Ireland in the year to come, and you are going to get rain, and you are going to get frost, and you are going to get leaves falling off. God has ordained these things. They're not accidental.

And you know what? Each of them has a totally radical, different purpose, and effect, and influence. There's a season in your life you'll walk through, and you'll go, I don't like this. That doesn't mean God's hand isn't in it.

You may say, I want to be like an eagle all the time. Praise God, so do I. I love eagles. You may say, I want to be courageous like a lion all the time.

Very few say, I want to be like an ox all the time. Oh, we'll get to the ox all right. It's a season.

It's a time. It's a part of your Christian life. But you don't get many people saying, I wish I could perpetually be in the ox season.

No, no, no. You want to be an eagle, or you want to be a lion. But we're going to deal here this morning with this man face, or that season of man.

And so we see that God has introduced seasons on the fourth day of creation. And in those seasons, they are appointed. They are fixed times, or they are seasons that work together hand in hand.

If you only had a summer, it would be disaster. If you only had a winter, it would be a disaster. You need the mixture of this.

If you only had mountain top experiences and no low valleys, shadows of death, it would be bad for your spiritual good. The giants are important. The trials are important.

The suffering loss that you don't understand is absolutely vital to your spiritual walk. If it was all God blessing you, answering all your prayers immediately, you'd say, oh, but that's what I want. Isn't that the Christian life? Give me, give me, give me, get, get, get.

Do you realize how that would destroy you? Just any one of your children, keep giving them every day, everything they want. Keep them happy. Keep them on the mountain top.

Keep giving whatever the request is immediately. You know what that would do to the child. You may think, no, I'm sure it will be okay.

No, you will destroy that child. There's got to be curbing. There's got to be boundaries.

There's got to be a removal. You know, growing up as a kid, Candace had the same two different families, two different continents, two different countries. I never asked my parents for a thing growing up.

I never stopped in the shop window and say, can I have that? Can I have that? Can I have that? Now, I don't know whether it was my education in that home and whether it was done early enough. You didn't ask for anything. Maybe it was my generation.

And now we so lifted the restraints. It's give me, give me, give me. You never done that.

Never, never. Candace was the same growing up. They never asked for things.

You got given things and you're glad to have them. Now, we give the kids everything. They don't appreciate anything they get in this generation.

It's broken after an hour. They throw it down. They don't like it.

They don't thank you. Something has changed. You know why? We've tried to give them one sunny season in raising children.

You better introduce an autumn season in that home. You better introduce a winter season in that home. You better have a spring time and of course a summer, but it balances out.

Any one season alone would destroy you. And if it was only the human face, if that's all it was, it would be too much for any one of us. Listen to what it says in Psalm 8 verse 4. And this is the Psalmist speaking.

What is man? The dark mindful of him. You God, why would you look on me? Do you know when we begin to deal with the face of a man, humanity, what you are as a person, do you realize if we see correctly, we're going to be in awe and say, what is man? What am I? That you God would even look upon such as me, a worm like me. I mean, when you see yourself as a man, you know the problem in the church, too many people get too big for their boots.

They get redeemed, forgiven, saved. They think they know everything. Christians are terrible for this.

They are proud. They are arrogant. They are willful.

Sinners aren't usually, but as soon as a man gets a bit down the road, you can't teach him. He knows everything. And you know what? They get in a position, they're arrogant, and they look down on everyone else.

That is a very, very dangerous position. What is man? The dark mind of him, or the son of man that you visited as him. For thou has made him a little lower than the angels and has crowned him with glory and honor.

Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands. Thou has put all things under his feet. This is an extraordinary thing.

Let me add, I'm just building some things here for a moment. Very fascinating. When you go to the tabernacle in the Old Testament, you know the tabernacle, 40 years they walked through the wilderness, the entire people of God.

They are 12 different tribes. They marched as a tribe. They camped as a tribe.

They were organized as a tribe. An entire family having grown out of one man and an entire military force and family has grown up. Do you know when the tabernacle camped at night and it was laid up and the priests began to minister in there and the glory cloud was over it and God revealed himself and manifested himself and spoke in there and they made sacrifices.

Do you know the 12 tribes camped in round the tabernacle? There was three to the north, three to the west, three to the east, and three to the south. Each of those three camps had a flag. Listen to me very carefully.

When you go into scripture and begin to look at Numbers chapter 2, you see that they were camped, all 12 tribes, in groups of three, four groups of three, and each of those three tribes had a standard, a different flag with an emblem. Now the Bible doesn't tell us what was on the flag. The Bible doesn't explain or describe what was the emblem or the symbol, but you know Jewish history does and you know what they tell us.

They say the four flags at the four different points of the tabernacle, one of them was a lion, one of them was an eagle, one of them was an ox, and one of them was the face of a man. This is all the old Jewish historians and scholars, they tell us to the south of the tabernacle was the camp of Reuben, along with the tribe of Gad and Simeon, all three tribes, and their standard was risen and it had the emblem of a man's face. I don't think this is accidental that the four standards and emblems of the entire people of Israel, whether they camp or whether they march down the road seeking God's will, do you know what a standard is for? It is a gathering place.

In other words, when the standard is raised, this is where you gather, this is where you need to be, you need to be in your position. A standard is a military emblem for gathering, for stirring, for equipping, and for making ready. And so we see that Reuben was camped under the standard of the human face.

All this is going to tie in. You see from Genesis all the way through Numbers, all the Ezekiel, then the Revelation, you have these four faces everywhere throughout Scripture. Do you think that's accidental that it comes up time and time and time again? And so they're on four different sides of the tabernacle, but here is Reuben is the embodiment of this human face.

Listen to what it says, Jacob prophesied to Reuben in Genesis 49 and three, and we begin to understand something of this human element. Reuben, my firstborn, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity. In other words, that man symbol, that's what it represents, the best of humanity, the best of what a man is, the glory of birth, and the excellency of power.

Then he gives another prophecy. I wish he had stopped there, but he says, unstable as water, thou shalt not excel. Do you realize with humanity, with man, there's great potential, but great weakness? And that's what this human face represents.

It is looking at the human element of our life. I wish it was always lion or eagles, sometimes oxes, but I wish we could be free in our Christian life of the human element. Do you realize as a man, you can live as a Christian in this world? Because with man, there are thoughts, there are emotions, there are struggles with sin, there are fights against the devil.

You don't have to face the devil as an eagle. You know, when you ascend as an eagle, you know what the eagle does when the enemy comes? He locks his wings. I'm giving you a story.

One of these days, I'll do a series on the eagle. That eagle locks its wings and it flies into the sun. It doesn't fight the enemy.

It doesn't engage the enemy. An enemy comes, it just turns towards the sun, locks its wings, covers its eyes, and it simply goes for the sun. No enemy can pursue after that eagle.

It's extraordinary. But you know what? As a man, I'm going to have to face many, many real things. I'm going to have to face valleys.

I'm going to have to face a winter time. I'm going to have to face all the realm of humanity, all the experiences of this human life. I wish I could live above the earth, but no, you're going to live your Christian life in this world.

You're going to face the devil. You're going to have all of the emotions. You're going to feel like giving up at times.

You're going to face trials along this way, and you're going to feel like throwing in the towel. And yet the human face says, march on, Christian soldier. Stand your ground.

All you feel is the humanity of this walk, but that's fine. You know, with all that's gone on in my life, I feel like a man. This isn't a lion season, I want to tell you.

This is not an eagle season in my life. You know, all I feel is to be a man, but it doesn't stop me preaching or praying or reading the Bible or evangelizing. You know why? I am a man.

I don't have eagle feelings or lion-like feelings. I don't even feel the intensity of labor. You know what? All I feel is the numbness of my humanity.

I am dominated by a season where I'm thinking naturally and facing everything as a man, and it's not easy. In the book of Kells, I'm just piecing all this together for you. In the book of Kells, and all you Irish people should know this like the back of your hand, the book of Kells, or sometimes called the book of Columbus, was written and drawn about the year 800.

It's an extraordinary copy of the four Gospels in the Irish tongue and it's one of our greatest treasures in this entire country. One of our oldest treasures, one of our greatest treasures. And on the opening page, there are four pictures of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

That's the opening page. Do you know what they're depicted as? A man, a ox, an eagle, a lion. In other words, the four authors of the four Gospels have been depicted by the old ancient Irish church that was still in revival from the days of Patrick and reaching out all across Europe to evangelize.

When they come to the four Gospels, they connected it to the cherubims of Ezekiel chapter one. That is extraordinary, I want to tell you. And I believe that each of the Gospels, and a lot of the old Christian writers, this is what they do, they lined up the cherubims with the four Gospels.

And so Bible teachers have frequently and often, when they come to Matthew, they reveal Christ as King in Matthew. And dealing with Christians, they talk about the kingdom of God. You're a kingdom citizen.

Or when you go to Mark, it's the servant, it's the ox. Matthew's the lion. Mark is the ox.

Luke is the man. We're going to come to that. And John is the eagle.

And so you have this unity. And it doesn't matter if you don't believe this or no point arguing over these things. They're just symbols to teach us and to instruct us.

When you come to Luke's Gospel, the dominant theme is Christ as the son of man. Listen up very carefully. The Gospel of Luke that is actually the Gospel of humanity or man, or Christ the man, he's revealed as the son of God.

When you come to the New Testament, the term son of man is used 88 times in our New Testament. 25 of those times appear in Luke, more than any other book in the New Testament. So Luke reveals Christ as the son of man or the divine Messiah as a man, his humanity more than any other New Testament book.

When you go into the Old Testament, you find the same term son of man used 88 times in the Old Testament. Guess which book uses it the most? It is the book of Ezekiel. Sorry, let me say that again.

In the Old Testament, the term son of man is used 101 times. 93 of those times is in the book of Ezekiel that we're reading about the cherubims. So in other words, the main book in our entire Bible that reveals the son, the title, the son of man, it's in the book of Ezekiel.

It dominates there. 93 times Ezekiel uses it in an extraordinary way. Now, I want to tie this right together here for a moment because I believe that this human face reveals the humanity of you and I, of the church of Christ, but also of the Lord Jesus Christ.

His humanity is revealed in Luke. It's revealed in Ezekiel. Christ came as the son of man.

He came from heaven. He didn't stay in heaven. He came from heaven with the divine mission, a divine calling to walk as a man amidst you and I. You know what we also are called? Not to come from heaven.

We are called to come from earth, to walk as sons of the most high God, that in the humanity of our flesh, that we'll live in the light of eternity and heaven coming. And you know what? In wintertime, that is not easy. And when we're in the valleys of life, that isn't easy.

And when all our prayers aren't answered, that is not easy. But you know what God is doing in even denials to your prayers? He is raising up sons unto himself. If you want to stay a spoiled little brat in the house of God, just sidestep the dealings of God.

Get in a tantrum when you don't get your way. Don't trust him and say, you are God. You're my God.

You're sovereign. All I am is a man. All I am is a woman.

Begin to demand. Throw your toys out of the pram. Begin to rip everything up around you.

You know, there's nothing worse than a spoiled brat on the high street, in the shop, in the church, at a mealtime. I'm in a spoiled brat that demands, that's rude to parents, that speaks anything. You know, I'm sitting there.

I haven't had children, but believe me, I've got the Bible's authority. I can tell you how to raise your children. I know how you ought to raise your children.

I don't need to be married. When I was a single guy, I used to teach on what a husband used to be. They could have said, well, who are you? You're not married.

You don't have children. I've got an authority from God and I've got a bit of common sense. Most of those kids, I tell you, they don't even know what they're trying to do.

They're going to destroy those children, make them reprobates and children of hell. What a crisis and disaster. But when we come to this, we begin to see that the gospel of Luke reveals the image of a man.

And I want to look at this before we close. And Luke's gospel, which is the gospel of the son of man, it reveals the humanity of Christ. It reveals the humanity of man himself and how God deals with our humanity in a real way.

The book of Luke or the gospel of Luke is the longest gospel of the four. It begins earlier, it ends later, and it's extraordinary. And I've got three points for you here.

I want you to listen very carefully as we go into Luke. I want you to see this emblem. I want you to look in the face of the cherubim.

You're not going to look at a lion today. You're not looking at the eagle today. We're not looking at the ox today.

You know what? We're looking straight into fire, spiritual life, extraordinary manifestations. I care about the glory, but I'm going to force you to look into the face of a man. You see, we get so spiritual.

We don't think as a man, as a redeemed man, as a human being with all my natural thoughts, that I can be a blazing fire for God. That's not true. You know what? We are only men.

That's the best of what you are. And yet we can come out of the midst of the fire and all of the glory of our humanity. You know Christ hungered, didn't he, when he was tempted, when he's in the wilderness.

Is he less God? Is he less the son of God? You see him hungry. You see him tired. You see him sleeping.

You see all of the elements of his humanity in our New Testament. And you know what? He's held forth as a man. He wasn't 50% man and 50% God.

That's heresy. He was 100% God and 100% man. He was absolutely a man in all of his faculties, in all of his understanding.

He grew in wisdom. How can you do that unless you've grown as a man? He knew what it was to be hungry in his belly and to have thoughts in his mind of maybe a hamburger that didn't have that then, of maybe a lamb chop that was kosher. These are very, very real things.

You know what the Bible says? He was tempted in every manner as you and I were. Don't tell me he was tempted. Don't tell me he didn't understand that.

Don't tell me the tears in Gethsemane saying, please let this cup pass from me. Don't tell me he didn't really experience that grief of heart, confusion in his mind. Oh, he was never confused in his spirit, but there were thoughts, battles, struggles, grief, sadness, crying over his friend Lazarus.

You know what the Bible portrays is a man of man, the perfect man, the God man, 100% human, born of the Virgin Mary. She didn't remain a virgin. There's no perpetual virginity.

But I tell you, he was born of a virgin. No man touched that woman until he was conceived and brought forth. But I've got three points I want to bring you here from Luke.

Number one, when you look at Luke as the gospel of man, humanity, and the son of man, what you actually see is the entirety of humanity. Let's look for a second into the gospel of Luke. And as we do, you see, Luke is not like Matthew any more than a man is like a lion.

Do you hear what I've just said? I'm going to show you something here that if you understand, it'll radically change your view of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. We lump them together. We read them together.

We begin to think they all say the same thing. They're the same. No, they're not.

They're different. They're written for a different purpose. They have a different emphasis.

They're revealing a different aspect of Christ. They're teaching you different things. If you read Matthew and Mark and Luke together, thinking they're all the same.

Oh, they just all say all the same things just a bit differently. Absolutely not. You're not understanding this at all.

When you come to Luke, you don't see a lion, an eagle, or an ox. You see a man. You need to hear this.

So the gospel of Luke was given to you to convey the humanity of your own person and the humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ. And so when you look, for example, at the three gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, sorry, Matthew, Mark, and John, they give records of the 12 being sent out on a mission together. Only Luke speaks about the 70 being sent out everywhere.

The 12 are sent to the house of Israel. The 70 are told, go into every city. And so when we come to Luke, Luke was the only Gentile writer in the New Testament.

If Ruth had any influence in the Old Testament, Ruth is the only book named after a Gentile in the Old Testament. But in the New Testament, Luke is written by the hand of a Gentile. In other words, the vision is bigger than Israel.

It's not narrow. It's not focused on elect people. It's not nationalistic.

When you come into Luke, you're getting a broader worldwide perspective. That's why when Luke deals with the genealogy, or genealogy to be more accurate, of the Lord Jesus Christ, it doesn't go back to Abraham like it did with Matthew. You know where he traces right back to Adam, showing that Christ has a connection all the way back to Adam.

And the plan is the redemption of mankind. It's extraordinary. When you begin reading Luke, you read the word sinners 16 times.

Do you realize it is the most, there's only one sinner is mentioned outside of Luke. And so when you come into Luke, you begin to see the humanity of the entire creation. It's worldwide.

It's global. It's the Gentile world. And why Christ came into the world to save not only the Jew, not only Abraham's race, but in this human book, it's given you the full aspect of the entire humanity.

And you know what? He begins to deal with sin and with sinners. You don't have a savior without a sinner. You know in the churches where they don't want to talk about sin, you lose the savior.

You lose the reality of a Christ coming to save the very worst of sinners. When the gospel of Luke opens up, listen to what the angels sing. Good will to some men, all men.

In other words, the birth of this child is good news to all nations, all men, not only to the Calvinist select, but every single sinner. Also, we read a bit into Luke, how that Simeon, the old man of God, begins to prophesy. When he looks at this babe and he says, this is a light to lighten the Gentiles, not only for Jerusalem and Israel, this little baby is going to shine a bright light right across our world.

As you begin to read through Luke further, you read the words, redemption, redemption, redeem, and grace. You know, grace is only found in Luke and it's found eight times. The words saved, salvation, and savior keep coming up through Luke.

So as you look at Luke, you're seeing a broad perspective of mankind, that we are sinners, that we have come into this world. We are children of Adam. But you begin to read of redemption and of faith and of justification and of God's plan to save mankind.

This is the message of the gospel of Luke. He uses the word sinners more than all of the rest. And he talks about faith in a very specific way.

And he doesn't make any mistakes. Listen to what it says in Luke chapter 5, 31. Jesus answered and said unto them, they that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick, I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

And so the whole message of Christ, Christ the man is being revealed. I came from heaven. I came from glory.

Why? For sinners. I'm on a mission for sinners. So as you read Luke, and as you see the face of the cherubim, you know what you're seeing? You're seeing the entire message of this gospel of humanity.

And you know what? It's no good having a church that's only a lion and only an ox and only an eagle. We need a church that goes, I was a sinner. I know what it is to drink deeply of sin, but I've been redeemed by the grace of God.

I've been saved by the power of God. I was a sinner like you. My life was destroyed like you.

I had ruined myself like you. My life was destroyed, but you know, there's a worldwide plan. I've got a commission from God.

You know, like Christ was sent as the man, not sent as the God into the world. He was born of a virgin, sent to redeem men. He came walking amongst us, like us, speaking like us.

He came with a Galilean dialect, not the dialect of Jerusalem. He come with a real brogue, and he began to speak as the people, and he grew as the people, and he lived amongst the people, and he healed the people, and he brought the gospel to the people. That's who Christ is.

You know, when you see this human face on the cherubim, you're seeing you're going to operate as a man in this city, and as a Christian woman in this city, you've got all your feelings, and all your frailties, and all of your past failures, but you've got a wonderful testimony of the grace of God, and a blood redemption, and of salvation, and now you've got a commission, and whether you're in the workplace, or the home, or with family, you know what you're saying? I'm here with a message for you. They look on you with a human face. You're one of us.

Some of you sound like us. I'm trying to sound local. I got such a compliment the other day.

I was in a shop here, and the man, he thought it was a local. It was the best compliment I ever had. First time I ever got mistook for a limerick person.

Some of you are going to call me a liar afterwards, but in Luke chapter 19, verse 10, it also says, for the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which is lost. This is when we see the cherubim's face. We are seeing the commission of God.

He's not sending you as a God man. He's not sending you as an eagle to evangelize. You know what? He's sending you as a man, a man, a woman who bleeds, who cries, who can get sad, or heavy in heart, someone who gets tired, and weary, hungry, who feels the elements of the day.

You're sent as a man. You see, when we feel like a man, we go, it's not evangelism day today, not prayer time today, not a day to worship God. I don't feel God.

Since when do you have the right to make that choice? I'm walking through the valley. I can't praise God in this valley. I've lost my wife, so I can't worship or shout in the house of God.

Who says that? I want to tell you, when you're feeling your humanity most is when God can reveal his fire most. Don't let your humanity hinder the gospel. You may be there going, I don't feel the anointing.

I don't feel the stirring of the Holy Spirit. I can hardly remember the scriptures today. Maybe with your mumbling words, your weak efforts, you could reach a soul for the Lord Jesus Christ.

You know, over the years, when I've been on a low par, low plane, I've been amazed at how God used me. The second point, the individuality of humanity. When we go into Luke and begin to read it, you're going to notice something very, very unusual.

You see, Luke was a doctor. Luke was a trained, educated man. And you know what you notice about Luke? He notices things that Matthew doesn't notice, and John doesn't notice, and Mark doesn't notice.

Luke picks up on the most unusual, insignificant things. But more than that, that's why I call it the individuality of humanity. When you come to Luke, it is the gospel of individuals, of persons, of men and women.

You realize Luke hones right in on the individual. It's not the multitudes. It's not the mass.

There's suddenly a real awareness of you as an individual person and of the compassion of God towards you, and that the Holy Spirit picks up on things that nobody else sees about your life. Luke records the compassion of Jesus towards the widow of Nain in chapter 7. This compassion that he loves this woman, that he cares about her. Don't miss the detail.

God has written this so you see that God cares about you and your needs. God cares about you when you're not even caught up with him. He notices you.

He's moved with compassion. He's moved for you when you're in trouble, when you're crying out, when your heart's broken. You know what? He cares about you.

It's a very human book. And the depths of his mercy to the woman that was a sinner, also in Luke chapter 7, the compassion of the Lord Jesus Christ. He cares about individuals.

You know, when you've got a human face, you care about people. You know why? I've been where you are. I've bled like you bled.

I've hurt. I've struggled with sin. I've fallen into a pit.

I was bound with drugs like you are. I had to fight the devils of hell. I had to fight thoughts of atheism or suicide.

I've been there. I understand this. You know, if we so remove ourself, we evangelize like an eagle, or we come like a roaring lion, I'm going to evangelize you.

The poor thing thinks you're going to devour them. Why not come as a man to go, this Christ saved me. I move with compassion.

I see your need. I see the struggle. I see the fight in a very real way.

The story of Zacchaeus hiding in the tree. Who noticed him? Christ stops. Do you know, Zacchaeus is only talked about in Luke.

You don't read about him elsewhere. And what do you see Christ in? Come down. I see you.

You don't think I see you. I see you. You're trying to spy on me.

Oh no. You've got it back to front. I'm spying on you.

I've got a plan for you. God turns everything around. You see Christ is the God of the individual.

It's not worldwide alone. It's not the masses. It's not the multitudes.

It's not faceless numbers. He knows you, Sean. He knows you, Sean.

He came looking for you. Isn't it wonderful that it was no accident? It wasn't that he offered and said, is there anybody who'll have me? Like some poor unmarried man who said, is there anyone? Highest bidder? I'll try and help you with this. I'll throw in a few offers.

Christ wasn't going and saying, is there any sinner will have me? He wasn't doing that. You know what? He was going, I'm going to have you. And I'm after you.

And I care about you. And I see you. I'm going to get right inside your house.

I'm going to get right inside your mind. And so Luke's gospel is the gospel of the individual. Notice the people he pulls out more than the other three gospels.

He makes an emphasis about women more so than Matthew or Mark or John. He emphasizes the Samaritan. You wouldn't notice this unless you study it, unless you really note it.

He'll just drop the term Samaritan where others haven't mentioned it. And Samaritans were bad people, really bad. They were half-baked.

Then the tax collectors, he notes them where the others don't talk about them. He speaks about the outcasts and he constantly brings you back to the poor. Being poor isn't a curse.

It actually shows in Luke, it's a blessing that really turns things on its head. And so we see that a gospel of the face of man is very important. With this cherubim, you need to understand in your Christian walk, if you're going to operate spiritually as a church, you need to understand we have a human element.

We have a human season that we pass through. I come into a prayer meeting, I don't feel any goosebumps going up and down in my back. My hair doesn't stand on end.

I don't feel the anointing. Oh, brother Paul, do you feel the anointing coming down? Do you feel the presence of God? And per you, you're scared to say you're standing there. I don't feel anything.

I just feel nothing. I feel it's a dead, hard, dry prayer meeting. You know what? There's a time to only feel your humanity.

By faith, you come in and say, I love you. I worship you. I praise you.

I need you. It doesn't limit you. It doesn't limit you.

You pray on. Notice this focus on individual. The shepherds anoints in Christ's birth.

The others don't mention the shepherds, but Luke does. Remember the 10 lepers that got healed, and one of them comes back to say, thank you. Thank you for healing me.

Only Luke happens to mention that that one was a Samaritan. The others were proud Jews. But he says, this one was a Samaritan, the very one you thought wouldn't come back.

He did come back. Or Colin, Zacchaeus, the tax collector, he names him. He marks him out.

Or the woman touching the hem of his garment. He noted her when others didn't make a focus. The women weeping around the cross, the other gospels don't say they're weeping.

You see, this puts the human element in, puts the human element into Christ and to Mary and to the disciples. You begin to see these little statements. You see, you've got to read the four gospels.

They are written distinctly with a distinct message. We just read it all and say it's the same stories. Oh, no, it's not.

It's got a real emphasis in showing tears coming down those ladies' face. You're saying we're not going to grieve when a loved one dies. Then why in all the world was Mary standing at the cross, watching her son suffering and weeping? The women that were closest to Christ were weeping as they beheld his death.

Don't tell me that isn't normal human feeling. Some people think you're to be super. You don't grieve.

You don't cry. You don't weep. Someone once said, they said, Christ wept at Lazarus' tomb because he wept over their unbelief.

Rubbish. Absolute rubbish. He had normal feelings.

He's weeping for his friend and he knows he's going to get raised from the dead. Don't you know Candice is going to get raised in the resurrection? Cheer up, brother. She's in heaven, enjoying the presence of God.

Be happy and enter into the joy of this. My heart's broken. You know what? I have normal human feelings and I'm not scared of that.

I'm in my man human season. There will be eagle seasons. There are land times.

But you know now, you see this concentration on these beautiful individuals. The women are named to finance Christ's mission. The others don't name them.

But Luke says, here's the names of the women who financed the mission trips. They ought to be recorded. There's at least 10 women mentioned in Luke's gospel, not mentioned anywhere else in the New Testament.

And so we see Luke's human gospel, it identifies women and the Samaritan and the poor and it brings them out. What about Luke's parables? They focused on individual men and women. The parables are filled with this.

Out of 35 parables that Jesus tells in the four gospels, guess how many are only in Luke? 19 out of 35. Over half of them, you can find in the three gospels. They are only in Luke's gospel.

Let me mention some of them and you'll realize what is in Luke that's not in Matthew or Mark or in John. Here are just some of them. The good Samaritan.

Remember the man that got beaten up and left and the good Samaritan comes along and helps him. It's not in the other gospels. You know why? This is the gospel of the individual.

It focuses in on outcasts. The Samaritan brings the Samaritan in and reveals this person in a very real way. Or what about the woman who lost the coin and she's searching for that lost coin? It's only in Luke.

Or the prodigal son? Only in Luke. The persistent widow that almost drove the judge mad? It's only in Luke. The parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector? Only in Luke.

Or the friend who goes and disturbs his neighbor, his friend in the middle of the night? Get up, give me a loaf of bread. No, go away. I'm in bed.

The children are asleep. No, give me a loaf of bread. I'm not going to get rid of him.

So he got up, lifted the bed, moved everything, got the guy in, got rid of him. It's only in Luke's gospel. Do you realize then this human face? God is caught up in the little affairs and issues of your life.

You could be so caught up in the lion and the eagle season. You don't realize how important the human element of this Christian life is. Walking through the trials, the troubles, feeling emotion, weeping over grief.

Don't you realize how spiritual this is? That weeping over a friend can be as spiritual as soaring like an eagle? Don't you think, oh, I'm so unspiritual in this season. Where's my faith? You're showing faith. You care.

You're concerned. You're not numb to all of these things. What about Lazarus and the rich man? It's only in Luke.

Or again, the women weeping at the cross. What about Christ's commission and so many other things? They are all here and God is dealing with individuals. But let me just finish here my last point.

The weakness of humanity. The weakness of humanity. When you look at Luke's gospel, you see man in all of his weakness and in all of his glory.

You can see what a man is without Christ, but you see what a man is in Christ and in redemption. In the parable of the great supper in chapter 14, it is Luke who records the Lord's command. Go out into the highways and the hedges and compel them to come in.

And then he goes on to say, after they've done that and compelled those to come in, he says, there is yet more room. There's certain preachers and do you know what they say? They say, there's only limited room. And you know, you're excluded.

I want to tell you, there's a lot of room. After all of the evangelism, there's a lot of room in here for anyone who wants to come. Come into salvation.

Come and receive the Lord Jesus Christ. Come and receive the provision. You begin to see the weakness of humanity and trying to reach souls for Christ.

Do you realize how weak men are to receive the gospel? The gospel goes to them. They're so weak, so powerful. They've got to be compelled to come in.

You can't even save men. You can't drag them out of hell and into heaven. You can't beg them or pay them.

You know, there's people on their way to hell, walk through this church. We preach them. They said, amen.

And then they get caught up in sin or a relationship or they begin to tell lies or they're dishonest with their car or their finance or they start doing things or they're not, they're not living right. And you plead with them to go to heaven. You can't even beg them to go to heaven.

You know how weak man is without a miracle from God. Even with all that we have in our midst, men will know the gospel, say they believe the gospel, and they'll walk out and follow after their sin. How many do you remember yourself? People who got prayed for in this church, healed in their body, saved in a court of law.

You remember the prayers you prayed, the prayer meetings we had, people who should have died and they're still hanging about this city and yet they're not looking for Christ. People are there saying, God answered your prayers. God answered the prayers of this church.

Where are they? They're out enjoying their sin. It's a terrible thing, sin, when it gets a hold of life. Luke alone tells us that when the Lord beheld the city of Jerusalem, he wept over it.

He actually looked at the city and said, Oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem, I would have gathered you as a mother hen, but you would not. Do you see the utter weakness of humanity that here they stand on the edge of hell, on the edge of judgment, and Christ is weeping for them. He's got tears in his eyes.

When's the last time you wept over a sinner or over a family member? Or do you just damn them to hell or preach the hide off them and don't cry? Are your eyes dry? Don't you have any tears for men and women who are going to go to eternity? Even those who reject your gospel, you go, well they rejected me. I've got no emotion. You're unhuman.

You're uncaring. You're callous. There's something wrong with you.

You know, even when men actually reject and curse you and say, I don't want to know, that ought to provoke us to tears. Our heart ought to break like the Lord Jesus Christ. It's only in Luke's gospel we read that when Christ was in Gethsemane, he sweat as it were, sweat drops of blood.

Only Luke identifies that. Remember what I said, Luke was the doctor. Do you know Luke uses some 300 odd Greek words none of the other gospel writers use? Do you know he uses about 300 words in Luke that aren't used in any other gospel? Do you know he notices things about sickness that none of the other authors mention at all? He identifies the sickness and the diagnosis of it and the terminology of it.

So you've got doctor Luke here. He's a physician. That's what he was trained for.

He is a brilliant man on the medical thing. He knows the weakness of man. He knows what a miracle is.

He knows what a real healing is. He says, I know the sickness. I know what leprosy does.

I know that this illness, it just keeps getting worse. At times he talks about the doctors. They went to all the doctors, spent all their money and they're the worst for it.

He knew exactly what he was saying at this time. You know why? He is a doctor in this gospel. That's why he points out little things about the weakness of men, their sin, their sinful lifestyle or their physical illness.

You know what Luke is watching. He understands. There's something about a man like that.

I know that we had Christians like that. They're watching. Someone comes in and they see the need.

They see the concern. They see the sinners. They're not there to put them straight and give them the gospel.

They're there to save them and to apply the answer and to give them the means of deliverance and to bring them out of their sin. It's only in Luke's gospel that we read about the Lord showing mercy to the dying thief on the cross amidst Christ being in agony. Have you ever been in agony and you evangelized some dying thief beside you? Here you are.

Men are rejecting you. The whole world's against me. Nobody loves me.

Nobody likes me. I'm in agony. I'm dying.

Why not preach the gospel to someone? Why not reach out to some soul? You say you've got five minutes to live. Why not reach someone with that last five minutes? Are you going to be preoccupied? I've only got five minutes to live. What am I going to do with it? Reach a soul for the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is the weakness of the humanity. I'm showing you the cherubim's face of a man. This is the first face you've got to look at before we look at an eagle or a lion or before we look at an ox.

You've got to look into the face of this cherubim. It comes out of fire and glory, out of heaven, out of the presence of God. You go, it's going to be all glorious.

To be spiritual is glorious. To be spiritual means you don't feel human anymore. You don't bleed like men.

You don't cry like men. You don't feel discouragement. Who told you that? That's not in this Bible.

Luke records the walk of the two men on the road to Emmaus. They were confused. He describes that confusion.

We thought this was going to be the Messiah, but he's crucified. We had such great hopes. Now they're dashed.

Where do we go from here? And he shows Christ intervening in that very human affair of life. God comes in the weakness of our humanity. He tells of the Lord dining and eating a piece of broiled fish and honeycomb.

Why do you think Luke said that? I mean, the others don't say it. And he gives you the whole menu. He gives you the food.

He's telling you what he's nibbling on. This is the resurrected Christ. He's risen from the dead.

And yet Luke's pinpointing. You know the others don't record that. And at the beginning of Luke, do you know what it says? I investigated.

I talked to those who knew. I wanted to have an accurate record to present to you. I wanted first-hand accounts.

So he sat with someone who was there at that meal, one of those disciples, and said, what did Jesus eat? No one's asked me that before. He's sitting there with his pen. I want to get this.

The Holy Spirit's moving on him, inspiring him to write. But he's a man. He's a pen man.

He's a natural author. And so you have this all the way through. It's the only gospel that emphasizes angels, the Holy Spirit, prayer.

You know why? The heavenly connection. This is the human face. And yet when you feel your humanity, prayer becomes an emphasis.

The Holy Spirit becomes an emphasis. The ministry of angels become an emphasis. In other words, that whole heavenly realm.

The more you feel your humanity, you go, oh God, I need a connection to this heavenly world. I don't want to be left here with my thoughts, with my eyesight, with my hearing, with my five senses. I'll get drowned in this world.

But I'm asking you, give me a connection where I'll emphasize prayer. I'll emphasize the heavenly. I'll evangelize the lost.

You've got an entire gospel of humanity. And Christ, the Son of God is revealed, saving sinners at the darkest of times, intervening in the small issues of life. You know what? Christ is at work in this church.

He's at work in your life. He's there in your workplace. He's there in your home.

And you go, I don't feel him. I don't see him. I don't hear him.

I don't see miracles around me. And yet, do you know what? Christ, the Son of God, the God man is coming walking in your life. Please stand with me here.

Lord Jesus, let's just worship him as we close this gathering. Let's magnify him. Let's worship him.

Let's love him. What a Christ. What a Savior.

He cares about you. He has compassion for you. He loves you.

He's caught up in the little issues of your life. Lord God, we bless you and magnify your name. Hallelujah.

What a Savior. What a mighty Savior. Oh, what a mighty Savior.

You think you're looking for him. No, he's looking for you. You think you've been searching for him.

No, he's searching for you. You think you're trying to get an answer from him. No, he's coming to you with that answer.

He's a real Savior. Reach out and touch him. Touch the hem of his garment.

You know, Christ noticed that little lady. Who touched me? There's about 500 people touched you in the past hour. Oh no, who touched me? There's someone while I was preaching, reached out to touch the hem of his garment.

And you know what Christ says? He says, who was that? Because virtue went out of me to touch you. Let's love him. Let's worship him.

What a Savior. Hallelujah. Thank you, Lord Jesus.

We glorify you. Let's lift our hands. Just tell him that you love him.

Tell him that you desire him. Tell him that you're thankful, even when you don't feel him, even when you don't see him, even when you don't hear him. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe.

Blessed are those that reach out to touch the hem of his garment when they feel nothing. When all the thoughts of the devil flood their mind and yet they pursue after the Lord Jesus Christ. What a salvation.

What a mighty God. Saints of God, in your humanity, walk with God. Live out this Spirit-filled life.

Live out this Christian life. You may be surrounded by valleys and giants and mountains and walls. You may be surrounded with feelings that are trying to paralyze you.

But here today, you say, I'm going to worship the Lord. Before you think of a lion or an eagle, let's serve him as a man. Let's simply walk as a man.

Let's simply live as a Christian man and woman, not looking for the spectacular, but knowing I can live by faith. I love him with all of my heart. I know that this gospel is real.

Hallelujah. Praise you, Lord Jesus. Worship his holy name.

Sing like never before. Oh my soul, I will worship your holy name. Let's sing that again.

Bless the Lord. Bless the Lord, oh my soul, oh my soul. Worship his holy name.

Sing like never before. Oh my soul, I will worship your holy name. I will worship your holy name.

I will worship your holy name. Hallelujah. Thank you, Lord Jesus.

We bless you. We adore you. We magnify you.

We love you, Lord Jesus. Oh, have mercy, thou son of David. Have mercy, thou son of David.

Have your way in our lives in Jesus' name. Hallelujah.

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