

Welcome to the Radically Christian Bible Study Podcast. I'm Travis Pauley, and here we have one goal: Learn to love like Jesus. Each week I visit with Wes McAdams, minister and author, and together we explore biblical passages and topics. I hope you enjoy this second part of our study on the Son of Man.

WES: You know, you almost have to read it in NIV, but I'll read it in the ESV. I don't have my NIV opened here, but -- and I'll show why that is kind of different, but in Hebrews Chapter 2, starting in verse 5, the Hebrew writer says, "It was not to angels that God subjected the world to come, of which we are speaking." So, I mean, we've just got to stop and pause and hang out there for just a second. Wait a second. The Hebrew writer says that "It was not to angels that God subjected the world to come, of which we're speaking." So the implication there is there is a world to come, right? There is a world that is to come and it's not going to be subjected to the angels.

TRAVIS: Yeah.

WES: So who's it going to be subjected to? To whom is it going to be subjected? "It has been testified somewhere" -- and he begins to quote from Psalm 7, "What is man" -- or, I'm sorry, Psalm 8, not Psalm 7.

Psalm 8, he says, "It has been testified somewhere, 'What is man that you are mindful of him, or the son of man, that you care for him? You made him for a little while lower than the angels; you have crowned him with glory and honor, putting everything in subjection under his feet.'"

Now, we have this tendency -- and I've always had this tendency

to read that out of context. Kind of in context for Hebrews, but out of context for Psalm 8 --

TRAVIS: Right.

WES: -- because it's really easy to read that and think, oh, he's talking about Jesus, Son of Man. "So you made Jesus, for a little while, lower than the angels. You've crowned him, Jesus, with glory and honor."

That's not what the psalmist was talking about.

TRAVIS: It's not capitalized; that's how I know.

WES: Well, depending on the translation that you use, sometimes they capitalize pronouns and sometimes they don't. But in Psalm 8, as we just read, the psalmist is talking about humanity. He's not talking about one particular son of man; he's talking about all humanity. NIV -- the NIV, thankfully, has translated kind of the way we read Psalm 8 a minute ago and translated it as plural just because you need to understand that he's talking about plural humans. He's talking about humanity and not just one particular human. So he says that God has subjected the world to come to the son of man. And by "son of man" he doesn't mean one particular son of man; he means all son of man, all humanity. And he quotes Psalm 8 to prove that point, that the world to come is subjected to humanity.

And then he says, "Now in putting everything in subjection to him" -- "him" being humanity -- "he left nothing outside his control" -- humanity's control. "At present, though, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him." Again, it's important that we understand the "him" is humanity. He's speak poetically. He's carrying on that singular pronoun

from Psalm 8, but he's saying we don't see -- right now we don't see this world, this present world, this present age, the creation in this present age -- we don't see this world subjected to the son of man. It's in rebellion, the same as it's been ever since the fall. It's in rebellion to the son of man, to humanity.

Then he says, "But we see him" -- see, kind of that play on it, which we would miss if we translated it the way the NIV does, singular and plural. But now -- now he says, "But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus." Now he is talking about a specific Son of Man. The world to come is subject to all humanity, but we don't see that at present. At present, we don't see all humanity ruling over the present world, but we do presently see Jesus who, for a little while, was made lower than the angels, crowned now, though, "with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone. For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory" -- again, glory is all about rulership. It's all about being exalted to positions of royalty, to be able to rule and reign. So "it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons" -- the son of man, humanity, all of us -- "to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering. For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source. That is why he's not ashamed to call them brothers, saying, 'I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I'll sing your praise.' And again, 'I will put my trust in him.' And, again, 'Behold, I and the children

God has given me."

So we could go on, but the whole point is that the Hebrew writer is saying that because of Jesus, the world to come will be subjected to the new humanity, the sons and daughters, the humans that Jesus has brought into this new humanity who are his brothers and sisters. The world to come will be subjected to the son of man. And, again, not "Son of Man" singular, "son of man" plural, the way the psalmist intended for us to understand that. The way that -- the natural way of reading Psalm 8 is as the plural humanity, and the Hebrew writer says we don't see that right now. We don't see the vision of Psalm 8 right now. It's not. It's in rebellion to us. There's tornados and earthquakes and fires and floods, and there's all of these things that we don't -- the world isn't subjected to us. Even the wild animals -- the psalmist says the wild animals are subject to us. That's not really true. You could try and you can tame some of them, but as a general rule, the world is not subjected to our rulership. They don't just line up when we say, "Hey, I need all the goats, come on over here." "I need all the lions right over there," and, "I need all the bears right over here." They don't do that. You can't do that.

But he says, but the world -- what we do see presently is Jesus, and we see all things subjected to him and he is sanctifying us. He is making us holy. Again, if we put it in terms the way that Paul does, if we suffer with him, we will be glorified with him. And, again, the Hebrew writer is right in line with what Paul is saying, and he's saying the world to come will be subjected to the son of man, to humanity.

Pardon this very brief interruption, but I want to tell you about the Bible study software that I use, Logos Bible Software. If you want to take your Bible study to the next level, Logos is a great way to do that. They've partnered with us to give our listeners a special deal. Check it out at radicallychristian.com/logos. That's radicallychristian.com/logos. Now back to the Bible study.

TRAVIS: I want to switch gears for a second because I think we've talked about one aspect of Jesus being the Son of Man, but another one I think of is -- I've talked to people who believe that Jesus, because he was the son of God, was actually incapable of being tempted in the same sense that we are. What do you think about that?

WES: Well, and again -- and Hebrews speaks to that, and that's -- the Hebrew writer's whole point is that the reason it's so important for us to understand the humanity of Jesus is not just about the future rule and reign --

TRAVIS: Right.

WES: -- of humanity because of this one particular Son of Man, but it's also because of the current ministry -- high-priestly ministry of Jesus. And the Hebrew writer says that he was tempted in every way as we are and yet without sin, and the Hebrew writer's whole point is that because of his commonality, because of his common humanity with us, that he can empathize with us but he can also intercede for us, because even though he was tempted because he was human, he resisted that

temptation and he was faithful to God, and now he can intercede for us.

And it's actually interesting, too, not only about the rule and reign aspect, but also the intercession part of it, because if you look at passages like -- and, again, Hebrews, the whole book is really on that issue, but John touches on this, too, in his first epistle. So it's I John Chapter 2, and he starts by telling them, you know, walk in the light, not in the darkness. And he says, though, in Chapter 2:1, "My little children, I'm writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

Now, if we just read that in English, we think, okay, you know, we have an advocate with the Father. But the Greek word there is "parakletos." What's interesting is -- you know, we often call the Holy Spirit the "paraclete." Sometimes we only know that term "paraclete" or "parakletos" in referring to the Holy Spirit, and that's what Jesus calls him. And when Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit as the "parakletos," as the "paraclete," we typically translate that as "comforter" or "helper," but it's interesting because it's the same word, the same idea. And what's really interesting is that the Holy Spirit -- Jesus says when I leave, I'm going to send another parakletos. I'm going to send another helper that's going to be like he has been for them. And he says it's good that I'm going away, that I'm going to ascend to the Father, because then I'm going to send to you the parakletos. And then John here says that if we sin -- he says we shouldn't sin, don't sin, but if you do, then you have -- we have -- a parakletos with the Father. Now, what does that mean?

Now, the term can mean -- and it's similar to how he says it here, an advocate, but it's "advocate" in the sense like a lawyer, like a representative, and that's really what a defense attorney does. A defense attorney argues your case on your behalf. It's a representative. It's somebody that you send into the court to plead your case on your behalf. And when you think about it, the entire gospel of John really centers around Jesus being the representative from heaven to earth. And so John's entire point is that Jesus comes from heaven. In fact, John doesn't spend any time talking about Jesus' birth. Like there's really not an emphasis -- I mean, he does talk about Jesus as humanity, "The word became flesh and dwelt among us," but his emphasis is more on Jesus being from heaven, that God sent Jesus from heaven, which is true. So Jesus is a parakletos from heaven to earth. He's a representative, an advocate of heaven to earth. He is God's representative on earth. And, really, that's John's whole point throughout the gospel, is that if you want to know who God is, look at Jesus. In fact, the apostles would say, even after being with Jesus for a long time, "Show us the Father," and Jesus says, "Have you been with me this long and you don't know that if you've seen me then you've seen the Father? If you've seen me, then you've seen him." And so John's entire emphasis of his gospel is that Jesus is the representative of heaven on earth.

And then he says, but when I ascend to the Father, I'm going to give you another parakletos, another representative. And so the Holy Spirit becomes this second representative of heaven on earth who lives within us. So he is -- I like to think of it as an emissary or an

ambassador. So an ambassador is someone that comes from one country to another country in order to represent their own home country in the foreign country, and that's exactly what Jesus did. Jesus comes from heaven to earth to represent heaven on earth, and then the Spirit comes from heaven to earth to represent heaven on earth. Like Paul says, you can't really understand someone's mind unless you have their spirit. Nobody knows -- I don't know what you're thinking unless I have your spirit. But he says we understand the mind of God because we have the Spirit of God. Because we have an emissary from heaven on earth, we understand what the mysteries of heaven are, what the thinking of God is, and the Spirit becomes that ambassador, that parakletos, that emissary, that -- however you want to put it -- that representative on earth from heaven.

But then the way John says this -- it's amazing -- that now, because of the humanity of Jesus, it actually -- now Jesus is a parakletos in reverse. Now he's a representative from earth in heaven. Before, his ministry was representing heaven on earth; now he's representing earth in heaven. Now he's representing humanity before the Father. And so he says -- again, he says, if we do sin, if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. That's why it's so important that we understand the humanity of Jesus, the Son of Man status of Jesus, because he is representing us there as a human being in the human courts, which is, again, Daniel 7 picture.

It also goes back to what Paul says. Paul says that we have one mediator between God and man, and he even says the man Christ Jesus.

The Greek word there is "anthropos," where we get "anthropology," the study of humankind. And so Paul says that our mediator between heaven and earth, our mediator between God and man is the man Christ Jesus. So it's so incredibly important that we understand for us to have a high priest, for us to have a representative, for us to have somebody who can advocate on our behalf, he has to be a human being. And that's the Hebrew writer's whole point, is that he can only serve as a high priest and make intercession for us and make atonement for us and bring about forgiveness for us because he has been tempted in every way as we have, but yet without sin. So we have to understand Jesus' role in forgiveness in, and tied to, and anchored to his humanity because he can't -- you know, if -- going back to your original question, if, as the, quote, "son of God," he couldn't sin and therefore his temptation was, you know, just a charade essentially, you know, then none of this makes sense.

TRAVIS: Right.

WES: But he became a human being. He took on flesh, and that means more than just skin. "Flesh" means he took on weakness. He got tired. I mean, just think about that for a second. God, the second person of the Godhead, became so fully human that he slept. Like he slept. Not just he stopped working for a while; he slept. He took a nap. He went to sleep. He got hungry. He got thirsty. He had to go to the bathroom. I don't mean to be grotesque because it's not, it's humanity. Jesus wore out the way you wear out. He got older the way you got older. He got tired the way you get tired. He got hungry the way you got hungry. And with that

weakness comes the ability to give in to the temptations of the flesh. And so when Satan comes and tempts Jesus, it's very possible that he sins, yet he does not sin, and because he has been perfectly human, now he has been glorified.

And in many ways -- obviously, now he is no longer subject to those weaknesses. Now he doesn't get tired. Now he doesn't get hungry. Now he doesn't take a nap. Now he always is interceding for us, but he's doing so as a human being, as our older brother. Again, human being 2.0, resurrected, immortal, imperishable, undefiled, all of those good words, but he represents us and he advocates for us and he makes intercession for us as a human being.

TRAVIS: Well, I think, to that point, when I think of -- when I now think of Jesus as the Son of Man, it sort of allows me to treat him as -- as I'm reading about his work on earth and about his reign, it actually makes me treat him as less sacred, and not in the sense that he doesn't deserve to be lifted up and that he's a king and that I'm subject to him -- not in that sense at all, but that -- you know, it's kind of like, you know, glorifying war and then seeing a war movie. It's like when you really get even an artificial picture of what it was like to actually be there, it changes your perspective.

And so I think of Jesus as like -- you know, when I can read into -- you know, just for my own sake, not to bind it on anybody else, but when I'm reading about Jesus' ministry and I just imagine for myself what he could have been tempted by in any given moment or being tempted by Satan in the desert, just how weak he was, and it gives me such an

appreciation for what he went through, and it's like, no, he felt the exact same way. He felt as -- you know, as subject to his weakness as I do, and yet he overcame it. And I think that when I now -- you know, a couple of years of kind of being really intentional about reading Jesus with some life and some emotion and that ability to be tempted, it's made me realize that for part of my Christian life I didn't -- if I thought I was connected to Jesus, if I felt bonded to him, it just pales in comparison to how I feel now, that he's like -- he's the Son of Man, he's like me, and it just -- again, it gives me such an appreciation for that that I feel like we miss out on when we actually lift him up so high that he's not here anymore. He's not really on earth.

WES: And I think that's exactly -- I think you've hit on something incredibly important because that is his ministry. His ministry is to not make God feel even further away, but to bring God and humanity together. Jesus' ministry is one of reconciliation, and if we listen to the gospel and we think, wow, that's awesome for that way-distant God to do that way-distant thing for me and now -- and to leave it at that, wow, what a shame. Because the gospel is all about -- it's almost like -- I wish I could demonstrate for those that are listening, but it's almost like sewing. Jesus came down so that he could represent heaven on earth, and then he went up so that he could represent earth in heaven, and then he sent the Spirit down to represent heaven on earth so that our prayers could go up. You know, it's just this sewing -- you know, this needle pulling thread down and up and down and up and pulling the two together, and Jesus is reconciling.

That's what Paul says in Ephesians 1:10, that he's reconciling everything on heaven and earth and he's bringing it back together and he's bridging that gap through his own deity and through his own humanity and he's bringing those two together. And it really should -- that's what Jesus means by saying, "If you've seen me, you've seen the Father. And now, because of me, I'm going to make a place for you in my Father's house where there's many rooms and we're going to come and we're going to make our abode with you."

And so it's bringing heaven and earth together. It's bringing humanity and deity together, and we should -- we should read it and we should say he's one of us and he's bringing us into that heavenly courtroom, into that heavenly home, and he's bringing heaven into us. He's bringing deity into us and us into him so that the two are reconciled and there's not that separation and that -- I like the way you said "sacred," because sacred, in one sense, can mean, you know, belonging to God, but in another sense it means separate. It means something that I can't touch.

And he really -- instead of making himself and making those things more sacred, more separated from us, what he's done is make us sacred. He's made us holy. He's made humanity -- he's brought in -- and that's what we read a minute ago in Hebrews 2. He's made us holy through his suffering so that now we are -- in spite of -- in spite of our sin, in spite of our past, in spite of what we've done, we're brought into that divine family, into the circle, and right now he represents us there, but in the end, in the culmination of all things, then God will be fully with us and us

fully with God and nothing will be separate and God will penetrate everything, and that's what the gospel should do for us. And you're right. It should have practical implications for us right now in the way we feel about and talk about and talk to Jesus.

I really hope you enjoyed this Bible study and I hope you'll subscribe to hear future episodes of the podcast. A big thank you to Travis Pauley, as well as our McDermott Road church family, for helping to make this podcast possible. And a special thanks to all of you for listening. We love you, God loves you, and we hope you have a wonderful day.