

It Had to be This WAY!

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[0:00] Please take your Bibles and go to the book of Hebrews.

Book of Hebrews. I believe in that black Bible in the chair in front of you. Excuse me. Excuse me. That black Bible in the chair in front of you. You'll find it page 170. Hebrews chapter 2. Hebrews chapter 2. I want to do something a little bit different.

Preach to something a little bit different for a Christmas message. It's like, oh, let's do something in Hebrews. And you'll see the flow and why I chose this as we get into it.

You may even see it as we read it. Hebrews chapter 2. We're going to read and we're going to study just one little section, verses 14 through 18. Hebrews 2, 14 through 18.

[1:05] Hebrews chapter 2, verse 14. Chapter 2, verse 14. Therefore, since the children share in blood and flesh, likewise he himself also partook of the same, that through death he might render powerless sin who had the power of death, that is the devil, and might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives.

For surely he doesn't help angels, but he helps the seed of Abraham. Therefore he had to be made like his brethren in all things, that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, resulting in the propitiation for the sins of the people.

For since he himself was tempted in that which he has suffered, he is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted. When you're watching a sports event on TV, you know, we use football as an example.

I love football. When you're watching like a football game, it's easy to make comments and to complain and scream at the TV.

Nobody does that, right? I mean, who does that? It's kind of crazy. Because you're watching the game. You see that, you're like, wow, why did you do that? Or you take the game, you pre-record it, and you go back through it, right?

[2:47] Then you can fast forward to all those things, right? And then watch it later. And then you see everything happened in the end, you know? Like, oh, okay, they won. It's a whole different thing.

You know what I'm talking about. Yeah. When you're on the field. When you're on the field, it's a whole different. You know what I'm talking about too, Riley.

You played. It's a whole different thing. One time when I played football for three years in high school, my senior year, one time we had our main guy, our captain of the team, he was hurt. So I had to be the captain of a rival school. It was the hardest, one of the hardest things I ever had to do. I remember I would be in class, and we'd be, you know, doing whatever. I'd have my notes from my, from our games, our plays, because the team would always go into what they call a motion.

And every time they would go into a motion, we would have to change our whole defense, but we wouldn't say anything. There would be no audible call. It'd be a silent change into our defense. Because they would figure out what we were doing.

[3:53] If we would do an audible, we would say out loud. So they would figure it out. So we wouldn't do anything. We would just change our whole defense. And so I had to be the one that coach would sit there and do these things, you know, give me all the signs, you know, to do a play.

And then once they would do a motion, we would change it. It's a whole different thing. When you're on the field, and oh, there's nothing like playing under the lights.

A night game. Night games are awesome. I love that. And the air was cool. And you're like hot. Like, oh, it feels good. It was great. But it's a whole different thing when you're playing the game and you're doing the first quarter, the second quarter, the third quarter, fourth quarter, and then

there's, you got some victories and then defeats and you make a headway and then you get back and you're sweating and tears and all throughout.

And then you win. And you're like, yeah. Because you feel the accomplishment. Because you're right there on the field and you know what it's like. God didn't just send Jesus down.

Okay, send Jesus down. Okay, die on the cross. Okay. You notice he didn't do that. You think, why do you have to go through the whole process of being conceived?

[5 : 22] And then nine months. Forty weeks, actually. In the womb. And then born. And then he had to learn how to crawl and to talk and to walk.

And then not poo in the diaper anymore. You had to learn all those things. You know, and we laugh. And my kids are like, but it's true. I mean, Jesus did those things.

He was human. Why not just, gone? Why not do that? Because then he would not be able to fully identify with us.

He would not be able to fully save us. And he would not be able to fully help us. That's why. It had to be this way.

I titled it Christmas message for today. It had to be this way. It had to be this way. No, he was like us and everything.

[6 : 35] And it had to be this way in order to identify with us, in order to save us, and in order to help us. That's what the writer of Hebrews is trying to tell us. In this little section.

He does that through the whole thing. But right here, he's really trying to get us to understand this. I'll give you some statements.

Total and full incarnation. And when I say that, I mean from conception to death. Had to happen, else Christ could not fully identify with us, save us, or help us in our time of need.

It had to be this way. Total and full incarnation. It had to happen, else Christ, the Son, could not fully identify with us, save us, and help us in our time of need.

There's your three points right there we're gonna look at. Good preaching always has three points. That was a joke. Because Jesus is fully identified with us, he can fully save us, and can fully help us in our time of need of suffering and temptation.

[7 : 49] Anything you can take away from this passage, and really, to remind yourself as you embark upon the next couple days, you know, Allie and I were talking about, it's like, oh my goodness, Christmas is like five days away, holy cow!

It's already here. Something you can remind yourself is this. The Son had to share completely with humanity so he could save humanity.

He had to share fully in our humanity to suffer and to die so that we may share in his glory as sons of glory. Another way to put it, the reason Jesus became flesh was so that he could save humanity, his people, from sin, death, and the devil, and is now able to help them in daily temptations and struggles and their suffering.

He didn't just come die, and that he suffered his whole life. I'll say this a little bit later. That's why he was called the man of sorrows.

That's what the writer of Hebrews is trying to prove, the need of the Son's incarnation and atonement and our need of salvation by Him only through Him.

[9 : 16] And the only way He could make sufficient atonement and bring us sufficient salvation was in His total and full incarnation.

Had to be a baby. From conception to death in the whole nine yards. No pun intended with the whole football thing.

He didn't. He had to do this. It had to be this way. He sets us free from the fear of death which is a result of sin.

And He stands with us in times of temptation and suffering. He knows. He knows what it's like to be human.

He knows what it's like to suffer. He knows what it's like. He knows what it's like. He knows. He identifies with you so He can fully save us.

[10 : 29] So He can fully save you and also help you. You see, there's our three main points from the passage. First, Jesus fully identifies with us the incarnation.

incarnation. And what the writer of Hebrew does in verses 14 through 18, he actually does parallel statements. So verse 14, part of verse 14 parallels to verse 17.

Part of verses 14 and 15 parallels with the latter part of verse 17. And then there in verse 16 it parallels to verse 18. He does that on purpose. Like He's saying the same thing but He does it in a different way.

And you'll see as we go through it. Notice, first verse 14. Therefore, since the children and the children go back to verse 13, these are the ones given to the Son by the Father.

For these He died. Since in the children, these, they share in blood and flesh. They're human. He Himself likewise also partook of the same.

[11 : 33] Just that part right there. He shared in that. Partook of it. Jesus shared with His children in blood and flesh.

In absolute humanity, you'll see, to destroy what came through Adam's sin brought about by the temptation of the devil, death. So, Christ identifies with us being human Himself.

He has full identification with His people. Very important for us to understand this. He was God-man.

Fully God. Fully man. Look at verse 17. He says the same thing. Therefore, He had to be made, excuse me, He had to be made like His brethren in all things.

The work Jesus came to do demanded His total incarnation from conception to death. So He had to become like His brethren in all things.

[12 : 52] He was made just like us. He was there on the field. To go back to that analogy with the football game, He was on the field.

He wasn't just up there telling us this and this. No, He was right there on the field with us. Sweat, suffering, hurts, pains, the battles, everything.

He's right there. He identifies. He identifies. Fully identifies with us. There's incarnation. So as He can fully save us. There's a second point.

Jesus fully saves us. Salvation. So He fully identifies with us. Notice, verse 14, Who also partook of the same.

In order that, here's the purpose, through death, He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is the devil. Satan desires our death fully.

[13 : 59] Not just physically, but spiritually. He wants to ruin us. He wants us to be separated from God.

But Jesus, through His death, defeated Satan by taking away death's fear, the fear of judgment and condemnation through putting our trust in Jesus alone.

Only in Jesus alone we have victory over death. You may die, but you'll have relationship with God forever.

That's what Jesus came to do, to save us. So though we face death, we can be with Him. If you're here, you're not a Christian, you have that, you can have that assurance.

Trust Christ alone. Trust Jesus alone and you can have the assurance that though you may die, you will be with Him forever. He will save you.

[15 : 06] You won't face condemnation. You won't face judgment. No, you'll face grace, mercy, and compassion. Don't you want that? Trust Christ.

Trust Jesus who died for sinners. That's what He's trying to say. That's what Jesus did. That's how He fully saves us. Because He identified with us, then to the point of the ultimate point of death, He died for sinners.

Satan exercises His power in the realm of death. He's been a murderer from the very beginning, right? That's what Jesus says in John chapter 8. No, Christ the Son in His death conquered the evil one.

He conquered death. Did. Believers are no longer under the fear of death. No longer under the fear of death from the one who has been a murderer from the beginning and brought us into death fearing slavery.

We should not fear death. We should not fear death. We should not fear death.

[16 : 22] The culture tells you the opposite. The media tells you different. You should fear death.

As Christians, we don't fear death. Right? Satan wants to enslave us to sin, though.

He wants to enslave us to death. But the Son, the Son, He has conquered sin and death and the result of sin, which is hell forever.

He's conquered that. That's why death, there's no fear in death. Death is just, it brings you to the best thing that your life will ever experience.

It's wonderful that Jesus' death brings forgiveness and cleansing so that we may be free to serve God and not be enslaved anymore to the devil.

[17 : 35] No longer. No longer. Jesus fully saves us. Salvation. And notice what he says, the parallel statement, verse 17.

Therefore, he had to be made like his brother in all things, verse 17. In order that, what's the purpose of the incarnation of Jesus becoming like us exactly, being born as a baby, growing up just like we do, that he may become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God? What's the purpose of the incarnation? That he may become a merciful and faithful high priest. What does that mean?

First, a high priest, this is the first time the writer of Hebrews calls him high priest. He's the one who represents us to God, God to us. He's like the mediator.

So he becomes the mediator, not just the mediator, but becomes a merciful priest and a faithful priest between us and God, God and us.

[18 : 49] Merciful. He represents us before God. Merciful. And that he averts God's wrath, not giving us what we deserve.

He totally identifies with us. He knows what it's like to go through all the things that we've gone through and then he takes it upon himself. The very wrath of God.

He's merciful, but then he's also faithful. Faithful towards God. Faithful, faithful to perform all the duties of a high priest.

He was the perfect high priest, never faltering. So he's trustworthy to do it. We can totally rely upon Jesus the Son. Merciful.

He averted God's wrath and then he can show us mercy, faithful in all the things pertaining to God. Faithful in what he is as a high priest and then he's trustworthy towards us.

[19 : 58] We can trust him. And notice the result of this. Because he was a merciful high priest, because a faithful high priest, notice what he says there in verse 17.

To make, and the word there too is result, the result is this, to make propitiation. What does propitiation mean?

It means that Jesus exhausted the wrath of God as he hung on the cross in the place of sinners. All of God's wrath was poured out on Jesus so that all of God's grace can pour out on you.

That's the kind of high priest he was. He was merciful and faithful and because of that he was the one who took the very wrath of God in our place, in our stead, as our substitute.

Had to be this way. He did this for the sins of God's people, the ones who would believe in him.

Notice how God took the initiative and through Jesus, the eternal son, the creator who took on flesh, the relationship between God and us is restored only through Christ.

[21 : 21] He cleanses people from sin's defilement and he exhausted God's wrath on our behalf. He became like us to die.

Only Jesus can save us. Only Jesus can save us. from conception to death, faithful, merciful, made propitiation.

So identifies with us, fully saves us and then even more so, Jesus, point three, fully helps us.

There's provision. First the incarnation, second is salvation, now it's provision. You gotta have those shin words in there where they rhyme. Look at verse 16.

For surely, he doesn't help angels. God doesn't help angels. I mean, I know, you kind of go, well, of course.

[22 : 27] Really? Why would God help angels? There's no rhyme or reason why he would help angels, why they're even in the plan in reference to him helping them.

He doesn't help angels, he helps the seed of Abraham. Jesus didn't come to earth as a baby to help angels. To those who believe as Abraham believed, he takes our hand and helps us.

He comes to our aid. Jesus came to be a sacrifice for the ones who believe in him, not angels. All who put faith in Jesus are Abraham's seed.

That's who he came to help. Look at verse 18. Again, the parallel statement. For since he himself was tempted in that which he has suffered, he is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted. It was the father's plan from the beginning to complete the work of saving his people by means of the suffering of his son.

[23 : 33] It was God's will for his son to pass through gruesome, terrible suffering. I said this earlier, he actually suffered his whole life. That's why he was called the man of sorrows.

It's not just that his death and just come, okay, come die and that's it. No. He identifies with us fully. And it all started with the conception.

The scandalous conception. Joseph, Mary's pregnant.

I don't know why. Mary's pregnant. So, what's going on? It wasn't me, says Joseph. And then, who was it?

Well, it was of the Holy Spirit. Yeah. Right. Right? I mean, it's not every day you hear about something like that.

[24 : 49] Oh, it was the Holy Spirit. Oh, well, in that case, sorry. How scandalous. And remember, in the Jewish context, when you were betrothed, it's like you're married.

And, and they're married. And then you consummate within a year. Sometimes it's earlier, sometimes later. But usually, it's within a year. You consummate that. That's why the text says in Matthew chapter 1, he was going to divorce her.

That's the word. So it begins with the scandalous conception. He already has a bad reputation. And then he's born in a plush castle with gold around and servants with music.

With harps. Yeah, he's born in a cave. Those cute little things that they show, you know, with little, stable. Made out of wood. Probably wasn't that.

It was probably a cave. Well, man, you know, he wasn't born in December. You all know that, right? Probably born in April, May, June, somewhere around there.

[26 : 07] Some of you think September. But still, he's born in a cave and not laid in a beautiful little basket made of wool that Joseph knitted himself.

he was put in a feeding trough where he'd feed animals. And then shepherds? Really? Shepherds come to see him?

Who cares about shepherds? They were nobodies. Nobody. Nobody cared about shepherds. Shepherds are watching sheep. Who cares? What about king? Three wise men came and saw him. That was when he was two. And he endured sufferings in the life that he lived. He was poor. He lived in a low class town who comes from Nazareth.

It's like you come from Fresno, California. Oh. Anybody from Fresno here? I met some gal. I met some gal and I actually knew her and she told me she was born in Fresno.

[27 : 15] I said, oh, the armpit of California. She's all, oh. That's what he else he's calling.

Anyways, lived in a low class town. No place to lay his head.

Oh. Jesus didn't believe the American dream where you can be able to own your own home. Why did he go Jesus be American?

Jesus wasn't American, right? Nah, he wasn't. Sorry. He knew what it was like to suffer and be tempted.

You see both aspects there in verse 18? Suffering and temptation? That really sums up the hardships of life, doesn't it? Suffering, sickness, cancer, this virus, and temptation to sin.

He was tempted just like us. So his humanity was completely genuine and real.

[28 : 32] Are you tempted? Jesus faced temptation too. Do you suffer? Jesus suffered too.

He can relate to us fully. He knows what it's like. Having shared in our nature, experienced our frailty, suffered temptation and then died, he provides the perfect help to us in need.

He knows what it's like. He knows what it's like when you're at the brink of just temptation and just want to fall underneath that.

He knows what that's like. He knows it was laid out before him. We were talking about this with my kids.

It was laid out before him. Satan was not at a place where he wanted him to go to the cross. It's the opposite. Satan didn't want him to go to the cross.

[29 : 40] That's why he offered to him all this I will give to you. If you just fall down and worship me, you don't have to deal with any of that stuff. you can have it now. Show yourself.

Throw yourself off the pinnacle of the highest point of the temple and then everybody will see who you are. His own family is saying that. Go show who you are. Show them that you're the Messiah. Oh, brother. Show him that you are. That was the evil one because the evil one didn't want him to go to the cross. All through that, he understands that temptation.

He understands suffering and what that's like. In other words, he helps those who are tempted for he can sympathize with them having been tempted and having faced suffering and the hardships of life.

Friends, he wasn't born in a plush castle. He didn't have a silver spoon in his mouth. He knows what it's like to be abused. He knows what it's like to be betrayed.

[31 : 04] He knows what it's like to face rejection. who was with him when he went to the cross? No one. They all left him.

If you think that Jesus, oh God, you don't know what this is like. Christian, you better bite your tongue when you say that.

He fully identifies with us so that he can fully save us, so that he can fully help us in our time of need. If we're being tempted, then as sons of glory, as his brethren, as the seed of Abraham, we can experience Jesus' gracious aid.

He comes to the aid of those who are tempted, he says there in verse 18. He can truly identify with you, and all started at the night of his birth. It all started at his conception, really.

The writer of Hebrews, he goes into this later on, throughout, and even one of the classic passages that he gives us, in chapter 4, verses 14 through 16. Since then, we have a great high priest pass through the heavens.

[32 : 29] Jesus, the Son of God, let's hold fast our confession. For we don't have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in all things as we are yet without sin. Which is why he says, therefore, let's draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and may find grace to help in time of need.

Notice the same themes coming up. Jesus identifies, he fully saves, and he fully helps us. The reason Jesus became flesh was so that he could save humanity, his people, from sin, death, and the devil, and is now able to help them in daily temptation and struggles.

When we suffer, he knows what it's like. it had to be this way. Because Jesus has fully identified with us, he can fully save us, and can fully help us in our time of need and suffering, and temptation. Total and full incarnation had to happen, else Christ could not fully identify with us, save us, or help us in our time of need. It's that irony where he goes through these things so that way he can bring about our salvation.

One of the lines of a Christmas song, not a Christmas song, Mary, did you know? It's that ironic phrase, this child that you delivered will soon deliver you.

[34 : 14] Kind of reminding me of this passage, going through that. I'll leave you with this, the words to the song, Mary, did you know?

Mary, did you know that your baby boy would one day walk on water? I know you know the song, but here's the words again. Mary, did you know that your baby boy would save our sons and daughters?

Did you know that your baby boy has come to make you new? This child that you delivered will soon deliver you. Mary, did you know that your baby boy would give sight to a blind man?

Mary, did you know that your baby boy would calm the storm with his hand? Did you know that your baby boy has walked where angels trod? When you kissed your little baby, you kissed the face of God? Mary, did you know?

I love it because this song is not glorifying Mary, it's showing the irony of what's happened when she gave birth to Christ and did she really know who he was?

[35 : 19] The blind will see, the deaf will hear, the dead will live again, the lame will leap, the dumb will speak, the praises of the lamb. I love how pentatonics, how they sing this song.

I sing this song great, love how they sing this song. Mary, did you know that your baby boy is Lord of all creation? Mary, did you know that your baby boy would one day rule the nations?

Did you know that your baby boy is heaven's perfect lamb? That sleeping child you're holding is the great I am. That's amazing. I go through my notes and my message and my sermon Saturday night and it was about 10 o'clock, I was finishing it up and I read that and I went, man, that's unbelievable. Isn't that just unbelievable? But how wonderful that we have a God who identifies with, I have a God who identifies with me.

He fully saves me and he fully helps me. You can say that personally to yourself too.

[36 : 38] Jesus, you identify with me fully, you fully saved me and you can fully help me in my time of need because he knows.

Let's pray and let's thank him. Jesus, thank you. we praise you. We're amazed by you taking on flesh and this has been our prayer that we will not become dull and void and bored of this gospel truth, this important aspect of the gospel, of you taking on flesh, the God man, identifying with us so

you can truly, fully, totally, completely save us and fully, totally, completely help us. You know what it's like. Forgive us, Jesus, for doubting you. You forgive us, Jesus, for saying, oh, you don't know what it's like, Lord.

Forgive us for thinking that way. Increase our trust in you even more, our love for you even more. Out of pure delight, out of gospel motivation, that we're astounded at how awesome and how gracious that you are.

[38 : 39] As we do each week, I encourage you, just take these few moments, to have some time of silence. And let this time be the time where you let your mind be filled with God's word, with gospel grace and truth.

Let it be filled. Maybe I'll help you to do that by praying the truth that you wrote down. Maybe I'll help you to read through the passage or just reflecting on different aspects of the gospel, whichever. Between you and the Lord, a time of silence where you can be with Him. And thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.