The Fifth Word

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[0:00] After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said to fulfill the scriptures, I thirst. Hollywood in our culture has a great fascination with machines becoming people.

Not people, but humans. Well, not humans, but almost exactly like humans. Whether it's movies like Blade Runner, where in many ways the machines become better than humans, that by the end of the movie you sort of admire their nobility, their breadth of experience.
Whether it be movies and novels like iRobot, where some of the robots are evil, but there is another robot that's actually sort of more noble and more sacrificial and just far better than the humans in the movie.
Or whether it's the Terminator movies, where the machines become evil and take over human beings. The Matrix machines become more evil than humans and take over.
Ex Machina, Makina, I should say. We're all the way through the movie. You can't figure out what on earth is going on with the robot. But our culture has a profound fascination with this idea that things that are just made out of wire and electrical circuits, that they will somehow develop consciousness, that they will develop a mind, that they will be basically a person.
[1:37] And whether they're worse than us or better than us, that it seems almost inevitable to many in our culture that a machine will become a person. It's a very, very curious thing about our culture that it's so easy for us to think about that.

But our culture also has a profound objection to God becoming human. Like, why is that? It actually sort of doesn't make any sense, if you think about it, that stuff like this and this, that this mic could start having consciousness and speak back to me.
But that if there is a God who does exist, who's created all things, that he can't take into himself our human nature. Why is it that our culture thinks that? It's in some ways part of a rebellion against God.
When Jesus says on the cross, I thirst, there's two things happening with these simple two words. The first thing is, is really revealing to us that he's human, that he has a body, that he's human. He's not a ghost. He's not a spirit. He's not an angel. He's not pure mind. He's human with a body. And as a human being with a body, he gets thirsty.
[3:01] Movies like The Da Vinci Code and books like that try to make it look as if there was some profound attempt by early Christians to make it look like Jesus, that Jesus wasn't human.

Sorry, that these books try to make it look as if Jesus wasn't God, that he just claimed to be human, and that that was some great thing that the early church, that evil group, manipulated and tried to erase from history.
But for the first three centuries of the Christian faith, the hard thing that Christians had was to believe that Jesus was human, that he was, they felt so much that he was God, they had a hard time believing that he could actually be a human being.
That was the great, profound thing that they had a hard time with. And so texts like this were very, very important. And Jesus is human. He thirsts. The other thing that's going on in this text is that Jesus is more than human, that he is in fact God, and that in a very, very simple, symbolic way, he's illustrating that the separation between God and him is occurring.
God the Father and him is occurring. If you go back and read the Gospel of John, you'll see that John in several places connects the Holy Spirit to being like a stream of living water that will well up within us.
[4:39] And so when Jesus says that he thirsts, he's not only revealing that he's human, but he reveals that what Karen just talked about, that is recorded in Mark, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

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That that forsakenness of Jesus is occurring. That Jesus, who would have experienced the unending presence of the Holy Spirit in his life, that Holy Spirit is now, in a sense, just as God, he's being separated from God because he's bearing the sins of the world, he's experiencing a thirst because the Holy Spirit is also separating from him as he bears our sins in his person.
Throughout history, Jesus has always been viewed as a bit of a contradiction and a barrier to us understanding who God is.
He's someone who gets in the way. But when we hear Jesus say that he thirsts, and when we realize that it's both expressing his full humanity and also that as God, he is now experiencing the abandonment, as God the Son, he's experiencing the abandonment of the Father, we see that Jesus isn't a barrier, but he is the one true and only bridge between human beings and God.
He's not a barrier. He's a bridge. And his death upon the cross is God's provision to make that bridge between fallen, bent human beings like ourselves in rebellion against him and God himself so that we can be his children by adoption and grace.
[6:22] Jesus is not a barrier. He is a bridge. I invite you to stand. And let's pray.

Father, we ask that you would make us disciples of Jesus who are gripped by the gospel and who are learning to live for your glory.
Father, thank you for Jesus. Thank you, Father, that he, as your son, remained 100% human, but that he took into himself our human nature and that he was 100% human.
We thank you, Father, that he's both 100% God and 100% human, but he's just one person, Jesus. And we thank you, Father, that he is your great provision for us.
Father, we thank you that Jesus, being human, knows the trials and temptations that we do, only without sin. Father, draw our hearts to Jesus.
[7:34] Father, we confess before you that we can turn to all sorts of things. We can turn to pornography, to gambling, to television, all sorts of things to comfort us in our weakness and in our distress, in our anxiety.

But, Father, turn our hearts to Jesus when we are most anxious, when we are most in distress. Turn our hearts to him. This we ask in Jesus' name.
Amen.

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