



The Essential Humanity of Jesus in Understanding the Person and Work of Christ

Our Relational and Relatable God: Shared Tears and His Saving Sacrifice

- *Elayne Adamczyk Harrington*

October 2024

Introduction: The Nature of God and Humanity

Deepening our knowledge and understanding of Jesus in His humanity as He walked the earth is fundamental to comprehending His person and work. Through His incarnation, He bridges the divine, incommunicable attributes of God with the human and communicable attributes, making them known to His people, yet upholding His ineffability. His Word, and by the very nature of the Word being Him, as in John 1:1: "...and the Word was God" provides a portrait of the face and being of our God.

When Moses asked, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" God answered him with "I Am" (Exodus 3:11-14, NIV). As Jen Wilkin, a Christian author and Bible teacher affirmed at the Dublin Women's Convention, "when we wonder who we are, God reveals who He is." (Wilkin, 2024). We were made in His image (Genesis 1:26-27, NIV), and God has, from the beginning of time, revealed Himself to us. The Old Testament projects the coming Christ, and the New Testament reveals the incarnate Jesus, who was fully human and fully God. "The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us." (John 1:14, NIV).



This complete image of Him exemplifies the sheer depth of God's love and His intimate understanding of human experience. He walked among us and walks beside us in rejoicing and in weeping. In His omniscience, He provided exactly what we needed—a tangible, relatable God-man—even when He knew His sovereignty and omnipotence would not be embraced by His own. (John 1:11, NIV).

The Incarnation: Tears, Sacrifice, and the Call to Love

The Christian concern of the indivisibility between suffering and sorrow with sacrifice and salvation can be considered through the very human attribute of tears. Physical, biological, and personal tears through which Christ triumphed over death once and for all, making a way for us to know Him—He is that way (John 14:6, NIV). Through Him, we gain access to the divine and human person of Christ. As the communal creator, our Trinitarian Godhead—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—reveals His social nature, instructing humanity on how to interpret His Word and His physical life. Jen Wilkin articulated that "our God is a social God" by His very nature (Wilkin, 2016), and "we are saved into special relationship with God, and thereby into special relationship with other believers" (Wilkin, 2021, p. 13). This is an invitation to transformative communion with Him and inherently extends to fellowship and faith with others. In fact, it is one of God's commandments: "Love one another as I have loved you" (John 15:12, NIV).



In the Bible Jesus's humanity invites us to identify with His experience. He shared in our joys and sorrows, manifesting a deep understanding of our human condition. His tears, recorded in Scripture, resonate profoundly with our own experiences of grief and loss. Notably, Jesus wept over Lazarus (John 11:35, NIV), lamented over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41, NIV), and shed tears in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26:38, NIV). These instances reveal a God who feels deeply and connects with our suffering. Charles R. Swindoll aptly remarks that "the tears of Jesus are evidence that He understands human suffering" (Swindoll, 2012) .

This understanding is vital, showing that Jesus' tears were not mere emotions but profound acknowledgments of human suffering. His journey through grief ultimately leads to redemption, signifying a deep ache resonant with our struggles. Jesus took on human form, embodying our sorrows, joys, and all human experience. His death was the only way to reveal the magnitude of His saving sacrifice. The ultimate sacrifice of His life is the apex of divine love—God Himself incarnate, offering His life in our stead (John 3:16, NIV).

Drawing from the reflections of N.T. Wright, through Charles R. Swindoll, "So where God has wiped away your tears you are to wipe away others' tears." (Swindoll, 2000, p. 109). We see that the message of Christ's death is intricately connected to the promise of God wiping away our tears (Revelation 21:4, NIV). This promise speaks not only to our individual sorrows but also invites us into a communal response to the pain of the world. As believers, we are called to embody the compassion of Christ, extending



comfort to others, reflecting on 2 Corinthians 1:3-5, which reminds us that the comfort we receive from God is meant to be shared with those around us.

Conclusion

Through Christ's humanity, we see our experiences mirrored and are drawn to salvation. His sacrifice and the Holy Spirit as Comforter assure us that we are never alone. God, both relational and relatable, sheds Christ-human tears and becomes the sacrificial Lamb, redeeming us and reigning forevermore.

His incarnation reveals a God who empathises with our suffering, teaching us through His very being. Through His tears, Jesus shows Himself as the empathetic Creator, inviting us into transformation. Reflecting on His humanity, we are called to worship and embody His compassion, sharing comfort and wiping away others' tears.



References

Dublin Women's Convention, 2024. Behold Our God. 19th October 2024, Maldron Hotel, Tallaght. Speaker: Jen Wilkin.

Swindoll, C.R., 2000. Exalting Christ, the Lamb of God. Dallas, TX: Word Publishing.

Swindoll, C.R., 2012. Dr. Charles R. Swindoll on The Messiah Who Understands Your Pain. LifeCoach4God. Available at:

<https://lifecoach4god.life/2012/09/15/dr-charles-r-swindoll-on-the-messiah-who-understands-your-pain/> [Accessed 15 October 2024].

The Holy Bible, 2011. New International Version. Biblica.

Wilkin, J., 2016. None Like Him: 10 Ways God is Different from Us (and Why That's a Good Thing). Wheaton, IL: Crossway.

Wilkin, J., 2021. Ten Words to Live By: Delighting in and Doing What God Commands. Wheaton, IL: Crossway.

Wright, N.T., 2016. The Day the Revolution Began: Reconsidering the Meaning of Jesus's Crucifixion. New York: HarperOne.