

Chapter 22

What is the "likeness" of our sinful flesh?

"What the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh" (Romans 8:3).

Do not get a wrong idea of that word "likeness." It is not the shape; it is not the photograph, it is not the likeness in the sense of an image; but it is likeness in the sense of being like indeed. It is likeness in nature, likeness to the flesh. And in order to be just like sinful flesh, it would have to be sinful flesh; in order to be made flesh at all, as it is in this world, He would have to be just such flesh as it is in this world, just such as we have, and that is sinful flesh. That is what is said in the words "likeness of sinful flesh."

He took not the nature of angels, but the nature of Abraham. "It was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." (Hebrews 2:10) It was the proper thing for Him to do. It was appropriate. Who are His brethren? The human race. Because we're all of one, He is not ashamed to call you and me brethren." [1]

How was it that Christ could be thus "subject to weakness" (Hebrews 5:2), and still know no sin? Some may have thought, while reading thus far, that we were depreciating the character of Jesus by bringing Him down to the level of sinful man. On the contrary we are simply exalting our blessed Savior, who Himself voluntarily descended to the level of sinful man, in order that He might exalt man to His own spotless purity, which He retained under the most adverse circumstances. [2]

Notes:

Jones, General Conference Bulletin, 1895, pp. 232, 233.

Waggoner, Christ and His Righteousness, p. 28.