

## “Jesus Shows Us Our Creator”

There is a story told about a child who moved into a new home in a new town; everything was strange to him. That first night he repeatedly called his mother into his room and she would assure him that “God is here with you.” After several repetitions the little boy looked at his mother and said, “I know God is here. But sometimes I need God with skin on.” Don’t we all...

The one true God who fills all things is beyond time and is creator of all. That’s enough to chew on, right there. Our fallen human minds cannot begin to understand him. We are time-bound; we are earthbound. Naturally speaking, we can comprehend our Creator about as well as the ants going back and forth on the anthill can comprehend the human being watching their activity. What can the ant know about the giant human? What can we know about the God who made the universe?

Is that all we can say about God? He’s like the big person—we’re like the ants—He can squash us if He feels like it? Not at all. The Church season of Advent urges us to look for the God who is coming; and if we let it, Advent teaches us to look for the coming of “God with skin on.” The One referred to as Emmanuel. God with us. He is coming to bless and not to curse. This person bridges the gap between the infinite God and the finite human as Jesus shows us our creator. And how we need this—it’s the difference between God as an abstract idea and God as a person, someone relatable and knowable.

Our creative God spoke creation into existence by the power of his word and even now holds it in his almighty hand. We confess in the Creed: “I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.” Martin Luther explains this with these words: “*I believe that God has made me and all creatures that he has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears and all my members; my reason and all my senses and still takes care of them.*” If you’ve spent any time at all in the Small Catechism you have probably studied those words, but do they grab you like they should? Do we even take the time to contemplate the majesty of our God?

The Psalmist, in words we sang just a few minutes ago, said, “... the Lord is a great God and a great king above all gods.” Think of it this way. Most people would be honored, maybe flabbergasted, to be invited to Buckingham Palace for an audience with the king of England. Imagine what a big deal that would be if you received that invite. If word got out, you would probably be featured on the news. Now chances are, none of us are likely to have that privilege. And yet we are invited into the presence of the one who is the great King—the King of kings: “Let us come into his presence with Thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!” How much greater is He than any king, president, prime minister! In his hand are the depths of the earth and heights of the mountains are his also. The sea is his for he made it, and his hands formed the dry land. How can we in our position ever know such a mighty God?

How can we approach the one who not only made the universe but who also created each one of us? Now, it’s true, we are commanded: “Oh come let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our maker.” But I know when I look in the mirror, I see the reflection of

one whose thoughts, words, and deeds are often a mess. I see someone who's not always eager to come into God's presence and bow down in worship; but who often runs the other way to go where I want to go. The Sinner in me doesn't want to kneel before anybody. How can I come and kneel before the Lord my Maker? How can you?

There is a way to enter the presence of the creator, and it's a way that is only for sinners. That way is a person; a person who said, "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father." This person is also the eternal Word through whom all things were created, and He is before all things and in Him all things hold together. This is the only begotten son of God: Jesus himself.

We can know him because He became one with us. This is "God with skin on," exactly what that little boy wanted in our opening story, and the God our hearts long for. He is the miracle and mystery of the Creator entering into His creation; the Author of the story writing Himself into the action. We know him first as the baby of Bethlehem, cradled in the arms of his virgin mother. We know him as the wandering preacher who captivated the crowds. We know him as the one who rode into Jerusalem on a colt as we heard again this past Sunday. We know him as the Lord of nature whose voice stilled the raging sea and turned water into wine.

We know him as the one who has opened the Kingdom of heaven to us by redeeming us "with his own holy, precious blood and innocent suffering and death." We know him as our great high priest who offered himself on the cross as the final sacrifice for the world that had rebelled against him. We know him as the Lord of life who entered our tomb and emerged on Easter morning, destroying the power of sin, death, and hell. We know all this about Him because he took on human flesh. He is "God with skin on" and the Gospels are the record of this appearing.

Jesus himself is our way to the Father. He's the only way and no one comes to the Father except through Him. At the same time, He is the Savior of the world who invites everyone to come to His Father, and He does so through ways that we can see, feel, taste, hear and even smell. He calls us and seals us to Himself through the water with the word; that gracious dying and rising with Him in baptism. He calls us to His altar where He feeds us His own body and blood, letting us know that life with Him is a feast! He speaks to our greatest need with the most important words we will ever hear: You are my beloved child—I am well pleased with you. The Father speaks those words; we hear them because of Jesus.

And so, this Advent presents you and me with an opportunity that you are already taking advantage of—the opportunity to draw closer to Jesus, and by drawing closer to Jesus, you draw closer to your Father God. Drawing closer to Jesus and His Father is both simple and difficult, because it is a matter of the time that we give to Him. The fact that you have taken the time to be here, in the midst of what is for most people the busiest time of year, is evidence that you want to get closer to your Savior and Creator. That's truly a beautiful thing. I would encourage you to lean into your devotion of time in the coming days. Talk to God in prayer a little bit more. Absorb His Words to you a little bit more. Be a little more deliberate in serving the people around you. Invest your time in nurturing closeness to Jesus and you'll come to know the Father in a new way.

