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Approaching the Unapproachable God

The Son of God *was* the Mediator, *is* the Mediator, and *ever shall be* the Mediator, the one Mediator between God and men. Scripture presents this fact so clearly that it cannot be misunderstood; it can only be deliberately misrepresented. There is one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. The issue is not subject to discussion or to debate; it is believed or it is rejected. Humanity does appreciate hearing that a Mediator is necessary between man (the word is used in the generic sense to identify all humanity) and God. Mankind has a rather high view of humanity and resents the description of defective in moral judgment or ethical character. Manipulation of the language has enabled humanity to discard the offensive "primitive

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this and that

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These notes are being written just as a new day begins. Outside in the night, I can hear a bullfrog. For some reason, maybe the abundance of the lizards, I hear no crickets. Bullfrogs always sound a little better with some accompaniment; but I will take the sounds of nature as they come: that is, most sounds of nature. I know that I am growing old because my mind keeps wanting to reminisce.

This publication is mailed to you on purpose. Someone who knows you believed that you would profit by receiving and reading it. If you do not agree, we will remove your name from the next possible mailing. We have no desire to intrude or offend.

I was raised in southern Indiana and spent portions of the summers in eastern Kentucky. There are times when I would give much to be able to turn back the clock and return to those days of yesteryear. In particular, as I listen to this bullfrog, I hear in my memory that Kentucky

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this and that

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whippoorwill that would sing through the night as I lay on the old featherbed. The dictionary calls the whippoorwill "a nocturnal nightjar with a loud repeated call suggestive of its name." I am certain that my readers know it is really the *Caprimulgus vociferus*. If any bird ever lived up to its name, the whippoorwill does—it is a vociferous bird! Vociferous or not, I would love to hear it, tonight, as I did, as a boy, in the summer, in (not "on") a featherbed, through an open window, in the hills of Kentucky, content and happy, knowing Mom (my grandmother) would have ham, biscuits and eggs, and fresh milk ready in the morning.

—Pastor Manley

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in due time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. 8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. 10 For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. 11 And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

You and I are sinners, under the curse of the broken law, at enmity with our Creator. You and I cannot approach God. We cannot see God. We need a Mediator, One to intercede on our behalf. God provided His Son to be the Mediator. The Son of God has the right to approach the Father and He most certainly can see the Father. He became the Son of man, so that we might approach Him and see Him. I plead with you this day, "Look and live."

—Pastor Manley

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notion" of needing to placate a deity because of offenses committed. The injured self-esteem of any person, sustained by hearing that he or she is a sinner, does not alter the truth. We need a Mediator.

First, understand that man cannot approach God. 1 Timothy 5:16 records of God that He dwells "in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see." John 1:18 makes the same emphatic statement, repeated word for word in 1 John 4:12, "No man hath seen God at any time." The Lord Jesus declared (John 4:24) that "God is a spirit"; He is therefore, as Paul describes Him, "the invisible God" (Colossians 1:15).

Man cannot approach God because of where God dwells—"in the light"; and, even if man could find God's dwelling, man cannot see God. Humanity has an earthly, temporal, physical existence; God is the heavenly, eternal Spirit. Humanity cannot approach God. Humanity cannot see God. Humanity needs a Mediator that can approach and can see God. The Lord Jesus Christ emphasized this truth repeatedly. For example, in John 5, after healing the impotent man who missed the stirring of the waters by the angels (verse 1 through 15 are in the best manuscripts, contrary to many marginal notes), the Lord Jesus is confronted by the religious leaders, identified by John as "the Jews." The term refers to the national religious leaders, not to the Jewish people. Note how the Lord Jesus answers them. He iden-

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tifies Himself as the Son of God and the Son of man and stresses that He was sent by God. He also declares that He can see God and can approach God.

John 5, 16 And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day. 17 But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. 18 Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God. 19 Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. 20 For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth him all things that himself doeth: and he will show him greater works than these, that ye may marvel. 21 For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth *them*; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. 22 For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: 23 That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him. 24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that

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through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

One more requirement has to be met.

The Mediator had to be a man, that He might be capable of suffering death; as God He could not die; and yet suffering the penalty of the law, death, was necessary to make reconciliation; a sacrifice for sin had to be offered, and therefore it was proper that Christ "should have somewhat to offer"; as the old theologians expressed it, "a true body, and a reasonable soul," and His Own blood which he did offer.

Redemption could only be obtained through shedding of blood, and reconciliation by the sufferings of death; therefore, a nature must be assumed capable of shedding blood, and of suffering death. A nature, without which, he could not be made sin and a curse for men, as the law required that he should.

Romans 5, 1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: 2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. 3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; 4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope: 5 And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. 6 For when we were yet without strength,

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so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: 13 (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. 14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. 15 But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, *which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.* 16 And not as *it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification.* 17 For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) 18 Therefore as by the offence of one *judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.* 19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. 20 Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: 21 That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign

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sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. 25 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. 26 For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; 27 And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. 28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, 29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. 30 I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me. 31 If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true. 32 There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true. 33 Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth. 34 But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved. 35 He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light. 36 But I have greater witness than *that* of John: for the works which the Fa-

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ther hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. 37 And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape. 38 And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not. 39 Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. 40 And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life. 41 I receive not honour from men. 42 But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you. 43 I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. 44 How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only? 45 Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. 46 For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. 47 But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?

John 6 and the first twenty-six verses again bring the Lord Jesus into a confrontation. This time it is not with religious leaders, it is with those who have identified themselves as His disciples (verse

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have the right of redemption.

Leviticus 25: 48-49 After that he is sold he may be redeemed again; one of his brethren may redeem him: Either his uncle, or his uncle's son, may redeem him, or any that is nigh of kin unto him of his family may redeem him; or if he be able, he may redeem himself.

He entered flesh to be our Redeemer. In order to redeem us, He must pay the redemption price. The debt of sin could only be satisfied, and reconciliation be secured thereby, in the same nature which sinned. So, Christ, Who knew no sin, was made to be sin so that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

He was made flesh, and made in the flesh under the Law. The redeemer had to be One free from any claim of the Law. Adam broke the command of God—all of his seed are incapable of keeping the Law. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. So someone not in the line of Adam, yet of human nature was required for the Mediator. Only the Lord Jesus matches that description.

Total, complete, perfect obedience to the Law was required for the justification of a sinner before God therefore Christ was made of a woman, that he might be made under the law, and yield obedience to it. By that obedience, men are made righteous in the sight of God.

Romans 5, 12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and

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ate with the Father, rather than the Father mediate with the Son. That is proper and suitable in preserving the names of the Godhead. He Who is the Son of God became the Son of man. It would not be fitting for the Father to become the Son of man.

The Lord Jesus Christ is suited for His office as Mediator, because in Him, and in Him alone is found in His one Person, the union of the two natures, human and divine. He is not a divided being with two separate and distinct persons within. He is Immanuel, God with us: God manifest in the flesh.

As the Son of God and the Son of man, he partakes of both natures; but He was Deity before He entered flesh. The Son of God took upon Himself a nature' (Hebrews 2:16), not a dual personality. The Lord Jesus Christ was not one person that was God and one person that was human—two persons living in one body. Some teach this; but they do so in terrible error. "Jesus was born," they say, "and then at the baptism by John, Christ entered Jesus" —that teaching is worse than foolishness: it is the pathway to hell.

The Lord Jesus Christ is suited to be a Mediator between God and man; because, as the Son of God, He is able to take care of things pertaining to God and to His glory, and, as the Son of man, He is also able to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

He became man that He might become our kinsman. He became our kinsman so that He would

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66).

26 Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled. 27 Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed. 28 Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? 29 Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. 30 They said therefore unto him, What sign showest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work? 31 Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat. 32 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. 33 For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. 34 Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread. 35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. 36 But I said unto you, That ye

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also have seen me, and believe not. 37 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. 38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. 39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. 40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day. 41 The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven. 42 And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven? 43 Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves. 44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. 45 It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me. 46 Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath

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he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

Revelation 1

7 Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

Is it not interesting that the remedy provided by the brazen serpent was effective only for those who looked on it.

Numbers 21:8-9 And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. 9 And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.

Is it not intriguing that the message of Isaiah 45:22 was, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I *am* God, and *there is none else.*"

The consistent message of Scripture is that man needs to approach God and to see God; but that in his natural state, man can neither approach God nor see Him except through the God appointed Mediator, the Son of God.

Since the Son of God bears the name of Son, it seems most in character that the Son should medi-

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so that we might behold (see) His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father. When the two disciples of John asked the Lord Jesus, "where dwellest thou?" His reply was, "Come and see."

There is a great emphasis throughout Scripture on "seeing" the Lord Jesus. Consider as examples

Job

Job 19, 25 For I know *that* my redeemer liveth, and *that* he shall stand at the latter *day* upon the earth: 26 And *though* after my skin worms destroy this *body*, yet in my flesh shall I see God: 27 Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; *though* my reins be consumed within me.

Simeon

Luke 2:28 Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, 29 Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: 30 For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,

The Lord Jesus

Luke 24:39 39 Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.

Paul

Hebrews 2:9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that

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seen the Father. 47 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. 48 I am that bread of life. 49 Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. 50 This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. 51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. . . 58 This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever. 59 These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum. 60 Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard *this*, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it? 61 When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? 62 What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? 63 It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life. 64 But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. 65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you,

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that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father. 66 From that *time* many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. 67 Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? 68 Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. 69 And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God

The Son of God stated that He was the Son of man, that He had been sent by the Father, that He saw the Father, that He had access to the Father, and that men (and women, boys and girls) could come to the Father by Him. This is the matter addressed in

John 14, 8 Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. 9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou *then*, Show us the Father?

Remember, this follows immediately upon His declaration that He is the way, the truth, and the life; and His emphatic declaration that He was the exclusive way to approach God: "no man cometh unto the Father but by Me."

This is the focus of

John 1, 18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the

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bosom of the Father, he hath declared *him*.

The Lord Jesus can approach God and the Lord Jesus can see God and humanity can see the Lord Jesus Christ. We see Him today by faith:

1 Peter 1, 6 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: 7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: 8 Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: 9 Receiving the end of your faith, *even* the salvation of *your* souls.

The required Mediator was provided by God.

The Mediator is the Son of God. Since humanity cannot approach God and cannot see God, the Mediator must be God. It is simplistic, but it must be stated anyway. To be God, He must be one of the divine Persons in the Trinity. There is no other "god." The only possible Mediator (One that can approach God and see God) with God is God.

On the other side—our side, to intercede for humanity, the Son of God must become human. Otherwise, man could not approach Him nor see Him. God, therefore, must be manifested in the flesh. The Son of God must be made flesh and must dwell among us so that we might approach Him and

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