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He was a bachelor farmer who lived on the same 40 acres his great-grandfather had carved out of the north woods. He milked 12 cows by hand and had a team of horses to do the field work. He lived in a house with no indoor plumbing or electricity. He was kind of a loner, but also did some beekeeping on the side. Once a year he'd take his honey to the big city - Green Bay - and sell it to a storekeeper he knew.

One year he came to town, and while he was talking to the store owner, a guy came in. Immediately the staff flocked around this guy and gave him the star treatment. After he walked out, the bachelor farmer asked the store owner, “Who was that guy?” “Why, that was Vince Lombardi” the owner replied. And the bachelor farmer asked “Who’s Vince Lombardi?”

How often don't we take for granted, especially during this time of the year, that everyone knows who Jesus is? And yet, there are people who really don't know, maybe even your neighbor. Do you know how to answer their question “**WHO IS THIS ‘JESUS’?**” Come with me today into God's Word and remind yourself of His nature and His gifts. Then, you'll be ready to answer.

Part One: His nature

Paul wrote to people who needed reassurance about who Jesus truly is. Remember, these believers were living in Rome. Most Romans believed that there were many gods. Each one had a specific power or job to do, and really, they weren't all that special. The Romans believed the gods were just a step or two above human beings. They had their faults. They fought and brawled with other gods. They made mistakes and weren't above jealousy, stealing and other sins. If you've seen the Marvel movies about Thor, that's a pretty good picture of how the Romans viewed their gods. So, one reason Paul wrote was to remind them of who Jesus truly is.

You know, Paul could have been writing to Americans, too. Most Americans think of God as just a few steps higher than them. The average citizen thinks that God can make mistakes. Ever hear someone say “Why did God allow that to happen? What was he thinking?” They don't think He is all-powerful. “Why did God allow evil to invade this world? Can't He stop it?” Then, when they hear the historical account of Adam and Eve will say “Why did God make them with the ability to choose to sin? What was He thinking?” To most people, God is someone who is just a step or two above us. And even believers get tempted to think in this way, don't we? How often haven't we questioned God's ruling of this world, as if His thought process, His wisdom was just a step or two above ours?

This way of thinking can slyly leak into our view of Jesus. We look at Jesus and often notice only the human part of who He is. We see the babe in the manger on Christmas Eve, wrapped in swaddling clothes. We see Him doing human things in the gospel accounts, eating, sleeping and dying. You know, human actions. And we can relate to that, can't we?

Paul reminds us that Jesus is truly a unique individual. Oh, it goes without saying that Jesus had a human nature. Paul says in verse 3 “**as to his human nature was a descendant of David.**” That's easy to see. His human nature started the moment the Holy Spirit conceived Him in Mary. But He's more than a man who walked the dusty roads of Israel. “**Who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God.**” He is always and completely God, Who has no beginning and no end. As the second person of the Trinity, He has always been. According to Jesus' divine nature, He is unlimited. There is no limit to His knowledge, His wisdom and His power. In Jesus, the unlimited nature of God is joined with the limited nature of a man. Truly, there has never been someone like Jesus. He has a human nature and a divine nature, united in one being.

This explains so much about His life. He may have looked as if he was just a man, but He did things that only God can do. He veiled, He tamped down His divine glory while He was on earth. But we could see He is God by the things He did. He walked on water. He raised the dead. He healed the sick. He cast out demons. He raised Himself from the dead. Oh, He had a human nature, but His divine nature powered His miracles, didn't it? He is both true man and true God.

It is because Jesus is both true man and true God that He is able to give us some fantastic gifts.

Part Two: His gifts

The best one is the reason He came to this earth and put on human flesh. To save us from our sins. Jesus needed to be both God and man so that we might have **“*grace and peace... from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.*”** Because He was human, He could live under God’s Law and keep it perfectly in our place. Because He was human, He could die and pay for the sins of the entire world. Because He was God - remember, God has no limits - His payment for sin could cover everyone’s sins.

What a treasure! Jesus didn’t come to just show us how to live a nice life. He didn’t come to just show us how to be kind to others, or how to endure the tough times in life. He didn’t come to show us how to be content with what we have. Oh, no! Much more than that, He came to give us eternal life. His perfect life and complete payment for sin restores us to perfection in God’s eyes. He came to make us worthy of paradise. The blood of Jesus, His Son, cleanses us from all sin. No human being can do that. You have to be God in order to make this happen.

As we go in spirit to the manger in Bethlehem, remember who is lying there. He is a baby, yes. More than that, He is God. All power is His. Remember, and be comforted knowing that Jesus is true God. Because He is God, He knows all things. He knows every hurt, every disappointment that comes into your life. He loves you and His heart aches for you. He knows your future, and is using everything to bring you home to heaven. He bends the evil of this world to do His will. Now, we may not understand or comprehend how He is doing this right now, but we trust Him. He is God. He is limitless. He knows what He is doing for our spiritual good.

These are God’s gifts to you this Christmas and every day of your life. Forgiveness, grace, peace, love, direction and comfort. You are **“*loved by God and called to be saints.*”** God gave us His Word so that He could constantly remind us of His presence and His gifts. Every time we pick up the Bible or hear the Word God is coming to us and saying “Don’t forget I love you. Don’t forget I am with you. Don’t forget I will strengthen and comfort you each and every day.” We have been personally selected by God to receive the amazing gift of eternal life. Oh, not because we’re special, but just because He chose us.

Ever wonder why God would do this? Why did God choose me to go to heaven instead of someone else? I’m not the best person in my neighborhood. I’ve got lots of faults and constantly sin against God’s will. So often I’m disobedient, lazy, mean and just a jerk. Why me? Well... Maybe this story will help.

A woodworker was once hired to craft a dining room table for a millionaire. That millionaire wanted a table that was spectacular, special, that would show the world he was special. So, the woodworker sorted through the wood that was available to him. He had black walnut and birdseye maple to choose from. He had awesome pieces of red and white oak. Beautiful pieces of mahogany and jacaranda, cherry and ash available to him. He picked out a salvaged, knot-filled, warped piece of pine with all sorts of flaws. He sanded, filled and stained that old piece of wood until it truly was a masterpiece. The skill of the woodworker was shown in the flaws that were repaired and left on display. That table was his crowning glory. It showed the world how good of a woodworker he was.

If you think you’re a knot-filled warped human being who isn’t worthy of Christ, you’re right! But He chose you to be fashioned into a child of God, perfect in His sight. You are a product of God’s love. You show the glory of a saving, loving Lord!

May we continue to show the world the glory of our God! My friends, you know who Jesus is. You know His spectacular, unique nature and the gifts that He gives to His followers. You know the glory, the honor and the thanks that are due Him. Be ready to answer when someone asks you **“WHO IS THIS ‘JESUS’?”** Tell them what you know!

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