* In 1986, the band Human League released their hit song “Human”.
* That’s right “Human” by the Human League.
* The whole idea of the song “Human” is that for the first 2/3 of the song- you think its about a guy semi-apologizing to his lover for cheating on her. And he coats the whole thing in this excuse that turns out to be the chorus.
* **“I’m only human, of flesh and blood I’m made.**
* **Human, born to make mistakes.”**
* But right at the end, the boyfriend gets a punch in the gut.
* Just after the bridge there is a speaking part from the girlfriend- where she says-
* **“The tears I cry aren’t tears of pain**
* **They’re all to hide my guilt and shame**
* **I forgive you, now I ask the same of you**
* **While we were apart, I was human too”**
* BOOM- Drum pad- bring back the synthesizer
* So the song turns out to be these 2 lovers, who both have cheated on one another and are sort of quasi-asking for forgiveness.
* And its all masked in this in this excuse of “being human”. I had to do this, because I’m human. Can’t you understand? I’m born to make mistakes. I have no choice.
* In 2018- I was introduced to another song entitled “Human”.
* I’ve shared it with you before. Its one of the reasons I decided to learn how to play piano this last year. Because I watched this Youtube video of Jon Bellion playing the acoustic version of his song “Human” and I found myself watching it over and over and over and sharing it with multiple people- and no matter how many times I’d watch it, tears would well up…a few times, I’d just weep. Because its so relatable. It so cuts to the heart of the Human experience.
* Here’s how it goes.
* **I always fear that I'm not living right  
  So I feel guilty when I go to church  
  The pastor tells me I've been saved, I'm fine  
  Then please explain to me why my chest still hurts**
* **I spent four thousand on the Mart McFlys  
  Yet I'm still petrified of going broke  
  There's someone gorgeous in my bed tonight  
  Yet I'm still petrified that I'll die alone**
* **I'm just so sick of being  
  Human**
* At the end of the song there is this little refrain
* **I got GPS on my phone**
* **And I can follow it to get home**
* **If my location’s never unknown**
* **Then tell me why I still feel lost**
* **Tell me why I still feel Human.**
* In 1986- the Human League was saying “**To be human is to make mistakes**, so cut me a break. I’m gonna need to have a little something on the side to keep me happy and filled up. So lets just forgive each other as we chase happiness.”- Don’t you want me baby?
* 30 years later Jon Bellion is saying- “To be human is to never shake that heavy feeling in your chest or that pit in your stomach that no matter what the pastor says, no matter how gorgeous the people that I sleep with are…no matter how much money or fashion or technology I can get my hands on… I’m petrified. Stuck in a hole I can’t buy or sleep my way out of. I Feel so lost. So Unfulfilled.
* I’m so sick of being human.”
* That’s 2 different messages- 30 years apart- about being human- From the Human League-“Oops, we make mistakes, its just our nature…but we can fix each other with our love.”
* Or with Jon Bellion- “We are sick…and we can’t do anything to fix ourselves- in fact, the more we try and fail…the sadder and sicker we get.”
* Every one of us is human.
* And every one of us is going to experience what the Human League sang about. “Oh, I make mistakes. I just need to fix myself.”
* But eventually- you’ll get to Jon Bellion’s version, “Oh my God! I can’t fix myself.”
* Some of you are Human League this morning. That might seem like good news to you…but its not. Because if you minimize how broken you are…if you minimize your sin…if you think you can fix yourself- pull yourself out of the pain you’re in by sleeping with another person…or succeeding at work…or getting married…or getting divorced….or having a family…. or becoming financially secure…or traveling the world….or buying a home….
* If you think being Human is being born to mistakes that you can fix….
* …it seems like you have control…it seems you still have the power to do something about your unhappiness.
* That’s why it feels good.
* The problem?
* You don’t have control. You can’t have control. And you never will have control.
* Which means if you are in Human League territory this morning- there is a major crash on the way. That’s the bad news.
* Some of you are already in Jon Bellion territory. You are so sick of being human. You have already tried and failed to fix yourself.
* And that feels like bad news. But its actually the beginning of good news. Because, often, you have to land at the bottom to realize which way is up.
* You have to get to the dead end of the path you’ve been walking to finally turn around and go a different way.
* You have to go through the darkest part of the night- to get to the sunrise.
* **Title Slide- “Human: How Baptism Drowns the Voices in Your Head”- Matthew 3**
* We’ve been recently in the book of Joshua. And we’ll get back there next week- Lord willing.
* But last week, in Joshua- we talked about hidden sin…and the need for repentance.
* And, I think the Lord wanted me to give you an opportunity today to respond in repentance. And baptism. So we’re gonna take a small break from Joshua…and look at Jesus’ baptism. The OTHER Joshua who climbed into the Jordan River…and then climbed out on a mission.
* **Matt 3:1-17 & 4:1**
* **In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea**
* **2 and saying, “Repent, because the kingdom of heaven has come near! ” 3 For he is the one spoken of through the prophet Isaiah, who said:**
* **A voice of one crying out in the wilderness:**
* **Prepare the way for the Lord;**
* **make his paths straight!**
* **4 Now John had a camel-hair garment with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. 5 Then people from Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the vicinity of the Jordan were going out to him, 6 and they were baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.**
* **7 When he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, “Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? 8 Therefore produce fruit consistent with repentance. 9 And don’t presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I tell you that God is able to raise up children for Abraham from these stones. 10 The ax is already at the root of the trees. Therefore, every tree that doesn’t produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.**
* **11 “I baptize you with water for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is more powerful than I. I am not worthy to remove his sandals. He himself will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 12 His winnowing shovel is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the barn. But the chaff he will burn with fire that never goes out.”**
* **13 Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. 14 But John tried to stop him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and yet you come to me? ”**
* **15 Jesus answered him, “Allow it for now, because this is the way for us to fulfill all righteousness.” Then John allowed him to be baptized.**
* **16 When Jesus was baptized, he went up immediately from the water. The heavens suddenly opened for him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming down on him. 17 And a voice from heaven said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased.”**
* **Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.**
* **TRANSITION:** One of the biggest problems we have is associated our humanity with our sin. Like for the Human League- it was an excuse- “I’m just human- I’m born to make mistakes”. And for Jon Bellion the only hope of finally being whole and complete- is to escape his humanity. He’s sick of it. But….

**1) You don’t sin because you’re human. You sin because you believe the voice that says “You’re NOT.”**

* + Humans are created in the image of God. We are lower, lesser than God. But still, that we are above the rest of creation.
  + …and Jesus was a human… yet He never sinned. He never tried to fill a missing piece of himself with something that couldn’t do it.
  + Being human is not a curse. Its not something to mourn. Its not an excuse**. Being human is a godly thing**. You were created by God **to be HUMAN**.
  + **We sin when we become convinced we AREN’T human.**
  + Take a look back at Matthew chapter 3. Its full of voices. Voices trying to convince humans of something.
  + **V 3-**
  + There’s the voice of John the Baptist in the wilderness, telling people to repent (or change their way of life) because a king is coming.
  + **V 7-**
  + There is the question John asked the Pharisees and Sadducees….”who warned you about the wrath to come?”
  + In other words, “Whose ***voice*** convinced you to come out to the wilderness for this baptism?”
  + **V 9-** John tells the Pharisees that he knows the voice they hear in their heads. “Don’t say to yourselves” or don’t listen to the voice in your head that says you don’t need to repent. Instead “I tell you” listen to this voice.
  + **V 17**- and then finally, Jesus as he comes up out of the water at his baptism…hears a voice…from heaven…from God.
  + **Listen, We decide what to do…we decide WHO WE ARE… based on the voices we listen to.**
  + When we sin….we are listening to a voice that is convincing us that we aren’t human.
* **Back to 1)**
  + I’ll give you two of those voices.
  + The first voice says **“You’re a god, not a human.”**
    - See, a god has ultimate authority.
    - A god sets his or her own rules.
    - As a god, you don’t follow a script, you write the script.
    - A god decides what is good and what is evil.
    - A god is special. Exceptional.
    - Though everyone else may have to adhere to a standard…when you believe you are a god…you get to rewrite the rules so they fit what you want to do. So that people worship you.
  + Take adultery for example.
  + Most people don’t conclude that adultery is morally right and then draw up a plan to sleep with their neighbor.
  + Rather, they see what they want…and they justify why a little bit of it is OK…at least right there in that moment.
    - “Well, I’m not ACTUALLY sleeping with her.- just thinking about what it would be like to sleep with her.”
  + Then bit by bit- that voice tells you to take what you want.
  + The voice that justifies all the small steps into your sin- then ratifies the plunge all the way in- “You are a god. You decide why you are exceptional. You decide how morality does and does not apply to you.”
  + When you’re convinced you are a God, you’ll rewrite the rules of morality for yourself, while you strictly hold others to a different standard.
  + Jon Bellion’s version of human has a lot of God-like choices. Unlimited money- “I can buy $4k shoes.”
  + Unlimited options of people to use. “I can sleep with the most gorgeous supermodel.”
  + Unlimited technology- “I got GPS on my phone”
  + Using Godlike resources to get what you have morally justified as OK for you- the exception to the rule- well…all that comes from believing a very un-godly voice in your head.
  + **Here’s the other voice.**
  + This voice tells you “**You’re an animal, not a human.”**
    - You are your desires.
    - You obey instincts.
    - You can’t help what you want…and don’t believe anyone that tries to make you something more than that.
    - You won’t surely die if you give in to your desires. That's just who you are. A super-evolved animal. Those desires are LIFE, not death.
    - You’ve got to give in to what you want deeply on the inside. Its your nature.
  + There is a line in Human League’s version of Human where they sing- “I just needed someone to hold me- to fill the void while you were gone.”
  + I’m just an animal. I had a need- and had to fill it.
  + When you’re hungry…you eat.
  + When you’re thirsty…you drink.
  + And when your next door neighbor makes you crave sex…you GO GET IT!
  + **Sin is** **forgetting who you really are**- **a human. Higher than the animals, lower than God.**
  + The heart of sin is listening to the voice that tells you that you’re someone you’re not.

**TRANSITION-** so, If we aren’t animals…just living by our instincts.

* + And we aren’t gods…with the power to write our own script.
  + Then who are we? And what does it really mean to be human?

**2) Humans are not gods. We are movies about God.**

* + In the beginning, God created humans in his image.
  + Do you know what an image is?
  + Its something that looks a lot like something else, but it isn’t that thing in reality.
  + Have you ever seen a movie that absolutely takes you into another time and place?
  + Its so real, that you feel like you’re there.
    - You engage in the relationships in those romantic comedies
    - You feel the pain and the glory of the battle scenes.
    - You cry at the heartbreak of lost love.
    - And cheer when its found again.
  + But all along, you know its not REALLY happening.
  + You know that’s Morgan Freeman, an actor who’s going home at the end of the day… but we allow ourselves to see RED…the convict in Shawshank who finds his freedom.
  + You knew that E.T. was a puppet…but you allowed yourself to feel his love for Elliot…and his quest to go home.
  + You knew those Turtles weren’t really teenagers, or Ninjas for that matter…but you also knew that Secret Evil Ninja Clans have no business controlling a city.
  + We knew Woody and Buzz weren’t even real TOYS, …but we were all taken with the idea that a friendship like that could be real.
  + In a sense, what we see in a movie, though we know its not the real thing…points us to…allows us to experience and feel… …something that is real.
    - Justice.
    - Heartbreak.
    - Friendship.
    - Love.
  + When God created humans in his image, he was making little movies about himself…while he remained the real thing.
  + So, what does it mean to image God? How does the movie play in the right way in your life?
  + Well, you can read it in the opening pages of the Bible. Take a look.
* **Gen 1:27-28**
  + **27 So God created man in his own image;**
  + **he created him in the image of God;**
  + **he created them male and female.**

**28 God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, and subdue it. Rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and every creature that crawls on the earth.”**

* + See, God says, “You aren’t God…you’re a picture of me. But you aren’t the animals…you have dominion over them.”
  + To be human is not to strive to BE GOD. To have control.
  + To be human is not to put yourself on par with animals. To just obey your instincts.
  + **To be human is to image God- To be fruitful & multiply & bless the world.**
  + “So, Trevor, are you asking me to have a lot of babies?”
  + Well, not necessarily, …though you guys are doing a great job of that.
  + Chiefly, the idea behind being fruitful and multiplying and blessing the world like God blessed us… is not mainly physical…its spiritual.
  + Think about fruit. Fruit shows life, doesn’t it?
  + Fruit on a tree shows that its roots are connected to a water source.
  + That its getting what it needs to grow.
  + If you have an apple tree that doesn’t bear fruit, you know its roots are not in good soil.
  + **Matt 3:10**
  + That’s why earlier, John the Baptist told the Pharisees and Sadducees that trees are only good if they…produce fruit.
  + Be Fruitful. So, what is spiritual fruit? What’s the theme of the movie your life is supposed to be playing?
  + **Gal 5:22-23**
  + If you are truly going to be human, **actually** going to live like you were created….to image God. When people watch the movie of your life,… they should recognize love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.
  + And when they reach for the fruit your life is pointing to, when they take a bite of the fruit of the tree of YOUR life, they are connecting to, seeing, appreciating worshipping the God you’re showing off.
  + …and that’s where the **multiplying** happens. Remember. Be fruitful AND multiply. Those aren’t two separate tasks. One feeds the other.
  + See, imaging God, helps other people to image God, which helps other people to image God.
  + **Be fruitful…and multiply.**
  + **Image God, and you’ll help create more imagers of God.**
  + Its easier to be patient, when someone’s been patient with you.
  + Its easier to have self-control, when your’e not doing it alone.
  + And…its so much easier to love, when you have been loved first.
* **Back to 2)**
  + Be the voice of love, of joy, of peace, of patience, of kindness, of goodness, of faithfulness, of gentleness, of self-control…be that voice in someone else’s life…and watch it begin to overpower the voice that says **“You’re a god. Do what you want.”**
  + Watch that voice begin to overpower the one that says “**You’re an animal. You have to obey your desires.”**
  + There’s only one problem. We’re all hypocrites.
  + We’re like movie screens, that promise a blockbuster, and deliver a flop.
  + We’re trees that look like an apple tree, except, no apples.
  + Most of us find that we can kind-of be loving and good for just a little while, maybe while we’re in public, maybe while we’re at church, but we know that at home, we’re looking at porn.
  + Behind closed doors, we’re screaming at our kids.
  + When no one’s watching, our joy is really in the attention we get from being rich, or a great musician, or an engaging pastor. or any other **identity** that’s not imaging God.
  + So, this sermon sounds nice. Be human. Be nice to people. Don’t be a hypocrite. Be a movie about God. Make the world a better place….and I hope one day you can ride a unicorn over a rainbow…
  + But you know, You don’t just decide to do that.
  + You have to hear a better voice.
* **Transition:**
  + Earlier. I cut that verse about the fruit of the spirit short.
  + Take a look at the rest of it.
  + **Gal 5:24- Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.**
  + In other words…if you’re gonna be human, all of your animal passions AND your desires to BE GOD …have to hang on a cross.
  + Before you can live, you have to die.
  + So, how do you survive a crucifixion?
  + You have to BELONG to the only human who ever has. That’s why Jesus died. See…

**3) God became human, then a slaughtered animal, …so you could be a loved child.**

* + When Jesus walked down into the water with John to be baptized. John told him “no.”
  + He told Jesus, “I need to be baptized by you!”…and that makes a lot of sense.
    - I think I’d probably do the same thing.
  + See, John had just built Jesus up to be GOD…but now, Jesus was coming for a baptism of repentance. Of change.
  + Why would God need to change? He’s perfect.
  + People were coming into the water confessing sins, but Jesus didn’t have any sins to confess.
  + So why does he get in the water?
  + Take a look at what he says…
  + **Matt 3:15**
  + Jesus said, **“Allow it for now, because this is the way for us to fulfill all righteousness”**
  + When Jesus says “allow this for now”, he means that something is coming later…that's better than this baptism.
  + This too shall pass. This is temporary. Its “for now”.
  + This baptism is just an understudy. Its not the whole movie, its just the teaser.
* **Back to 3)**
  + When Jesus is baptized, he’s showing us his mission. He’s showing us that the next 3 years of his public ministry are not about teaching…they are about “fulfilling righteousness”…so he can give it to you and me. You know what that righteousness is?
  + It's the answer to everything Jon Bellion was lamenting.
  + He was singing about not being RIGHT. His life felt off. He tried to set it right with sex, money, technology, relationships, alcohol, drugs…but it always left him sick of being human.
  + He needed to be re-aligned. Set right.
  + That’s what Jesus is doing. And he’s doing it by dying.
  + He’s telling us his goal is not to become a political leader…its to hang on a cross… in our place.
  + Yet, even though he’s not a sinner, he identifies with sinners.
  + Can you imagine this?
  + Look, John just said “I’m not worthy to hold his sandals. He’s not just a man…HE’s GOD”
  + Then Jesus lines up in between a thief and a tax collector. A prostitute and an ex-con. And waits for his turn to go under the water.
  + Jesus, even though he needs no repentance, stands in your place and lets the waters of judgement overtake him…so they wouldn’t overtake you.
  + See, on the cross, Jesus was taking the condemning voice away…taking it on himself. The one that says- “You aren’t right. Fix yourself or else. You don’t deserve to be human.”
  + In the water at his baptism, he was identifying with us…humans…with our sin, our brokenness, our hopelessness…our hypocrisy.
  + But on the cross, he wasn’t just identifying with your sin…he was being crushed by it. God was becoming a slaughtered animal.
  + **Isaiah 53:3 & 7** (note change to “Humans”)
  + **He was despised and rejected by *humans*,**
  + **a human of suffering who knew what sickness was.**
  + **He was like someone *humans* turned away from;**
  + **he was despised, and we didn’t value him.**
  + **He was oppressed and afflicted,**
  + **yet he did not open his mouth.**
  + **Like a lamb led to the slaughter**
  + **and like a sheep silent before her shearers,**
  + **he did not open his mouth.**

On the cross, Jesus, was feeling the sickness of being human. And he was becoming a sacrificed lamb…and animal not seeking his desires, but submitting his life to humans who would take dominion over him.

* + Though he was God in human form, he was rejected like an animal…
  + though he was the WORD of GOD…though he could have used HIS voice to stop it all…he was silent.
  + For you.
  + Jesus didn’t use his voice on the cross, because he was silencing the voices in your head as he died.
  + And he was opening your ears to hear another voice. A better voice.
  + One that not only tells you ***you’re a human***…but that you’re God’s family. **THAT’S WHAT IT MEANS THAT JESUS GIVES YOU HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS.**
  + **Matt 3:16-17 & 4:1**
  + Imagine you’re on a hill near the Jordan river.
  + You see John arguing with Jesus in the water. Then you watch John put Jesus under…and bring him back up.
  + When he comes up out of the water…you see the skies break. A light shines through the clouds down on Jesus. But its not just a ray of sunlight…there is something more glorious to it. Something…almost tangible.
  + …and whatever it is, it rests on Jesus standing wet in the water.
  + …and then you hear it. **“This is my beloved Son with whom I am well pleased.”**
  + Then you watch Jesus walk out of the Jordan River.
  + But not like Joshua walked out of the Jordan. Not victorious into the promised land.
  + No, Jesus doesn’t sign autographs.
  + He doesn’t high five people.
  + He doesn’t even start teaching.
  + He just makes his way, eyes fixed ahead, hair still dripping wet, into the wilderness…alone…
  + Does it seem odd to you that the voice of God the father…from the skies…in front of witnesses… just said to Jesus in an audible voice “This is my beloved son in whom I’m well pleased”…
  + …and then Jesus walks off into the wilderness to meet the devil…the adversary of God?
  + But it's the only way you ever get to hear The Father say about you EXACTLY what he said about Jesus.
  + When Jesus comes out of the water, he’s showing you that when he dies, he will not stay dead.
  + He goes under the waters of God’s judgment.
  + He descends into death…but he rises again. He lives.
  + And as he walks off into the desert…he’s starting his mission.
  + He’s going to work for you. In your place. To fulfill your righteousness.
  + He’s going to be tempted. He’s going to hear Satan’s voice. The one you have heard over and over…”Just be an animal…Just be a god.”
  + …but He’s going to pass the test that you and I failed- He will remain a human.
* **Back to 3)**
  + Jesus has lived your life and fulfilled righteousness…so the pressure to perform like a God is gone.
  + Jesus has died the death that you deserve for acting like a god or an animal…so the condemning voices for your failure is gone.
  + And Jesus has resurrected….so you can join him in that resurrection and live with him and all his humans forever. That’s the kind of humanity you’ll never get sick of.
  + Jesus goes into the desert after he’s baptized to hear Satan’s voice…so you can come to the waters of repentance- and have his Father’s voice…”This is my beloved child with whom I’m well pleased.”
  + Remember that line from Jon Bellion’s Human?-
  + **I'm petrified that I’ll die alone.**
  + Jesus died alone- On a cross singing a Psalm with virtually the same line. My God, My God- why have you forsaken me. He did that for you. So you can sing a new song. “The Cross has the final word. NO more voices in your head. They have been drowned in the water of Jesus’ baptism. And his Cross. And his resurrection.”
  + So here’s the question-
  + Why would you not repent today?
  + Why would you not turn around and follow Jesus today?
  + All the love you are looking for comes from God.
  + You will never fix yourself.
  + You could never be god enough.
  + And all the desires you have can never be quenched.
  + Because you are not an animal.
  + You are a human- You aren’t born to make mistakes. You are made to know and be known by God as his child.
  + And that all starts by turning around today and believing that Jesus has died and resurrected to make you family.

**Conclusion: Baptism Slide**

* + You know, sometimes folks ask me “Do you have to be baptized to be saved?”
  + I think that's the wrong question.
  + Jesus stepped into our place when he was baptized. He didn’t belong there. I did.
  + Jesus hung on a cross for us. He didn’t deserve that. I did.
  + He identified publicly with my shame.
  + Why would I reject the very sign that identifies me publicly with his righteousness?
  + If you want to be united to Christ, crucifying your old self…and being raised to life as a person controlled and moved by his Spirit….I don’t understand why you wouldn’t want to publicly identify with him in baptism.
    - Perhaps you’ve got a got reason.
  + But just remember, Be careful what voice you’re listening to.
  + **Repent, the Kingdom of God is near.**

**Prayer.**

**Baptism.**

**App slide**

**Email Slide**