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Athanasius on the Restoration of Mankind

We're sometimes asked "Are you sure the adoption of humanity is the gospel? I've never heard it before." That's why we like to bring in the thoughts of various theologians from history to add to our understanding of the gospel.

In the following passage, from *On the Incarnation*, Athanasius of Alexandria explains how Jesus includes all mankind in his work to restore humanity's nature.

Thus by His own power *He restored the whole nature of man*. The Savior's own inspired disciples assure us of this. We read in one place: "For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge that, if One died on behalf of all, then all died, and He died for all that we should no longer live unto ourselves, but unto Him who died and rose again from the dead, even our Lord Jesus Christ." [2 Cor. 5:14] And again another says: "But we behold Him Who hath been made a little lower than the angels, even Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God He should taste of death on behalf of every man." [Heb. 2:9] The same writer goes on to point out why it was necessary for God the Word and none other to become Man: "For it became Him, for Whom are all things and through Whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through suffering." [Heb. 2:10] He means that *the rescue of mankind from corruption* was the proper part only of Him Who made them in the beginning. (*On the Incarnation*, Chapter 2, paragraph 10, emphasis ours.)