

From the February 4, 2009, Issue

Lent: Heaven and Earth Together

I don't know what you think about when it comes to the Lenten Season, but the thing that comes to my mind is Fish and Fasting! Both of those things are NOT anywhere near my favorite subject. I am picky about the taste of fish (and absolutely can't stand trying to eat it with bones on the inside!) Fasting is not the most fun thing for someone who likes to eat, and I more than like to eat – I REALLY like to eat!

I tend to think of fish and fasting at this season because of what I learned at Bluffton High School, where I graduated. During Lenten season we always ate fish in the lunchroom on Fridays, and I remember conversations with friends who were trying to decide what they were going to give up, or “fast” from, during Lent.

As I think about Lent, Fish, Fasting, AND WHO JESUS IS, I am stunned once again with the truth of how HUMAN all of these things are! I mean, why would the Triune God, in His basic essence, have anything to do with any of these human, fleshly, and lowly things?!

Why on earth would Jesus, the Father's Son, come into our SINFUL FLESH and see life as we see it? Why would He limit Himself to time and space on a tiny planet, when He is already EVERYWHERE?!

Why on earth would Jesus, the Father's Son, eat fish (with bones?!). Are you kidding me? God doesn't need food to survive! Why would Jesus, the Father's Son, sharing all things with Him in the Spirit, fast in the wilderness for 40 *god-awful* days? Is this a *tasteless* joke or what? What ON EARTH for? God doesn't need to go without because He needs nothing!!

And yet, that is just the point! The Triune God is so Loving, Relational, Self-giving and serious about our Adoption and Inclusion into His Life and Being, that when we think of these subjects tying together, we are reminded that the Triune God is fully WITH Humanity in the Person of Jesus Christ! God, in the Son, is One of US – permanently and forever! **Col 1:19, 2:9!**

He has fasted like us, and for us. He has eaten like us, and with us. He has given the Father a fitting human response from within our fallen flesh in a gracious act of Worship! Wow!

So, the truth revealed in Jesus is that it is NOT about us leaving our bodies for a disembodied state called heaven! It is not about going from here to there. It is also NOT about God becoming what we are, so human, that He is no longer God! It is about all of us – together!

Let this be your encouragement during this Season of Lent, however you may live in it in the Freedom of Christ. Whenever we speak of Jesus the Christ (and honor celebrations and traditions that are in line with Who He REALLY is in His Relationship with the Father, the Spirit, Humanity and Creation) we are remembering in the Spirit that God and humanity are together! We remember that the Goal and end Purpose of the Triune God is Heaven and Earth together! We remember that Jesus really meant “Thy Kingdom come, on earth as it is in Heaven!” **Matt 6:4-13!**

We remember that every human and created thing has the greatest confirmation, dignity, nobility and purpose stamped on and within it because the fullness of God now lives in a human body!

Check out this passage in **Revelation 21:1-4** in **The Message** Version, in this light:

I saw Heaven and earth new-created. Gone the first Heaven, gone the first earth, gone the sea. I saw Holy Jerusalem, new-created, descending resplendent out of Heaven, as ready for God as a bride for her husband. I heard a voice thunder from the Throne: "Look! Look! God has moved into the neighborhood, making his home with men and women! They're his people, he's their God. He'll wipe every tear from their eyes. Death is gone for good - tears gone, crying gone, pain gone - all the first order of things gone."

Yes – this is what is meant behind Jesus fasting, eating fish, and becoming human. This is what we mean when we say “The Adopted Life: Trinity and Humanity, Together”

~ *Tim Brassell*