

He Walked Among Us

Dr. Steve Kumar

There are moments in history we wish we could relive. One such moment for me was at Calgary. I was speaking at the University of Calgary with James Erwin, the American astronaut who walked on the moon. It was the week the Space Shuttle Columbia exploded killing seven brave astronauts. University hall was packed. They came to hear the astronaut speak about America's success in Space but the unforgettable moment for me was when he said, "The greatest event in history was not when man walked on the moon but when God himself walked on this earth." That *is* the greatest event. God entered our space and time and became one of us. The invisible became visible, the abstract became concrete, and the Word became flesh (Jn 1:14). He did not send his secretary but delivered his message personally.

This is why we insist that Christianity is not a religion but a relationship; a relationship between God and human beings. What humanity needs is not just religion but reality. In religion, the leaders point to God but Jesus points to Himself as God. Religion is man's achievement. Christianity is God's atonement. Religion is what man does for God. Christianity is what God has done for us. Religion says do. Christianity says done. Religion says you sin, you pay. Christianity says you sin, I pay.

There are many reasons why a person becomes a Christian, but the best reason is because it is true. If Christianity is not true, it is not worth believing. But if it is true, it is true for all. If it's true for someone somewhere, it is true for everyone everywhere. If Christianity is merely subjective, we have nothing objective to offer the world. Although Christianity could be subjectively experienced its truth is based on objective facts. There is overwhelming evidence that Christianity is true. The followers of Christ proclaimed that Jesus of Nazareth was resurrected from the dead, "God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact" (Acts 2:32).

If Christianity is true then it certainly is relevant. In their challenging book, *Jesus the Only Saviour*, Tony and Patricia Higton relate a story about a close friend who was once a zealous Hindu. His deepest desire was to know God but not until he came to Christ “could he say that he knew God, and began to have a relationship with him which resulted in true worship.”

Religion may offer us rituals but only Christ can reconcile us to God and provide a vital relationship with Him. Jesus came for a unique purpose, unlike any religious leader of the world. He came not to make us religious but to make us right with God through His unique sacrifice on the cross.

Confucius saw the struggles of life and said, “Educate!”

Buddha saw the misery of life and said, “Meditate!”

Mohammed saw the paradox of life and said, “Dedicate!”

Krishna saw the vanity of life and said, “Reincarnate!”

Jesus saw the agony of life and said, “Regenerate!”

Christianity is not a set of views, it is the Good News that God has come to seek and to save a lost humanity and change our hearts for the better. In this sense, it is not a religion but a new revelation that offers a new relationship. It is not simply a matter of giving up things to become eccentric. Former English cricketer, David Sheppard, describes it like this: “It is a case of ‘taking up’ something else which is infinitely worthwhile.”

It is a vital and dynamic relationship with a living God. Fear, anxiety, resentment, guilt, and loneliness disappear in his presence. The security of our lives does not depend upon our position, possessions, or power but on the personal relationship with the One who is the source of all reality. Ultimate security is ultimately found only in the ultimate One. He is the ultimate Hope and the ultimate Answer to all our ultimate questions.

In 1896, Glasgow University conferred the degree of Doctor of Law to the famous missionary, David Livingston. As he rose to address the audience, one could observe the deep respect for a man who had endured severe hardships in tropical Africa. He appeared lean and haggard, due to severe illnesses on nearly thirty occasions, and his left arm hung helplessly at his side having been crushed by a lion. After describing his trials and tribulations, with great passion, he said:

“What supported me through all the years of exile among a people whose language I could not understand, and whose attitude toward me was often uncertain and hostile? It was this: ‘Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age.’ On these words I staked everything, and they never failed.”

In Jesus Christ there is reason for optimism. His reality makes all the difference to our existence. He is the meaning for our living. In Christ we exchange a hopeless end for an endless hope.