

**Courage Ministry**  
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**Jesus – Man and God**

**Introduction**

Who is the most important person in your life? I believe that the answer to this question will determine your aspirations, desires, hopes and plans for your life. For many of us, as we live out our humanity the most important person might be our spouse, parents, or siblings, or grandparents or cousins or a best friend. Since we are on the road to eternity I believe that as we acknowledge the blessings of our best friends and important persons we must look beyond this world. Thus in this context the most important person for me is Jesus Christ, the son of Mary, the son of God, the Word made flesh who became man for our salvation.

**A Biblical perspective that I take seriously. Isaiah: 50:4**

In the *Third song of the servant of Yahweh* we read: “The Lord Yahweh has given me a disciple's tongue. So that I may know how to reply to the wearied he provides me with speech. Each morning he wakes me to hear, to listen like a disciple.” For a long time I have been quite sensitive and open to the Holy Name of Jesus by actually speaking His name. *Jesus Christ is Lord to the Glory of God the Father* are the very first words I utter each morning. The actual manner of praising Jesus helps me to explore the event in his life as depicted in the Gospels. I provide some personal examples of recent ponderings which hopefully assist readers to meditate on the scriptures about Jesus.

**The role of Joseph and The flight into Egypt. Matthew: 1:20 & 25, 2:13-22**

Joseph was an upright and just man. He obeyed what the Angel of the Lord warned him to do four times in his protection of both Jesus and Mary. In the first dream Joseph did what the Angel ordered in taking Mary as his wife and then giving Jesus his name. In the second dream Joseph immediately got up and escaped into Egypt at the Angel's urging. In the third dream which occurred in Egypt, Joseph was told to go back to the land of Israel. And in the fourth dream since Joseph was afraid to go into Judaea because of Archelaus, who had succeeded Herod, the scripture says: “being warned in a dream he left for the region of Galilee. There he settled in a town called Nazareth” (Matthew 2:22).

We usually do not think much about Joseph, but notice here how open he is to the voice of God spoken by an angel and how promptly he acted. I have been meditating on the influence Joseph must have had on Jesus and what a great father-son

relationship it would have been. Do we have dreams? What do we do with our dreams? What about the dreams we have about our life? What did Joseph do for Mary and Jesus until his death? Joseph by his actions and humble life was able to safeguard the future for the ministry of Jesus. We need to learn more about Joseph.

### **The Presentation of Jesus in the Temple. Luke: 2:22-38.**

On the second of February the Church celebrated the time Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to the temple and presented him to the Lord as prescribed in the Law of Moses. It was forty days since the birth of Jesus and Simeon “prompted by the Spirit...came to the Temple.” Simeon took Jesus into his arms and spontaneously praised God. It had been revealed to Simeon by the Holy Spirit that he would not die until he had seen the Saviour of the world. I pondered how Mary and Joseph felt when Simeon prophesied the fall and rise of many because of Jesus the Messiah and in particular Mary whose soul would be pierced as by a sword. This was Jesus a baby with flesh and bones, yet was also God. How do we delve into this mystery? I just acknowledge that this is Jesus the second person of the Blessed Trinity beginning his salvific journey for all of us. Yet it is significant that the Holy Spirit is clearly active in this scene. Most Holy Spirit give us the power and grace to praise you, Jesus and Abba – Father Amen!

### **Jesus as an adolescent and among the doctors of the Law. Luke: 2:41-50.**

By the age of twelve Jesus must have had some beginning awareness of his divinity and connection with Abba. He demonstrated this to some extent in the Temple when he went up to Jerusalem each year with his parents for the Passover. He was found in earnest dialogue... “in the Temple, sitting among the doctors, listening to them and asking them questions; and all those who heard him were astounded at his intelligence and his replies.” What do we understand or learn about Jesus in this story? He was conscious of his mission, yet it was not the right time for his apostolic ministry. What did he do for eighteen years? I have pondered this many times and have seen and also read in a number of people's writings, their patience and how certain joyful events happen in their life after waiting and hoping for some years. One of the best examples of this is “Against All Hope: the Prison Memoirs of Armando Valladares – (1986, Coronet Books. Houghton & Stoughton). A Cuban poet jailed for twenty two years and tortured by the regime of Fidel Castro as a political prisoner. His book is one of the most inspiring I have ever read. I recommend it. Reflecting on Jesus I suspect he got on with his cousins, both as a preteen and later as an adolescent and then as a young man in his twenties. Was he gnashing his teeth with impatience to begin what he came to earth for? This preteen, building up his muscles and strength as a carpenter. What did he do on Holy Days and feast days? No, God's time is the best time and Jesus would have learnt in his time at Nazareth the ways of the world and acquired knowledge of human nature.

### **Jesus is baptized in the Jordan. Matthew: 3:13-17.**

Jesus did what the Law demanded: “ he came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. John tried to dissuade him. 'it is I who need baptism from you' he said 'and yet you come to me!' But Jesus replied, 'Leave it like this for the time being; it is fitting that we should, in this way, do all that righteousness demands'. At this John gave in to him.” Jesus then submitted to John and the remarkable opening of the heavens occurred. Jesus was told that He was the beloved son of God and that all should listen to him. He was now ready – a sort of human graduation occurred - He was ready and gifted by the Spirit to do miracles and healings and be the prophetic voice of God for the next three years in his own land. But also to be the sacred one and the saviour for us in 2017. How do we respond to the promptings of Jesus and the Spirit? Jesus allows us to be his ministers of healing, love, hope and many other ways to assist our fellow men and women. Let us not be afraid to yield to the Spirit in our every day occasions and events. A helpful way of discerning the blessings of the promptings of the Spirit is to share with any of the following: your spouse, spiritual director, confessor or good friend. Eventually we have to step out in faith and humility.

### **Jesus at the wedding feast at Cana. John: 2:1-12.**

Shortly after the baptism of Jesus “there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee. The mother of Jesus was there and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited.” Imagine the fellowship, camaraderie and bonhomie that would have reverberated at that feast. No wonder the wine ran out earlier than expected. Mary discreetly informed Jesus: “They have no wine.” Jesus exclaimed that “My hour has not come yet.” I have pondered about the influence a mother has on her son. Mary was confident that Jesus would respond positively and in a way appropriately by telling the servants “Do whatever he tells you.” Jesus seemed not to want to be publicly recognized as a wonder worker, yet because of his mother Mary, he worked the wonderful miracle of having the best wine for the guests. We too can ask for the intervention of Mary who is our Mother.

### **Conclusion**

I believe that if we can base our life, prayer, and behaviour on biblical principles we will be well able to negotiate and work through difficulties that occur in our lives. I hope to write more about Jesus in the next article. If you feel inclined let me know your view about this latest endeavour of mine.

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