

**~Other Speakers S-Z: David Servant:**

Yesterday we learned one reason why God's Son became a human being: to teach us about God. But there was a second reason that is even more important. Jesus became a human being so our sins could be forgiven, as we just read: "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Timothy 1:15).

Why did Jesus have to come into the world in order for sinners to be saved? If God wanted to forgive sinners, why didn't He just do it from heaven? Why did God have to become a human being?

To answer those questions, we first have to understand something about God. He is perfect. He always does the right thing, and it wouldn't be right for God to simply forgive people who continually do bad and evil things. What would you think of your parents if they never punished a brother or sister who beat you up every day? You would think that they didn't love you and weren't fair.

If God didn't punish people when they did bad things, He would be unloving toward people who were hurt by other people's sins. And He would be acting unfairly. So God couldn't just decide not to punish people for their sins, or He would become a sinner Himself!

However, God loves the people He's created, and He needed a way to forgive them without becoming a bad person Himself. So God decided to become a human being who would face every temptation that anyone ever faced. He, however, would never sin. Then, as a substitute, He would take the punishment for everyone's sins! As an example: Perhaps you were about to be spanked for disobeying your mother or father, and your sister or brother volunteered to be spanked in your place! (Pretty slim chance of that happening, right?)

That is why God had to become a human being. God, of course, can't die, but humans can. So God became a human being in order to die. And His painful death was the payment for our sins. Jesus Himself said, "I...came here...to give my life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45). A ransom is a payment to set free someone who is a prisoner. Jesus gave His life as a payment to God's justice so He could set us free from our sins.

**Q. Why couldn't some other human being have died for our sins instead of Jesus?**

**A.** Because all of us have sinned, we all deserve to be punished. So none of us could serve as a substitute to die for the sins of others. It would be like two convicted murderers who become friends in prison. If both were sentenced to die in the electric chair, it would be silly for one to say to the prison warden, "I will sacrificially volunteer to die in place of my friend." The warden would reply, "You can't die for him because you are going to die for your own crime."

We needed someone who was sinless, who didn't deserve any punishment for his own sins, to be punished in our place. Jesus was the only person who has ever lived without sin.

**Q. How could the painful death of only one person be enough payment for the many sins of everyone who has ever lived?**

**A.** It was not the amount of suffering that made Jesus' death sufficient payment for everyone's sins; it was the fact of who did the suffering. Let's say, for example, that your dog attacked and killed your neighbor's dog. Your neighbor might demand that your dog be killed so that your dog suffers just as much as his did. That could be considered fair. But what if he demanded that you die for what your dog did? That would be unfair, because you are worth a lot more than a dog. You have more value than an animal!

In the same way, God has much more value than all the human beings put together. If Jesus had been just a man, His sufferings would have been sufficient payment for only one other person who deserved to die. But because God's value is infinitely higher than all human beings combined, His painful suffering was more than sufficient to be able to pay fairly for everyone's sins.

**Application:** Since God loved us enough to die as our substitute, we should show Him love in return by doing what He says. Jesus said, "If you love me, obey my commandments" (John 14:15).