

The Ultimate Risk Taker

In eternity past heavenly Father, Christ and Holy Spirit forever guided their creation. These three persons were “*without beginning of days or end of life.*”¹ “*The number of [their] years is past finding out.*”²

The eternal Christ was exempt from harm, failure and every other problem that afflicts humanity. The Trinity enjoyed one another’s fellowship as they were totally united in all their plans, purposes and creative acts. Father, Son and Holy Spirit enjoyed an existence exempt from all the ills that plague the angels that sinned against God and the humans who rebelled against His lordship.

Since “*God is love*”³ he refused to write sinful mankind off as a lost cause. Instead, Father, Christ and Holy Spirit devised an ingenious plan for forgiving human sin and bringing people back into fellowship with their Creator. But this plan cost God, Son and Holy Spirit more than we can imagine.

The Human Christ Jesus Exposed To Every Conceivable Danger

The eternal Christ put off his infinitude, his magnificence, his omnipotence and became a two cell human in the womb of a young Israeli woman named Mary. Our human minds cannot comprehend this incarnation of the second person of the Trinity. But we refuse to be limited by human explanations. We walk by faith in God’s statements recorded in Holy Scripture.

The infinite Christ Jesus was truly a human exposed to every danger that threatens mankind. He experienced the rigors of childbirth and the years of maturation. Divinity did not exempt the human Christ from the harm that faces everyone living on planet earth.

Christ Jesus was the ultimate risk taker. Just like Adam and Eve, Jesus could have sinned against Heavenly Father and refused to do Father’s will. But he didn’t!

What the Ultimate Risk Taker Endured

Psychological Pain

At some point in his childhood Jesus understood his divine origin. Consequently, at age 12 he asked Joseph and Mary, “*Why were you searching for me? ...Didn’t you know that I had to be in my Father’s house?*”⁴ When he saw the confusion on their faces, “*He went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them.*”⁵ For 18 years this young Jewish boy who grew into manhood squelched his natural desire to be about his ministry. He contented himself to work as a common carpenter in a small Jewish town. What a risk taker!

The young man Jesus submerged himself in Hebrew Scripture. He

understood more about Scripture's meaning than anyone on earth. Consequently, he understood that his days of ministry would lead to unbelievable psychological pain.

In Scripture Jesus read about the brutal torture and pain that faced him during his last days as an earthling. The evening before his arrest Jesus entered the Garden of Gethsemane where he often spent private time with his Heavenly Father. *"He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. Then he said to them 'my soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death'."*⁶ After leaving his companions, Jesus went *"a little farther"* and *"fell with his face to the ground and prayed; my father if it is possible may this cup be taken from me; yet not as I will but as you will."*⁷ He wanted to escape the unbelievable suffering that faced him. But the ultimate Risk Taker conquered his fear and added an all-important statement to his request for Father to rescue him: *"Yet not as I will but as you will."* With Father's help Jesus volunteered to become the ultimate Risk Taker. Our Savior denied his fear of risk because of his faith in his heavenly Father's help. Heavenly Father's power always infinitely exceeds our weakness, so Jesus knew he could endure the unbelievable unpleasantness that awaited him.

Jesus was truly human just like Adam before Adam sinned. Consequently, Jesus' psychological pain was real, not imaginary or contrived. Jesus *"has been tempted in every way just as we are yet was without sin."*⁸

On one occasion during his ministry the disciples greatly disappointed Jesus. His humanity cried out, *"You unbelieving and perverse generation...how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you?"*⁹ Jesus felt like running away, but he refused to do so. His immeasurable love for heavenly Father and his huge commitment to our salvation riveted his attention on his goal of becoming Savior of humanity.

Physical Pain

Jesus was not taken by surprise when he was arrested, tried, tortured and crucified. Scripture foretold all the physical pain the man Christ Jesus would endure. These frightening prophecies affected Jesus' mind and body.

Our precious Savior knew he could escape the horrific and brutal last day of his life on earth. He told the apostles that he could call on his heavenly Father who would put at his disposal more than 12 legions of angels to deliver him from his enemies.^{10,11} Escape lay at Jesus' fingertips! Merely one simple request for Father to send the angels to rescue him would have spared Jesus' unmatched physical pain. But the ultimate Risk Taker entrusted himself to the power of his heavenly Father who kept his Son faithful to divine purposes in spite of physiological pain. The Risk Taker felt absolutely certain that the impossible isn't impossible when heavenly Father empowers you!

Following a sleepless night in which Jesus experienced beatings, mobs

crying out for his death, false accusations hurled at him and hatred that could be felt, he remained steadfast in his commitment to shedding his blood for mankind's forgiveness. Then, about 9 o'clock in the morning, Roman soldiers crucified him.

This hideous form of execution required Jesus' hands and feet to be pierced by large nails and, thereby, attaching him to a wooden cross. The pain he felt cannot be imagined. His back was lacerated by a cruel whipping. Now, there was no position of comfort as his bones and exposed muscles rubbed against the rough cross. For about six hours Jesus hung suspended on the cross as people stood around him jeering at his claims of divinity. Hate filled people cried out, "*Save yourself! Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God.*"¹² As unfathomable pain seared through his body, Jesus refused to allow taunts from the crowd to alter his commitment to their salvation.

Drained of all physiological and psychological energy, Jesus "*cried out in a loud voice... 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?'*"¹³ Perhaps this moment was the lowest point in Jesus' 33 ½ years on earth. But he recovered his confidence in heavenly Father. Then, "*Jesus said, 'It is finished.'* With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit."¹⁴ When Jesus' human spirit stepped out of his body **the ultimate Risk Taker became the ultimate Winner!** In the eyes of the world Christ Jesus looked like a failure, but Satan and sinners were completely incorrect.

The Jesus in You

The Spirit of the resurrected Jesus dwells in every human willing to accept him as their Savior. His Spirit moves into the human spirit and becomes the life energy that empowers us to conquer all enemies arrayed against us. So, we remind ourselves that in whatever we face in life "*we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.*"¹⁵

The Ultimate Risk taker who dwells in your spirit empowers you to be like him—a big time winner!

Footnotes:

1. Hebrews 7:3
2. Job 36:26
3. 1 John 4:16
4. Luke 2:49
5. Luke 2:51
6. Matthew 26:37-38
7. Matthew 26:39
8. Hebrews 4:15
9. Matthew 17:17
10. Matthew 26:53

11. Legion—3,000-5,000 soldiers
12. Matthew 27:40
13. Matthew 27:46
14. John 19:30
15. Romans 8:37