

Attack on Identity

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Ho are You? What is a person?

Genesis 5:1 This is the written account of Adam's line.

When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. 2 He created them male and female and blessed them. And when they were created, he called them "man." 3 When Adam had lived 130 years, he had a son in his own likeness, in his own image; and he named him Seth.

Genesis 9:6 "Whoever sheds the blood of man,
by man shall his blood be shed;
for in the image of God
has God made man. 1

John 1:12 Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—¹³ children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. ²

Rom 8:13 For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but **if** by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, ¹⁴ **because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.** ¹⁵ For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." ¹⁶ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. ¹⁷ Now **if** we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, **if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.** ³

All sin is rebellion - rejecting the will of God. In reality, we can only reject the will of God by rejecting one (or both) of these essential truths:

- I. God's is the sovereign creator and ruler of the universe
- II. As humans, we are His image bearers, subordinate children, and heirs

In either case, at its core, sin always comes down to rejecting our true Identity.

¹ [The Holy Bible: New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984), Ge 9:6.

² [The Holy Bible: New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984), Jn 1:12–13.

³ [The Holy Bible: New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984), Ro 8:13–17.

The book of Matthew begins with a genealogy establishing that Jesus is of the line of King David. Chapter two shows the birth of Jesus fulfilling prophesy, thus confirming him as Messiah. In Chapter 3, Jesus' divine nature as part of the trinity is revealed during his baptism:

Mt 3:16 At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. 17 And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." 4

In chapter four, following his baptism, Jesus is led by the spirit into the wilderness for testing. In each of the synoptic gospels, Jesus goes straight from the river Jordan to the desert for testing.

It is no coincidence that immediately after Jesus is publicly confirmed as the Son of God, that Satan tempts Jesus to doubt his God given identity.

The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."⁵

The NIV Study bible's note for Matt 4:3 is quick to dismiss this as attack on Jesus' Identity.

"If you are the Son of God. Meaning "Since you are." The devil is not casting doubt on Jesus' divine sonship but is tempting him to use his supernatural powers as the Son of God for his own ends. Son of God"⁶

Satan really was tempting Jesus to reject his identity as the Son of God. In order to sin, Jesus would have to refuse to submit to God's sovereignty and violate his place in the trinity. The only way that Satan could usurp Jesus' authority and ultimate victory, would be for Jesus to reject his identity and not to take it up.

If Jesus had availed himself to his omnipotence during his temptation, he could not have been "*tempted in every way, just as we are*". Jesus humbled himself and "*took on the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness*". He "*had to be made like his brothers in every way*".

Heb 2:17 For this reason **he had to be made like his brothers in every way**, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. 18 Because **he himself suffered when he was tempted**, he is able to help those who are being tempted. 7

⁴ [The Holy Bible: New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984), Mt 3:16–17.

⁵ [The Holy Bible: New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984), Mt 4:3.

³ Zondervan NIV Study Bible Fully (Fully Revised) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), Mt 4:3 pp. 1472

⁶ [The Holy Bible: New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984), Mt 4:3.

³ Zondervan NIV Study Bible Fully (Fully Revised) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), Mt 4:3 pp. 1472

⁷ [The Holy Bible: New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984), Heb 2:17–18.

Heb 4:15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one **who has been tempted in every way, just as we are**—yet was without sin⁸

Php2:6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but **made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness**. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death – even

Heb 2:9 But we see **Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels**, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.⁹

Heb 5:7 During the days of Jesus’ life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and **he was heard because of his reverent submission**.⁸ Although he was a son, **he learned obedience from what he suffered**⁹ and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him¹⁰

In scripture we see that that Jesus “*sat amount teachers, listening to them and asking them questions*” and “*grew in wisdom*”. Even as an adult, we see instances where there are things that Jesus did not know. These things could only be true if Jesus did not avail himself to omnipotence.

Luk 2:46 After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, **listening to them and asking them questions**¹¹

Luk 2:51 And **Jesus grew in wisdom** and stature, and in favor with God and men.¹²

Mk 13:32 “No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.”¹³

Mk 5:30 At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, “Who touched my clothes?”¹⁴

⁸ [The Holy Bible: New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984), Heb 4:15.

⁹ [The Holy Bible: New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984), Heb 2:9.

¹⁰ [The Holy Bible: New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984), Heb 5:7–9.

¹¹ [The Holy Bible: New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984), Lk 2:46.

¹² [The Holy Bible: New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984), Lk 2:52.

¹³ [The Holy Bible: New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984), Mk 13:32.

¹⁴ [The Holy Bible: New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984), Mk 5:30.


What is the most defining character of humanity if not our finiteness? How could Jesus truly be “*like us in every way*” and able to “*sympathize with our weaknesses*” had he not “*made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant*”? Don’t all servants have weaknesses and limitations, wouldn’t limitlessness certainly be more than “*nothing*” and the opposite of “*human likeness*”?

The reason Jesus did not know who touched his cloak, or when his return will be was the same reason that his disciples had to wake him from sleep to talk to him and the reason Simon of Cyrene had to carry his cross for him. He did not always avail himself to his limitless divine attributes - he was a real human (and yet fully God).

The expressions “that guy is a Machine!”, “He’s not human!”, “That’s not humanly possible”, “He’s only human” all point to our defining character – limitation.

Jesus was really tempted, and way he could really be tempted if it was possible to doubt His place in the trinity, and consequently God’s preeminence – the essential truths making up his very identity. This is the same way we have always been tempted by Satan. It is clear that in both tempting the first Adam (through eve) and the second Adam (Jesus), Satan used a the same tactic that he continues to employ to this day.

	What God has told you?	Is God Good?	Are you really God's Child?
Adam & Eve	Did God <i>really</i> say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden' and that you would 'surely die'?	Why can't we eat from this beautiful tree? God is holding out on you!	You can be a God yourself if you eat of the fruit
Jesus	Are you <i>really</i> the Son of God?	You don't deserve to be hungry! You should be a ruler!	You can rule the world right now! Simply bow to me
Modern Society	Did God <i>really</i> create man? Is Jesus <i>really</i> God?	Why is there suffering in the world? Why should I follow God's law?	You are just a rational animal; you can choose your own reality (be your own God)

 God is Satan's mortal and unconquerable enemy. Satan knows that he is hopelessly outmatched. The biggest threat to the kingdom of darkness, is humans accepting their true identity as image bearers of God and being connected to greatest power in the universe - Spirit of God. This is why Satan is desperate to prevent us from accepting our true identity - superior to him in authority and power through Christ.

This is precisely why the biggest spiritual issues of our age are about our identity: who we are and who made us:

Denying that God exists

Denying that God is Good

Denying that we are God's children created male and female in his image to serve him

We need to submit to our true Identity. We have been "*crucified with Christ*" "*Christ lives in me*" we are "*God's children*" "*heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ*". We need to live and act in the reality that our Father is the most powerful force in the universe.

Gal2:20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.¹⁵

¹⁵ [The Holy Bible: New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984), Ga 2:20.