Challenge 24 of 40

Reflection by David B. Franklin - Baltimore, USA

It is impossible to overstate the significance of Christ's choice to take on human flesh. No words can suffice to fully capture the abundance of such a sacrifice. Amazing, incredible, marvelous, awe-inspiring, extraordinary...nope, none of these words meet the standard. It is an “indescribable gift” (2 Corinthians 9:15). It is a gift too precious to diminish with human language. However, can we consider the inverse?

What if Jesus had never come to earth? It's a daunting question that puts “goose pimples on my goose pimples” as my aunt would say. If Jesus had never come, life would be a constant search for meaning without ever arriving at any substantial conclusion. There would be no joy of salvation for today and no hope of resurrection for tomorrow. We would be stuck in a spiritual quagmire hopeless and helpless, left to fend for ourselves.

But praise God, John declares Jesus did come! And John’s first statement about Jesus helps us to see who He is. He is not only Savior but He is Creator. “Through him all things were made.” In the beginning of time Christ was creating us as the reflection of His image and He returned with creative power intending to recreate in us a renewed reflection of His image. However, this time it would not be by the Word spoken, but rather by the Word broken. Christ lived in the cabinet of human flesh plagued by its weaknesses, pressured by its temptations, and troubled by its deception but when His body was broken on the cross so was the curse of sin and His creative power was re-mastered and re-
released in our lives.

This is why John can say, “In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it” (v.4-5). Now everyone who accepts Christ experiences the breaking and blessing of life in Christ. The breaking provides us the opportunity to be blessed by the light that shines through the dark brokenness of our lives. Through our brokenness Jesus shatters our past and redeems our future so that we become a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17).

In this new life, Jesus is the center and substance. He is center in that He is our central focus and our primary example. His victory, not only in death, but also in life, has given us a pattern to model our lives after. He is the goal to which we strive and the method by which we arrive at that goal.

He is the substance in that He is the power that sustains us. This is why Paul says I’m not just following Jesus’ example but “I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me” (Galatians 2:20). In the Garden of Eden humanity lived with Christ, after the resurrection Christ can live in us. As such, day-by-day His creative power is working in us and reshaping us into His image. This is the joy of living life in Christ; He is working in us to will and to do his good pleasure (Philippians 2:13).

May we give Christ access to every dark and broken place in our lives so that the creative power of His life can be renewed in us with ever-increasing glory (2 Corinthians 3:18).