

Does God Understand How I Feel?

[Hebrews 2:10-18](#)

Hebrews, Day 8

¹⁰ For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering. ¹¹ For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers, ¹² saying,

*“I will tell of your name to my brothers;
in the midst of the congregation I will sing your praise.”*

¹³ And again,

“I will put my trust in him.”

And again,

“Behold, I and the children God has given me.”

¹⁴ Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵ and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. ¹⁶ For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. ¹⁷ Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. ¹⁸ For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

- Hebrews 2:10-18, ESV

Marie Antoinette was famously (and incorrectly) reported to have said, "Let them eat cake!" when she was told that the poor of Paris had no bread. This quote, though almost certainly never actually said by the French queen, has been famous for centuries for a reason: Sometimes rich people seem to live lives completely detached from the reality the rest of us deal with everyday. People born to wealth and privilege do have real problems, but they don't include wondering how they're going to pay for the next month's rent or for the repairs their car needs.

God is all-powerful, all-wise, all-knowing, and never-failing. He never lacks the knowledge, power, or wisdom to do all His holy will. As Psalm 135 says:

*For I know that the Lord is great,
and that our Lord is above all gods.
Whatever the Lord pleases, he does,*

*in heaven and on earth,
in the seas and all deeps. - vv. 5-6, ESV*

So, we might wonder: Does God really understand how I feel? Certainly God knows everything; nothing is hidden from His sight. But does He understand what it's like to be lonely, afraid, or tempted? In a word: No.

Some people have tried to make God more relevant to our lives by insisting that He does understand. They have posited a God who "feels your pain" and who is tired, frustrated and lonely at times. This is not the true God. God is an infinite, eternal, almighty Spirit and feels no pain or frustration. God is Three Persons in eternal, loving community and is not lonely. While Scripture sometimes uses language of emotional turmoil for God, this is an accommodation to our weakness so we can understand God somewhat in our own language.

Part of the reason for the Incarnation is so that God can know what it's like to be human. The Second Person of the Godhead, God the Son, took on a true human nature. He was "*made like his brothers in every respect*" with a nature like ours. He entered into our full humanity, in part so He could suffer and sympathize with our suffering, be tempted and sympathize with our experience of temptation.

This is a depth of love we can never fully grasp. God was willing to become human to truly empathize with us. He was willing to suffer pain, hunger, loneliness, vulnerability, weakness, thirst, betrayal, temptation and abandonment. He had to take on a human nature to do so, but He did so willingly, for us and for our salvation. We needed a mediator, a sympathetic and faithful high priest. Jesus was willing to be that high priest for us, though it required such great sacrifice, beyond human comprehension.

So, does God really understand how I feel? Yes! But only because God the Son was willing to take on a true human nature. In His human nature, Jesus knows our weaknesses and suffering, having suffered more than we ever will, so He could save us from our sin and suffering and bring us home to Himself forever.