

# THE JESUS YOU NEVER NOTICED

*“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...” —HEBREWS 5:7*

We do not know all the details of His cries and His tears and His suffering, because there is much in the life of Jesus we do not have details about. If we take all four Gospels, which give us the historical record of His life, we have a total of about one month’s worth of information, so we know very little about His 33 years on earth, especially the years before His ministry.

What we can ascertain from what we do know is that Jesus was born into a hostile environment on almost every level we can think of. He was conceived in the womb of an unwed mother. He was born in a stable, laid in a cattle trough, which is what a manger is. As a baby, He became a refugee, fleeing to Egypt with His parents. Eventually, they settled in an insignificant, obscure little town called Nazareth. Not the beginnings one would expect from someone who was to save the human race!

When He was 30 years of age, Jesus’ ministry began. The crowds were first impressed, but after listening to what He said, they rejected Him. “Even His own brothers did not believe Him” (John 7:5). Isaiah 53:3 adds, “He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering.” He was rejected by men. He was a man of sorrows. Think about that. That was His reputation

- a man of sorrows; not that He had been sorry and felt sadness on occasion, but this suggests an enduring sense of sorrow.

Our danger is that we tend to put Jesus on a pedestal, and detach Him from the real world of struggles, temptations and battles. We often depict Him in a long, white robe and, of course, it is perfectly clean; no dirt, no soil marks. However, Jesus had dirty feet, metaphorically as well as literally. He lived in an environment which included cries, tears, and suffering, and was not standing apart from it, but in the midst of it.

Jesus was not exempt from the influences of pain and suffering, and through suffering in particular, says the writer to the Hebrews, “He learned obedience”. God was working under the surface, moulding, stretching and hurting, so that although He was a Son, He learned obedience from what He suffered. We too must recognize that some of these situations in our lives which we would gladly cast off are actually part of God’s tool kit in making us godly. As we seek to obey, we realize our need to depend on God, for in and of ourselves we can do nothing.

***PRAYER: Thank you so much, Jesus, for knowing us and what it is like to be human.***

***TO REFLECT UPON: Do I realize how life’s problems make me stronger?***