

From the August 4, 2009 Issue

Athanasius on Humanity's Resurrection

We're sometimes asked "Are you sure the adoption of humanity is the gospel? I've never heard it before." That's why we like to bring in the thoughts of various theologians from throughout history to add to our understanding of the gospel.

In this text from the 4th century theologian Athanasius of Alexandria, he talks about how the Son of God conquered death in humanity and set humanity free from death by taking on our human nature and putting it to death in his Divinity.

. . . being God, He [the Son] has become human. For all other human beings, being merely born of Adam, died, and death reigned over them; but He, the Second Man, is from heaven, for "the Word was made flesh," and this Man is said to be from heaven and heavenly, because the Word descended from heaven; wherefore He was not held under death. For though He humbled Himself, yielding His own body to come unto death, in that it was capable of death, yet He was highly exalted from earth, because He was God's Son in a body. . . . as Paul has written, "Since being in form of God He became human, and humbled Himself unto death, therefore God also hath highly exalted Him," . . . To human beings it was not possible to succeed in this; for death belongs to humanity; wherefore, the Word, being God, became flesh, that, **being put to death in the flesh, He might bring all humanity to life by His own power.** ~ *First Discourse Against the Arians*, chap. 11, para. 44. (Emphasis is ours.)