

The Mind of Jesus (1)

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Preacher: Rev James Maciver

[0 : 00] Worship, we're going to sing tonight firstly in Psalm 45, the second version of Psalm 45, that's in the Scottish Psalter. You'll find that on page 269 of the Psalm books.

My heart indicting is good matter in a song. I speak the things that I have made which to the king belong. My tongue shall be as quick his honor to indict as is the pen of any scribe that useth fast to right. Thou art fairest of all men, grace in thy lips doth flow, and therefore blessings evermore on thee doth God bestow. And the New Testament makes it clear that these words through the Psalm apply to Jesus, especially as we come to look at how the words later on are picked up in the book of Hebrews, where you find that these details about the kingship of the Lord is also something that we sing about here in the Psalm. So it's prophetic about Jesus and about his power and prestige as the prince or as the king of his people. So verses one to five, my heart indicting is.

My heart is dying in it, good matter in the song. I speak the things that I have made which to the king belong.

The Lord shall be as quick his honor to indict as is the pen of any scribe that useth fast to right. Lord, the Lord shall be as quick his honor to indict as is the pen of any scribe that useth fast to right. Lord, the rest of all them, Christ, in thy lips, that flow, and therefore, then, since evermore, O ye that on me show, Thou, the rest of all my life, Thou, the dark most of might, Have given dreadful majesty, And in thy glory bright, For thee blessed truth and right,

[3 : 20] Bright cross the sea instead, And thy right hand shall teach to thee Things terrible and great, The Lord shall, shall, pierce the hearts, And fall aside to the King, Where by into subjection, The evil heart shall bring Let's unite our hearts now in prayer, Let's call upon the Lord in prayer.

O Lord God, almighty and glorious and gracious, As we come into your presence, We give thanks for the truth of these words That we have been singing, For you are indeed all glorious And always worthy of our praise, And we thank you tonight That this is our privilege once again To come before you to extol your glories And prestige, Everything that makes you majestic And pertains to you as God, As these are revealed to us in your word.

We thank you, O Lord, That your word teaches us All of these things that are true concerning you. We acknowledge, O Lord, That our feeble minds sometimes Are more than stretched to take in The glorious truths that you have revealed to us.

And so we always pray That your Holy Spirit will come And open our minds and receive And grow in our understanding of you Through your word. We ask to that end, Lord, tonight That your spirit will take the things of Christ And show them to us.

We ask that you would open up your word for us So that we may find more of What pertains to your salvation in it. And help us especially to avail ourselves Of that salvation.

[5 : 46] For we know, Lord, even though we be saved, Yet we still are required to grow In the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. And Lord, we pray if we come tonight To be confronted with your truth in the gospel And know that we have not yet Willingly received you As you are offered in the gospel.

We ask that your Holy Spirit Will enable us Willingly to reach out And take hold of you by faith. Help us, Lord, we pray, To trust in you In such a way that would Remove from us all self-trust.

The reliance that we find Naturally in our own hearts. That would seek to elevate our own ability Beyond anything that is appropriate. And we give thanks, Lord, For the way in which you prove To be such a sure foundation To all who trust in you.

And for we know that trust requires That the one we trust in And the foundation we build our trust upon Will be sure and steadfast and immovable. And we thank you that that is Through concerning you As the saviour of your people.

Lord, we ask that tonight You would give to us That sense of your presence. We know that when you are present With your people And make your presence known It truly is a different place To what it would otherwise be.

[7 : 14] We give thanks for the many years Of gospel presence And the presence of God That this very building itself Is associated with. And we give thanks, O Lord, That your hand is not shortened That it cannot be to us tonight What you have been in previous times.

And we pray, O Lord, That you would help us To bring a sense of wonder To our calling upon you Our singing of your praises Our speaking out of your word And our hearing of your word. Lord, our God, Enable us especially To wonder at the great acts of God And particularly tonight As we give our mind To the coming of the Son of God Into the world Through taking the form of a servant To himself.

Lord, we pray for a sense of wonder Of awe and of amazement But also of thankfulness And of dependence. For this is why you came into the world So that we might be saved. That you might take us out Of that pit of sin And of death That we are born into And bring us to be set Upon the foundation That is Christ himself.

[8 : 28] With his righteousness Covering us With the hope of heaven In our hearts. O Lord God, We ask your blessing Once again to be ours As a congregation Of your people Here in this town In our circumstances In our own localities Wherever we live We thank you, Lord For the privilege of belonging To this congregation The privilege of being part Of this ongoing witness To your grace As it has been Through many generations We give thanks For the many opportunities That you give us To continue to witness for you And to continue to depend upon you In the presence Of those who see us in the world And those we meet with Who may not themselves Have any such desire about you.

Lord, help us to be faithful to you In our witness to the world And enable us, Lord, To resist every attempt By the evil one Or by what we find naturally In our own hearts To take us aside From a faithful following of you And a faithful testimony To you in the world.

We pray your blessing Upon all our activities As well as our worship. We pray that that will be blessed To children, to young people, To adults alike. We ask that you bless All that is done too For our older generation And for the ways in which We long, O Lord, To have these re-established Such as the Over 55 Fellowship That we're able to gather Regularly in the hall.

Lord, we pray for the days To be hastened When these activities Will be able once again To be practiced in our midst. We give thanks, O Lord, For all that we are able to do.

We give thanks for the improvement In the way in which we Can face the COVID pandemic Through vaccinations And through careful administration As we are led to.

[10 : 26] We ask, O Lord, That these will continue. We pray for those tonight Who are suffering from that infection. We pray that those who have the virus And have had a positive test result Will know your blessing, Your protective care, Your healing touch upon their lives.

Especially those of them, Lord, That we know ourselves And belong to us In our families In our congregation. We pray that you're blessed too Those who are in hospital In intensive care.

We pray that that will be so Throughout our land That you would bless them And give them, Lord, To recover. We pray for those locally as well Who have had difficulties In recent times.

We think tonight of Donation Care Home. We pray that you'd bless the staff And the occupants, The residents there. We ask, Lord, That you would be pleased To grant your own healing To those who are positive, To those who have the virus, Whether staff or resident.

We ask, Lord, That you would give further protection And care and the administration Of medical care, That you'd bless those Who carry that out. We ask that you'd continue To protect us In our communities, Oh, Lord, And throughout the whole Of our nation That we will see A reduction in the amount Of positive cases.

[11 : 48] We pray tonight That you'd bless those Who mourn The passing of loved ones In our midst. We pray, Lord, That your gospel Will be tonight for them A means of comfort, A means of further directing them In your own ways.

And we ask us, You, Lord, Have brought such a painful Episode into their experience As happens to us all From time to time. Help us to look to your Son, To look to you as the Father Who gave so willingly Your only begotten To the death of the cross.

And so that we might find In that our salvation. But bless, we pray, Those who continue To miss loved ones. Bless them in their families, In their own hearts And thoughts.

And grant, Lord, That you would continue To strengthen them In the days to come. And we ask that you'd bless All who serve in our community In different ways And in public life.

We pray for our teachers, For our doctors. We pray for those, Lord, Who look after our young In different ways. For those who have Responsibilities to care For children. Bless them, we pray.

[12:53] Bless, we pray, Those who provide Welfare through the food bank And other resources. For those who have fallen On hard times And continue to struggle. Remember them, Lord.

We pray ourselves Who are struggling In this and other ways At this time. And continue to provide For us, Lord, we pray. And help us to reach out With help whenever we can To those who are in need.

We ask your blessing To be with us as a nation. Bless those in authority And government over us. We pray, O Lord, That you would continue To uphold them But give them especially To look to yourself.

And Lord, when we find So much evidence Of a failure to do so, We ask that your Holy Spirit Will come And that you will turn us Into your own ways. And enable us, Lord, Once again to rejoice In the things of the gospel.

Bless your church In our land And throughout the world. We think especially tonight Of those places in the world Where persecution Is the daily experience Of your people. We give thanks, Lord, For the witness And the work of agencies And missionaries Who go to different parts Of the world.

[14:02] We think tonight Of North Korea That we heard of recently Through the work of Asia Link. We ask that you would bless Your own people there. We know that you have Many people in that nation That cannot themselves Be seen visibly Because of the dangers They face to themselves And to their families.

Lord, remember them, we pray. Strengthen them And give them to be An ongoing witness to you In whatever way they can Even to those Who are in authority. Grant these mercies to us now, We pray, And continue with us.

And pardon our many sins And cleanse us for Jesus' sake. Amen. Now, reading of scripture tonight Is from Romans And chapter 15. Paul's letter to the Romans Chapter 15.

We're reading from the beginning Verses 1 to 13. We who are strong Have an obligation To bear with the failings Of the weak And not to please ourselves.

Let each of us Please his neighbor For his good To build him up. For Christ Did not please himself. For as it is written The reproaches of those Who reproached you Fell on me.

[15:18] For whatever was written In former times Was written for our instruction. That through endurance And through the encouragement Of the scriptures We might have hope. May the God of endurance And encouragement Grant you to live In such harmony With one another In accord with Christ Jesus.

That together you may With one voice Glorify the God And Father Of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore welcome one another As Christ has welcomed you For the glory of God.

For I tell you That Christ became a servant To the uncircumcised To the circumcised To show God's truthfulness In order to confirm The promises given To the patriarchs And in order That the Gentiles Might glorify God For his mercy.

As it is written Therefore I will praise you Among the Gentiles And sing to your name. And again it is said Rejoice O Gentiles With his people And again praise the Lord All you Gentiles And let all the peoples Extol him.

And again Isaiah says The root of Jesse will come Even he who rises To rule the Gentiles In him will the Gentiles hope. May the God of hope Fill you with all joy And peace in believing So that by the power Of the Holy Spirit You may abound in hope.

[16:45] Amen. May God follow with this blessing Our reading of his word This evening. And if we turn now To Philippians chapter 2 We can read there From the beginning Of the chapter again That we're covering What we looked at last time.

Tonight we're looking At verses 5 to 7 But just let's remind ourselves Of the verses before that.

Philippians chapter 2 So if there is any Encouragement in Christ Any comfort from love Any participation in the Spirit Any affection and sympathy Complete my joy By being of the same mind Having the same love Being in full accord And of one mind Do nothing from rivalry Or conceit But in

humility Count others more significant Than yourselves Let each of you look Not only to his own interests But also to the interests Of others Have this mind Among yourselves Which is yours In Christ Jesus Who though he was In the form of God Did not count equality With God A thing to be grasped But made himself nothing Taking the form Of a servant Being born in the likeness Of men And being found In human form He humbled himself By becoming obedient To the point of death Even death On a cross Therefore God Has highly exalted him And bestowed on him The name that is Above every name So that at the name Of Jesus Every knee should bow In heaven And on earth And under the earth And every tongue Confess that Jesus Christ Is Lord To the glory Of God The Father And as I said Particularly Verses 5 To 7 Have this mind Among yourselves Which is yours In Christ Jesus Who though he was In the form of God Did not count equality With God A thing to be grasped But made himself nothing Taking the form Of a servant Being born In the likeness Of men Undoubtedly Verses 5 To 11 Of this chapter Are one of the Highest peaks In the whole Mountain range Of God's revelation In the scriptures

And as you begin To climb This great mountain That speaks about The son of God And his descent Into this world Is taking our Human nature To himself The more you Climb this mountain This wonderful Passage of scripture The more you realize That you're actually Not in this life Anyway Ever going to reach The top Because as you Climb it And as you see What the apostle Is saying here About Christ You realize That there's so much Else above you That you need To reach out And try And climb And get to the top Of and you realize That because Of the nature Of what this is The person of Jesus The deity The godness Of Jesus The humility Of Jesus The descent Of Jesus The death Of the cross There is so much In this Mountain As we climb it That you cannot Actually fully Comprehend Due to our own Human Frail understanding Everything that's here Whatever eternity

Will bring By way of adding To our understanding As it undoubtedly Will There is yet so much Here that reaches Beyond our ability But what we are Able to climb What we are able To take from the passage What we are able To understand of it Is here for our Practical application To the Christian life Because you remember As we said Last time This is really What the apostle Is doing He is appealing To the Philippians To do nothing From rivalry Or conceit He is appealing To them to be Of the same mind Having the same love To look not only On their own interests But the interests Of others And he introduces Jesus He introduces Christ And the mind That Christ Is endowed with The mind of Christ Which really Is what we are looking At this evening And as he brings In the mind Of Christ And the mind Of Christ In relation To the action He took In coming from heaven

[21 : 08] Into this world To give himself To the death Of the cross As you look At the mind Of Christ In that Then that provides Our template For the mind That we ourselves Ought to cultivate As Christians In this world Our mind In terms of How we relate To each other How we relate To the world Our mind In terms of What we must be In humility And counting others More significant Than ourselves All of that Is fed By this great Statement That he brings About the Lord Jesus Christ And therefore As we increase In our understanding Of that So we gain More insight Gradually Into the kind Of people God would have Us to be As those Who are Following the Template Of Jesus As our Great example Now some people Would say It's not so much An example here That Jesus Is presented As But I think You really Cannot avoid Looking at it

In terms of Presenting Jesus As our example The translation You have here In the ESV Has Have this mind Among yourselves Which is yours In Christ Jesus So it's really saying That there's an element There of union With Christ And being united To Christ That's how you're Able to Grow towards Having this mind Personally I prefer The authorized Version of it Because that's Have this mind In you Which was also In Christ Jesus So it's presenting It more As an example But however you Translate the words That you find In the original Language here Of the passage It comes Ultimately to this That Jesus Is the template The example That Jesus Is the mind The mind of Jesus That's presented To us By way of challenge By way of inspiration By way of Challenging us To cultivate That mind And to follow That for ourselves

Now I'd like us To think of Verses Five to nine As a journey The journey That Jesus took The journey That the Son Of God Took From the height That he began At Which was always The case with him In the form of God And how he came By stages Down To give himself Ultimately To the death Of the cross So tonight We're looking At the height At which Christ's journey Began And then We'll look At the first Stage of it In verse Five to seven Five B to seven Which that first Stage of the journey Brings us To the point Where Paul is saying That he took The form of a servant Being born

In the likeness Of men And that will be Enough for us Because this Is really a packed Passage Full of wonderful Things And then The second Stage Is what you find In verse eight Being found In human form

He humbled himself By becoming Obedient To the point Of death Even death On a cross That's the second Stage Having begun At the height Of the form Of God And the first Stage bringing him Into this world To be born As a human being It didn't end There for him It went further On down Into the valley As he descended And came to the Point of death And then The third stage Is in verse nine Where we again Realize the journey Didn't end With the cross The journey Then continued Through his resurrection Especially here His exaltation Back to the mountaintop Back to glory Back to the glory As he said In John 17 To the father The glory I had with you Before the world Was There's the journey These are the stages Of the journey It might help us Just to look at it I hope it will To divide it Into these stages Of the journey That the son of God Took From heaven Into this world And back again Having died And risen again From the dead And been exalted To glory So what about The height then That where we're Beginning tonight Where he's saying here In verse five Have this mind Among yourselves Or his years Which was also In Christ Jesus However we translate That What is that mind Well that mind Begins here With being in the Form of God Who Though he was In the form of God That's the starting point That's where you begin To think of the journey That's where the journey For him began Being in the form Of God And I know Here again There's nothing wrong With the translation There Though he was In the form of God Because the ESV Is taking the language And emphasizing again For us Trying to bring The teaching And the words That Paul is using Despite the fact That although This was true of him Yet he took this journey

[26 : 11] And descended into The valley of the death Of the cross And again The authorized version Is also good In a translation Where he's saying Where it says Who being In the form of God And that word itself Is actually quite important Because the word being Actually means The kind of condition Or the state That was true Of this person Before anything else That's then mentioned After that Before he took The form of a servant Before he made himself Of no reputation Made himself nothing Taking the form of a servant Before any of that This was what was true of him This was his state This was his condition This was his position He was in the form Of God And that's really similar If not almost identical To the beginning Of John's gospel You remember how John begins his gospel That wonderful Opening verse

In the beginning Was the word And the word Was with God And the word Was God And that was Throughout the verse Is so important In the beginning Was the word The beginning of creation The beginning of things As they existed Having created them But in the beginning When the creation began He was He existed This was his position This was the condition He was in He was God What a difference In verse 14 Of John 1 And the word Became Flesh Not was flesh But became Or was made Flesh So here is Paul's equivalent Really if you like Jesus being in the form Of God But what does that mean?

What is Paul indicating By this phrase The form of God? What exactly Does that entail? Well it entails Essentially And we're going to Really have to Contract things Quite a bit Just to try and Summarize it as quickly As we can But nevertheless Take account of All of these Really important Phrases and words Into which The apostle Packs this teaching In order to Reinforce What he's saying About our living In harmony With each other And our acting In humility Not putting Our own interests Ahead of those Of others Well form The form of God Really essentially Means all the Attributes And the functions And the glory That belongs To God Were his They were his Then They were his Before He took any Action himself Towards Coming into this World Before he stepped Down into this World He was

In the form Of God He had all The essential Attributes Of God In other words He was fully God If you think Of everything That makes God To be God To make him Divine That was his The son of God The Jesus That's going on That passage Goes on to mention This is the Starting point For him This is not Something that He graduated Into This is where It all began For him He was already In the form Of God He was already Divine He was already In every way God With everything That belongs To God Who Already His This is not Saying to us That Jesus In some way Or other Was partially God That he was Semi Divine It's not saying To us that he Was similar To God It's not saying To us that he Was almost God It's not saying To that he Was God At one time

But ceased To be God It's not saying That like the Jehovah's Witnesses That he was The first Created Being That God Created He is God He is the Creator He always was From all eternity He was in the Form of God And you know You cannot really Begin to Appreciate Whatever degree We have Of appreciation Of this journey That the son Of God Took You have To begin With the Form of God If you are Going to Appreciate anything Of the Lowliness Of Christ You have To begin With the Height You have To begin With the Grandeur Of Christ With the Greatness Of Christ With the Deity Of Christ With the Divineness Of Christ Because it's Only then That you really Stand in Awe Of him Coming Into this World To be Born As a Human Being He was In the Form Of God And you See you Begin then To appreciate

[31 : 10] Just how Much this Great peak Of truth Towers Above us As you Realize the Grandeur Of this Person That the Jehovah Mentioned or The Yahweh Mentioned Throughout the Old Testament With all the Spectacular Events that he Himself is Associated with The great Acts of God That the Old Testament So abundantly Sets before Us This is God Jesus Is there It is His As much As the Father's In all These great Acts of Creation And redemption He was In the Form of God And then We come to The first Stage of The journey This is Where it Began This is What was Through Always Often From all Eternity But being In the Form of God He did Not count Equality With God A thing To be Grasped But made

Himself Nothing Taking The form Of a Servant This is Very Detailed Very Precise Language As we Try and Go through It Slowly It's Important To take It Just In the Way In which The Words Are set Out For us He Did Not Count Equality With God A thing To be Grasped That's Not Saying To us That Equality With God Was not Actually His But instead Of actually Reaching out To take it Or to Aspire To that Instead He became A servant That's not What it's Saying Equality With God Was his Equality With the Father Numerical Equality Within The Trinity The Glories Of the Trinity The Mystery Of the Trinity But in That Trinity Of the Father The Son And The Holy Spirit The Son Has The Father Has And The Spirit Has

He Has Equality With God Because He's God It's Not Saying Anything To us About Something He Didn't Have That He Chose Not To Reach And Take For Himself So What Does It Mean He's Saying Here He Did Not Think Of Equality With God You Might Say A Reason Against Becoming A Servant There's Part Of The Sheer Glory Of This The Sheer What Makes You Really Amazed As You Begin To Go Into This Teaching Is This Here Is Someone Who Was Always God Who Was God From All Eternity Who Was In The Form Of God Who Had Equality With God But The Argument Here You See Is He Did Not Regard That Dignity Of Godhood As A Reason Against Becoming Human Psalm 40

And Verse 7 Remember Psalm 40 Speaks There About Sacrifice And Offering You Did Not Desire Then I Said Lo In The Volume Of The Book It Is Written Of Me I Come Lo I Am Coming To Do Your Will My God And Hebrews Again Picks That Up To As Applicable To Jesus It's Like Jesus Speaking Out Of Eternity And Saying And The Son of God Did Not Say When It Came To This Point Of Taking The First Stage In The Journey Downwards Into Into Humanness And Into The Death Of The Cross He Did Not Say I will go, I come as long as it's not going to mean me becoming human. But he didn't say, well, if I become human, I won't go as far as to actually become human to the point of bearing the sin of these sinful human beings. He did not actually say anything like that.

[35 : 20] It didn't at all involve him saying, I will become human, but not to the extent of that amount of suffering and certainly not to the death of the cross.

What this is saying to us is, none of that featured in the thinking and the actions of the Son of God. He just said, I come. I'm doing it.

It's my portion. I delight to do your will, my God. The will of the Father who sent him is matched by the will of the Son who came.

There is no clash of wills. They're together at one in this coming into the world on the Son's part. So you see, put it all together, and what you find is, have this mind, which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to hold on to, to the extent that he refused to come to be a servant.

That really, I think, captures it. And so, instead of holding on to that and letting the dignity of divine royalty be an argument against him becoming human, instead, he did this.

[36 : 46] He made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant. If ever you might think of two words that really don't belong together, they are the words God and servant.

Who would have thought of putting these two words together in one sentence as if they belong together? God and servant. Because when you think of God, you don't think of God being a servant.

When you think of a servant, you don't think of that servant as having divine status. Isn't it improper to think of servitude as in any way related to God, to deity?

But not in Jesus. And that's the point that Paul is making. He made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, he did not divest himself.

And this is one of the arguments that wrongly has been taken from the passage. Some theologians have down the years gone to the point of saying that Jesus actually divested himself or laid down some of the essential attributes of the godhood of deity when he actually became human.

[38 : 12] Now, you can't really imagine a person of the Godhead laying down any of the essential attributes of God and continuing to be God.

If Jesus had laid aside any of the essential attributes of God, take for example his justice, his righteousness, any of these great prerogatives, he would not continue to be God.

If he had laid aside the ability, the power he has to uphold the whole creation, which is what the Bible tells us is true of the second person, the son of God, what would have happened to the creation?

He was going to keep upholding it. So what this really is saying to us is that he instead of making his dignity as God, as divine, stand against his coming into the world, he actually made himself nothing.

Yevi again is good. He made himself of no reputation. If he laid anything aside, he laid aside his reputation. He laid aside everything that would prevent him being uncomfortable to the point of death and assaulted and bruised and mistreated and come to bear the penalty of sin.

[39 : 41] See, it's not by really laying down things that were essentially his that he became a servant. It was by taking something.

It's one of those wonderful, it almost seems like a paradox that the Son of God came into this world, took human nature to himself, not by divesting himself of what belonged to God, but by taking to himself what was not his till then, a human nature.

Now just stop and think about that. God, he made himself nothing, not by subtraction from his deity, but by adding something along with his deity, he became human.

He took human nature to himself. He is not less than God as he comes into the world, but with all due evidence as we speak and are careful with our words, he came into this world not less than God as he was before.

He was God, he continued to be God as he came into the world. Not by that, but by becoming more than, we should say more than, I was going to say more than God was at that point, but that could be misleading because it's God plus humanity.

[41 : 16] He added human nature to himself, to the person that he is as the son of God. So he became human and continued to be, as the catechism puts it, God and man in two distinct natures, one person forever.

Friends, the more we begin to go into these great issues, the more we explore this great ocean of truth, the more we try and climb this great mountain of teaching, the more surely we appreciate who Jesus is, the more we love him, the more we admire what he did for his people, the more we admire the fact that he took a step downwards from this great height of Godhood without leaving it behind, but becoming human and taking in that the form of a servant, and just look at the way that the word form is used there as well, who being in the form of God did not count equality with God, a thing to retain in the sense of not coming to be a servant, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant.

And if the word form, as it does, means in the first instance, the form of God, everything that is essentially God, then it has that same meaning when it speaks of the form of a servant.

He is the servant. Everything that makes a servant a servant is his, as the servant of the father.

He is the complete servant. Everything that was needed of a servant to be his people, savior, he has, he took, he didn't leave anything aside that was necessary for him to be the servant of the father in order to take the sin of his people and die the death of the cross.

[43 : 27] He is the definitive servant. It is not that, nothing at all that Jesus, the son of God, came to be like a servant. It is not that he came nearly to be a servant.

It is not that he seemed to be a servant. He is the servant, the definitive servant. And nowhere can you better see that than when he began washing the feet of the disciples, as you find in that great passage in John 13.

Because that is where you see the son of God in the form of a servant. That is why Peter was so bewildered as to what was going on. This is just simply not right as far as Peter is concerned.

I am the servant, Peter was thinking of himself. This is Jesus. This is the one who has presented himself as divine. This is the son of God.

Lord, are you going to wash my feet? You can see the sense of amazement, the sense of inappropriateness, if you like, in Peter's voice.

[44 : 31] Here is the Lord, the Lord of glory, the one in the form of a servant, the creator of the whole universe. And here he is on his knees in the presence of this disciple and actually washing his feet.

You see, why did Jesus then, what sort of teaching did he then go on to give them? Very similar to Philippians chapter 2, isn't it? I have washed your feet.

Now you must wash one another's feet. You must be servants as you have seen me serve. You must love one another as I have loved you.

That's the example, that is the great definitive example of servanthood on the part of Jesus. And so it goes on to say, taking the form of a servant and being born in the likeness of men.

Being born in the likeness of men. Well, being born itself is an amazing term to use of the Son of God. You don't expect to find that the Son of God, God himself in the person of his Son.

[45 : 46] You don't expect to find these words being born in the likeness of men. What's happening here? The Creator has become the created.

Through being born of a woman, entering into this world through human birth. This is the Son of God.

There is the one who was in the form of God, now in the form of a servant, and doing so being born in the likeness of men. It almost seems impossible.

It is to our minds impossible that God could in any form come to be born as a human being. The Son of God nevertheless was.

He took this to himself. It's his action. He took humanness to himself, but he took humanness to himself in a way that preserved his method of coming to be born in a human fashion.

[46 : 58] This again is not saying it seemed to be the case. It actually did take place. Just imagine Mary, this human mother, holding this newborn child, nursing this newborn baby, as she wrapped him, as she fed him, as she cared for him.

What would be going through her mind? Well, of course, maybe not at that stage too much, although she was told by God what this was going to be about. It's only afterwards that she began to realize more and more who this was.

But think of it even then, she's upholding him in a human sense. He's dependent on her for his sustenance, humanly speaking.

He can't yet walk, so she has to hold him and carry him and nurse him and care for him. It's the Son of God.

The Son of God in the likeness of men in human form. And here's the amazing thing. as he is upholding, as she is upholding her infant child as God, he is upholding her as a human being.

[48 : 21] He's her sustainer. He's her creator. He is her God. Who can understand, you see, how high this peak rises above us?

But our Lord rises so high above us as we admire it, as we stand in awe, as we look up to the heights of this gigantic peak of teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ, about the Son of God, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.

And again, we find that the likeness of men is not that he seemed to be human, but that he was indeed human. How amazing is this?

how much does this draw out of your heart the worship that is due to this person? How much do you stand here tonight and look up this mountain of teaching and say, this is just beyond my comprehension, and yet what I understand of it, I admire, and I accept, and I receive, and I worship this person?

You see, he's in the likeness of men. It doesn't mean he's not fully human, but it means being fully human, there's still a difference about him.

[49 : 47] Not the kind of difference that makes him less than human, but the kind of difference that makes him different to every other human, because he's not a sinful human.

He does not have a corrupt human nature. I wonder how many times his mother Mary and his legal father Joseph would have watched this child growing up and thought to themselves, I've never seen anything like this.

A child who always behaved, perfectly. A child who was always ahead of them as he grew up in understanding of God's will.

A child who never had to be scolded for something he did wrong. A child who never spoke out of turn. A child who was perfect, without sin.

he was examined later on by Herod by others with regard to his person looking to find fault in him.

[51 : 03] And this was the verdict, after all of that examination, I find no fault in him. yes, he is in the likeness of men, he is truly human.

But tonight, our Lord had a humanity in this world and still has that humanity that is different to this extent that it was never sinful, although he bore the sins of his people in his incarnate state.

What do we say to this teaching? Why is this teaching here? Why are we beginning to climb this great mountain of teaching, where the person of the Lord Jesus Christ looms so large above us? Well, as we said at the beginning, this is why Paul is putting it in this passage. This is why Paul is putting it in relation to everything else he is saying here. In humility, count others more significant than yourselves.

You know, if the Son of God, as he did, looked from heaven upon our plight as human beings, and the mind of Christ said as he said, I will put them ahead of myself.

[52 : 22] Who are we to stand on our dignity and say, no, I can't actually do that. I have to think of myself first. That's what this is saying to us.

Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but to the interests of others. And friends, tonight this is exactly the person this needy world of ours needs.

This gigantic Jesus, this divine Jesus, this human Jesus, this Jesus that has such grandeur us beyond our ability to describe or even to take in all the facets of it.

But this is the Jesus our world needs. This is the Jesus we present in the gospel, however inadequately we present this gospel. This is the divine Savior, this desperately needy world needs and needs to hear about.

And isn't it a solemn point, and I finish on this. And having taken this journey from the form of God that he was from all eternity, let's just put it in simple terms, having taken this journey, this immeasurably great journey as far as we're concerned, from the heights of heaven and heaven's glory, we'll see God willing next time in the death of the cross.

[53 : 55] The damnation his people deserved, that's the depth to which he plumbed as the servant. Isn't it a solemn point that having taken such a journey, sadly, so many people are not even prepared to take the short journey from their home to church to worship this Jesus.

that's the reality of it. That's why we need to keep presenting this Jesus to them in all his grandeur, but also in all the depths to which he himself willingly came so that you and I would have this Savior presented to us and would have him by faith in him to be our Savior too.

Isn't he special to you tonight? Isn't he really special? And as you begin to understand, as you go on in your life as a Christian more and more about him, it doesn't become even more special as time goes on.

And let me just say to you, if you're here or online tonight and you're not yet saved, and you've not come to accept the offer of the gospel where this Jesus presents himself to you, will be well, what can we say except something like this?

How can we possibly go on refusing this Christ as our Savior when this Christ has come on such a journey to save us?

[55 : 39] May he bless his word. Lord our God, truly we find ourselves in awe at the teaching your word brings us in regard to how you came into this world, the glorious, divine Son of God, and took to yourself our human nature, taking the form of a servant.

We thank you, Lord, for the reality of this and that you continue to be in our nature even in glory, that you did not divest yourself of it following your obedience unto death.

We thank you that thereby you are able to take what you now are as the Lord of all creation, the Lord of your people, the head of all things over your church, and you are able to take the

experience that you have gained in this world in order to sympathize with us in our weakness.
O Lord of God, glory be to your name, glory be to your glorious person, as we have had tonight this glorious truth about you set out in your word.

May we, Lord, never, ever be lax in glorifying your name, in commending you to the world around us, and enable us to maintain that convinced mind in ourselves, that we need you at all times.

[57 : 11] Hear us, we pray, for your glory's sake. Amen. Let's conclude now by singing to God's praise in Psalm 40.

Psalm 40, that's on page 51, that's in the Sing Psalms version of it. And we're singing verses 6 to 10. You did not ask that calves or goats be brought a sacrifice for sin, but you have opened up my ears, you did not seek burnt offering.

Then I declared, Lord, I have come, it's written of me in the scroll, I want to do your will, my God, your laws in my heart and soul. Verses 6 to 10 to God's praise.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

I Your love is in my heart and soul. When the love of God sent me when it may, Your justice I'm moving abroad.

[59 : 23] I did not see in my lips at all, Hear no lips above me o'er.

I did not hide within my heart, Your saving grace of righteous hand.

In the assembly I proclaim, Your steadfast love unfaithfulness.

Amen. Now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, The love of God the Father, And the communion of the Holy Spirit, Be with you now and evermore.

Amen.