

Preaching Christ...
...by the power of the Holy Spirit
...and the authority of the Word of God

Day: Good Friday 2019
Services: 730am, 930am and 930am
Series: Easter
Title: # 2 He made himself nothing
Passage: Philippians 2:5-8
Aim: To explore what Jesus took – for our sake!
Outline:

He was **God**... but did not consider **equality** with God something to be used for his own **advantage**...

Down – down – down – was his journey

From **God** > to making himself **nothing** > to taking the nature of a **servant** > being in **human likeness** > and then – as a **man** – a **real human being** – **humbled** himself even **further** – by becoming **obedient** to **death** – not just **any** death – but **death** on a **Roman cross**!!

He was the **Lord**, the **Master**, the great **sovereign** of the **universe**... and he became a **servant**... the **servant** of **God** and **others**... the servant prepared to wash the **feet** of his own **disciples**!

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He took human **likeness**... in other words there was **nothing** in his appearance to give **away** who he **was!!**

you would not pass him in the **street** and think 'oh, there goes **God'!! /**

... he was not accompanied by a shining **light** hovering over him like a **halo**...

Yes, He **took** human **likeness!**

That is - Jesus took his place, where **we are**... he entered **fully** and **completely** into our **world**... the **Son of God** **stepping** into our **world**...

He was breathing the air **we** breathe, rubbing shoulders with the **people** of the **day**.... gazing into their **eyes**...

He took his place right among **humanity**...!

He did not simply take our **nature** and then live in a **sanitised spiritual environment**

He did not live in a big **palace** that only a few people could get into if they filled in the right **forms**...

...**NO** – he came to 1st century Jewishness, he came to **Nazareth**... he come to the home of a **carpenter**...

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...living right in the **middle** of **humanity**... where he would hear people **swear** and he would wince at their **blasphemy** – just like **you** do in **your** lives...

he ate with notorious **sinners** and **tax collectors** and **prostitutes**....

And that's why religious orthodoxy **despised** him... //

...that's why they said if he's **really God**... if he was really the **Messiah** he would be **sanitised**, he would be **removed**... he would be **enrobed**... he would be **separate**... he wouldn't be hanging out with **these** people... //

And that's why they complained **again** and **again** – “well you don't **dress** like us – you don't **fast** like us – you don't keep the **Sabbath** like us – you don't wash your hands **ceremonially** before you **eat** like us – what's **wrong** with you! You're no **Messiah!**”

“...we'll have **none** of this... you're a **pretender** – you're a **threat** – you're too **common** – you're **too popular!**” ///

He was the **Messiah** all right... but not the Messiah they were **expecting** and not the Messiah they **wanted**...

He came as a **servant**

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The **suffering-servant** who took our **sin** and was **crushed** for us...

...and taking the nature of a **servant**, he went lower **still**...

...as he **took** the **curse** of **death** upon the **cross**. ///

Just as **Nazareth** was the **last** place on earth we'd look for a **Messiah** – so is the **CROSS** the **last** place on earth that a man or a woman would ever go to look for **God!**

That is why the Bible says that the message of the cross is absolute **foolishness** to **men** and **women**.... //

Are you actually telling me that on that Roman cross was GOD!??

YES!!

There was nothing that looked **less** like **God** at **work**, then in what was happening at the **cross!**

...and there was nothing that looked less like **GOD**, than that **figure** on the **cross**.

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How could it possibly **be**?

You say “I am **amazed** by this... I am **staggered** by it...”

You **ought** to **be**!!

The idea that Christianity is an **invention** of the fertile **imagination** of **men** and **women**... that they sat down together and said “let’s conceive of a religion that they will be **interested** in and will be a **believable** thing...” and so on...

You can’t imagine **anything** as **inconceivable** as this...! ///

GOD on the **CROSS**!! ///

...and while in the **garden**, the disciples **had failed** to grasp what is going on..

...at the scene of the cross **itself**... one of the other criminals hanging **with** him, **turns** to him and **recognises** him...

When the disciples **buzz off** and say “the whole thing is over...” “it’s all about to end in a mess at the cross of Calvary...” – when they’ve all run away....

...at **that** point, the fellow hanging **next** to Jesus turns to

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him... and **recognises** him!

“**God** is up **here**”, he says

“This man has done nothing **wrong**”, he says

“**Remember me**”, he says, “when you come in your **kingdom**”

...and this **suffering, brutalised** figure of humanity, says to the thief, ‘**today** you will be with me in **paradise**’

Jesus – Son of God for **all eternity**...

Down – down – **down** he **went**

Made himself **nothing** - for you

Took the nature of a **servant** - for you

Humbled himself - for you

...was obedient to **death** - for you

...even death on a **cross** - for you...

And if you - like that thief hanging alongside him... have

Preaching Christ...
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recognised him as **innocent** – *this man has done **nothing wrong***

...and have said words to the effect of *remember me – have mercy on me...*

...then you **too** can claim Jesus' life-giving – moving – thrilling words – **you** will be with me.... in **paradise...**