

The Mind of Christ

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Preacher: Martin Ayers

[0 : 00] Thanks, Stephen. I asked Stephen to help me move the ladder because I'm so weak. I didn't want to look like I was struggling. Now, guys, we're going to think together about what we just heard from the Bible.

I wonder if you could just think, how much do you think you'd be willing to do for a friend? To be kind to them. Imagine your favorite TV program has just started, but your friend needs help with their homework.

Would you turn off your favorite TV program to help them? What about if they weren't being very kind to you? So imagine that your friend didn't invite you to their birthday party.

Would you still invite them to your party if they were your friend? A mixed response over there.

Would you give them your last Easter egg even if they wouldn't play with you at break time?

Or for the grown-ups, would you lend them your car if last time they borrowed it, they scratched it, and they never said sorry? Well, you can tell how much you love someone by how far you're willing to go, how low you're willing to go for them.

[1 : 16] How much we'll do for them that costs us. And Philippians chapter 2 tells us how low Jesus went for us. But in order to realize how low he went for us, you have to realize first how high he was at the beginning.

And that's the first thing we need to understand about Jesus. Jesus is the Son of God. And it said that in verse 5. It said this. In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus, who being in very nature, God.

Jesus is in very nature, God. I've got a little crown here to show you. And I was just going to use this ladder to show you that Jesus started off life very high.

He'd always been up in heaven. He's in very nature, God. We can think of heaven a bit like, not like a ladder, a bit like this. Can people see that picture?

I'm probably in people's way, so I'll duck out of the way. People know what that is? That's Buckingham Palace, where the Queen lives. Or you could think of heaven a bit like this. This is Balmoral Castle, where the Queen spends her time when she's in Scotland.

[2 : 30] Can you imagine what it would be like to live in a palace? Just think about how much work there'd be, doing the cleaning. Imagine how long it would take to set the table for dinner, if that was your dinner table.

But the royal family don't have to do any of that. They get served, because they are so high up. Well, Jesus was like that in heaven. And heaven is much more majestic than a palace.

And Jesus has always been there. Because God made time and space and everything. And he made it through Jesus. Jesus is the one through whom the whole world holds together. So...

Is that someone's... Oh, no, that's... I'm sorry, that's my phone. That's so embarrassing. In the middle of my talk. Gosh, sorry about this, everyone. It's very rude. Let me just...

Hello? Hello? This is the Queen. The Queen? The Queen? The real Queen? Gosh. Well, hello, what do you want?

[3 : 29] Do you not know who I am? I'm Queen Elizabeth. You're Queen. Right. Thanks, Queen Elizabeth. It's actually a bit of an awkward time right now.

I'm actually halfway up a ladder giving a talk at church. Gordon and Jenny went on a holiday. They've kind of landed me in it with this service. And I don't really have much time.

What is it that you actually want? Martin, I'd like to come and visit you. To come and see you. To get to know you. Well, that's very nice, Your Majesty.

But to be honest, I'm quite a busy person. You know, I've got three little kids. And I've just arrived. We just moved to Glasgow. And, I mean, to be honest, I don't really want you to visit. I don't really

want to know you.

You're saying you don't want to get to know me? I guess I am, really. Yeah, that is what I'm saying. I don't really want anything to do with you. Is that all right? Oh, right.

[4 : 29] Goodbye, then. Goodbye, goodbye. I'm so sorry about that. It just happens to me all the time. You know, but phones going off is one of my own pet hates in the middle of a talk. And then it was my phone.

That's really embarrassing. And I must have just had it with me. I've forgotten to turn it off. And it's just gone. This is terrible.

This is shambles. Hello? It's the Queen again. But I thought I said that I was busy. I just wondered if you wanted to think again.

I am your Queen. The Queen of Scotland, of England, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Commonwealth. Do you really not want me to get to know you? No, I basically don't want anything to do with you.

Leave me alone. Goodbye. Sorry, it's so embarrassing, that going off. Could you all just check your phones maybe? Just check that you've turned your phones off?

[5 : 27] Because I don't want that to happen again. Because it's just so awkward when you're trying to give a talk and the phone goes off and it disturbs everything. So anyway. Well, I don't know how you thought about how I just talked to the Queen.

But maybe you thought I was being a bit rude. Maybe you thought if that was the Queen on the phone and you were the Queen, you'd be a bit offended by that. I certainly would be if I was the Queen and someone was that rude to me.

But that's how the Bible says that we've all treated God. Actually, He is in heaven. He's in charge. And He wants to know us.

And we've all said we don't want to return His calls. We don't want to know Him and be friends with Him. Even though He's in charge of us. So we reject Him. We ignore Him. And that's what the Bible calls sin.

It's that we've said to God, Shove off God. I'm in charge of my life. And because of our sin, God is angry. Because we've not treated Him as we should.

[6 : 27] But God still wants a friendship with us. So that brings us to what Jesus did next. Jesus came to serve us. Let's look again at that Bible reading. It's going to come on the screen. I'll read verses 6 and 7 about Jesus.

Who being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to His own advantage. Rather, He made Himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant.

being made in human likeness. So Jesus came to serve us. He made Himself low. He came into our world as a servant.

That's a picture of Jesus foot washing. Because He washed people's feet as He came to be a servant. The Son of God left heaven in all its comfort and He became a baby.

And He wasn't born as a general or as a king so that He could tell us what to do and order us around. No, He came into the world to serve. And grown-ups, it's not that the Son of God lost something when He did that.

[7 : 29] When He came into the world to serve us, He took something on. He didn't get rid of being God. He didn't lose that. He added to being God human nature.

He took on being human. And we see that as He grows up in how He lived. So even though He was a human being, He could heal a paralyzed man. Or when there was a storm, He could speak and the storm went calm.

Even though He was human, He could say to people, your sins are forgiven. Oh, heck. I can guess who that might be.

Hello? Hello. It's the Queen. Who? The Queen. What do you want now? I have decided to come and meet you anyway.

I'm round at your place right now. You're at my place? Yes, at your house, at the rectory. I'm doing a bit of cleaning while I wait for you to get home. You've made a real mess, haven't you?

[8 : 32] There's barely a place for the corgis to sit down. I know it was Easter last week, but you could have tidied up after yourself. Right. Well, thanks, I guess.

That's very kind of you, Your Majesty. I'll see you later. Okay, see you later. Bye-bye. Well, do you think the Queen would come to my house and do all the cleaning for me?

In fact, do you know what? I've got some security cameras at our house. I wonder if we should just quickly have a look and see if the Queen really is there doing some cleaning. Gosh, look at that. She is. She's there. That's amazing. But I tell you what, it's not as amazing as how Jesus is described in the Bible that he came to be our servant.

Literally, he came to be our slave. He came to do everything he had to to bring us back into a friendship with God. So I wonder if you could think back to those questions again about what would you do?

[9 : 37] How far would you go to be kind to a friend? Just think, would you leave your house and live on the streets without a home as a poor person forever?

Well, God has gone lower than that for us. Would you let people be rude to you and reject you?

Well, God has gone lower than that for us. Would you let people arrest you even when you've done nothing wrong?

God went lower than that. Would you die for the people who treated you so badly, who weren't your friends, but really had wanted to be your enemies? Well, that's what God has done for us.

Why did he do that? Well, that's our next point. It's that Jesus came to save us. He came to serve us, but he also came to save us. Have a look at verse 8 on the screen. And being found in appearance as a man, Jesus humbled himself by becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross.

Jesus had to deal with the punishment that we deserved from God for the way we've treated God and the way we've treated each other. So when Paul, here writing Philippians, calls Jesus a servant, he wants us to think back to another bit of the Bible where God promised he'd send his servant into the world to save us.

[10 : 57] It said this in Isaiah 53, But he was pierced for our transgressions. He was crushed for our iniquities. The punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.

We all, like sheep, have gone astray. Each of us has turned to his own way, and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. So did you hear why the servant had to die?

He had to die in our place to bear the penalty we deserved for our sin. Jesus came into our world to give up his own crown and wear the crown of thorns to die for us, going much lower than we would ever go.

And when Paul says, did you notice the language he used? He said, Jesus went to death, we'll just look at the next slide, even death on a cross, because God's people at that time knew God's word, said that if you died on a cross you were cursed.

But the reason was that Jesus was taking the curse that we deserved for us. That's how low God is willing to go for you. And so the question for us whenever we hear that is to think, well have I accepted Jesus' death for me?

[12 : 14] Have you told God sorry, thank you, and please, sorry God for the way I've treated you and treated other people. Thank you that you sent your son into the world for me to die on the cross in my place so that I could be friends with you.

Please forgive me and please help me to live for you from now on to be king in my life. We all love rescue stories, don't we? We love films about rescue and I've got three true rescue stories for us here.

The first is of this lady here. I don't know if you saw her this week. This is Sarah Albone and she set out last week to climb Ben Nevis wearing summer clothes and trainers with nothing with her except a selfie stick and there was a blizzard and she would have died up the mountain.

She was utterly stupid and some mountaineers found her in the blizzard and they got her safely back to the ground again. They were heroes and they rescued her.

The second rescue story is about children. Again, last week there were some school children off the coast of San Diego. That's the sea there and they're good swimmers so they went out for a big swim together but some of the children started to panic.

[13 : 28] They got a bit scared because they were so far out from the beach and because they panicked, the other children panicked looking at them in the water and suddenly they were all starting to swallow water and they would have drowned but the lifeguards saw them and they came straight out and they got all of them back.

Amazing. They rescued all the children. So there's a picture there of them all back on the shore again. And the third true rescue story is our story. It's that Jesus saw the way we were treating God and that we were in real trouble with God and God the Father loves us so he asked Jesus will you go into the world and save them and Jesus came into the world dying on the cross to rescue us. That's how low he went so that all we have to do is turn back to God and say sorry, thank you, please. Now we're going to sing now before we look at what God did for Jesus next.

We're going to sing a song that helps us remember God's kindness to us in Jesus dying on the cross. We've heard what Jesus was willing to do for us to give us that amazing grace. Remember he was the king in heaven being a very nature God.

He came to serve us. He came to die to save us. Let's find out next what God did for him. The next thing we're going to hear is that God gave Jesus a great price for doing that.

[14:46] Let me read the next bit of Philippians. Therefore, God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

You hear that? God was so pleased at what Jesus did coming to rescue us. He's given him the place of highest honour. He's in an even more special place than before because of what he's done.

And so I printed out this picture of kind of a high place of the sky but I was then trying to work out how do I stick that even higher than the crown on my ladder? And I was thinking this week well maybe I could put a ladder on top of the ladder and kind of balance it.

And I looked online to see how you do that because that's how you find out how to do things these days. And I found these pictures of what I could do. There was one and I thought that doesn't look very safe does it?

And then there was another one and I thought that looks even worse. And then another one there. And actually these ladders these pictures had the caption with them they were with an article about why women live longer than men.

[16:00] So I thought well I'm not going to do that I'm just going to leave it to your imagination that Jesus is now in the highest place he could be. And if you want a special theological word that's a long word about God about this the word I like to use is swoosh like the Nike swoosh.

You see if you look at the Nike swoosh you see that it starts in one place and it goes lower and then it goes higher than it was before. And that's what Jesus did for us. He was in heaven he came to serve us he died to save us.

God has exalted him and maybe next time you see someone in their Nike sports gear you can think of what Jesus has done. He's back in heaven he's called Lord and one day everyone will bow to him.

Now Jesus we're supposed to look at him God wants us to look at him and think wow well done a bit like you might look at a medal winner at the Olympics and think well done for what you did. But there's more to it as well because God wants us to look at him and be inspired.

And I've noticed that when I look at BBC Sport now look at good sports clips at the end it always has this special screen it says be inspired. In other words get out and do some sport because you've seen what these people did.

[17:11] Well we're supposed to look at Jesus and be inspired to serve others like he served us. Remember how the reading started? I'll read it for you again. In your relationships with one another have the same mindset as Christ Jesus.

So we go out from here ready to serve each other because Jesus has served us. And I wondered if you could have a think about how you could serve other people.

I had some examples. Maybe in your home you could serve the other people. Maybe if you see your brother and sister and they need something or they want a toy that you use maybe you could think well I'm going to serve them because Jesus served me.

Maybe in church maybe as you see needs around you maybe as you see people who have needs you could think well I care for these people and serve them because Jesus served and cared for me.

In your friendships and this is really important I think grown-ups for us because of what Jesus has done for me I need to be the first person to try and make things up if I fall out with somebody.

