

The greatest King

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 17 December 2023

Preacher: Robin Silson

[0 : 0 0] now last week or for the for the next few weeks we've been thinking about um as you'd expect uh the meaning of christmas as we are in this time of advent advent and and last week we thought about it from the position of god the father who gave his or gave up his only son uh that he would perish and that we wouldn't um so that we would have eternal life this week we're thinking about the coming of jesus but from a different angle by looking at jesus himself and thinking about why he came as he did and how that tells us something about what god is like now every person at one point another everyone here included um whether you're a christian or not at some point everyone has debated in their own mind the existence of god everybody's debated that but wherever you stand on that wherever you stand on that everyone has an idea um of if there was a god this is that everyone if there was a god what would we want him to be like if there was a god what would we want him to be like the kind of character the kind of person with the kind of qualities that you would admire now of course there'd be some differences if we took a straw poll but i want to suggest this morning there are three things in the description of jesus in the passage that we read earlier who's god in the flesh that ring true with the type of leader the type of god that we would all want the type of person the type of god that actually intrinsically we all desire um and it gives credibility because it what we realize is that there's a unique thing in human experience is that the type of person that we would all really want god to be like the type of leader the type of king that we would all want to follow god has put something in our hearts where we all actually agree on something about the type of king that we all want um the first thing that i want us to look at is that um this king this this man who comes down god himself is that he doesn't take advantage of his position that is something that we would all want um out of a leader out of somebody that we would follow is that they don't take advantage of their position it's the first thing that stands out in jesus identity um in this passage uh as we as we read through some of these verses together particularly from verse uh five onwards you look with me um in verse six what it says it says that he's god in human flesh he's being in very nature god and then we get that character trait that i've been talking about we read he did not consider equality with god something to be used to his own advantage it means he he has equality with god he's god himself but he doesn't look down on anyone he doesn't take his position um and use it for his own advantage he's the top of the tree people who were at the top of the tree they normally normally you would think people who were at the top of their field they use it to their own advantage we we see we we've seen that in our world numerous times throughout the whole of history we see leaders don't we who use their position to benefit themselves we we know corruption you if you were to take if you were to look at the whole of history you take your pick of people who are in charge uh who are at the top of their game they use their position uh for their own advantage corruption even in recent times scandal normally occurs when people in power do something that they think they can get away with because of their status you think ministers expenses covid president putin donald trump you you take your pick they use their position for their own advantage and who knows we're not in that position whether we'd be tempted to do that the same thing with that level of power but here we have jesus who doesn't do that

jesus the living god the creator of all things now you think about there is no higher position is there than the living god there is there is no higher position he's he's definitely the top of the tree there's nothing above him but he doesn't use his position his authority his almighty power over every living thing to his own advantage for his own gain it is it is actually quite staggering really it's quite staggering how he uses his almighty power you you think you think the almighty god think of how much power he has you think of the potential what god could do with the power he has to create all things he doesn't he doesn't do that what what does he do with his almighty power he comes down to our level what we what we see in here that jesus did when we when we know that what when we

see jesus coming down it actually teaches something about god himself that that god himself had every intention once in fact to make himself known this is what it teaches it was what it teaches about god that god the living god who's alive and in control of all things right on he he didn't expect you to look up to him and work everything out about who he is he didn't and he doesn't expect you to do that but he came down to you he came down to us to reveal himself as a god to the people he created he wanted to show us what god is truly like and and the only way he could do that is if he the living god became one of us if he took on a human nature you see god becoming man it's what i'm going to call now this phrase might sound a little bit odd to you it's what i'm going to call divine baby talk divine baby talk you know what i mean by baby talk um you you you if you have a if you've any had spent any time with a baby or a toddler and you don't have a full-blown adult conversation with them if you want them to understand you you have to you know you crouch down you get on there come down to their eye level you speak slowly use hardened movement show them use a dialed a dialed down way to communicate with them to communicate with a little one on their little sometimes you might imitate the noises you may the noises uh they make you have to come down to their level for them to understand you if you talk to a baby the way you talk to another adult not nothing's going to happen nothing's understood and this is what's happening at the incarnation at christmas when we celebrate it with jesus coming down to be a person because what happens is jesus is coming down to our level he's stooping down he's talking to us in a way that we can understand if we if we were to gaze up at god in all his glorious holiness it's too much for us it's like a baby trying to have an adult conversation he comes down to our levels and speaks to us in a way that we can understand to reveal himself god wants to reveal himself so he comes to earth as one of us divine baby talk at our level so we can understand and see what god is like it's why we know it's why we know that the christianity the good news of jesus christ the christmas message it's not meant to be mystical or difficult to understand it can be understood by the smallest child we know that because jesus came to reveal god he doesn't come down to make things difficult complicated he came to say this is what god is like you see you want to know what god is like you look at me when you see jesus being compassionate and full of kindness and love but also when you see him condemning things that are evil and bad he jesus is saying you see this in me this is what this is what god the father's like this is what god is like that he comes to have when he comes and has meaningful meaningful relationships with people it's because god wants to have a meaningful relationship with you he offers the same compassion the same kindness the same love the same peace that we see jesus offer is is coming from god the father offered to us because jesus reveals who god is so that's the first thing we would want in a leader we would want something who doesn't take advantage of their position the second thing we would want everyone would want is somebody who understands us somebody who understands us understands our struggles jesus god himself comes into the world as a baby this baby is the future savior and will reign over all people but notice how he enters we read it see in verse 7 what does it say it says rather he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant being made in human likeness and being found in appearance as a man you see this in his birth his birth it's a it's a very nothing kind of entrance into the world isn't it would we expect that from someone that um in christianity is called the king of kings it's not like the kind of birth you'd expect he comes in humility he's not born with a silver spoon in his mouth in the warmth and comfort of a palace but he enters the world in such an insignificant way the lowest of the low surrounded by farm animals in what they think was a cave rather than a stable when it comes to a place to be born when it comes to a place to be born you can't get any lower right he doesn't even have a proper bed i mean he has to sleep in the animal's feeding trough his mum mary she's she's not surrounded by great midwifery care uh there's no scottish baby box with onesies and nice toys um and you can imagine the hygiene in there you know there's no alcohol gel as you walk in um it would have stunk would have stunk wouldn't it surrounded by farm animals i'll leave you why it would have stunk to your own imagination it's ridiculous the whole the whole scenario you think this is ridiculous the king of kings god himself comes as a human apart from mary and joseph it's such a nothing kind of birth nobody's there to see it the king of kings i mean basically in total squalor you couldn't get any lower it's not how you would expect a king to enter can you imagine that with our own royal family if the next the next royal child to be born it's ridiculous the reason he does this the reason he comes in the way he does is because jesus wants to be somebody that you to that you can and and if you were to choose somebody to follow you choose somebody who thinks who understands the situations of life the real life don't we we get that don't we you know when um there's so much

criticism you know modern leaders politicians there's always often criticism isn't there that um those that all they've all been educated at some posh private school in london um and there's nothing wrong with that it's fantastic that they've had a good education but the but the the criticism is often made of that is that they don't understand everybody that the normal struggles of of life of what it means to have nothing and have to work your way up to live hand to mouth the normal life of a working man you know in in somewhere like newcastle or wherever wherever is different in in the east end of glasgow the it's different for somebody who's who's born there to somebody who's who's educated down south in eton that's that's so now it's probably an unfair criticism but that is the criticism that the person that doesn't understand the life of the working man now that can't be said of jesus christ that cannot be said of jesus christ because jesus starting life couldn't get any lower he couldn't get any lower than born than than mary

you know just having given birth and she's surrounded by don't she's surrounded by smelly animals he can't get any lower in life jesus has humble beginnings and it pictures the humble person that jesus is his starting life is actually reveals what jesus will be like there was there's no one serving jesus apart apart from mary and joseph the point of his birth the humble the humble beginning says something about the reason jesus came that he didn't come to be served there is no one serving him who would serve a baby that's born in such a lowly place the only life you would expect of someone of that in that position the only life you'd expect when you see him born the way he is is this this baby is going to grow up to serve others he's he's not going to be served if you predict what kind of life this baby would have you wouldn't predict a life of him being served by others you would predict that he would be the one to serve people and he does he does he comes to serve and not be served and to give his life as a ransom so there's two things you'd expect that you'd want we'd all want in a leader doesn't take his position as his doesn't use his position for his own advantage and the second thing was that he understands people understands their struggles the third thing that we'd want in a leader some that we would follow is somebody who has a sharp focus on their goal somebody who does what they say they're going to do we know that in leaders as well don't we that's often the reason we choose to follow them there's nothing more disappointing than a false promise jesus comes with a promise and he follows it through to the end jesus comes down first from heaven to earth born in humility as a baby this amazing descent from you can't get any higher than earth down up from head than heaven down to earth but you see the descent the descent down it isn't finished jesus humility will take him lower still and he'll choose willingly to do that because he has a razor like sharp razor sharp focus on the reason he came his goal of being obedient to the reason he came and there's no and this descent there's no there's no one bigger from heaven to earth and then we read on from verse 7 verse 7 by becoming obedient to death even death on a cross jesus has a plan in coming to earth and he'll go lower still the descent is even lower it's not just death but death on the cross even the manner of death the manner of death is not dignified is it before i became a minister i used to work as a nurse and one of the the big things in nursing is the dignity of the patient dignity in suffering making sure that when somebody's suffering they're as comfortable as possible and they're respected and um that even in the midst of it they have this sort of human dignity that we we all deserve the suffering that jesus goes through is anything but dignified it's utter humiliation it's complete humiliation he stripped practically naked uh and hung for everyone to see stripped of all his dignity that and there's almost an irony there isn't there that the one who deserves the most respect and the most dignity um is the one who lefts with the least the one who created the people who were stood in front of him the one who caused the wood of the tree he hangs on to grow is stripped of everything it's the death reserved for criminals at any time jesus could stop this but chooses willingly with obedience to follow the plan with a razor like a razor sharp focus through to the end he came not to be served but to serve and give his life as a ransom

in philippines in in the third verse of the chapter we read we we read earlier we read this rather in humility value others above yourselves not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of others as we read that we realize that jesus follows that command out perfectly the cross his attitude he looks out for the interest for others interests for our interests above his own he he knew that the only way he could rescue us was to give up himself to the most humiliating humiliating experience his goal was to lower himself isn't this the type of leader the type of king that we all yearn for whose mind is for the good of others rather than himself to such an extent that he would give his life up to rescue you on the cross on the cross jesus himself values your eternal future more than his own life a razor like focus on achieving his goal of loving you to the end it's

because of jesus obedience to the plan that he's exalted verse 9 to 11 this is so important look with me that therefore is really important because it means that the reason verse 9 to 11 happens is because of the obedience we see in the verses that come before 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 on earth and under the earth and every tongue acknowledge that jesus christ is lord to the glory of god the father in a very peculiar way that is different to any kind of leadership that we will ever see jesus death jesus character how he lives is the proof of his kingship this this is what qualifies him to be the king of kings it is his death that qualifies him to be exalted it's because of what he does that he's lifted up because of his service that he deserves the highest place that every knee will bow because of his death and of his sinless life that he's raised to new life there is a strange peculiar glory here that jesus becomes glorious and lifted up by doing the very thing that is not glorious dying for others we started by talking about the type of we've talked all the way through about the type of god the type of king the type of leader we would all want jesus meets all of these he doesn't use his position as god for his own advantage but comes to reveal who god is he understands our struggles because he becomes one of us born in humble conditions and he goes low still dying the death of a criminal to save us he knows full well that this will be the end of his life and what it does is it adds authenticity to the claims of christianity because who doesn't admire and respect a person like this everyone does he's a leader worth following the desire for this type of leader is not exclusive just to us or just to this culture it is throughout history across cultures every single person has wanted or desires a man and a leader that is like that it's not and it's not coincidence it's not coincidence that we all want a person that is the same we all have the desire for a leader who would do this a king like this because when god made you he placed that desire in your heart knowing that he would be the only one who fits the bill he's the only one who fits the bill he does this out of love for you this is the king we all want because this is the king we all have let me pray oh my god we do thank you for your son we thank you lord jesus that you are the type of king the type

[20 : 15] of leader that we really all want we thank you that you you didn't and you don't use your position as the king for your own advantage that you understand our struggles because you came down as one of us that you couldn't be any lower and you came to serve us and we thank you that you are obedient to the plan that you made with your father before you came to die on a cross to save us we praise you where would we be without you and so this christmas time lord i pray for each one of us that we would worship you that we would meditate on the truth of who you are in our hearts and that we would know the joy of christmas because of the gift of your son and because lord jesus of you you didn't do it you didn't come with a hump with a hump with in a in a um in a mood you didn't do it but you did it willingly and you do it again we praise you for who you are and what you've done and so have mercy upon us bless as we pray in jesus name amen