

Sermons preached by MR. J. GREEN at "Rehoboth" Chapel,
Swindon, on Sunday, 20th December, 1959.

Text: Philippians II. v.8,9.

"And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself,
and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.
Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a
Name which is above every name."

MORNING

From time to time the Holy Ghost has made manifest His
work in the hearts of sinners. Some who, by reason of
ignorance and prejudice, have manifested much hatred towards
the Person of the Lord Jesus and His people, have been so
completely changed and turned round that it has become a
sacred, heavenly pleasure to them to speak well of the
Person and work of Christ and to esteem His dear people
highly. This work of the Holy Spirit is very wonderful, and
you and I need not be left, as some were left, to wander
far into the guilt and filth of sin to know that by nature
we have hearts which are at enmity against the Lord Jesus
Christ, and that by nature we have no pleasure, no delight
in His cross or in His ways. Some of us, I believe, can
look back this morning and feel what God has wrought in our
hearts, how He has been pleased to do things for us which we
could never do for ourselves, and those things which no man
could do for us.

Now this good man, the writer of this epistle, could
look back, as he often did, and remember past days when he

looked upon Christ as an imposter, when he hated Him and the mention of His Name, and hated those who worshipped Him and loved Him, and he hailed such to prison. He was madly enraged against these godly people; and yet in these epistles he writes so lovingly, so affectionately towards them, and he does all that he can do by God's help to encourage poor sinners to trust in the all-sufficient Name and merits of the Lord Jesus. I believe Paul's heart burned with heavenly fire, with real love to God, as he meditated upon what the Lord Jesus Christ had done for him; and whenever opportunity afforded, he loved to preach of two things: the first, those exquisite sufferings^{of} the Lord Jesus Christ, His humility, His death; and also His resurrection, His exalted state.

We have these two things in these two verses, and the apostle commences thus, speaking of Christ, "And being found in fashion as a man." We firmly believe that He was the eternal Son of God, who dwelt in the Father's bosom, Who ever did those things which pleased His Father; yet, knowing that the Father had chosen a people who should show forth His praise, and that it was the Father's will that these chosen people should be saved and presented faultless at last before His presence, and, Christ knowing that none in heaven could perform this work but Himself, He lovingly, willingly, undertook an active part in that covenant ordered in all things and sure, and He undertook the suretyship of

His people whom the Father had given Him; and, knowing what it would cost Him, did not shun to remain their Surety. He knew it would be necessary, to satisfy divine justice, to honour God's holy law, which He foreknew His people would break, for Him to leave heaven and come here on earth, this sinful earth; and He knew it would be necessary for Him to take into union with His divine nature that true humanity, that sinless humanity, and yet for that humanity to be subject to so many sinless infirmities. We cannot conceive, my dear friends, how this can be, that Christ should have that sinless nature, and yet a real nature, that He should derive that real humanity from the virgin; and we firmly believe, though we cannot explain it, that He Who was the eternal Son of God, became the Son of man; He became Immanuel, God with us; and thus the text says, "And being found in fashion as a man."

There are many clear instances recorded in the sacred Scriptures that show that the humanity of Christ was very real. One has thought of that set forth in the fourth chapter of John, how Jesus, "being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well." It shows His true humanity. He knew what weariness was. And why, my friends? That He might ^{with,} sympathize and succour and help His dear people as they journey on through life. They often feel weary, and we need not be three score years and ten to know something of this weariness. But the Lord Jesus was found in fashion as a

man, and He knew, He experienced, this weariness, on behalf of His dear people, that He might lovingly, feelingly sympathize with them.

We read of another occasion when Lazarus had died, and this blessed Man was at His grave; and how He felt for those two sisters, Martha and Mary; and we read, "Jesus wept." As Man He wept; and, my friends, they were real tears; those sinless tears were real! And so, as we journey on and may have to pass this way, and our dearest comforts may have to fall before His sovereign will, yet Christ was found in fashion as a man that He might sympathize with His dear people as they journey on through this wilderness below.

But more than that, He was found in fashion as a man that He might suffer. As the Son of God He could not suffer, He could not bleed, He could not die; so He lovingly, willingly was found in fashion as a man that He might suffer. I believe as I sought to meditate upon this last night it did soften my heart, to feel that the Lord of life and glory should condescend to be found in fashion as a man that He might suffer for such a worm as I. And what about you, dear friends? This will be a most sacred truth to you if the Holy Ghost favour you to experience it a little; and you will have to thank God that this first clause in the text is a most precious and sacred truth; in fact, were it not a sacred truth you would have no hope; there would be

no gospel to preach, there would be no heaven for any poor, lost sinners. It all hangs upon the truth of this clause. The Lord enable us to give prayerful, careful attention to it. The apostle, writing to the Corinthians, says, "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich." So He became this Man that in that humanity He might suffer, the Just for the unjust.

But we would never lose sight of this blessed truth, that though He became Man He still remained what He ever was; the Son of God; and, though few realised it or had any true experience of it, He was the Son of God when here on earth, His deity clothed as it were with that humanity; and there were times when He made it sweetly manifest that He was not only Man, but that He was true, almighty God. Those disciples, when they were on the stormy sea and heard that voice saying, "Peace, be still," had a sweet proof that the Man Christ Jesus was true, almighty God. The winds and the waves obeyed Him.

I have mentioned Christ at the grave of Lazarus; and what a sweet proof that was of His deity. He cried with a loud voice, saying, "Lazarus, come forth." Dear friends, have you any ^{sweet} proof in your poor heart this morning that He is the Son of God? Has He ever spoken to you with that unction and power? He was pleased to speak to one woman when He was on earth, and she had ~~assumed~~ ^{no doubt but} what He was true, almighty God; He said to her, "Thy sins be forgiven thee."

Has He ever said that to you? Have you ever prayed for it? Are you seeking it? Do you long to feel that all your sins are forgiven you? Then if the Lord Jesus should visit your heart and say, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," you would have in your own heart a sweet, sacred proof, a blessed evidence that He is the Son of God.

"And being found in fashion as a man;" He suffered being tempted of Satan. O, how that enemy came to Him! Yet the Lord Jesus submitted to the temptations of the evil one. Why? That He might succour every tempted son and daughter. Perhaps some of you have been sorely tempted during the past week; and temptation, to a child of God, is a painful reality; it is not something that we merely talk about; "O, I was tempted to do this, or to do the other;" it is something painfully real to God's people. For instance, if the devil should be permitted to come to one of us this morning, particularly one who has made a profession of Christ's Name, and say, "You are a deceiver, you are not a child of God, you are nothing but a hypocrite," you and I would not be able to stand against that temptation ourselves; that would be most painful and solemnly real to us, and were we not supported by God's grace, the devil would drive us to despair with his temptations. But Christ comes right into the very path of His dear people. He says, "Poor sinner, I know all about this temptation; I know the pain of it; I have been tempted in all points like as you

have, yet without sin; I can succour thee, I can support thee, I can deliver thee from the hand of Satan." O, how you will thank and praise Him for His love and mercy, that He was found in fashion as a man, and that He did subject Himself to those temptations of Satan for His people's sake. O that you and I knew more of the sweet truth of this clause, "And being found in fashion as a man."

But more than this, that humanity, supported by His divinity, must bear all that the whole church of God would otherwise have had to bear throughout eternity; and a mercy it is to have a few moments' fellowship with this blessed Man, the Man Christ Jesus, in the Garden of Gethsemane, and to feel how awful and terrible sin was to Him, and the curse of that broken law that fell upon Him - which His people had broken, - the anger of God against sin. We read that whilst He was thus suffering "His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." Dear friends, have you a little hope that this wonderful Person Whom I try in my feeble way to set before you, was "found in fashion as a man" for you? Can you say with good Joseph Hart, as you have fellowship and communion with Him in the garden,

"Not a glimpse of hope for me,
Only in Gethsemane"?

Then we see Him upon the cross, and perhaps we have set before us here more clearly than anywhere else the reason why the Son of God was found in fashion as a man, - that upon that cross He might suffer and bleed for His people's sake,

and, when He had finished the great work of redemption, bow His sacred head, give up the ghost, and die. Ah, there is life to His people in the death of the Lord Jesus Christ! They live whilst they behold their Saviour die. This is very important. If He did not die for us, if He did not bleed on the cross for us, hell must be our eternal portion; we shall be lost for ever and for ever. Everything, my friends, hangs upon having a gracious experience of this truth, "And being found in fashion as a man."

He died, and that lifeless body was taken from the cross and laid in the tomb. It would be very sad for us if there were nothing more to say than that; for that would mean that death had the dominion over this Man. But we read that we have "many infallible proofs" that this blessed Man who hung on Calvary's cross, arose triumphantly from the tomb. Death could not hold Him, and so He arose as that mighty Victor, that blessed Conqueror over death itself, over all the sins of His people, over the law itself. Could we, friends, have fellowship and communion with one better than this blessed Man?

"And being found in fashion ~~asa~~ as a man, He humbled Himself." It was a voluntary humility. There was no pride in it; There was no need for Him to be humbled. It was all of His mercy, all of His love, all of His grace, that He humbled Himself. If we can view it by faith in Christ, humility will be very sacred to us, and I believe we shall seek conformity to this

blessed Person. Real, God-given humility is a foretaste of heaven. None will ever get to heaven who does not have some fellowship and communion with Christ in His humility. We must receive this wondrous grace from Him. But what a wonder of wonders, my dear friends, that the Lord Jesus Christ should condescend thus to be found in fashion as a man, and that He humbled Himself! Look what He endured, what sinners said and did against Him when He was here on earth. Look what He suffered in many ways. I thought last night, "I have a comfortable bed to lie in," and I thought of Jesus; what did He say when here on earth? "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head." He Who could call the world His Own possessed nothing on earth, as Man. What wonderful humility! We can hardly enter into it, that when tribute was demanded of Him and His disciples He had nothing to pay with. He commanded His disciple to go to the sea-shore and he would find that which was necessary in the mouth of a fish. And He so humbled Himself that He would have to do with a poor leper, did not disdain a poor leper, that man who came to Him in his diseased state and said, "If Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean." Christ did not say to him, "No, I am the Lord of life and glory, I can have nothing to do with you." He had mercy, compassion, upon that leper; and He healed him. O, friends, I feel we see the humility of Christ sparkle in this, that He had to do with poor sinners. Poor

Mary Magdalene, O, He did not shun her, but He had to do with her, and He mercifully and graciously rid her of those seven devils. There was the poor mad Gadarene; nobody could hold him, nobody could do anything with him, yet the Lord had mercy upon that poor thing. He humbled Himself, and thus He had to do with poor sinners; and though He is in heaven, enthroned in highest bliss, He still humbles Himself, He still has to do with poor sinners. I want Him to have to do with me, friends. Do you? O, I feel what matchless condescension on His part to have to do with such a poor wretch as I feel myself to be. When we consider something of the Person of Christ we shall have to sing, as in the hymn we commenced the service with,

"Unworthy dwelling! glorious Guest!
Favour astonishing, divine!"

that He, the Son of God, should condescend to dwell in our poor hearts! Is not that humility, friends? I believe we shall look upon it as real humility on His part, real condescension, to have to do with such as we feel ourselves to be.

During the night my mind went to those two disciples, - sad and sorrowful they were as they journeyed on; and this apparent Stranger joined up with them and said, "What manner of communications are these ^{which} ~~which~~ ye have as ye walk together, and are sad?" You know the journey. "And He made as though He would have gone further; but they constrained Him, saying, Abide with us; for it is toward evening, and the day is far

spent. And He went in to tarry with them." I thought, What love, what humility on the part of the Lord of life and glory! He went in to tarry with those two dear disciples; and He broke bread and gave thanks, and they knew Him and had no doubt Who He was. And didn't they love Him! Didn't they have fellowship with Him! And if that is your favoured lot, friends, to entertain the Lord of life and glory in your heart, (and real religion is this, "Christ in you, the hope of glory,") you will love Him, you will worship Him and praise Him, but you will feel, "What condescension, what humility on His part, that He should humble Himself to help me, to commune with me, and to bless me, the most unworthy of all sinners on earth!"

Now may the Lord bless these few things to us, and may He give us grace to enter a little into the sacred truth of them. It is no good my reading this word about Christ, "And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself;"-that will not do me a scrap of good unless I feel it was for me. That is the secret of real religion, feeling these things were for me. Paul, speaking of Christ in another place, said, "Who loved me, and gave Himself for me."

Amen.