

Jesus: The Son of David

Advent Midweek #1 – 12/02/20 – Mt. Calvary Luth.

Text: Matthew 1:1,6 Pastor Keith Besel

v.1 “The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David...”.

Introduction

✘ In the eyes of most British citizens, King Henry VIII was a famous and important king. But King Edward VIII is viewed in a different light altogether. He is not the heroic king who led the British against war and oppression. He is not the famed leader who put the needs of the people before the crown. He is not the inspiration for a Shakespearean play or for folk singers or movie producers.

➔ To be honest, in the eyes of the English, King Edward VIII was a very disappointing king; the one who abdicated his throne just to marry a divorced woman. Other royal names like Henry V and Richard the Lionheart and Elizabeth I and even Elizabeth II will be remembered throughout the ages, but not Edward. He is little more than a brief footnote; a black mark in the records of the British monarchy.

✘ St. Matthew begins His Gospel with a quick run through the records of the Kingdom of Israel. He introduces us to Jesus by tracing His lineage as the promised Messiah, through kings and patriarchs, heroes and disappointments. Matthew hearkens us back to Jesus’ ancestors which includes also the prophecies of the long-promised Savior.

➔ In Advent we focus on the “coming” of Jesus; the One who came to be greater than His fathers, David and Abraham by ushering in a kingdom that will have no end. God’s plan before the foundation of the world was that one of King David’s own descendants would be the One who would redeem God’s people.

✘ Most people just blow right through or skip over these opening verses of Matthew; Jesus’ genealogy back to Abraham. Today though there is a greater interest in genealogies than in years gone by. No longer is it just that one nerdy member of the family who would gather all the information together and work to reconstruct and pass on information about the family tree.

➔ Admittedly genealogy websites have simplified the work so that even the most casual observers can explore and better understand their family histories. Now with DNA advances people are able to explore more than just one or two branches of the family tree. Today we can explore how all of the different branches and generations of the past have come together to form you; to form me as unique, individuals within our families.

✘ In the next few weeks of Advent, our midweek sermons will help us unpack the significance of Jesus’ genealogy and show us how God worked to weave His plan of salvation throughout the history of His chosen people to its final culmination in Jesus as our Savior. Tonight we begin with a look at how Jesus, David’s Son is David’s Lord; ruling on David’s throne today and forever.

I. David remembered as a great hero.

✘ Unlike King Edward VIII of England, King David is considered to be the great hero of Judah and Israel. Even after those kingdoms fell to Babylon on account of their sinfulness and unbelief, the people still waited in hope that one of David’s descendants, as promised, would come to restore Israel back to its former glory. They hoped for and expected a warrior king; one who would crush their enemies and make them again a nation feared by all others.

→ But why does Matthew specifically call Jesus the Son of David when He had other kings in His family tree as well? Manasseh, the king who led Judah and the people of Jerusalem to do more evil than the Amorites and the nations before them was also in Jesus' family tree. Well, it might have something to do with the fact that Manasseh sacrificed his own sons to false gods (2 Chr. 33:6), filling Jerusalem with blood from one side of the city to the other? No, King Manasseh was a failure; a part of history that most would prefer to forget. He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD (2 Chr. 33:2), like so many before him, and like others who would follow him. Manasseh, like King Edward, was an embarrassment; a shameful excuse for a king in the eyes of citizens and historians alike.

II. David remembered as a failure as well.

✘ But you see, Matthew records Jesus' entire genealogy precisely because he wants to remind us that Jesus came to save and redeem all people – the greatest heroes and the worst failures.

→ That means that we could just as easily call Jesus the Son of Manasseh because it would remind us that Jesus' purpose in coming to this earth was not to return Judah and Israel to their former earthly glory, but instead to establish an eternal kingdom; a kingdom founded not on account of power and might, but on mercy and grace. Jesus came to rescue every heart and soul stained by sin.

✘ Even King David, the man 1 Samuel 13:14 says was a man after God's own heart, did what was evil in the sight of the Lord. Yes, the boy who slew Goliath the giant with a slingshot needed someone to rescue him as well.

→ It was God's prophet Nathan who was charged to remind King David of his own sin and need for a Savior. And once the truth of his sin hit home, David confessed it publically in Psalm 51:5 where he says, "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me". In fact David was so convicted of the punishment he deserved that a few verses later in Psalm 51:11 he begs the LORD, "Cast me not away from Your presence, and take not Your Holy Spirit from me".

✘ And that's how it is for the powerful and influential people of this world. Though David, as a shepherd struck down both lion and bear (1 Sam. 17:36), he was easy prey for Satan, the prowling lion (1 Pet. 5:8). Yes, David needed a greater Shepherd than himself to strike down the devil on his behalf.

→ King David, the one who triumphed over all his foes could not master sin; could not triumph over death. This man who had everything he could imagine and to whom God said He would have even given more was still not content with it all. So what did he do? He took Bathsheba as his own wife and ordered the murder of her husband Uriah – even trying to cover it up as a casualty of war. But of course, God knows all people's motives; all of the scheming in our hearts. And what David did was evil in the eyes of the LORD.

→ Yet, when David confessed, "I have sinned against the LORD." Nathan replied as God's spokesman the same way that all pastors are to respond to a confession of sins, "The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die" (2 Samuel 12:13). How could God do such a thing? Because of the work that David's promised descendant; the "Son of David" would come to do.

III. The Son of David as David's Lord on David's Throne

✘ In Matthew 22:42, when Jesus had a confrontation with the Pharisees, He asked them, "What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is He?" They answered, "The son of David". But then

Jesus responded by quoting Psalm 110; asking them how David could call his own descendant his Lord. The Pharisees never could understand that truth. Yet the mighty King David, even before it took place, believed that his own descendant would be infinitely greater than he would ever be. In faith he knew his descendant would come to be his Lord.

- ✘ Peter quoted this psalm as well in his Pentecost sermon about Jesus rising from the dead (Acts 2:34). Peter noted that David's own descendant would reign on his throne. But this descendant and king would be different from David who died and is buried to this day. No, David's Son was raised from the dead and ascended to the heavenly Father's right hand.
- ✘ This was God's promise, as we heard earlier in our Old Testament reading (1 Sam. 7:12-16). But also through Isaiah who prophesied to the Messiah and His eternal reign on David's throne: "For to us a child is born," he said, "to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over is kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore" (Is. 9:6-7).

IV. The Son of David – a different kind of hero.

- ✘ While it's true that Jesus is the Son of David and the Son of Manasseh, He is a different kind of king altogether. Jesus is the only truly righteous King; the only One whose kingdom will have no end. Jesus comes to reign over and save the high and mighty who fall from their thrones and the meek and lowly who have no strength of their own.
 - ➔ No one on earth is righteous before God, not even the great King David. Therefore, God in grace sent One who came to be our righteousness. As the prophet Jeremiah foretold, "In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which He will be called: 'The Lord is our righteousness'" (Jer. 23:6).
- ✘ Even still, as the King of kings, Jesus wore a crown of thorns upon His head. He was wrapped not in beautiful robes but in sin and shame – yours and mine and all the world's. Jesus was the Son sacrificed for the sins of His fathers Manasseh and David. He came as the Lion of Judah who also became the Lamb who was slain; the King who put the needs of His people before the crown.
 - ➔ In fact, Jesus gave up His crown and abdicated His heavenly throne when He came to earth and took on human flesh. Why? Not for His own selfish desires, but so that He might save the nations. Jesus is a true servant King; putting the needs of the people before the crown, as it would be said at His trial, that it was better that one man should die for the nation than that the entire nation would perish (Jn. 11:49) – even if it meant it was the King who had to die. So this King took on the form of a servant and became obedient unto death, even death upon a cross (Phi. 2:8).
- ✘ On that day, the inscription over His head was the only earthly evidence that would mark Jesus as a king. Yet there the Son of David died. He died for David and Manasseh; for kings and queens; for peasants and paupers; for rich and poor; for strong and weak; for young and old; for sinners from every family on earth.
 - ➔ Dear friends, understand well that you also are sons and daughters of David, for you have inherited David's sin and shame from your conception as well. Yet Jesus, the Son of David, came to save all who share in David's weakness; in his frailty; in his sin - not just the father, but all of his sinful children.

- ✘ This is why Matthew begins his Gospel, focusing upon the kingdom of God coming near to us by calling Jesus the Son of David. Yes, Jesus comes to bring the kingdom of heaven to us; the kingdom proclaimed in His Word and given to us by grace through faith in Him alone.
 - ➔ Because of Jesus, you and I can now join with King David in Psalm 145:13 and sing, “Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures throughout all generations. Thanks be to God, Christ’s kingdom has come among us also! In the name of Jesus. Amen.