

Have you ever noticed that the social setting we're in determines how we identify ourselves? In a medical emergency, my wife (Naomi) identifies herself as a nurse, but in most other settings it doesn't come up unless someone asks about her work. Similarly, the social setting I'm in determines whether I introduce myself as Naomi's husband, as a pastor, or as a soccer coach. As my children get older, increasingly I find myself in settings where they are known but I am not. When that is the case, I introduce myself as Anna's or Luke's dad.

In fact, a few weeks ago Luke and I were training with the North Shore Alliance soccer team and I was talking with one of the players that I had never met before. As we stood on the sidelines, Luke was on the pitch, with the ball at his feet—he made a few good moves and then dished off a brilliant pass. The player I was standing beside commented, "Luke is so poised on the ball; he never panics, and makes great decisions." At such a moment, I am quite proud to say, "I'm Luke's dad."

Luke is getting faster and stronger, I'm getting slower and weaker. But I've had my time, this is his time, and most good parents hope and pray that their children will surpass them in terms of character, skill, and achievement. Both of my children are on their way.

Over the past 10 weeks, we have been journeying through 1&2 Samuel, looking at the life of David, the one who God described as a

man after His own heart. In light of the Church calendar—with today being Palm Sunday, followed by Good Friday and Resurrection Sunday—we are going to set aside 1&2 Samuel for the next two weekends and shift our attention to the Psalms.

A psalm is a Hebrew prayer, a song, and of the 150 psalms in the Old Testament, 73 of them were written by David. Some are psalms of celebration, some are psalms of lament, while others describe the nature and character of God. This morning we're going to look at the most frequently mentioned psalm in the entire New Testament—it's quoted or alluded to at least 25 times.

It's mentioned so frequently because David refers to one of his descendants who will surpass him in terms of authority, dominion, and glory; the New Testament makes clear that this psalm was fulfilled in the coming of Jesus. At this time, I want to invite you to turn with me to Psalm 110.

1 The Lord says to my lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet." 2 The Lord will extend your mighty sceptre from Zion, saying, "Rule in the midst of your enemies!" 3 Your troops will be willing on your day of battle. Arrayed in holy splendour, your young men will come to you like dew from the morning's womb.

4 The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind: "You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek." 5 The Lord is at your right hand; he will crush kings on the day of his wrath. 6 He will judge the nations, heaping up the dead and crushing the rulers of the whole earth. 7 He will drink from a brook along the way, and so he will lift his head high."

There are two other texts that we're going to look at this morning and so I want to make a few simple observations before we move on:

- **First (vs. 1-3)**, David speaks with confidence that his descendant will surpass him in terms of dominion—he will rule an expanded kingdom—but also in terms of authority: he too will be a king (**vs. 2**), but he will also be both priest (**vs. 4**) and judge the nations (**vs. 6**).
- **Second**, it is very strange by Jewish standards, for David to call one of his future descendants “*my Lord*.” How can he be David’s son and David’s Lord at the same time?

Let’s hold on to this question as we turn now to our second text, Matthew 22:41-46.

The context surrounding this scene is worth noting. In chapter 22, Jesus is under fire by the Pharisees and Sadducees, each trying in turn to trap Jesus in His words, asking difficult questions and trying to make Him look foolish. Instead, Jesus answers their questions with great skill and insight; in vs. 41-46, Jesus turns the tables and asks a question of His own, regarding the identity of the Messiah.

“41 While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, 42 ‘What do you think about the Messiah? Whose son is he?’ ‘The son of David,’ they replied.

It’s at this point that Jesus quotes Psalm 110, asking the religious leaders for an explanation. Vs. 43, “[Jesus] *said to them, ‘How is it then that David, speaking by the Spirit, calls him ‘Lord’? For he says, 44 ‘The Lord said to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand until I put*

your enemies under your feet.’” 45 If then David calls him ‘Lord,’ how can he be his son?’ 46 No one could say a word in reply, and from that day on no one dared to ask him any more questions.”

Jesus began by asking about the human ancestry of the Messiah —“*whose son is he?*” The response is immediate, “*The son of David.*” It was a good answer, the right answer, but Jesus followed up with a second question, based on Psalm 110. “*How is it then that David, speaking by the Spirit, calls him ‘Lord’?*”

When David speaks of **the** Lord speaking to **his** Lord; to whom is he referring? If David refers to him as “Lord” then he must be superior to David, but who else, apart from God, is higher than the king?¹

Jesus wasn’t denying the Davidic ancestry of the Messiah, instead, on the basis of Psalm 110, Jesus suggests that the Messiah is more than *merely* human. New Testament scholar, Craig Blomberg writes,

“The Messiah is no mere mortal, not even the most exalted of human kings. He is divine. God in his sovereignty has planned things this way. God’s plan also includes the future implementation of perfect justice throughout the universe, at the end of time, through this Messiah, who is both priest and king. Then God’s enemies will be destroyed and God’s people rewarded. The rest of the Bible likewise speaks of God putting his enemies under Jesus’ feet (1 Cor. 15:25-28; Eph. 1:22; Heb. 10:13).”²

¹ R.T. France, *The New International; Commentary on the New Testament: The Gospel of Matthew*, 849.

² Craig L. Blomberg, *The New Testament Use of the Old Testament: Matthew*, 84.

To say that the Messiah will be the ‘son of David’ is not incorrect, but it’s incomplete. In Jesus the Messiah, we have both the son of David and God the Son.

Put as simply as possible, the doctrine of the incarnation is that God the Son—Co-Eternal, Co-Equal, with the Father and the Spirit—became human without ceasing to be God. There was a moment in time, when God the Son stepped into human history as a human being—He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of Mary—son of David and Son of God.

At the centre of Christian orthodoxy is the confession that in Jesus Christ we do not see God pretending to be a man, or even God in a man, but God as a man. In Jesus Christ we have **One Person** with **Two Natures—God and human**; these two natures perfectly exist within Jesus “without confusion, without change, without division, without separation.”³

When people say that they don’t believe in God, a good question to ask is, “*Which God don’t you believe in?*” The agnostic is quick to acknowledge that while God may exist, nothing can be known of His nature. But as Christians, we believe that Jesus Christ is the Eternal Son of God made human; Jesus is the decisive word about God. God became human so that God could be known; Jesus makes real, true, knowledge of God possible.

Hebrews 1:1-3 describes Jesus as the radiance (**reflection**) of God’s glory, and, the exact representation (**stamp**) of His being. Jesus’ words, being, and action reflect the words, being, and action of God.

³ Chalcedonian Creed.

This is why Jesus could make statements like Matthew 11:27, “*No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.*” In John 12:45 Jesus said, “*The one who looks at me is seeing the one who sent me;*” in John 14:9 Jesus said, “*Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.*”

So to summarize: in Psalm 110, David refers to a future descendant as “my Lord.” This “son of David” will surpass David in terms of authority, dominion, and glory; he will be King, Priest, and Judge of the nations. In Matthew 22, Jesus referred to Psalm 110, asking the question—who is this son, and can he be merely human? In Jesus we have both the son of David and God the Son—fully human and fully divine. *Jesus is the one in whom the longings of humanity and purposes of heaven meet.*

Let’s move on to our third and final text: Matthew 21:1-10.

“As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, 2 saying to them, ‘Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. 3 If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away.’”

4 This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet: 5 ‘Say to Daughter Zion, “See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.”’

6 *The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. 7 They brought the donkey and the colt and placed their cloaks on them for Jesus to sit on. 8 A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road.*

9 *The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted, 'Hosanna to the Son of David!' 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!' 'Hosanna in the highest heaven!'* **10** *When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, 'Who is this?'*”

Throughout His ministry, expectations swirled around Jesus. And as He approached Jerusalem for the final time, everything came to a head. Everywhere Jesus went He attracted attention, but He never sought attention. He would heal people and then tell them to keep it on the down-low; even as Jesus revealed His identity to the disciples, He told them to keep it quiet.

Why all the secrecy? Jesus knew what was in people's hearts; He didn't want people to misunderstand who He was and why He came. But as He approached Jerusalem for the final time, He changed His approach. He wanted to make a bold statement and so He sent a couple disciples to fetch Him a donkey, and He rode it into Jerusalem.

illus: It's one of those “you had to be there” moments. It's like going to Rogers Arena to watch a Canucks game and seeing 18,000 fans waving a white towel. It's fun, right? We're just cheering, right? Wrong. If you don't know what happened on April 29th, 1982, then you're missing the point.

On that night, the improbable Vancouver Canucks were in a dogfight with the mighty Chicago Blackhawks; it was game 2 of the Conference Finals. And the referees were killing us, they called 4 consecutive penalties on the Canucks. And with the game slipping away, the coach, Roger Nielsen, in an act of total frustration, grabbed a white towel, lifted it up on a hockey stick and began to wave it: *I give up, you win!*

His mock surrender became an act of defiance that has defined Canuck fans ever since.

In Zechariah 9:9 we read, “*Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.*”

This ancient prophecy held a future promise for God's people. The day is coming, said Zechariah, when God will send a King who will defeat the enemy, bringing peace, mending what's been broken, and healing what is sick. Zechariah's prophecy is one of many that points to the time when God will intervene to set the world right: to deal with sin and evil once and for all and bring freedom to His people. When Jesus rode in on the donkey, He was making a grand statement: *The time has come, the King is here; the moment you've been waiting for has finally arrived!*

And the message Jesus sent wasn't lost on the crowd; they spread their cloaks on the ground—like a “red carpet” affair—and they began to wave palm branches, all the while shouting, “*Hosanna!*”,

“*God save us!*”⁴ I can recall Pastor Keith once saying, “Their song matched their situation...Praise, because God’s King was here to save them. From now on things are going to change. God’s future is breaking into the present. The brokenness of the world will be undone.”

But we know the rest of the story; the celebration of Jesus’ kingship was short-lived. Within the week, Jesus was “crowned with thorns, enthroned on a cross, and hailed as the chief of fools.”⁵

Let’s get to the application.

Application: In Jesus we see a God who became human so that He could bear our weakness, disappointment, sin, shame, and death. In Jesus Christ we discover a God who loves; God calls to us because He longs for relationship with us.

In the earthly ministry of Jesus, He most commonly referred to God as “Father”. Not only did He call God “Father,” but in Luke 15 He told a story about a Father in order to describe what God is like. God is not a distant, angry, unforgiving Father; He’s a loving, forgiving, faithful, and generous Father.

Psalm 110 describes the son of David as both King and Priest. As priest, Jesus both represents God to the world and the world to God; at the cross Jesus offered the perfect sacrifice on our behalf. And as the risen Son of God He mediates God’s blessing to the world

John 3:16-17 describes God’s relationship to the world in the following way, “*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.*”

God the Son became human, not to get His revenge, or hand out a bunch of “I told you so’s,” but to rescue, to heal, to express God’s love for the world. *If you want to know who God is and what matters to Him, look to Jesus.*

If this is what God is like, then who are we meant to be? Human beings have been made in God’s image, set apart for relationship with Him, and destined to participate in His kingdom. But while we have been made for relationship, ironically, humanity is marked by division, strife, and envy. We live in God’s good world, but because of sin, the world is profoundly broken and we along with it.

The solution to the brokenness of the world is found in Jesus. God knows firsthand what it’s like to suffer loss, to be hurt, misunderstood, and rejected; Jesus experienced the pain we bear. He didn’t live a privileged, pain-free, human life; Jesus stepped right into the muck and mire. The Creator drew near as Redeemer—God has acted through Jesus to restore what has been lost through sin, to reclaim the image of God in humanity; Jesus came to be one of us in order to rescue us.

⁴ Cf. Psalm 118:22-25.

⁵ Garland, 430.

How are we to respond to this son of David and Son of God?

- We are invited to surrender to His love; to turn towards Him, to open our hands and hearts to Him. He doesn't force Himself upon any of us. Our experience of His love is directly proportionate to our capacity to trust, surrender, and receive from Him.
- We are also invited to worship Him, to celebrate with adoration and praise. He has done great thing for us, for the world, and so we worship with joy and gladness.

In Luke's account of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, the shouts of "*Hosanna*" drew the ire of the religious leaders. These shouts amounted to worship, which was fitting for God alone. Upon hearing this praise, the Pharisees said to Jesus, "*Teacher, rebuke your disciples!*" Jesus responded, "*I tell you...if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.*"⁶

Worship is the appropriate response to the goodness of God. It's the appropriate response to the gift of mercy, peace, and freedom that is ours in Jesus. Worship is the response of those who have experienced the love of God—a love that is patient and kind, that isn't selfish or manipulative, a love that isn't dishonest, a love that forgives, a love that never fails.

Jesus Messiah—He is the son of David, God the Son, King of the world, King of our hearts.

Prayer

⁶ Luke 19:39-40.

Worship

Benediction