Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

David's Son and LORD
Scripture: Luke 20:41-44
Code: 42-249

In our study of the Word of God, we find ourselves this morning in the 20th chapter of Luke's gospel, Luke chapter 20, coming to the conclusion of this rich 20th chapter.

Perhaps more importantly than the chapter is the chronology. We are now late in the day on Wednesday of the last week of our Lord's life. He will be crucified on Friday and risen on Sunday morning. This is Wednesday.

It was most likely Monday that He made His entry into the city of Jerusalem, to the "hosannas" of the massive multitude. On this Wednesday, He has spent the entire day in and around the temple area, teaching the large crowds and being confronted by the religious leaders. They have done everything they can on this day to publicly discredit Him. The Pharisees have made their effort. The Herodians have made their effort. The Sadducees have made their attempt.

All of them unsuccessful. All of them humiliated. All of them exposed by the wisdom and the clarity and the power of our Lord's response. Luke says in verse 40, "They didn't have courage to question Him any longer about anything." Now it's His turn to ask the questions. And in verse 41, we read this, "And He said to them, 'How *is it that* they say the Christ is David's Son? For David himself says in the book of Psalms, 'The Lord says to my Lord, sit at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet.' David, therefore, calls Him 'Lord' and how is He His Son?' "

If I were to title this message, I might simply title it, "David's Son and Lord." That in itself is a startling title. No Middle Eastern father would ever under any circumstances call his son "Lord." That would be to honor and respect on its head. And yet David's Son is also David's Lord.

The nature of the Lord Jesus Christ, the essential nature of Jesus Christ, has been debated since He was on earth to this day. And it will be debated throughout all of human history. And it comes down to this. Was Jesus God? Is He God? Or is He merely a man?

The general consensus in the world is that Jesus was a man, lived and died, noble, insightful, wise, devout, religious, compassionate, sacrificial, well-intentioned, and whatever other adjectives you would like to fit in. But a man. That's consistent, of course, with Satan's agenda because if Jesus is merely a man, then He is not God, He is not the Savior, the Bible is not true, Christianity is not genuine, it is a false religion. If, on the other hand, Jesus is God, if He is God, then He is the

sovereign, he is in charge, the Bible is true, Christianity is genuine. This is the critical issue.

I received an ad in the mail. This is what it said. “Sunday at 7 p.m., the Christadelphians invite you to a Bible study on the subject ‘Jesus is not God.’ ” A Bible study on the subject Jesus is not God by the Christadelphians? In Greek that means “Christ-lovers.” It’s not just the bizarre and weird Christadelphians who reject the deity of Jesus Christ, so do the Jews, and the Muslims, and the Hindus, and the Buddhists, and the Mormons, and the Jehovah’s Witnesses, and the Christian Scientists, and the Scientologists, you can go on and on. If you’re going to reject Christianity and deny its truthfulness, you have to reject the deity of Jesus Christ. Jesus cannot be God, or if He is God, then this is the true religion.

So the target of false religions is always going to be the person of Christ. There are other errors than this among apostate so-called Christians who get other things wrong like salvation by grace and faith alone. But it is consistent with Christianity that Jesus is God, and anything less than that in terms of defining His nature makes it a non-Christian religion.

Having said that, I need to say that there are apostate Christians, we might call them “liberal Christians” who call themselves Christians and deny that Jesus is God. But that’s not Christianity. The Jews today, and throughout history, and at the time of Jesus did not acknowledge Him as God. They did not acknowledge Him as Jehovah incarnate. They did not acknowledge Him as God, the second member of the Trinity. In fact, they didn’t believe that the Messiah would be God. They believed that the Messiah was to be merely a man, no more. Notable man, powerful man, influential man, a man who is all that a man could possibly be, a man endowed by God with everything that would be the epitome of humanity to accomplish by the power of God greater things than any other man, but still a man.

The Messiah was to be human. He was to be a human who came into the world, became the ruler of Israel, reestablished the kingdom of God, subjected all Israel’s enemies, and ruled the world of nations from Jerusalem, and brought to fulfillment all God’s promises to Abraham and to David. They did not see the Messiah as God, Son of God, or the Savior of sinners. They saw Him only as a man.

That was obviously what the people believed because that’s what the leaders taught them. When Jesus claimed to be God, He became immediately a blasphemer. He committed the most heinous sin that they could conceive of in their religious system. To claim to be God was madness.

In addition to that, He then began a fiery assault on their theology, on their power, on their influence, on their position, on their false righteousness, and even on their temple operation. And that was at the very beginning of His ministry, and it occurred all through His ministry, and again at the end even in this week. He cleanses the temple, confronts their corruption, exposes their hypocrisy, and escalates their feverish desire to get rid of Him.

The true Messiah, they believed, would be a man, nothing more. And Jesus claiming to be God, coming in wielding this authority, cleansing the temple, condemning their theology, their self righteousness, and their religion were crimes worthy of death. So they tried this week to confront Him unsuccessfully. And finally, as we read in verse 40, their mouths were shut.

It's now His time. This is His last time to engage the religious leaders of Israel, the influencers. It's His last time. It's His last conversation. What might you imagine that conversation would be? Well, you would assume that if His conversation with them is the last one, He is going to discuss what is the most important matter, and He does. And He asks them this question, verse 41. "He said to them, 'How *is it that* they say the Christ is David's son?' " Let's call that a discerning question, a discerning question. It gets right to the core, penetrating, provocative, a discerning question. How is it that they say the Messiah is David's son?

Now, just a reminder, Matthew has an account of this question by Jesus. Mark has an account of this question by Jesus. And Matthew and Mark's accounts enrich this one, as we see so often in these synoptic gospels. And if we go to Matthew and Mark, we get a few things that kind of help us. The first one is to ask the question why is Jesus bringing this up? Isn't He aware at this point that they have fully rejected Him? What is the point of going back to clarify who He is again? What is the point of that?

They are fixed and resolute in their animosity, and their hatred, and their vitriol. They want Him dead and every moment that goes by they want it more desperately. Why is He bringing up this issue of His identity again? And the answer comes from Mark 12:34. He knew of some who were not far from the kingdom. He knew of some who were not far from the kingdom. That would include, for example, one of the leaders by the name of Joseph from Arimathea, who you meet later as the one who provides a tomb for the Lord.

This then, believe it or not, is one final evangelistic effort. Even after all the hatred expressed by these leaders, all the superficial interests of the fickle and indecisive crowd who were being led around ultimately by the nose, Jesus in spite of all of that is still the compassionate evangelist. He is still down to the very last conversation inviting sinners headed to hell to know Him for who He truly is, to cease their open rejection, to cease their indecision.

Yes, He has confronted them with the strongest rebukes. He has publicly shamed them for their corruption and lies. But He still manifests enough concern to speak one more time the truth for He as God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked. His joy is in the salvation of sinners. His sadness is in their destruction.

Back to 19:41. When He first approached Jerusalem, at that triumphal entry on that Monday, a couple of days earlier, He saw the city and wept over it. He is the weeping Savior. And so one more time He calls them to the truth about Himself. And this, dear friends, is absolutely essential for salvation. No one will go to heaven who does not believe Jesus is God, no one. No one.

This is the clear, unmistakable, unambiguous testimony of Scripture. John 5:37, for example, “And the Father who sent Me, He has born witness of Me. You have neither heard His Word at any time nor seen His form. And you do not have His Word abiding in you, for you do not believe Him whom He sent.” If you don’t believe the truth about Christ, you have no relationship with God.

The apostle Paul put it this way. “If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, affirming Him to be who He is, let him be damned.” In 1 John 2:22, “Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son. Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also.” You have no relationship with the Father unless you confess the truth about the Son.

So, once more, the Lord Jesus affirms and asserts His divine nature as God, and thus offers Himself even to those who despised Him. Go back to chapter 15 for a moment, all the way back to chapter 15 to that incredibly rich story that we know as the story of the Prodigal Son, really a tale of two sons and an amazing father. You go back to that story, you remember the Prodigal came back. The father embraced him, reconciled him, kissed him, put a ring on his finger, a robe on him, shoes on his feet, had a celebration. In the middle of the celebration, the older brother appears. Verse 25, he “was in the field, he approaches the house, he heard music and dancing. He summoned one of the servants, *began* inquiring what these things might be. He said to him, ‘Your brother has come, your father has killed the fat calf because he's received him back safe and sound.’ He became angry, was not willing to go in. His father came out and began begging him.”

The older brother, you remember, represents who? The Pharisees, the scribes, the legalists, the religious leaders. The prodigal represents the outcasts, the tax collectors, the prostitutes, the riffraff, the sinners. They were coming to God. They were coming to Christ, and being loved, and being forgiven, and being embraced. And it outraged the self righteous legalistic Pharisees who are seen in this older brother. And what was the father’s response to this?

He began entreating him, verse 29, “but he answered and said to his father, ‘Look! For so many years I’ve been serving you, I’ve never neglected a command of yours, yet you’ve never given me a kid, a goat, that I might be merry with my friends. And when this son of yours came who has devoured your wealth with harlots, you killed the fattened calf for him.’ And he said to him, ‘My child, you’ve always been with me, all that is mine is yours. I offer it to you, I’ve always offered it to you.’”

Here is Jesus, back to Luke 20, confronting an older brother, confronting the Pharisees, the scribes, the religious leaders again, who have complained over, and over, and over, that He embraces sinners, prodigals. And Jesus here gives an invitation to them once more to consider who He is and to receive the blessings that He will willingly give a repentant hypocrite.

And so the Lord asks them the pertinent question. But I have to take you back to Matthew, Matthew 22:41. This is where the conversation really starts. Remember, Matthew, Mark and Luke record the same incident and they all give us little details. Matthew 22:41, this is how it began. Here's what Jesus said first. "What do you think about the Christ, whose son is He?" What do you think about the Christ, whose son is He? "And they said to Him - " literally one word " 'David's.' " And that's exactly what He expected them to say. What do you think about the Christ? What's your view of Messiah? Let's talk about the nature of Messiah. Let's talk about the essence of Messiah. Whose son is he? What nature does He bear? And they respond immediately with a conventional Jewish answer, "David's."

Now you come to Luke and you read that Jesus said, "How is it that they say the Christ is David's son?" How did you come to that conclusion? He questions their common answer, and it was their common answer. They believed the Messiah would be merely a man, but the best of men, the noblest of men, the most gifted and blessed of men, and a son of David. And I remind you again that the fundamental question of Christianity is the nature of Jesus Christ. If He's just another man, then the Bible lies, He's not God, and you can forget Christianity. And they were convinced that the Messiah would be merely a man. So you have this very direct and very pertinent and very essential and important question placed before them. I call it a "discerning question" because it discerns to the core of where a person is spiritually.

It is followed by a deficient answer, a deficient answer. Their answer was "David's," as I read you from Matthew 22. "David, son of David." Was that true? Yes. Second Samuel 7:12-14 prophesies clearly the Messiah would come out of the line of David. Read Psalm 89, you'll find it there five, six times. Messiah will come out of the loins of David. Amos 9:11, Micah 5:2. He's going to be in David's line.

Now this is commonly believed by the Jews of Jesus' day. It's so obvious in the Old Testament, they all believed it. For example, Matthew 9:27, "Jesus passed on, two blind men followed Him, crying out, saying, 'Have mercy on us, Son of David!' " Not only was the Messiah to be a Son of David, everybody knew that, but Jesus was, in fact, a Son of David. He was in the Davidic line and apparently the people not only knew the Messiah would be a Son of David, but they knew Jesus was a Son of David.

In fact, this was a common expression in Matthew 12:23, after Jesus healed a demon-possessed man who was blind and dumb, "the multitudes were amazed and began to say, 'This man can't be the

Son of David, can He?' " So again indicating their understanding that the Messiah was to be a Son of David.

Matthew 15:22. "A Canaanite woman came out from the region of Tyre and Sidon and *began* to cry out, 'Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David; my daughter is cruelly demon-possessed.,' " 15:22, that was. Matthew 20:30, a great multitude from Jericho, two blind men, again, and they say, "Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David." Then when He entered into the city, "Hosanna to the Son of David," Matthew 21:9. So everybody understood that. Luke 18:38-39 also refers to the Jericho expression by the blind men, "Have mercy on us, Son of David."

It is true that He was in the Davidic line. The genealogy of Matthew 1 establishes that He's in the Davidic line. The genealogy of Luke 3 establishes that He's in the Davidic line. His father Joseph was in the Davidic line. His mother Mary was in the Davidic line. Both lines converge, of course, in Him, by blood through His mother, by right through His father, even though His father was not His father in terms of actual human birth. Nonetheless, He is the Son of David.

And by the way, if He were not a Son of David, it would have been waved in His face fast because the scribes and the Pharisees as well as the Sadducees kept very, very careful genealogical records, all of which were destroyed in 70 A.D. in one of the greatest losses to the Jewish people. But the races were literally traced in their genealogy - the families, I should say, were literally traced in their genealogies throughout the Jewish race. All of that was accessible. If Jesus was not in fact the Son of David, they would have discovered it immediately in the temple genealogical records and they would have discredited Him on the spot.

The scribes kept those records with great, great care, preserving things in the right tribes in the right families in the right heritage for the future great glorious kingdom to come. It could be easily checked. It was checked, I am certain, and they knew, in fact, He was the Son of David. It is a correct answer. It is just a deficient answer. Not wrong, incomplete, inadequate.

In fact, when the people called Him, "Son of David, Son of David," the leaders reacted negatively to that because they knew that they were not calling Him "Son of David" just to identify His family, but they were calling Him Son of David as the Son of David who would be the Messiah. That's what they resented. There were tens of thousands of offspring that came out of the loins of David. It was fine for Him to be one of those, but not the Son of David with an upper case *S* indicating the Messianic title. So Davidic dynasty and Davidic descent was, in fact, true concerning Jesus. But that is not sufficient.

So you go from a discerning question, through a deficient answer to what I'll call, a "divine reality," a divine reality. This is marvelous. This, again, shows us so much. Verse 42, the question is, "How is it that they say Christ is David's son? How can you say that when "David himself says in the book of Psalms, 'The Lord said to my Lord, sit at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies a footstool for Thy

feet.' David therefore calls Him 'Lord,' and how is He his son?" This is just amazing.

Now let me tell you what Jesus is doing here as an argument. Why are you calling Messiah David's son only, when David himself says in Psalm 110:1, that's the Psalm He's quoting, Psalm 110:1, "The Lord said to my Lord, sit at My right, hand until I make Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet."

Now let me tell you the foundation of our Lord's argument. Everybody – everybody - knew Psalm 110 was Messianic, everybody. The standard universal Jewish interpretation of Psalm 110 is it is speaking of the coming Messiah. This coming Messiah is the one who will sit at the right hand of God, the position of power and authority, and make all Israel's, and thus God's, enemies a footstool for His feet. He is the conquering hero. He is the conquering hero. Very reminiscent of Psalm 2. That is how the Jews interpreted Psalm 110. And it was a universal interpretation. It's Messianic. And when the Messiah comes, He will wield the right hand of God. He will wield the authority and power of God. He will subdue all God's, i.e. Israel's, enemies, put them under His feet.

And by the way, just as a further explanation of that. Being placed under the feet of a ruler was not where you wanted to be because it really was a symbol of execution. Listen to Joshua 10. Five kings are brought to Joshua. Verse 24, "It came about when they brought these kings out to Joshua, Joshua called for all the men of Israel, said to the chiefs of the men of war who had gone with him, 'Come near, put your feet on the necks of these kings.' So they came near, put their feet on their necks." Verse 26, "So Joshua struck them and put them to death, hanged them on five trees."

Everybody knew what it meant to make your enemies your footstool, to put your feet on your enemies' neck. This is Messianic. They knew the Messiah would come and destroy the enemies of God because that's what the Old Testament prophesied. How then, if this is Messianic, and the Messiah is to be David's son, can David call Him "Lord"?

Because verse 1 begins in Psalm 110, "The Lord said to my Lord," that is Yahweh is talking to the Messiah, and David says the Messiah is my Lord. How can the Messiah be David's Son and David's Lord? Only one way, He has to be the eternal God who becomes man. He has to be the everlasting God who becomes in time a creature.

This is stunning to them. In fact, this is so stunning an argument that the Jews scrambled for centuries because of this very incident. It wasn't long after the completion of the New Testament and the availability of this that the Jews changed their viewpoint of Psalm 110 and they said it refers to Abraham in some strange way. And others said, "No. It refers to Melchizedek." And others said, "No. It is a reference to Judas Maccabeus," who was a ruler from 135 to 143 - 143 to 135 B.C. And those who came up with the Judas Maccabeus idea took the Hebrew and altered it to create an acrostic of the name of Judas Maccabees. They were the originators of the Bible codes. They did anything and everything they could do to manipulate the text of Psalm 110 to make it non-Messianic, because if it

is the Messiah to whom the Lord is speaking and the Messiah surely is David's Son, David also calls Him "his Lord."

The Messiah is both man and God. He is the eternal Son of God as well as man, son of David. He is David's Son and David's Lord. If He was just an ancestor to come centuries later, how could David in the present tense refer to Him as "my Lord"? If you don't think Bible exposition down to the personal pronouns is important, here's something that will correct your view, right? How important is it to get the words and the phrases and even the prepositions and pronouns right?

Well, some liberals came along and said, "Oh, David was wrong when he said this. And it was just a crazy moment for David. He was wrong." And if you were leading Luke, you might conclude that, well, David said it but he shouldn't have said it. However, Matthew 22:43 says - listen to this - "David said in the Spirit." Or, if you will, Mark 12:36, "David said, in the Holy Spirit." Let's make sure we're not talking about the human spirit. He said it. He said it in the Spirit. He said it in the Holy Spirit. So all the bases are covered there.

What David said then was not wrong, it was right, absolutely right, absolutely accurate. Same kind of construction there in Mark that you find in Acts 4:25, where it says, "By the Holy Spirit, *through* the mouth of our father David." It's the same thing. The Spirit of God inspired David to say it. David said the Messiah who hasn't even come yet is now, at this moment, my Lord. That kind of reminds me of what Thomas said when He saw Jesus after His resurrection and said, "My Lord and my God."

This could set in permanent panic because He's exposited the Psalm they all affirmed to be Messianic. The Jews have, Middle Ages to now, those who still consider the Word of God seriously, have come back to the fact that this is a Messianic Psalm generally. I don't know what they do to escape the fact that the Messiah has to have been alive at the time of David as well as being in the future the Son of David. But if they're thinking at all, this same argument is a powerful argument for the Lord Jesus Christ.

And then one day in the purposes and in the providence of God and in His perfect plan, the Messiah will return to reign and to place His heel on the neck of His enemies in that great eschatological event of His glorious return, and judgment, and kingdom establishment. But until then, His heel falls on the neck of His enemies every second of every day. The judgment of Christ on sinners and rejecters does not await the final judgment. It goes on every single day. His enemies are always His footstool.

When verse 44 sums it up, "David therefore calls Him 'Lord,' - " and then asks " - How is He only his son?" You have an impossible dilemma. The Jews were completely stopped. And, in fact, that's what Matthew says. Matthew basically says what Luke says before this incident. Matthew says it after this incident, verse 46. "No one was able to answer Him a word, nor did anyone dare from that day on to ask Him another question."

After the discussion with the Sadducees, Luke says it was over. The Pharisees circled back after their little meeting. They've got one more issue and Jesus confronts them with that issue. They were done, but He came to them. And after that, they were done for sure. Luke says they had nothing left to say. So Jesus asked the question. They couldn't answer that. They are doubly silenced.

There's nowhere to go if you reject Jesus Christ. Don't come with any kind of patronizing nonsense about the fact that you think Jesus is a good person and the Bible is a wonderful book. The Bible says Jesus is God. He is David's Son and David's Lord. He is the God-Man. If you believe that, you affirm Scripture. If you do not believe that, you deny Scripture. The Scripture then is to you a deception and Jesus is a fraud. The Bible is full of lies. Abandon Christianity, leave the church, get as far away from it as you possibly can. But if the Bible is true - and it is - Jesus is God and Man, then what He says is true, what He did is the only way of salvation, and faith in Him alone is the way to heaven.

You could talk about the deity of Jesus Christ so many ways. He manifested the attributes of God: Omnipotence, commanded the elements, commanded the demons, commanded the physical world, commanded death, commanded life, forgave sin. He had the attribute of omnipresence. He was able to be everywhere at all times if He desired to be. He was omniscient. He knew everything including the thoughts of men. He was immutable. He never changed. He was holy, true, wise, sovereign, loving, eternal, glorious, unchangingly so. He is God. He is God in the same way that God is God, no less.

And if God became a man - let's just create a hypothesis. If God became man, what would we expect Him to be like? Well, I think, first of all, we would expect Him to be sinless, because the God, the true God, the God of Scripture is holy, holy, holy, holy. So if God became a man, He would be sinless. Was Jesus sinless? Yeah. Even His own enemies couldn't find any accusation against Him. He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners.

If God were a man, we would expect not only there to be no sin, the absence of sin, but we would expect, secondly, the presence of perfect righteousness. He would be the purest of persons who ever lived.

If God were a man we would expect His words to be the greatest words ever spoken. Because He has the greatest intelligence, and the greatest wisdom, and the greatest command of truth, and the greatest command of the expression of that truth. The words of Jesus would be like no words ever spoken by anyone, any time, any place. And it was said of Him, "Never a man spoke like He spoke." He said, "Believe Me for My works, sinless, and righteous, and powerful. Believe Me for My words."

If God became a man we would expect Him to display supernatural power with ease because it would be a true reflection of His nature. Jesus controlled nature, healed people, walked on water, raised the

dead, dominated the kingdom of demons, avoided those who tried to kill Him. Literally did miracles in numbers that couldn't even be counted, and John ends his gospel by saying there are too many to even write.

If God were a man, we would expect Him to exert a profound influence over humanity. Jesus did like no other in all of human history. He changed the world.

If God were a man, we would expect Him to manifest the love of God, the grace of God, the kindness of God, the compassion of God. And He does. We would also expect Him to display the justice of God, the judgment of God, the wrath of God, and He does.

If you read the Old Testament and get the picture of God, read the New Testament, Christ is the perfect representation of God in human form. That's Hebrews 1.

The Jews wouldn't believe it. No matter what He did, they wouldn't believe it. Look at Luke 22, Luke 22:66. This is after they arrest Him. Verse 66, "When it was day, the Council of elders of the people - " the leaders " - assembled, chief priests and scribes, they led Him away to their council chamber saying - " listen to this " - 'If You are the Christ, tell us.'" Are you kidding me? You want to know how hard-hearted they were? "'If you are the Christ, tell us.' But He said to them, 'If I tell you, you will not believe;'" What's the point? "And if I ask a question, you will not answer."

Do you know they never denied the miracles? None of them. They never denied the wisdom of Jesus. They never refuted His exposition of Scripture. They never discredited the answers that He gave. They just wouldn't believe. That's the sad error of people throughout history and even today.

And what about you? Are you with these hard-hearted, stone-cold leaders who see it all and yet don't see it? Who never deny any of it, but will not believe it? Or are you with that crowd that is terminally indecisive and can be led around by the nose and one day can cry "Hosanna," and then a few days later "Crucify Him"? What is your response to the question who's son is Jesus Christ? If He is the Son of God, then He is truly the Messiah, the Lord, the only Savior, and the only way by which a sinner, through faith alone, can escape hell and enter heaven.

Father, we see again as we always do the wondrous beauty, majesty of Jesus Christ in the Word. We see His wondrous use of Scripture to manifest His own deity and glory. We see His compassion on the hard-hearted and the indecisive. And, Lord, this is given to us for today as a call, as it were, to those who stand in open rejection or indecision to consider again whose Son you really are. Son of David, yes, but also the eternal Son of God, the only Savior, who came first as an offering for sin and will come again as a reigning monarch.

Father, I pray that there will be no heart here turned away, but all will embrace the Savior and believe, repent, and receive the gift of eternal life. It’s in His name we ask. Amen.

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