

**Wednesday, December 4, 2019 – Advent Midweek I**  
**“Jesus Is the Son of David”**

Matthew 1: 1; 6; 17

Rev. Derek S. Klemm, Mountain View Lutheran Church, Las Vegas, NV  
*Adapted from R. Reed Lessing’s “Who Is Jesus” Series, CSL*

Since the dawn of time, about 60 billion people have walked on Planet Earth. Of those 60 billion people, only a handful have made any real, lasting impression. In that handful of people, one stands far above all of the others. His name is Jesus.

Jesus never wrote a book, and yet millions of books have been written about him. Jesus never painted a picture, and yet the world’s greatest art has Jesus as its source for inspiration. Jesus never raised an army, and yet millions of his followers have fought and died for him. Jesus never traveled very far from his birthplace, and yet his testimony has gone around the world. Jesus only had a handful of followers, and yet today over 30 percent of the world’s population follows him.

To ignore Jesus is disastrous. To reject Jesus is fatal. But to know Jesus is to love him; to love him is to trust him; to trust Jesus is to be radically, dramatically, and eternally changed by him. The most important question, then, that we can ever ask is this—Who is Jesus?

Who is Jesus? That’s the name of our sermon series for Advent and Christmas. Who is Jesus? Matthew wants us to know, it’s what Matthew’s genealogy is all about—written so we can know Jesus.

Today we begin with this truth—Jesus is the Son of David. “A record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ the son of David ... and Jesse the father of King David ... Thus there were fourteen generations in all from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the exile to Babylon, and fourteen from the exile to the Christ” (Mt 1:1, 6, 17). Jesus is the Son of David and David is a king. That makes Jesus the King. When we confess that Jesus is the King we dare not confuse him with American politicians. While both are rulers, both are very different!

American politicians make big, crazy promises—don’t they? Here are some of the more recent ones. In 2004 John Edwards said, “We will stop Diabetes, Parkinson’s and Alzheimer’s!” In 2012 Newt Gingrich said, “We will put a colony on the moon by 2020!” Clock’s ticking on that one.

Politicians will say almost anything to get elected—won't they? And I didn't even mention anything from our last election cycle! In America we're accustomed to leaders who say what the public wants them to say. No one's campaign slogan is, "Slow, arduous change" or "Realistic compromises" or "You can't always get what you want." No. We want leaders who promise the moon—or at least a colony on the moon!

However, when we look at Jesus, we see a completely different kind of leader—a different kind of king. Jesus is the promised King. "A record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ" (Mt 1:1). When we hear the term "Jesus Christ," we sometimes misunderstand it. "Christ" is not Jesus's last name. "Christ," is a title. It's the Greek translation of the Hebrew word "Messiah," which means "anointed one," after the three offices the Messiah holds that are anointed with oil at their inception – prophet, priest and king.

The Old Testament foretells of a coming Messiah—a King who would be anointed with the Holy Spirit to accomplish God's mission. The Messiah would come from the line of David. He'd be born in David's city and sit on David's throne. Matthew labors to demonstrate that Jesus is this king—the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of David!

When Matthew writes his gospel, Israel had been without a legitimate king for hundreds of years. Now, Matthew declares, "a king has finally come to sit on David's throne. It's Jesus!" Matthew hammers this truth home by citing ten specific Old Testament promises—writing, "that what was spoken might be fulfilled." Matthew cites the Old Testament ten times, and alludes to it over 250 times!

Jesus is, indeed, the promised King. Jesus is also the compassionate King. Jesus doesn't come to drive out Israel's enemies. Jesus comes to bring in outcasts. That's evident in Matthew's genealogy. In the ancient world, people traced their ancestry through the father. It comes as no surprise, then, that Matthew's genealogy is predominantly male. However, it isn't exclusively male. Did you notice that Matthew also mentions four women? There's Tamar in verse 3, Rahab and Ruth in verse 5, and then Bathsheba in verse 6. Matthew doesn't highlight Jesus's connection to any of Israel's matriarchs—Sarah, or Rebekah, or Rachel.

All four of the women in Matthew's genealogy are outsiders to Israel. Tamar was a Canaanite. So was Rahab. Ruth was a Moabite. And Bathsheba was a Hittite like her husband

—Uriah the Hittite. Each of these women were outsiders to Israel. Moreover, each of these women had a stigma attached to her. Tamar was dishonored by her brother-in-law. Later, she deceived her father-in-law into sleeping with her so she could conceive children. Rahab was a prostitute. Bathsheba committed adultery with King David. Ruth once worshiped Chemosh.

The Jews expected a Messiah who would come, drive out their Roman oppressors, and crush the nations to establish God's rule. But at his first coming, Jesus doesn't come to judge the nations. He comes to save the nations. Jesus brings outcasts home to God, and he removes the shame of marginalized people—like his great-great grandmothers Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Bathsheba.

This is a preview of the rest of Matthew's Gospel. Who does Jesus spend his time with? Outcasts. Jesus gets close to the diseased, to people who were quarantined from society. And Jesus touches them. He gets close enough to contract their diseases.

Did you notice that three of the four women in Matthew's genealogy were sexually exploited? According to research, one in four women, and one in six men will be sexually abused or exploited at some point in their lives. I know that some in this church carry deep wounds in this area of their lives. And often, those wounds are deepened by the shame others inflict upon us. Jesus welcomes and heals people who carry these wounds, even the unnecessary wounds of shame.

And that finally includes all of us. The ugly shame. The haunting shame. Jesus not only takes away our guilt, that's sin done by us. Jesus also takes away the shame, that's sin done to us. We don't have to drink our shame away. Work our shame away. Explain our shame away, eat our shame away, cry our shame away, or bury our shame away.

Jesus isn't a King who sits on his throne and says, "Try harder." No, Jesus is a King who descends from his throne, filled with compassion. Jesus identifies with us in the pit of shame. At our darkest point—when we feel the ugliest, most despairing—Jesus says, "I love you!"

What other people said and thought and did to us doesn't define us. We don't have to live in shame. We aren't worthless. We aren't damaged goods. We are clean. We are whole. We are his. There's outside help. Jesus is the compassionate King.

Jesus is also the rejected King. To the Jewish elites of his day, Jesus was the wrong kind of king. He lived in the wrong place, associated with the wrong people, preached the wrong message, appointed the wrong leaders, carried out the wrong mission, and offered the wrong redemption.

The whole thing came to a head on Good Friday. Matthew writes about it. “Above his head they placed the written charge against him: THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS” (Mt 27:37). But risen on the third day Jesus says this in Matthew 28:18, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.”

That’s what we would expect of a King—to have all authority. As our King Jesus makes demands of us. After all, Jesus, the King, has all authority in heaven and on earth. But before Jesus makes any demands of us, first Jesus comes for us. Jesus lives for us, dies for us, and Jesus rises for us. Jesus gives everything for us. That’s a king worth following all the days of our lives!

Matthew 9:9, “As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector’s booth. ‘Follow me,’ he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him.” Who is Jesus? Jesus is our King that we follow all the days of our lives. Just ask Matthew! In Jesus’ name, Amen.