



Christ Reformed Community Church

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“David’s Son and David’s Lord” Mark 12:35–37

So, let’s take our Bibles and turn to Mark chapter 12. I want you to stand in honor of the reading of God’s Word. We just want to look at three verses this morning, Mark 12:35–37. The title of the sermon: “David’s Son and David’s Lord.” Picking up in verse 35:

And as Jesus taught in the temple, he said, “How can the scribes say that the Christ is the son of David? David himself, in the Holy Spirit, declared,

*“The LORD said to my Lord,
“Sit at my right hand,
until I put your enemies under your feet.””*

David himself calls him Lord. So how is he his son?” And the great throng heard him gladly.

Thus ends the reading of God’s blessed Word. Let’s be seated and go to Him in prayer, asking for His help.

Father, we are grateful again for the privilege of worshiping You. We’ve just had the privilege of worshiping You through song, and now Lord, we come to this most sacred text of Scripture, a very, very important text of Scripture that gives to us the identity of Jesus Christ, the Messiah, God come in human flesh. Help our hearts and minds to be cleared from the clutter of this world that we might receive Your engrafted truth of Scripture, that it might yield fruit in our lives. We pray these things in Jesus’ name. Amen.

Those of you who have been with us as we’ve gone through Mark chapter 12, and really all the way back to the end of Mark chapter 11, understand that we have been discussing incidents that are occurring on the last Tuesday that our Lord walked this earth. Wave after wave of attacks, really a flurry of attacks from the religious leaders, orchestrated by the Sanhedrin have been directed toward Jesus. Wave after wave of delegations and committees composed of the chief priest, the scribes, and the elders, and even the Sadducees later came to Jesus in the temple with a series of questions designed to trap Him into saying something they could use against Him. These questions included a political question about taxes in order to make Jesus out to be some sort of revolutionary rogue that threatened Rome’s authority under Caesar. These questions also involved the theological question about the resurrection. That was asked by the Sadducees who intended to make Jesus look like a clumsy theologian because they didn’t believe in the resurrection. But there

was also a spiritual question, and we looked at that last week, a question which asked, “Which was the greatest commandment of all?”

This was posed by a single scribe who alone, out of all of those who asked the questions to Jesus as we saw last week, was actually interested in learning from Jesus. But the religious leaders failed in their attempt to trap Jesus into saying something that they could use against Him because the end of verse 34 says, *“And after that no one dared to ask him any more questions.”* All the questions they had asked Him had centered around His authority. Back in chapter 11, He’s in the temple, verse 28, *“By what authority are you doing these things?”* Well, it becomes clear after all of these questions that He has a whole lot of authority. He has the ability and the authority to prove His opponents wrong. And now, they are basically putting up for the time being a white flag of surrender. They’ve exhausted all of their questions, and now we see Jesus asking them in our passage really the most important question of all.

As we read in verses 35 through 37, there’s a series of questions that Jesus asks, but really to get to the heart of what Jesus is getting at, we need to understand that His primary question is meant to get them to think about His proper identity and mission as the Messiah, the answer of which they give in their hearts and minds, the answer of which you give in your heart and mind this morning, solidifies your eternal future. That is how critical this question is. And so, after a day of questions coming from the religious leaders, we have the question of the day, and the question of the day is the most important question of our day: Who is Jesus Christ? Who was Jesus Christ? If Jesus is not just David’s son but also David’s Lord, as it becomes clear in our text, then that means His authority is even superior to that of Caesar’s, going back to the tax question. If Jesus is not just David’s son, not just a man, but also David’s Lord; that is, God, then that showcases His authority because He was raised from the dead, proving that He died in order that we might be raised from the dead. And Philippians 3 makes it clear that He will raise us from the dead with the same power that raised His body. It’s His authority, His right to rule. His authority was even seen in the fact that more than anyone else and above everyone else in total perfection, Jesus loved the Lord with all His heart, soul, mind and strength and His neighbor as Himself, to go back to the spiritual question.

Jesus has proven His authority. Jesus has proven that He is not a mere man. It was C. S. Lewis, as you well know, who quipped that Jesus is either one of three people. He is either a liar, He is a lunatic, or He is Lord. It’s clear as we read the Bible that Jesus claimed to be the Messiah, and at the same time, He claimed to be full deity. If He’s not, then this either makes Him, number one, a liar because He’s not who He claimed to be. In which case, we can dismiss everything He said, and we might as well dismiss everything the New Testament says because that’s a word about Jesus. He’s either a liar or He’s a lunatic if He wasn’t the Messiah, the Son of God because He only thought that He was the Messiah, and really He was crazy like His siblings thought He was and accused Him of being early in His ministry. If Jesus claimed to be the Messiah and He claimed to be deity and He is not, then He is either a liar or He is a lunatic, but it’s clear that He is Lord. He is exactly who He claimed to be, and He proves that, and therefore, the wisest option for every single individual who has ever existed is to bow in worship to His lordship. And it’s in these verses, this larger section of Mark, that Jesus seeks to correct the Jews’ wrong views of both the Messiah and Himself. That is what Jesus has been getting at with His answers to all of these questions, and

now even more particular in verses 35 through 37. He is, in fact, the promised Messiah, the Savior of sinners.

Earlier, Jesus posed that question to His disciples, *“Who do people say that I am?”* and they came up with all sorts of different responses from what they heard from the people, but then Jesus asked them, *“But who do you say that I am?”* Peter answered on behalf of all of them, *“You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”* That was in Caesarea Philippi privately with the disciples, but here in Mark 12:35–37, Jesus asked a similar question in the temple publicly. It’s not just to the disciples, it’s the religious leaders, the Pharisees, the scribes, the elders, and a large crowd. They’ve seen that they’ve been defeated, the religious leaders have. They’ve retreated. They have not dared to ask Him another question, but Jesus doesn’t run from the battlefield of debate. He rallies to overtake His enemies, proving that He is Lord of all by asking them a question that they have to face. He proves His authority by the way He asks the question and then answers it. The Jews had and still have a wrong view of both the Messiah and the identity of Jesus as the Messiah. And it was Jews in Jesus’ day, not just the religious leaders but perhaps even some among the crowd in the temple listening to Jesus teach, who rejected Him. They didn’t believe Him to be the Messiah. They didn’t believe Him to be God come in human flesh. In fact, they assaulted His theology, the religious leaders did. They claimed that He was against the law. Jesus wasn’t against the law; He was just against their legalism, but they assaulted His theology. They insulted His purity claiming that He was a hypocrite. We know that He was *“holy, harmless, and undefiled,”* Hebrews 7 tells us.

They rejected His authority out of hand, out of jealousy: *“By what authority are you doing these things?”* They assaulted His theology. They insulted His purity. They rejected His authority. They denounced Him publicly, and they even accused Him blasphemously. They accused Him of having a demon. They accused Him of having a demon, operating in the power of Beelzebub. As a matter of fact, we read that the people were amazed and they said, *“Can this be the Son of David?”* But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, *“It is only by Beelzebub, the prince of demons, that this man casts out demons.”* On the contrary, Jesus made it clear He did not come from hell, but that He came from heaven. Jesus was crystal clear that He was not only the Messiah, but He was God come in human flesh. John 5:18 says, *“This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath”* according to their legalism, *“but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.”* And John then tells us that as a result of that, they sought to stone Jesus to death. In chapter 8 of John’s Gospel in verse 58 and verse 59, *“So they picked up stones to throw at [Jesus], but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple.”* Why? Because He said in verse 58, *“Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am. I am,”* the covenant name of God.

He claimed to be God, but the Jews didn’t view Him that way, and in fact, the Jewish expectation of the Messiah virtually had zero spiritual qualities about it. They viewed the Messiah to be a man, to be a man of the dust, an earthly king who would topple over Israel’s enemies, fulfilling all the promises made to father Abraham, passed down to David, their greatest king. And to the Son of David, God would give a powerful, unmatched kingdom in which this Messiah, Son of David, would be the Savior of the nation. Notice that language, Savior of *the nation*—not nations, and not even individual souls. I mean, even the Sadducees who denied the resurrection believed in the

coming of the Messiah. It was in their best interest that this political earthly Messiah come so that they could maintain their clout and their wealth and their fame.

So, if on Monday of the last week of our Lord’s life, Jesus walked into the temple and turned the tables over, on Tuesday, Jesus turns the table metaphorically on the religious leaders. They’ve been asking Him questions. Now it’s time for Him to ask the most important question of all. And in these verses, just three verses, in Jesus asking this question, He also answers His own question, and in doing so, expresses His identity unequivocally as the Messiah—not just the Messiah, but the Messiah as God come in human flesh. Therefore, we see Jesus the teacher making three powerful points to His audience in the temple. And I want you to understand this morning, that perhaps there is no greater subject that can be delved into or discussed than the glory of the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ, than the glory and the mystery of Jesus and His identity as the Messiah. This is not just a matter of theology. This is a matter of life and death, a study of theology, and in particular Christology, a study of Christ. Samuel Ward, the noted Puritan, said he had three noble ends, three noble ends to studying theology. First and greatest, he said, was God’s glory. We study theology because God is glorified by that. Secondly, he said, we study theology for man’s own contentment here and for our salvation hereafter. In other words, a study of theology can determine whether or not you’re a true believer, whether or not you have right beliefs. Third, Ward says, that a study of theology is good for us because it leads to the edification and the conversion of our neighbors. In other words, the more you know theology, the more you can handle the Scriptures, the more you can be a competent witness for Christ. Those are three good reasons.

I could reword them this way: the study of theology has a worshipful end, that is to glory and adore God. Number two, a soteriological end—that is, it leads to salvation. Paul told Timothy the Scriptures make us “*wise unto salvation.*” And number three, an apologetical end. It helps us in our evangelism and our witness to give a reason for why we believe what we believe, so even our own faith can be strengthened. And so, this morning as we look at these three powerful points made by Jesus to express His identity as the Messiah, God come in human flesh, we must take spiritual inventory of our own souls.

First of all, the first powerful point that Jesus makes to express His identity as the Messiah, God come in human flesh, is that He does so by posing a question to the scribes. He expresses His identity as God come in human flesh by posing a question directed to the scribes. Look at it with me in verse 35: “*And as Jesus taught in the temple, he said, ‘How can the scribes say that the Christ is the son of David?’*” Now, we’ll back up here a little bit because verse 35 begins by saying that “*Jesus taught in the temple.*” This is on Tuesday. Jesus had entered the temple earlier this day before all of these questions were asked by the religious leaders. This is the same day. Matthew tells us in his account, Jesus didn’t merely walk into the temple, but He was teaching in the temple when in Mark 11:27, He was interrupted by a delegation sent by the Sanhedrin. So, they literally interrupt His teaching, and this wave of questions, delegation after delegation, committee after committee trying to trap Jesus into saying something they could use to accuse Him. Well, Jesus is still in the temple, and apparently, He began to pick up His teaching again, as verse 35 says: “*As Jesus taught in the temple.*” But I think He changed His sermon because now the situation was so dire because of all these questions planting doubts in the hearts of His listeners and His congregation there in the temple. Jesus wanted to put them on their heels, the religious leaders, and so He asks them this question: “*How can the scribes say that the Christ is the son of David?’*”

Now, understand Jesus’ motives. I think this is important to grasp. Jesus poses this question in order to provoke belief among the religious leaders. This question is made out of love to prove that He is the Messiah, the son of David, the Savior of sinners. He is putting into practice what He taught earlier in verse 30, that we are to love the Lord our God with all of our minds. He is loving these religious leaders by asking them a question to provoke thought within their minds concerning His own identity. Their questions came from evil motives to trap Him, but Jesus’ questions come from good motives to save sinners. Their questions looked for destruction of the Son of God by the answer He provided, but Jesus’ questions looked for salvation by the answer that they would provide, if they provided the right answer. Ezekiel tells us the Words of God: *“As I live, declares the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live.”* And that was the heart of Jesus because Jesus is God. On the one hand, Jesus aggressively told the truth in evangelism, but on the other hand, He compassionately loved sinners, even weeping over their lost souls. He wept over Jerusalem because they refused to repent and recognize Him as the Messiah. And so, Jesus’ question here in verse 35—mark it—it’s targeting the beliefs of the scribes concerning the identity of the Christ, or the son of David because He’s concerned about their salvation, and in particular, He’s concerned about the scribe that He just spoke to, the scribe to whom He said, *“You are not far from the kingdom.”* You see, Jesus’ desire was that sinners be saved, not that He merely win a debate, and that’s a good practical point for us to understand in our theology and in our understanding of truth. Our desire should be to win souls, not just win the debate.

Now, Jesus won the debate, and He won souls. As a matter of fact, you might think it strange that Jesus would love the religious leaders and expect them to be converted, but as a matter of fact, He did desire that. Not all of the religious leaders permanently remained outside of the kingdom. Joseph of Arimathea in chapter 15 of Mark is described as a respected member of the council who was himself looking for the kingdom of God. And we read in John chapter 19 that it was Joseph of Arimathea that asked Pilate for Jesus’ body, together with Nicodemus, a man of the Pharisees, a teacher, the premier teacher of Israel, who together took care of Jesus’ body and prepared it for burial. Nicodemus too was a man looking to get into the kingdom of God and had that discussion with Jesus in John chapter 3. Both Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, men looking for the kingdom of God, men who were part of the Sanhedrin ended up converting to Christ. They became disciples of Christ. Furthermore, Acts 6:7 says that the Word of God continued to increase and a great many of the priests, that would be the Sadducees, *“became obedient to the faith,”* a great many of them, not a small number. And so, I believe that as Jesus asked this question, *“How can the scribes say that the Christ is the son of David?”* He is targeting that one scribe in particular, and all the scribes he represents, and all the religious leaders who failed to see His identity because Jesus understood this was a matter of life and death.

Now, Mark picks up on the middle of Jesus’ question posed to the scribes and about the scribes, so I want you to turn back with me to Matthew chapter 22. Mark’s version is a little bit more abbreviated. Matthew gives us the fuller scene, Matthew chapter 22, picking up in verse 41: *“Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question, saying, ‘What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?’ They said to him, ‘The son of David.’”*

So, Jesus first asks, *“What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?”* Is he just the son of David, or is He someone else’s son? They said to Him, He’s only the son of David. So, the nature

of Jesus’ question was more than, “*How can the scribes say that the Christ is the son of David?*” Jesus agreed that the Messiah or the Christ was the son of David, but He’s asking this question because they didn’t believe that the Messiah would also be the Son of God. They only believed that He would be a son of David. They only believed that He would be human, and in fact some of the religious leaders denied that Jesus was even the Messiah. The vast majority did. Some of the Jewish crowd did as well. In John chapter 7, some said, “This is the Christ.” Some said, “No, is the Christ really to come from Galilee?” “*Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the offspring of David, and comes from Bethlehem, the village where David was?*”

We see Jesus was, in fact, born in Bethlehem. He grew up in Nazareth of Galilee, but He was from Bethlehem, so some of them reject the fact that He’s even from Bethlehem. That’s how ignorant they are, but the heart of His question had to do with their disbelief that He was the Christ. That’s the primary issue, and that He was the Christ come in human flesh. So as Matthew records, Jesus also asked them in Matthew 22:42, “*What do you think about the Christ?*” “What do you think about Him? What do you think about me?” It’s really what He’s asking. You remember on the day of His triumphal entry in Matthew chapter 21 that they chided Jesus for allowing the babies to sing “Hosanna!” And you remember Jesus said, “God out of the mouth of infants and nursing babies has prepared praise for Him,” that is, for Himself, for the Messiah. So, when Jesus asked this question, He understands this is an antagonistic crowd who rejects His identity as the Messiah. They have no understanding that the Messiah or the Christ is Jesus. They have no understanding that the Messiah or the Christ is not only the son of David but is also the Son of God. And so, Jesus is essentially asking, “Why do you theological experts of the Scriptures, you scribes, you leaders of Israel, only view the Christ, the Messiah, to merely be the son of David, to merely be an ethnic Jew descending from David’s bloodline? Why is it that that’s all you see the Messiah to be? Can’t you see He’s far more? He’s not just a national deliverer of ethnic Israel; He’s a spiritual deliverer of sinners.” And in fact, Mark’s theology is meant to prove that. “*The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.*”

There is a spiritual element to the coming of the Messiah that Israel largely missed. I read early in 2 Samuel chapter 7 the promise that God made to David, that He would raise offspring up after him, who would come from his body, but that God would “*establish his kingdom.*” And listen to these words: “*He shall build a house for my name,*” God says, “*and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son.*” You see, that was the issue. Jesus asked this question in verse 35: “*How can the scribes [only] say that the Christ is the son of David?*” “Have you read 2 Samuel 7, that the Messiah, the son of David is also the son of God?” That’s what Jesus is getting at.

Now, there were other Old Testament passages that pointed to the fact that the Messiah was not a mere man or earthly deliverer. Let me just give you a few. For example, Jeremiah chapter 23 and Jeremiah chapter 33 describe the Messiah as a righteous branch, one who would come from the family tree of David, but whose name would be called “*The LORD is our righteousness. The LORD is our righteousness.*” He is a righteous branch, and He is God. That’s what the Old Testament was saying, or that He would be a branch from Jesse’s stump. That would have been David’s dad. In fact, turn with me to Isaiah chapter 11 because this is a precious portion of Scripture that speaks about the fact that He would be a branch. Verse 1 of Isaiah 11: “*There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit,*” the Bible

says, “*And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.*” That occurred at his baptism. Some of the religious leaders witnessed that. They should have made this connection. Verse 3: “*And his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide disputes by what his ears hear.*” He’s going to be a better decider of things than even Moses. “*But with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.*” Verse 5: “*Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist, and faithfulness the belt of his loins.*” This is speaking about the purity of the Messiah. Righteousness, purity, marks Him. Faithfulness marks Him.

And then skip with me to verse 11: “*In that day the Lord will extend his hand yet a second time to recover the remnant that remains of his people, from Assyria, from Egypt, from Pathros, from Cush, from Elam, from Shinar, from Hamath, and from the coastlands of the sea. He will raise a signal,*” notice this, “*for the nations and will assemble the banished of Israel, and gather the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.*” You see, this wasn’t just a Messiah that was going to have an earthly kingdom that just toppled Israel’s immediate enemies. This was to be a Messiah who was God come in human flesh. He was the son of David, but He was going to be a King forever that would call the nations to Himself. This wasn’t merely about national ethnic Israel. This was about the salvation of the world. You know Isaiah also says:

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone. You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil. For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire. For to us a child is born, 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 peace there will be no end.

There is no other kingdom coming after this. “*He will reign on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish and sustain it with justice and righteousness from that time and forevermore.*” I mean, classic passage on the Messiah, Isaiah 9, refers to him as “*Mighty God*” and “*Everlasting Father.*” The Old Testament was full of this. Ezekiel 37, that David’s servant would be “*prince forever.*” The implication is that He’s not just the son of David; He is the Son of God. And Mark is trying to bring that point out by writing this account of our Lord’s life. Back in chapter 1, verse 11: “*And a voice came from heaven, ‘You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.’*” The transfiguration: “*You are my beloved Son,*” that refrain over and over and over again, the voice of the Father. And the New Testament also confirms obviously that the Messiah would come from the house of David, Luke 1:69; the throne of David, Luke 1:32; the seed of David, Romans 1:3 concerning a son who was descended from David according to the flesh. Jesus the Son of God fit that bill. He wasn’t merely sent from David’s house; He was sent from God’s heaven. He is a Messiah with spiritual and eternal dimensions. Psalm 89 is a wonderful Psalm that speaks about these spiritual and eternal dimensions. It opens up this way:

*I will sing of the steadfast love of the LORD forever;
with my mouth I will make known your faithfulness to all generations.
For I said, “Steadfast love will be built up forever;
in the heavens you will establish Your faithfulness.”*

*You have said, “I have made a covenant with my chosen one,
I have sworn to David My servant: (that’s the Messiah)
‘I will establish your offspring forever
and build your throne for all generations.’”*

Selah

*Let the heavens praise your wonders, O LORD—
Your faithfulness in the assembly of the holy ones!
For who in the skies can be compared to the LORD?
Who among the heavenly beings is like the LORD?
A God greatly to be feared in the council of the holy ones,
and awesome above all who are around him?*

This is God who sends the Messiah. Verse 20: *“I have found David, my servant; with my holy oil I have anointed him.”* That would have been the Holy Spirit. That’s the holy oil that anointed the Messiah. Verse 24:

*My faithfulness and my steadfast love shall be with him,
and in my name shall his horn be exalted.
I will set his hand on the sea
and his right hand on the rivers.
He shall cry to me, “You are my Father,
my God, and the Rock of my salvation.”
And I will make him the firstborn,
the highest of the kings of the earth.*

*I will establish his offspring forever
and his throne as the days of the heavens.*

I mean, did the religious leaders never read the Psalms? Were they that unfamiliar with the Psalms to recognize that the Messiah would be the Son of God? Amos 9:11–15 speaks about the world becoming God’s vineyard that will bear fruit because the Messiah will reign over them. Or you’re familiar with Micah 5:2, another favorite sort of Christmas verse: *“But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days,”* to say that the Messiah is from of old, from ancient of days, eternally existing, not merely to bring national good to ethnic Israel with political implications but the good news of salvation, spiritual implications to the nations. And that’s really at the heart of that question: *“How can the scribes say that the Christ is [only] the son of David?”* Out of all the Scriptures and all they say, you see, everything stands or falls on your view of the Messiah. Everything stands or falls on your identity of Jesus. Your theology stands or falls on a right understanding of the Messiah. Your ecclesiology stands or falls on a right understanding of the Messiah. Is the church just made up of gentiles who

are sort of a parentheses to God’s overall plan to the Jews, or is the church the true Israel of God? Your eschatology stands or falls on your right understanding of Jesus the Messiah. Is Jesus’ kingdom focused on a strip of land in Palestine, or is Jesus meant to be the conqueror of the world? Your salvation rests or falls on understanding Jesus as the Messiah. There is no one else. “*There is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.*” The religious leaders of Israel got it wrong. They were the tenants of the vineyard. There was no spiritual fruit in their lives. There was no spiritual fruit in the lives of Israel as a whole because there was no proclamation of salvation because there was a wrong understanding of the mission and the identity of the Messiah. He’s merely the son of David, merely a man, merely a political, national, and ethnic deliverer. All the questions they asked Jesus combined don’t weigh as much as this one question that Jesus asks them, the most relevant of all questions, not only in His day but on into our own day. That’s Jesus first powerful point. It’s a question.

But Jesus makes another powerful point to move us into the direction of seeing His identity as Messiah, God come in human flesh. He does so not only by posing a question to the scribes, but secondly, by providing affirmation from the Scriptures, verse 36. So now, Jesus is going to provide affirmation from the Scriptures. They’ve answered the question we saw in Matthew’s account, but they answered it partially right. So, notice verse 36. Jesus says, “*David himself, in the Holy Spirit, declared,*

“*The LORD said to my Lord,
“Sit at my right hand,
until I put your enemies under your feet.”*”

The religious leaders quoted oral tradition, but not Jesus. Jesus quotes Scripture. He quotes David, and He makes that clear. David said what he said in the Holy Spirit. In other words, David wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. What David said from his mouth and from his pen really came from God. It came from the Holy Spirit. So, you say the Messiah, the Christ is only the son of David, but are you going to argue with David himself who wrote under inspiration of the Holy Spirit who said: “*The LORD said to my Lord, ‘Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet.’*” That is where Jesus is taking the argument. Jesus is providing affirmation of the person of the Messiah as well as identifying Himself as the Messiah by going to the authority of the Scriptures. They want to know by what authority He does these things. He’s pointing to His own authority based on the authority of the Old Testament Scriptures. Psalm 110:1, that’s the quote that Jesus gives.

Psalm 110 is—you might not know this—the most quoted Old Testament text in the New Testament. It’s quoted thirty-three times. The reason for this is because it says something critical to understanding the person and role of the Messiah, something the scribes missed, but something Jesus understood, something He saw. Jesus would have grown up singing Psalm 110. It was a coronation hymn. That’s what it was. It was sung or chanted or recited in the temple and in the synagogues. In ancient history when they had a king it would be sung or chanted at the crowning of the king, at his inauguration. In fact, turn back with me to Psalm 110 because I want you to see something that in the New Testament you can’t see, but in the Old Testament you can see. Psalm 110. Notice in your Bibles that it says there, “*The LORD says to my Lord.*” Now, the first word, *LORD*, should be in all capital letters, and that is indicating the fact that that is the covenant name

of God. That is Yahweh. But “*The LORD,*” Yahweh, capital L-O-R-D, “*says to my Lord,*” L-o-r-d, lower case letters, “*Sit at my right hand.*” Originally, this was Yahweh saying to another lord; namely, the king of Israel. The Hebrew word there is *Adonai*, which means “sovereign one.” This was Yahweh saying to the king of Israel, newly inaugurated, being coronated to sit at His right hand, to rule as His vice regent, to act as His ruling agent on His behalf.

In fact, when the monarchy collapsed in 586 BC, and all those Jews were taken into exile into Babylonian captivity, the future lord, lower-case *lord*, *Adonai*, was viewed to be the promised Messiah who would restore the final kingdom to the likes of the golden era under King David. And that’s really what David writes about here in Psalm 110. He is writing in anticipation about the coming of the Messiah, so that the scribes rightly saw Psalm 110 as both a coronation hymn as well as a Messianic hymn. They understood that this text was about the Messiah, but they missed the point. They missed the spiritual dimensions of both the nature of the Christ’s kingdom where the Messiah rules—they said it was purely earthly, national, material, political. They missed the nature of the kingdom, and they missed the nature of the Messiah Himself. He’s not purely human; He’s God. In fact, not only does David’s statement in Psalm 110:1 prove to them the divine human nature of the Messiah, but there are many other Old Testament texts that do as well. Psalm 8:1 uses Yahweh, *LORD*, capitalized L-O-R-D, and *Adonai*, lord, lower case, back-to-back, just like in Psalm 110:1. But this time, it’s not speaking about God and a human king. This time it’s speaking about God, both of the names. You’re familiar with it: “*O LORD,*” Yahweh, “*our Lord,*” *Adonai*, “*how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens.*” So, while Psalm 110 may have been a coronation hymn, and while Yahweh did say to the king of Israel “*Sit at my right hand,*” and rule on my behalf, there was a spiritual and theological meaning behind that.

The *Adonai* in Psalm 110 was not merely an earthly king because Psalm 8 describes God as Yahweh and *Adonai*, *Adonai* meaning “the one who is absolutely sovereign.” “By what authority do you do these things, Jesus?” And Jesus says, quoting David, “*The LORD said to my Lord, ‘Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet.’*” Jesus is claiming to be the Messiah, to be the son of David and yet to be David’s Lord. That’s what He is saying. God in Psalm 110:1 is speaking to the Messiah, the Mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ promising Him preeminence, power, and majesty and glory since He existed from all of eternity now and forevermore as God. Psalm 8: Yahweh, *Adonai*. Psalm 110: Yahweh, *Adonai*, the Father and the Son. And in fact, notice carefully there’s more than that because in verse 36, as Jesus quotes David, He says, “*The LORD said to my Lord...*” That’s the key. You see, David is not merely saying that the Messiah would be his descendant, which is true, David is saying far more. He’s highlighting that his descendant would be his Lord. “*The LORD said to my Lord...*” God said to my coming descendant, my Lord. The Messiah, David says, is at the same time both my son and my Lord.

This is staggering because the great and mighty King David, the greatest of all kings, describes the coming King descending from his bloodline as greater than himself. That’s what David is saying, and what’s even more staggering is that Israel missed this interpretation. They missed this understanding. The Messiah is David’s Lord, the eternal Son of God descending from David’s genealogy but conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mary, born in Bethlehem, the City of David. Yes, but the Holy Son of God. The scribes had missed this. Isn’t that scary? How easy false teaching, how easy legalism and not taking the Scriptures seriously can lead to all

sorts of error, error the likes of this, which rejects the only Messiah and Savior. They missed that the Messiah was the divine human son of David, David’s Lord, and thus Lord of all whose enemies he would rule over. That’s what Psalm 110:1 teaches.

Turn with me if you will to Revelation chapter 22. There’s a very interesting verse in Revelation chapter 22 that really sums up everything that we’ve looked at so far. Revelation 22:16 is quoting Jesus. What does Jesus tell John and the churches? *“I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches.”* “Here’s what I’m testifying. This is what you need to understand about me,” Jesus says. *“I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright and morning star.”* I mean, that is staggering language. *“I am the root and the descendant of David.”* In other words, “I’m the root of David, signifying the fact that I’ve existed from all of eternity. I am the source of David’s life, and at the same time I am the descendant of David. I’m not only deity, but I am humanity.” He’s speaking about God coming in human flesh, the incarnation where Jesus dressed Himself in the garments of man’s rags, though He was the source of all things, the Creator of all things, He Himself not a created being took on the flesh of one of the descendants of David. That was Jesus. And Jesus says, *“I am the bright and morning star.”* Well, Jesus had a star, we learn at Christmastime, that pointed to His arrival on the night He was born in Bethlehem, the City of David. He would be the one who would shatter the kingdom of darkness and sin. The dawn of the glory of His bright and final kingdom would be ushered in. This was Jesus the Messiah, not just the Savior of ethnic Israel, the Savior of sinners lost in the darkness of sin, held captive to do the will of the devil. That is who Jesus is.

Again, 2 Samuel 7: *“He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son”* And then it says, *“When he commits iniquity, I will discipline him with the rod of men, with the stripes of the sons of men.”* Of course, Jesus never committed iniquity, but He took our iniquity upon Himself, and God the Father punished Him as if He was carrying all the sins of all of those who would ever be saved. And then 2 Samuel 7:15 says:

“But my steadfast love will not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you. And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever. In accordance with all these words, and in accordance with all this vision, Nathan spoke to David.”

He is both the root and the offspring of David, the root and the descendant. Revelation 12:5: *“She [the woman] gave birth to a male child, one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, but her child was caught up to God and to his throne,”* That’s Jesus Christ, crucified, resurrected, ascended, enthroned. Now, turn back with me to Matthew chapter 22, back to Matthew’s account because, again, this a fuller sort of account. Jesus began with his question, verse 42, *“What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?”* They said to him, *‘The son of David.’* But notice verse 43:

“He said to them, ‘How is it then that David, in the Spirit, calls him Lord, saying,

*“The LORD said to my Lord,
“Sit at my right hand,*

until I put your enemies under your feet”’?

That really clarifies it. Mark’s is more abbreviated. Jesus is essentially saying, “Okay, if I am merely the son of David, then how can David call me the Messiah, his Lord?” That’s the point. He is God and man. He is Lord and Savior, not just of Jews but also gentiles. The day of Pentecost:

Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne, he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing.

This is the God-man. The very words that were spoken to Mary: “*And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David.*” Mary knew that Jesus was the Son of God and the son of David, human and divine. “*And he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.*” You see, what Jesus is doing by quoting Psalm 110:1 is He is indirectly claiming to be the Messiah, and He is indirectly claiming to be God come in human flesh. You say, “Well, did He ever directly claim that?” Yeah, I quoted John 5 and John 8 earlier, but later in Mark also at His arrest. Chapter 14 and verse 61: “*But he remained silent and made no answer. Again the high priest asked him, ‘Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?’ And Jesus said, ‘I am.’*” And not only that, “*You will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.*” “You sent your people earlier to ask me by what authority I do these things. You’re going to know what authority I have because you are going to see My judgment.” And verse 63 says, “*And the high priest tore his garments and said, ‘What further witnesses do we need? You have heard his blasphemy,’*” claiming to be God.

I tell you this morning, there is no greater mystery, no more glorious doctrine than that of the incarnation, as true humanity, born of a woman of the offspring of David, growing “*in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God,*” Luke 2:52; sharing in the flesh and blood of men, Hebrews 2:14; sharing in flesh and blood, Hebrews 2:17, that He might become a faithful and High Priest to atone for sin. Jesus was faced with every cruelty that you’re faced with in a sin-cursed world, yet He was without sin, tempted by the devil himself. The gospels note the fact that He was thirsty, He was hungry, He was sleepy. He had physical limitations. He had emotional limitations, sorrowful in the garden. He wept. He sweat drops of blood. As I said, He wept over Jerusalem. He loved: “*As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you.*” Jesus had righteous anger in the temple, anger at the religious leaders. Truly human and yet truly divine. Eternal, Micah 5:2. He is “*from ancient days.*” “*The Mighty God, Everlasting Father,*” Isaiah 9. He is omnipresent. What does Jesus say? “*Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.*” He’s omniscient, John 16:30: His disciples said to him, “*We know that you know all things.*” He’s omnipotent, Philippians 3:21, I mentioned it earlier. It says that Jesus “*will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.*” He’s immutable: “*The same yesterday, today and forever,*” Hebrews 13:8.

He is all-sovereign, Matthew 28:18: “*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.*” Jesus alone does the works only God can do. He creates, John 1:3: “*All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.*” Not only that, but He created and multiplied bread and fish to create more food. He made wine out of water. He creates. Jesus sustains: “*Upholding all things by the word of his power.*” He forgives. He accepts worship. He is Son of God, son of David, truly God, truly man. You this morning must accept and embrace Jesus just as He’s presented in Scripture. The Scriptures do not stutter. The Scriptures do not blink. They affirm unequivocally the true humanity and divinity of Jesus Christ, to which if you don’t believe that, you can’t be a true Christian.

So, Jesus is asking the most relevant of all questions, but He makes three powerful points to express His identity as the Messiah, God come in human flesh. He does so not only by posing a question to the scribes, verse 35; and by providing affirmation from the Scriptures, verse 36; but He also does so by prompting reflection for the skeptics. Notice with me in verse 37. Jesus says, “*David himself calls Him Lord.*” Remember, He quotes Psalm 110:1 in verse 36:

“*The LORD said to my Lord,
“Sit at my right hand,
until I put your enemies under your feet.”*”

But now, He’s giving the interpretation of it. Verse 37: “*David himself calls him,*” that is the Messiah, “*Lord.*” That answers it all. And then another question to prompt reflection among the skeptics. Here’s the real question: “*So how,*” verse 37, “*is he his son?*” “You said that the Messiah is David’s son. Fine, but David calls Him Lord. So how is He only David’s son? He can’t be. The Messiah is more.” He is saying, “David recognized the Messiah not merely as a son, not merely as his descendant, but as his Lord, and by implication, you too should recognize Me as your Lord. I’m the son of David. I’m the one prophesied. I’m the one David said was his Lord. I’m greater than David. I’m the one David understood that I was greater than. So if you reject Me, you at the same time reject David’s Lord, and if you reject David’s Lord, seeing Him just as the son of David, you reject salvation.” And I don’t know if Joseph of Arimathea was there that day. I don’t know if Nicodemus was there that day. I don’t know if any of the Sadducees who had earlier questioned Jesus had hung around or if they were so embarrassed, they left. I don’t know, but perhaps some of the skeptics embraced Jesus’ teaching because notice the end of verse 37: “*And the great throng,*” it says, “*heard him,*” that is Jesus, “*gladly. The great throng heard him gladly.*” That would have included the Pharisees. That would have included the scribes and the elders, the large crowd listening to Jesus’ teaching. “[*They*] *heard him gladly.*” The religious leaders were left only to their reflective hearts—no words. As a matter of fact, we don’t know if anyone was converted this day because Matthew’s account tells us in Matthew 21:46, “*And although they were seeking to arrest him, they feared the crowds, because they held him to be a prophet.*”

So, who knows where they were at? Joseph of Arimathea, Nicodemus, these original skeptics, some of the priests who later were converted, were they converted this day? I don’t know, but Jesus gave them enough to reflect on. He gave them enough to reflect on. “*The great throng heard him gladly.*” What they did with what they heard was up to the Holy Spirit, but what they did with what they heard determined their future destiny. And I think this passage teaches us that we also need to reflect on Jesus’ identity as the only King because from the authority of the Scriptures,

nobody can escape His rule. Back in verse 36, “*The LORD said to my Lord, ‘Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet,’*” and Jesus has the final kingdom. He will rule forever. He will defeat all of His enemies. Now, that’s comforting for Christians because it reminds us of His prayerful intercession. We have a High Priest, Hebrews 8:1 says, “*Who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven.*” Romans 8:34 says that He intercedes for us. He prays for us. His kingship means prayerful intercession. His kingship also means personal attention. Colossians 1:17 says that “*in him all things hold together.*” Hebrews 1:3: “*He upholds the universe by the word of his power.*” He is personally attentive to your life, your circumstances, your trials, your fears. He’s King over all.

His kingship reminds us of His prayerful intercession, His personal attention, His perennial legislation. In other words, there may be other people who think that they have power and authority, even in the governing realms, but Paul says that He’s been “*seated at the right hand in the heavenly places,*” Ephesians 1, “*far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And he put all things under his feet.*” His kingship reminds us of His prayerful intercession—that’s comforting. His personal attention—that’s reassuring. His perennial legislation—that’s convicting because we have Caesars and kings and governors that reject His authority. His kingship also reminds us of a powerful and hopeful progression, 1 Corinthians 15:25. The Bible says, “*For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. All enemies under his feet.*” There is a progression to the growth of His rulership and authority and His kingdom in the world.

Why should you recognize Jesus as the Lord of Lords, the King of Kings? Because it reminds us of His prayerful intercession, His personal attention, His perennial legislation, His powerful progression of His rule but also of His painful, painful indignation. Jesus, as He quotes Psalm 110:1 says that all of Jesus’ enemies will be put under His feet. You do understand where that language is coming from, don’t you? It’s coming from Joshua 10:24–25, which describes five kings that came to Joshua, and Joshua put his foot on their neck as they lay in the dust, and they were executed. That is the justice of our Lord. He will come and make war with all those that reject Him. He will punish them in an eternal lake of fire after judging them, and He will be just in doing so. Jesus asks the question about His identity as the Messiah and the true nature of the Messiah because it is a matter of life and death, heaven and hell, salvation or damnation. David’s son is at the same time David’s Lord, and He is your Lord. He is the Lord of all. He’s either a liar, what He said isn’t true; a lunatic, He thought what He said was true but He was wrong; or He’s Lord. Those are the only three options. Pick which one.

Our text shows the Bible teaches He is the only Lord of glory. And the glory of the incarnation, the very gospel itself is the most glorious and sovereign and mysterious reality, but it’s summed up in this; that David’s son is at the same time David’s Lord, and if He’s David’s Lord, He should be your Lord because He’s your Lord whether you recognize it or not. Someday you will recognize it. Someday you will, but hopefully on that day you won’t be laying in dust with God’s foot on your neck. Hopefully, you will be in the dust prostrate, casting your crowns at His feet, bestowing upon Him “*the name that is above every name.*” He is the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. David’s Lord, David’s son but our Lord, the Lord of all. Let us pray.

Father, thank You for Your Word, Lord, a very critical passage of Scripture that conveys to us the urgency of the hour to believe in You. The Bible says that *“Behold, [today] is the day of salvation.”* Today is the day that we are to believe. Today *“is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.”* Let us rejoice in our salvation. Let us rejoice in our King of Kings and Lord of Lords. We thank You, dear Father, that He’s not only rescued us from sin, but Father, He indwells us with His Holy Spirit. He has promised to tend to our needs, to care for us, to govern our affairs in such a way that You receive glory as our triune God. It will be for our good. No matter what we face in this life, You are governing the affairs of man. You are governing the affairs of our circumstances. You are the greatest King, David’s son but David’s Lord. May all here this morning present recognize Him as such, and may we in this moment of closing, praise Him as such, as we sing this hymn, *“Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus.”* We pray all of this in Jesus’ name. Amen.