



CONCORDIA SEMINARY, ST. LOUIS • WHO IS JESUS? • AN ADVENT/CHRISTMAS SERMON SERIES ON MATTHEW 1:1-17

**ADVENT
SERMON SERIES**

SAMPLE

WHO IS JESUS?

AN ADVENT/CHRISTMAS SERMON SERIES ON MATTHEW 1:1-17

R. REED LESSING

ADVENT 1:

JESUS IS THE SON OF *DAVID* (MATTHEW 1:1, 6, 17)

ADVENT 2:

JESUS IS THE SON OF *ABRAHAM* (MATTHEW 1:1)

ADVENT 3:

JESUS IS THE SON OF *SOLOMON* (MATTHEW 1:6)

ADVENT 4:

JESUS IS THE SON OF *MARY* (MATTHEW 1:18-25)

CHRISTMAS:

JESUS IS THE SON OF *SINNERS* (MATTHEW 1:1-17)

Note: the hymns are all found in Lutheran Service Book.

ADVENT 1

THEME OF THE DAY

This weekend begins an Advent/Christmas sermon series called *Who is Jesus?* Today we learn that Jesus is the Son of *David*. Christ is our King!

INVOCATION AND CALL TO WORSHIP

P: In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

P: Jesus is the Son of *David*.

C: Our coming King!

P: Jesus is the Son of *Abraham*.

C: Our sacrifice for sin!

P: Jesus is the Son of *Solomon*.

C: He finished for us!

P: Jesus is the Son of *Mary*.

C: Immanuel—God with us!

P: Jesus is the Son of *Sinners*.

C: He forever loves us!

P: Let us worship *Jesus!*

HYMN: 331

The Advent of Our King (stanzas 1-4)

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

P: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

C: But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

P: Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

All: Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

P: Almighty God in his mercy has given his Son to die for you and for his sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen

HYMN: 331

The Advent of Our King (stanzas 5-6)

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us pray. Stir up your power, O Lord, and come, that by your protection we may be rescued from the threatening perils of our sins and saved by your mighty deliverance; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

ALL: Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

The readings are about Jesus the Son of *David*.

OT: Jeremiah 23:1-6

EP: Romans 1:1-6

GO: Matthew 1:1-17

CREED

SERMON

The First Part in the Series

Who is Jesus?

“Jesus is the Son of *David*”

(Matthew 1:1, 6, 17)

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! That's what Matthew's genealogy is all about—he writes it 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!” In 2012, Michelle Bachman said, “I will pull American troops out of Libya *and Africa!*”

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.” 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. When Jesus went in for a physical, the doctor didn't say, “Ok, let's see here. Last Name: Christ. First Name: Jesus.” No. “Christ,” is a title. It's the Greek translation of the Hebrew word “Messiah,” which means “anointed one.”

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 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! Amen.

FOR NEXT WEEK

Read Genesis 22:1-14 and answer these questions:

1. Why do you think God tested Abraham's faith? Why does God test our faith?
2. When God tested Abraham he provided a ram of sacrifice. What does God provide for you in your tests?
3. Jesus is the Son of Abraham (Mt 1:1) because Jesus, like Abraham's son Isaac, is the Son of sacrifice. What did Jesus sacrifice for you? What can you sacrifice for him?

HYMN: 343

Prepare the Royal Highway

PRAYERS

Following the pastor's prayer, "Lord, we will follow" the congregation is invited to respond, "**For you are the King of kings and Lord of lords!**" This is based upon Revelation 19:16.

HYMN: 348

The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns

BENEDICTION

(From Matthew 28:18-20)

P: Because Jesus says, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.”

C: We will go and make disciples of all nations—

P: Baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: And teaching them to obey everything he has commanded us.

P: And surely Christ is with us always—

ALL: To the very end of the age!

SILENT PRAYER

King Jesus, I will follow you all the days of my life! Amen.

SAMPLE