

Last September... when Patti and I visited London, England... the Queen was on holiday in Scotland... Now whenever the queen is out of the country... commoners like us... (by making arrangements long in advance)... are able to tour the inside of Buckingham Palace. So we took the opportunity to do that while we were there... and got to see one royal room after another. We saw rooms with pure gold flourishes on the moulding... and on embedded designs on the ceilings and walls... and on majestic staircases. Hallways had giant paintings of Royal family members from centuries ago and various depictions of British history. It was all -very lavish!

As we walked from room to room... reading a booklet that we were furnished with... and listening to pre-recorded presentations on a Walkman... I was hoping it might lead us to the royal throne room. I have read enough fairytales to make me curious about what it would be like to see a REAL King and Queen's throne... up close and in person.

We entered a room that didn't look much different than all the others... (They all seemed to be like long...elaborate... and wide hallways.) This particular one contained various gifts along both sides of the room... that had been presented to the queen by various heads of State. Some were from presidents of the United States. (Obama had given her a pair of quaint horse bridles... They were in a small box.. displayed as though the Queen had merely opened the lid... said "Thank you"... and laid it aside with no further interest. I had to chuckle. I think I've given a few gifts like that.) ... But then I looked at the end of the room – AND THERE THEY WERE!

At last I had come to what I thought might be the highlight of this tour. With much anticipation... I just knew that **this part** would be worth the whole price of our tickets to go inside for our “look-see.”

There was just enough ceremonial pomp and circumstance to these chairs to be identified as the Thrones of the British Empire... but not **too** extravagant. To be honest... they were a “let-down.” I expected **more** – especially after seeing all those rooms... and seeing the Royal Carriage in the courtyard of the palace. The carriage was completely golden... and highly polished with a lot of artwork. Certainly the thrones would be equally as ornate and lavish. But they weren’t... and neither were they as **large** as I had anticipated. Motel lobbies (typically)... have chairs of similar stature.

The thrones inside Buckingham Palace are not used very often. Every so often the Royal Family will have official portraits taken of them sitting on these thrones. ... But there is **another** throne for the Kings and Queens of England... and it **is** much larger. **That** throne is in Westminster Abbey... and it is the coronation throne... which has been used for centuries to coronate a new monarch of England. The throne is called King Edward’s Chair. It was built in **1296**.

King Edward’s Chair probably had (at one time)... gold paint and ornaments of various colors... but today they are worn off - and it is even **more** plain looking than the thrones of Buckingham Palace. ... But (as I said) it **is** however HUGE!

Either King Edward was a **giant** (ten feet high, four feet wide) or his throne was intentionally built big to make a point. ... Indeed it **is** to make a point...

and it is this: No one king or queen can ever fill that seat. No one person can fill the greatness of Great Britain's royal rule.

In Scripture we learn of King David's throne. ... We learn from 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, and 1 and 2 Chronicles that this "chair" is ***too big*** for David and any of his twenty-one immediate heirs to fill. ... A bigger king than Solomon was needed to fill this vast chair. ... A bigger king than David was needed to rule over the immense kingdom that God would establish. From Psalm 2 we learn that "*the nations*" will be this future King's heritage... and "*the ends of the earth*" will be His possession (Psalm 2:8). That is a Big King! ... From Psalm 72... we learn that this king will have "*dominion from sea to sea*"... and that "*all kings*" will "*fall down before him*" and "*all nations serve him!*"

This "throne" is huge. Who could possibly sit on it and rule over this entire-earth kingdom? ... It would be a future "Son of David."

This morning... we will see Jesus walk up to that huge Davidic throne... and take His rightful place on it. ... He will declare Himself to be that very "Son of David."

By the time we are finished here today... I want you to see that there is no space left for anyone else. He fills the chair! He *alone* fills the chair. Thus I want you to see *and do* what Philippians 2 says - we are to see and do:

**Philippians 2:9-11 (ESV)**

*Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and*

*every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

Last week... when we were together in Matthew 22... we had seen how the religious leader's of Israel were examining Jesus – **Jesus!**... (the Perfect Lamb of God... Who... by the end of the week would lay down His life as the ultimate sacrifice - was being examined.) The high-ranking officials were trying to trip Him up... but God was making sure that **we** see that His Lamb for the perfect sacrifice... was without blemish.

Matters had really heated-up between Jesus and the religious leaders... since Jesus had ridden into town on a donkey a few days earlier. Children and adults had lined the streets... were waving palm branches at Him... and calling Him the "Son of David." - That was enough to anger Israel's leaders. They told Jesus to make them stop calling Him that.

But Jesus stirred the pot even further. He told a series of three parables that stressed the fact that the leaders of Israel had rejected the rule of God by rejecting His Son. They knew that Jesus was talking about them. So they launch their attacks to trip Him up and bring Him down.

We looked at two of those attacks last week... and ran out of time before we could get to the third examination (which shows Jesus to be the perfect Lamb of God.)

It would seem quite natural that we should begin this morning with the **third** examination. (It follows with the next verse sequence.) But I'm not. I am going to start right **after** Jesus silenced His questioner for a third time. (We will come back to it... as we close... because Jesus makes a point in it...

that is a good *follow through*... to our seeing that Jesus ***alone*** can fit on the throne – as the “Son of David.” First we will see Jesus demonstrate to the Jewish leaders that He fits the throne. Then we will come back (re-tracing our steps to the verses we are now temporarily skipping over)... and see what this specifically ***means*** for you and I.

### **Matthew 22:41-42**

At this point in the narrative... Jesus has successfully answered and thereby silenced His critic’s questioning Him. ... Now Jesus launches a few questions of His Own at them. His first question is easy. He gently floats a softball question at them. A very hittable pitch. (“*Whose son will the coming Christ... the Messiah... be?*”) They swing at His pitch and hit the ball dead on. (“*The Son of David.*”) ... Their answer is correct. But they are about to be thrown out... before they reach first base. (I’m sorry... Baseball season started this week... Derek... did you get to go to the Cub’s home opener this week... when you were in Chicago...?)

Jesus is about to show them that their answer was only ***half*** right. He is much bigger. He is the son of David... but even more... He’s the only one Who can fill the throne.

The leaders of the Jews knew the Scriptures... and in certain respects... believed what they said. ... They knew the prophecy of Isaiah.

### **Isaiah 11:1 (ESV)**

*There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.*

Jesse was King David's father. They had read the words of Jeremiah...

**Jeremiah 23:5 (ESV)**

*“Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land.*

Any Jew... who knew the Scriptures... believed that the Messiah was the son of David... a direct heir to the royal throne. So they had a ready answer for Jesus' easy question: Christ is “The son of David.”

In Matthew's Gospel we have already seen multiple occasions where Jesus **accepted** this Messianic Title. Over and over... He received praise and allowed people to call Him “the son of David.” We have seen it in Matthew 9:27... 12:23... 15:22... 20:30-31... 21:9... and 21:15

**AND** it was this title the crowds had given Jesus... when he had entered Jerusalem early that same week. They cried out, *'Hosanna to the Son of David!'* (21:9 and 15). ... It was this that had made the leaders of the temple indignant (21:15)... and almost certainly it was this... that had provoked their offensive against him now. ... By clear implication... Jesus was informing them of His Messiahship.

The Lord had brought the Pharisees around full circle. But they were too blind to see that the One now questioning them was the Son of David.

When David was King... Israel was in their full glory. The entire world looked up to them. They were the world's most preeminent Kingdom. ... The coming son of David... meant to them that they would immediately be ushered back into the world's most important status. ... The One Who filled this large throne... would re-establish Israel's dignity... their power... and their glory.

Evidently... the leader's of the Jews... just did not see Jesus as the same type of military leader that David was. So they looked past Jesus... Whose Kingdom (in their eyes) promised no such thing.

Jesus was informing them of His Messiahship. But He also had more to teach them about what this meant. ... Once they had given their answer... ("Christ is the son of David")... Jesus asked a second question... and then another. ... And with these follow-up questions... Jesus quoted from Psalm 110:1. (And for good reason. Here is why...) ... Every orthodox Jewish scholar interpreted Psalm 110:1 to refer to the Messiah.

### **Matthew 22:43-45**

Now... I have to be honest about something here. I spent a lot of time this week thinking about these verses and the impact Jesus was making. I wasn't quite understanding the power of His point... and then it dawned on me.

I think it is a cultural thing. Our cultural mindset of "father and son" relationships is far different than it was in Jesus' day and in King David's day. Today... of course... we are taught to view fathers and sons as equals. No one would dare say that a father is greater than his son – he is just older. ... Television and the rest of the media has pushed so hard for equality that parents are depicted as total idiots... and it's the kids who know everything and are the great and wise family members. ... We no longer live in a "Father Knows Best" television era... or culture.

But for thousands of years... before the 1960 American culture shift... parents were seen as greater than their offspring. Children were taught to pay allegiance to their parents... because of the inequity of greatness.

Those who passed down life to them... and figured various life challenges ... and taught life skills... were greater. ... And grandpa is greater than dad!

Now we could sit here and debate the correctness of whether or not fathers are actually greater than their sons... and perhaps you could point to some very poor parenting in some fathers... to prove why we have it correct today. ... But the truth is... if we are to allow these verses to have their intended impact... we need to place ourselves back into the majority of cultures... as well as every other time period outside of our modern day. As a whole... fathers were regarded as greater than their sons... their grandsons... great-grandsons... etc.

In verses 43-45 we see Jesus ask... *“How is it that David calls his ‘son’ - ‘Lord’? ... What father, especially a king, calls his son ‘Lord’?”*

Under normal circumstances... the father exercises parental authority over his children... but this was not true in David's case. He saw his descendent as his Lord... to whom he owed his allegiance. Jesus had pointed to a passage and asked the Jews how they would interpret such an apparently illogical testimony.

Jesus is saying that He is David's son because He is humanly descended from David. ... But He is also David's Lord... and therefore greater than David. ... How could David call his own son superior – unless He was...? Scripture (we have already seen) requires someone greater than David to fit on his throne.

David was the GREATEST king Israel had ever known. Jesus had received the title and praise of “Son of David.” Jesus – (The son of David)



is greater than David – but don't miss this. The son of David is told to sit at the right hand of God. ... Who sits at the right hand of God...? ANSWER: His equal. Jesus "is now quietly leading them to the point of confessing that He is God."

The Pharisees were asked a question... they had never been asked before... concerning David's well-accepted messianic Psalm. ... They had no idea how to answer it... and they failed to see that the answer Himself was "standing in front of them in flesh and blood." ... What the crowd and children shouted upon Jesus' triumphal entry in Jerusalem... "*Hosanna to the Son of David*"... Jesus accepts and expands upon.

The Pharisees... Sadducees... and supporters of Herod had asked their questions. Then Jesus turned the tables and asked them a penetrating question — who they thought the Messiah was. The Pharisees knew that the Messiah would be a descendant of David... but they did not understand that He would be God Himself.

### **Matthew 22:46**

All in all... Matthew 22 takes the verbal hostilities between Jesus and the religious leaders to its sorry end. ... Jesus' parables magnify Israel's rebellion and guilt in not submitting to the rule of God in Christ. ... The religious leaders attempted to trap Jesus... and to discredit His teaching.

If there was ever any doubt, it is now abundantly clear that there can be no reconciliation between Jesus and the leaders of Israel. His final question to them was unanswerable. The only way that David can call his messiah-son "Lord" is if his son is divine. The Pharisees who wanted to trap Jesus

by challenging His identity were now themselves trapped by Jesus who had identified Himself as David's descendant and his exalted Lord. At this point... all dialogue ceased.. with ominous implications.

If the Pharisees possessed an unbiased knowledge of their Scriptures... they would have to concede that Jesus was the fulfillment of David's prophetic statement... that He was their Messiah... and that the crowds were correct in hailing Him as the Son of David.

But this ... they would not do... they could not do. This fact is still denied by the great majority of Jews today... as it is denied by a majority of the world's population.

Yet... as Christians... (those born again by the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit)... we declare the accuracy of these statements. We rest securely on the authority of David's words... written under the influence and authority of God's Spirit. We dare to stand before a skeptical generation that illogically denies the claims of a loving and saving God and say to it, "*Behold, your King! Behold, the Son of David! The only One Who fills the throne... just as it was prophesied!*"

The religious leaders of Jesus' day were illogical... weren't they...? The skeptical generation that you and I live in today is illogical... isn't it...?

But now it is time for me to show you something just as illogical as the way THEY reject the clear teaching of Scripture. ... You may be doing the same thing. With your own bias... you may be rejecting the clear teaching of Scripture – as it relates to the passage we first skipped over... but now return to...

Let's go to the third examination of Jesus – just before He launched His questions that silenced them.

### **Matthew 22:34-36**

With this question this man is not asking “*which laws from the Scriptures need to be obeyed and which can safely be ignored?*” Instead he is asking... “*Jesus, in your opinion, what is the fundamental premise of the Law on which all the individual commands depend?*” He is asking, “*Of the 613 commands (as later rabbinic tradition would number them—248 positive and 365 prohibitive)—which command gets at the heart of them all?*”

Before and after the time of Jesus... this was a question that Pharisees enjoyed debating with each other. One rabbi quoted Proverbs 3:6 as the heart of the Law: “*In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.*” Another rabbi quoted Habakkuk 2:4: “*The righteous shall live by his faith.*” The famed Rabbi Hillel gave his own version of the Golden Rule. He said, “*What thou hatest for thyself, do not to thy neighbor.*”

But here is Jesus' answer... (Try to hear it without any bias...)

### **Matthew 22:37-38**

The key to this command is observing the “*alls.*” Three times in verse 37 the word “*all*” is repeated. “You shall love the Lord your God with *all* your heart and with *all* your soul and with *all* your mind.” This repetition of the

word “all” emphasizes “the necessity of a total response of love to the lordship of God.” ... God’s wholehearted love.... must not be answered in a half-hearted manner. “Heart... “soul”... and “mind” are overlapping categories representing our entire being. The demand is for total allegiance: one should love God with every globule of one’s being.” All! “You shall love the Lord your God with *all* your heart and with *all* your soul and with *all* your mind,” with all of everything you are. Total devotion.

Have you come to regard Jesus as the true Son of David... as God incarnate... and yet your bias thinks that it is perfectly OK... to only give Him half-hearted devotion... (if *that* much)? The religious leader’s of Jesus day... looked past Him and ignored the clear teaching of Scripture... but what about you...? ... .. But wait! There’s more conviction here.

### **Matthew 22:39-40**

There is not room for a love for God that is detached from a love for others.

In his famous Parable of the Good Samaritan... (Luke 10:25-37)... if you recall... it is the religious leaders... (a priest and a Levite)... eager to get to Jerusalem (apparently to worship God in the temple with their ritual sacrifices)... who on their way... walk around the body of the half-dead man. ... They are presumably too busy “*loving God*” to love others... so busy focusing on the first great commandment... that they don’t have time for the second... for their neighbor... (which is the person who God has providentially placed along your path... who disrupts your busy schedule... the person in need of compassion and care.)

Here in 22:39 Jesus makes clear that He will have nothing to do with this kind of “love.” ... He teaches that a genuine love for God must express itself in genuine love for these neighbors.

As the Apostle John wrote in 1 John...

**1 John 4:20-21 (ESV)**

*If anyone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.*

God cannot be loved apart from our neighbor, and our neighbor cannot be loved apart from God.

It is only by God’s grace that I can ever think about loving others and loving God more than I love myself... much less actually do it! Looking out for number one will always be my... (and I’m guessing your) strong inclination. ... So the call here is that we recognize such deficiency in ourselves... and confess it to the Lord.

I have no ability to love like this on my own... and neither can you! We need the life of Christ to rage inside of us. But if we remain in our bias and think that we are doing just fine... knowing that we don’t love like we should... we will not cry out to Him. We will not ask for His life to dominate through a raging love through us. ... Of all the things you pray for... do you ever pray that you might love the way you ought...?

Would you please join me in praying that God would ignite the fire of revival in our hearts.