

Jesus And His Relationships

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Date: 06 February 2022

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[0 : 0 0] now turn again with me this morning to Luke chapter 3 definitely Luke chapter 3 not Luke chapter 2 Luke 3 21 through 37 as we continue our studies into the gospel of Luke I read for you there a genealogy they're not always easy to read out loud but what's in a genealogy because significant portions of the Bible are given over to genealogies family trees in my part of the world Sutherland whenever you meet someone new we always ask them or we used to not now because half of them up there are white settlers we used to say to them of what people are you my kids are always laughing when I say that of someone of what people are you and the answer to that question of what people are you tells you a lot about that person the most important thing it tells you is whether you're related to that person which in the case of my village like as not I am my wife Kathma is always commenting on how many people I'm related to we'll be walking down the the deserted main street in Gospy and bump into someone and I'll say to her oh that's my third cousin and she'll slap her forehead and say why am I not surprised by that

Luke 3 21 through 37 is actually an incredibly important passage in scripture it's a genealogy which is asking the quite kind of question we like to ask back up north of what people is Jesus of what people is Jesus what is his relationship with God and what is his relationship with us of what people is he after all knowing what a person is can tell you a lot about them it can kind of tell you their temperament their personality their trustworthiness even and so today we want to ask two things from this story this joint story of Jesus baptism and Jesus family tree first of all Jesus relationship with God and second Jesus relationship with us the question we need to ask ourselves all of us as we go through this passage this morning is this of what people am I am I of

Jesus people am I connected to Jesus do I have a relationship with him sorry I didn't remember that this is not a Sunday school week so the kids are still in so I hope you can listen carefully to what I'm what I'm saying today kids first of all then Jesus and his relationship with God Jesus and his relationship with God remember the big question of what people is Jesus now the story of the baptism of Jesus in verses 21 and 22 is recorded throughout the four gospels Jesus baptized the heavens opened and a voice speaking from above what is different in Luke's account is that it was while Jesus was praying the heavens were opened Jesus prayer life and the prayer life of his disciples is of great importance for Luke as we'll as we'll see as we go through Luke acts over the the coming years amazing things happen when Jesus and his disciples pray the heavens are opened God speaks and the Holy Spirit comes down in power to equip us for mission well the story of Jesus baptism together with the genealogy of Jesus helps us to understand his relationship to God first as the son and then as the sufferer the son first of all you you won't need me to tell you that the most frequently repeated word in this passage is the word son whether it's God saying of Jesus you're my beloved son in verse 22 or the genealogy of Jesus containing 37 references to son of you can't miss the image of sonship here but by far the most prominent use of sonship imagery is that of Jesus as the son of God and we see that in verse 22 when a voice comes from heaven as Jesus is praying you are my beloved son and then in verse 37 verse 38 rather where the genealogy of Jesus ends with the words the son of God here's the fundamental nature of the relationship between Jesus and God he is God's son so we ask of Jesus of what people are you Jesus and he says I'm God's son and in so learn and so learning that we we learn about his temperament his personality his trustworthiness as they say you know the apple never falls far from the tree we learn much about Jesus simply from the fact that he is the son of God God is faithful and true his son is faithful and true God is loving and righteous his son is loving and righteous that's what it means to be the son of the father Jesus the perfect representation of the qualities of God now Nate memorably preached from this he's looking up now memorably preached from this topic a few weeks ago from John chapter 1 where he he said Jesus is the exegesis the the unpacking the demonstration the exact picture of who God is if you want to know who the father is and what the father is like look at the son if you want to know how God relates to the outcasts and downtrodden of society the weak and foolish things of this world see how Jesus God's son relates to them and as we'll continue to see throughout our studies over the years Jesus reaches out to them always in love and compassion in great power and righteousness

if you want to know how God relates to the power merchants and the politicians when I say that politicians in the church and unreligious elites of our world look at how Jesus God's son related to them in the gospels as we see through Luke acts he exposes them as frauds hypocrites you might wonder what I was doing during my COVID isolation apart from listening to Nate preaching on zoom I was reading through a massive volume called the existence and attributes of God by Stephen Charnick some of you may have may have seen this it's absolute huge tome and it's like really tightly packed thousands of pages it's a classic heresy coming I don't know why I know I'm probably committing heresy by saying that my problem is the book doesn't start with Jesus you can read a whole chapter of the book you're talking it took me two weeks to read one chapter hundred thousand words and the name Jesus doesn't come up at all

I read the whole chapter on the power of God and it left me cold because it wasn't about Jesus seems to me that heresy coming here the premise of the existence and attributes of God by Stephen Charnick is philosophy and not Christology it seems to me to rely more on Aristotle and Plato than it does on Matthew Mark Luke and John the best way to know who God is is to carefully study his son Jesus Christ the best way to understand God's love and power and righteousness goodness faithfulness and mercy is to see these attributes displayed in the life of Jesus Christ that's the point of the sonship language here in Luke 2 and 3 for after all remember the boy Jesus when he was 12 years old already called God my father he is the Christ he's the son of God and in so being he is the exact representation of who God is the things he says and the things he does are the things of God they are what God would do and say and so when you find Jesus reaching out to the Gentiles and accepting them as equal members of the kingdom of God by faith you see God reaching out to the Gentiles and accepting them as equal members of his kingdom and when you see Jesus reaching out to love the unlovable to reach the unreachable and to change the unchangeable that's what God's doing this is our God the God whom we see in the face of his son Jesus Christ the God of whom we so wonderfully sing of in Psalm 34 18 the Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit you know the correct question to ask is not of what people is Jesus and answer he's the son of God

[10:14] I wonder if the correct question to ask is of what people is God and to answer that he's the father of Jesus we'll come back to the picture of Jesus as the son of God when we study the temptation of our Lord but understand this even as we talk of a son bearing the characteristics of its father so Jesus is the exact representation of God the father in his love righteousness and grace this is of what people he is I wonder whether folk here when they say I don't believe in God are starting in the wrong place in fact I don't wonder I know they're starting in the wrong place don't start where God does not want you to start with Aristotle and Plato start with the four gospels and with his son Jesus Christ if you start with Jesus most of the hang-ups you have with God will disappear and your faith in him will burn bright but he's not only the son he is also the sufferer he is also the sufferer

I want you to try and remember back into the fog of a sermon I preached a few weeks ago where we consider what it meant for the boy Jesus to be about the things of his father Mary and Jesus this is from Luke chapter 2 verses 41 onwards Mary and Joseph had been up to the feast at Jerusalem and Jesus had stayed behind for three days finally being found by his parents in the temple walking with the elders of the people and when questioned by his parents Jesus said to them didn't you know I had to be in my father's house or more literally didn't you know I had to be about the things of my father and we agreed together didn't we that one of the things Jesus would have been discussing with the elders of the Jewish people was what the old testament said about the mission of the Messiah what kind of life Jesus was being called to live and according to the old testament what kind of mission he was being called to accomplish now one of the most important sections of the old testament dealing with the mission of the

Messiah one which I'm sure the boy child Jesus would have been talking with the elders of Jerusalem about is contained within the servant songs of Isaiah the servant songs of Isaiah now these are songs in various chapters in Isaiah including Isaiah 42 Isaiah 53 which deal explicitly with the atonement with the substitutionary death of Jesus as Messiah of how he's going to suffer and he's going to die on behalf of his people so that through his death they may have life now why I mention this is because the voice from heaven this voice which Jesus hears in his baptism in verse 22 saying you're my son whom I love with you I'm well pleased that is almost a straight lift from the servant song in Isaiah 42 in other words God is reminding his son that his role as Messiah is going to involve suffering on behalf of his people the righteous for the unrighteous the guilty the innocent for the guilty his mission is going to be cross-shaped he's going to suffer ridicule and shame and mockery physical abuse torture execution that he's not been called to sit upon a golden throne he's been called to die upon a Roman cross in other words in Jesus baptism his father's reaffirming to him what he already had learned as a boy your ministry my son is going to involve suffering and dying for your people all those men that we've listed in that genealogy at the end of chapter 3 there yes Jesus will die to take away their sins even the sin of the first man Adam and this in itself is amazing that God would send his boy his own son to suffer and die for us this is the gospel of the free grace of God in Christ Jesus that if anyone here today young or old should put their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ their sins will be forgiven and they'll get eternal life

I'm sure you'll agree with me all of you that Jesus was the greatest man to ever have lived but if you want to imitate him and if you want to follow in his footsteps you too must embrace the suffering that comes along with it ministering like your master involves a cross-shaped life you're asking the question of what people must I be if I'm to be like Jesus you must answer yourself I must be of the suffering kind of people and it should seem to all of us to be such a mystery that God should send his son not to reign in power but to die in pain but as we saw this is the free grace of God and the gospel of Jesus Christ and it's so good this news is so good it cannot but be true so this then is the relationship of God of Jesus to God Jesus the son the perfect representation of who God is the face of God as it were as Nate said the exegesis unpacking of God

Jesus the sufferer who has accepted the mission his father has set for him by suffering and dying for us and again I ask as you ask the question of what people is Jesus allow your mouth to open wide and worship allow your heart to be strangely warmed within you because this Jesus whom I proclaim to you today is your savior and your lord in whom you're called to believe and trust Jesus and his relationship with God well secondly more briefly Jesus and his relationship with us Jesus and his relationship with us you will know that there's also a genealogy of Jesus recorded in Matthew but it looks very different from that recorded in Luke one begins with Jesus

[17:28] Luke one ends with Jesus Matthew but they're both very important because what is this important to us as Scots to know of what people you are it's even more important to the Jews it's a sign of your Jewishness that you can trace your ancestry back through the line Luke's genealogy omits many stages in this family tree but rather than playing games with words let's go to the text and let's understand the two things this genealogy is teaching us first Jesus is one of us second Jesus is one for us he is one of us the very fact that Jesus family tree is listed means he is a man of flesh and blood a real man with a real family just like us his conception was miraculous but everything else about Jesus was normal he was one of us a member of the human race just as surely as I am and you are he had red blood flowing in his veins the genetic makeup of all those who had gone before him although it wasn't until Watson and Crick popularized DNA

Jesus' DNA was that of his ancestors all these funny names in that genealogy earlier last year I began to research my family tree on my father's side and I found it very interesting until I got distracted by something else you know as I showed the kids I found photographs of my grandparents and my great grandparents and records going even further back skeletons in the closet and actually as I look into their eyes you know I see myself in them that lady I showed you Helen Ritchie she had her own stories to tell she died at 34 1906 from TB in Aberdeen her stories have been forgotten they'll never be told but but even she had her own achievements of which to boast and her own family which she loved I and a host of her descendants have her genetic identity encoded

I'm one with her even as she is one with me and so she's not forgotten and the point of the family tree in Luke 3 here is that Jesus is one of us all the histories of those who went before him are summed up in him and while Jesus himself had no children church tradition tells us of two of his grand nephews who were farmers in modern-day Syria for as long as we are studying Luke Acts remember this Jesus is one of us that Jesus whose body was tortured whose hands and feet were nailed to the cross and upon whose head a crown of thorns was driven he's one of us experiencing pain the same way that I do and you do we must never suppose him to be immune to the pains of the human condition he was made in every way like unto us don't forget that don't ever forget that

Jesus is one of us but you will notice something absolutely fascinating about this genealogy in Luke 3 compared to the genealogy in Matthew 1 eagle-eyed will get it Jesus' family tree is traced back in Matthew to Abraham but in Luke chapter 3 it's traced back to Adam and this reflects the difference in the purpose of the two gospels Matthew is a Jewish gospel it's written for Jewish believers and therefore the family tree stretching back to Abraham the father of the Jews reinforces his Jewishness Luke is a gospel written to validate the place of the Gentiles within the early church and therefore by tracing the family line of Jesus back to Adam the father of all human beings Jew and Gentile Luke is reinforcing that Jesus is for all human beings not just Jews so when I use this phrase he's he's one of us

I'm talking about one of the whole of humanity not just one of the Jews but one human among the eight billion who live in this world today and so you might ask the question of what people is Jesus and Luke wants to answer he's of the same people as you are Luke wants to ground Jesus in the stuff of humanity the messiness of the human condition with all its need and suffering its hunger and thirst its emotion and sensitivity this is our Lord and Master our King and Savior the Son of God made like one of us the one of us but then also he's one for us he's one for us because if you're like me the question perhaps you've always asked is this if John the Baptist's baptism was a baptism of repentance why did Jesus get baptized because only sinners need to repent only those with dirty hands need to have them washed so why was this sinless man Jesus being baptized unto repentance and why was Jesus the only man in all of history with clean hands and a pure heart being ritually cleansed in the waters of baptism okay so I'm sure that most of us of a certain generation and older will have watched the Hollywood historical Hollywood blockbuster

[23 : 53] Spartacus starring you know Kirk Douglas who died recently as the leader of a great Roman slave rebellion doomed to failure Spartacus and the remnants of his defeated army are crowded into a small mountain ravine where the Romans try to figure out who among them is Spartacus which of you is Spartacus they asked to which one man in the army stands up and says I'm Spartacus and then another man over there stands up and says no I'm Spartacus and then a thousand of them stand up and say no I'm Spartacus they hold him in such respect and self-admiration it's so hold him in such admiration and respect that each of them to use a modern word self-identifies as Spartacus as a result the Romans crucify the whole army treating each slave as though he were Spartacus they treated each slave as though he was Spartacus the reason Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River is the exact opposite it was not that humanity was self-identifying as its hero Jesus it was that Jesus was self-identifying with humanity rather than a million voices raised in admiration and respect crying out I'm Jesus it was that one voice raised in love and passion for a suffering humanity crying out

I am them all eight billion I am Colin Dow I am Alice Wamaitha I am Archie McInnes I am Marian Morrison I am them he was baptized in order to identify with us to be one of us but there's even more the followers of Spartacus were all punished as though they were Spartacus himself all of them were crucified but Jesus was crucified for us ten thousand were crucified for one man Spartacus but one man Jesus Christ was crucified for ten thousand times ten thousand of us there's the difference for not only is Jesus one of us he is one for us it was as if when the great multitude were being baptized into the river Jordan all their sins were being washed into the river but when Jesus was being baptized in the river Jordan all their sins were being transferred to him the multitude went into the water dirty and came out clean he went into the water clean and came out dirty because he was carrying the sins of humanity upon himself not only is Jesus identifying with us in this passage he's beginning to bear our sin not only is Jesus one of us he's one for us what begins at the baptism here in the Jordan concludes in Jerusalem with his crucifixion because it's there on that ugly hill called Golgotha a Jesus who picked up our sin in the Jordan finally pays for us and so as we close we do so with the words of my fellow villagers in our ears kids are you listening this is a good question to ask if you're up north when it comes to Jesus of what people is he of what people is he that's the most important question in this passage but of only slightly less importance is this question what people are you of what people are you as a result of who Jesus is and what Jesus has done are you ready to become one of his people are you ready friends what people are you let us pray heavenly father the wonder of this passage rests in these two great pillars of truth

Jesus relationship with you Jesus relationship with us and lord we want to ask that from the youngest to the oldest all of us would be able to say today I'm one of Jesus people that even if up until now we've been swithering between two opinions or hovering between making a decision that today this very minute we would say to ourselves and say to others from now on I want to be one of Jesus people because he died on the cross for me we ask these things in Jesus name amen who here