

Date: December 16-17, 2023

Title: Message & Music

Speaker: Kurt Bjorklund & Kathy Schmitt

Speaker 1 - Kurt Bjorklund

Good morning. Merry Christmas. Today we are going to be doing our Message and Music service. This is something that we have done traditionally here for years and years. And we're going to talk about two titles for God, the Son of God for Jesus and the Son of Man. I'm going to talk about the Son of God, and in just a few moments, Kathy Schmitt is going to talk about the Son of Man.

Kathy has been a part of Orchard Hill here for almost 30 years since the early nineties and is one of the people who have really helped to shape this church that a lot of you may not know. She served in kid's ministry, was involved in small groups, has been a BSF teaching leader for this area for well over a decade, has served on our church board as a servant leader, and has been somebody who has just recently come on our staff team to help with first impressions. I'm excited that you're going to get a chance to hear from her. And Ron and Kathy, among hundreds of other couples, families, and individuals who are part of this church are a testimony to how God can use faithfulness over a long period of time. For some 30 years, they've just plugged in and served. And part of why this church is what it is today is because of people like Kathy. And so, I'm excited you're going to get to hear from her.

I'm going to start by talking about the Son of God as a title for Jesus. And, you know, the names are important. Here's what I mean. Parents come up with names for their children and they usually try to have some significance. These are some of the top trending names for this last year. Nevaeh, and evidently the logic of that is its heaven spelled backward. And so, you didn't just want to call your child heaven. So, they went with Nevaeh. Zuly, I have no idea what that's about. Violina, which is for somebody who probably loves music. There's the name Marvelous which probably is saying I want my child to be marvelous. And then somebody named their daughter Modesty. I don't know if they're trying to ascribe some kind of title that they hoped would play itself out or what exactly.

But, you know, if you've ever named a child, how important that is. But probably what's more important is self-designation. You may have been given a name and you go by the name because it's your given name, but there are probably nicknames or titles that have been ascribed to you or that you've even embraced over time that you say this is probably a better window into who I am.

In fact, I would suggest that in our day and age, in some ways, our passwords that we use probably reveal something about us. I mean, if you think about your passwords, are you the kind of person who puts your pet's name in and then, you know, every time you have to change it, you add another exclamation point? Or are you the kind of person who has this intricate password system with numbers, names, and different symbols so that you know, or do you just use the same password all the time?

I was tech support for my wife for years, and in that role, there were often opportunities that I had to ascribe to her a password, which is kind of a unique and fun opportunity. So, I decided that what I would do to keep it simple for her is I would just give her the same password every

time that I entered her password. By the way, she has now figured this out and reset her password everywhere. And so, I decided that it would be great to have to make her type *Kurt is hot* every single time she had to enter something in. It's no wonder that she figured out how to reset her passwords and said I don't want to have to type that anymore it's embarrassing.

But the names that are ascribed matter, and there are dozens of names and titles for Jesus in the Scriptures. But two of them that get some of the most attention are Son of God and Son of Man. The title Son of God is one that when you first hear it for Jesus, if you've been around the church, especially for some time, you say, oh yeah, of course, Jesus is God. Of course, He's the Son of God. It feels a little obvious, maybe a little mundane.

But look at these verses again in Luke chapter one, verse 32. Here's what it says. "He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David..." Verse 35, "The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God."

Now, the reason that I say this isn't obvious is because when you hear that, if you just hear it with modern ears without some Old Testament background, you may just say well, it's just another kind of designation. But this was significant because for a Jewish person to say this person is the Son of God would have been almost akin to blasphemy. And yet that is a title that Jesus took for himself.

In Genesis 15 we see a little something of what's significant with this title in that the son of somebody meant that they were the ones who could perpetuate the lineage of that person. And so, to be the Son of God means that Jesus was claiming that He could perpetuate the lineage of God Himself. Here's where we see this Genesis, chapter 15, verse two and following. "But Abram said, 'Sovereign LORD, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?' And Abram said, 'You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir.' Then the word of the LORD came to him: 'This man will not be your heir, but a son who is your own flesh and blood will be your heir.'" And his point, very simply, that to be the son of somebody meant that you weren't just an heir, but you carried on the line.

And then in Proverbs 10:1 we see this about a son, and that is the son is one who brings glory to the father, honors the father, a wise son. It says, "A wise son brings joy to his father, but a foolish son brings grief to his mother." Proverbs 15 verse 20 says it this way. It says, "A wise son brings joy to his father, but a foolish man despises his mother." And so, it isn't obvious to us what a big deal this is because sometimes we hear it, and we don't ascribe to it all that the Old Testament imagery loads into this image.

Jesus is the one who extends the lineage of God Himself and brings honor to God. One author in writing about Jesus put it this way. He said, "Let's call the role of some of the professions and how the titles of Christ play in. To the artist, He's the one who's altogether lovely. To the architects, He's the chief cornerstone. To the physicians, He's the great physician. To the preachers, He's the Word of God. To the philosophers, He's the wisdom of God. To the dying, He's the resurrection and the life. To the geologist, He's the rock of ages.

To the farmers, He's the Lord of the harvest. To the professors, He's the master teacher to the prodigal. He's the forgiving father to the lost sheep. He's the good shepherd to the thirsty souls. He's the water of life to the hungry. He's the bread of life. To the philanthropist, He's God's unspeakable gift."

God in Jesus is the Son of God and thus the Authority of God to extend who He is to the world. But it isn't mundane for another reason. And this is in Romans chapter eight. There's a section in Romans eight that talks about the adoption of sons for people who believe in Jesus. So, Jesus is the Son of God, but he makes it possible for all people to come to be the children of God, the sons of God. Here's what we read. This is Romans eight, verse 19. It says this, "For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed." And if you read through this passage, you see this idea of adoption, this idea of not just being somebody who believes in God and has a future and a ticket to heaven, but that you can be the son of God now.

Now, you may read that, and the translation that we use here, the NIV, translates it as children, but it actually says sons in the original language. And this is a place where this translation of trying to be a little gender neutral, which generally is a good thing to be gender neutral, misses something. And the reason it misses something is that being a son meant that you had a special heir in that culture. In our culture, it doesn't necessarily mean that, but in that culture, it means that. And he's saying, if you're a son of God, you can share in everything that God has secured for people. Now you may say well, that sounds sexist. Well, the Bible also calls all people who are believers the bride of Christ. So, it kind of cuts both ways. You're a bride, you're a son. Okay? Just deal with it.

Here's the reason that this is so significant. Jesus is the Son, and He makes it possible that those who believe in Him will also be the sons or the children of God. That means that today, as you sit here if you believe in God, you are a child of God. You have the value, the worth, the inheritance. The whole being of divinity has been, in a sense, bequeathed to you. And somehow, we can say well, the Son of God, it's just one of those titles that we get.

I saw an article that somebody sent me about a person who bought a copy of a Rembrandt at an auction and paid \$15,000 for it. And if you saw, this news story just came out last week, turns out the painting was an actual Rembrandt and it was worth 14 million. So, it wasn't a bad investment. \$15,000 got the 14 million because they found it was a real Rembrandt. Here's what it means when you say, I'm a son of God, I'm a child of God. You were made by the God of the universe and reborn in the image of Jesus Christ to bring honor to God and to continue the line of God, just like Jesus.

You see, Jesus saying I'm the Son of God means I have the authority of God. But by extension He's saying, I'm inviting any of you, anyone, everyone, to come and experience what it means to be a child of God. So, as you are here today, you may be here saying, you know, I'm just struggling with life. Do I have value? Is my life worth living? Am I loved? Do I matter? Do I have a future? And the answer is, if you have believed in Jesus Christ, then you are a child of God, a son of God. The answer is yes because Jesus came as the Son of God.

God helps us to understand the beauty of these titles and these images, and to live in the reality of them and not just gloss over them. And we pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Speaker 2 - Kathy Schmitt

That beautiful song that we just heard from my colleague Colleen and Chris, just reminds us of what Jesus said when he declared I am the light of the world. Jesus was very intentional with his words to describe who He was, who He is, and what he came to do. And to reveal to us different facets of His nature as God, in different facets of His nature as Savior, Jesus proclaiming this truth, I am the light of the world.

What reminded those Israelites of the pillar of fire in the wilderness that led the Israelites after they were brought out of Egypt? And just as the pillar of fire symbolized God's presence, God's protection, and God's guidance, Jesus saying I am the light of the world was for claiming as God, that He offers his presence, his guidance, and his protection to all who follow him.

And as Kurt said, another way that Jesus helps us to understand who he is and what he has done is by his titles. And what we read so often in the Gospels is Jesus refers to himself as the Son of Man over 70 times in the Gospels. The expression Son of Man so often in the Old Testament, man or mankind.

But yet, in the book of Daniel, the phrase Son of Man refers to a heavenly being who was given authority and given the kingdom. And so, let's look at those verses again. At this time in Daniel chapter seven, Daniel records this vision that was revealed to him while the nation of Israel was in captivity. And as they lived those long years in captivity, they most likely wondered if God had forgotten them, if God had turned His back on them, and if God had forgotten His promises that He made to them. And it's at this very time that God gives Daniel this vision of a glorious future, the coming of a king, and the establishment of a kingdom. And that would give them hope. And that's what gives us hope today.

So, let's look again at those words in Daniel chapter seven. We read, "As I looked, 'thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His clothing was as white as snow; the hair of his head was white like wool. His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze. A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before him. Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was seated, and the books were opened."

What Daniel saw here was all inspiring and I imagine terrifying all at the same time. The ancient of days, he refers to God, the Father, and it speaks of His eternity. Daniel tries to describe. He describes God here in human terms. He says he took a seat. He had clothing as white as snow. He had hair white as wool. And all of this would speak to the holiness, the very holiness of the ancient of days of God. Daniel speaks of the glory of God. He describes that by what surrounds God, the throne was flaming with fire. The wheels were almost all ablaze. Thousands upon thousands attended him. 10,000 times 10,000 stood before him. And then we see the ancient of days. He takes his throne as the judge. Court was convened. The books are open, and judgment is now at hand.

And as Daniel continues to watch he sees someone descending from the cross. And let's look at those verses. That's in verse 13. It says, "In my vision at night I looked, and there before me

was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed."

And so, this time Daniel saw in this vision another figure, one like a son of man, and he sees a human there. Yet this person is coming. He's coming with the clouds of heaven. In the Old Testament, clouds are an accompaniment of deity. And God repeatedly descended in a cloud and or appeared to the Israelites in the cloud in the Old Testament. And so, this one like a man coming with the clouds of heaven means that this person is divine. And yet he has this appearance of a man when the son of man is brought into the presence of the ancient of days. The ancient of days eternal role was delegated to this Son of Man. The Son of Man is given absolute authority. He will have all the power to rule in His kingdom. This son of man will be honored. He will be honored by those that he rules over. The hearts of everyone will honor the Son of Man, His dominion, His power, and His right to govern will be everlasting.

And lastly, the son of man's kingdom will never be conquered. This kingdom will never end and will never be destroyed. Jesus chose this title, Son of Man, to connect Himself to this prophecy, to let his audience know, and to let each one of us here know that He is the fulfillment of this prophecy. And he uses this title. So often in the Gospels, you'll see him say the Son of Man is the one who has the authority to forgive sins.

The Son of Man is the one who must suffer, and the Son is the one who must be rejected and delivered into the hands of men and killed. And a Son of Man will rise in three days. He specifically uses this title when he is referring to his second coming when he will come in all power and all glory. We see that in Matthew chapter 26 as we read about a time when Jesus was on trial, and he was questioned there by the chief priest and Sanhedrin. And let's look at those first. Verse 63 says, "The high priest said to him, "I charge you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God." "You have said so," Jesus replied. "But I say to all of you: From now on you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven."

And so, Jesus confirms that He is the Son of Man and while scripture attributes supreme sovereignty to God the Father, it is very clear it is God the Father's intention or His purpose that Jesus will rule the world. This everlasting kingdom will come by the saving work of the Son of Man by His perfect life. It's by His suffering, His death, and His resurrection that He rescues people. He rescues us and brings us into God's Kingdom, making all of us who place our faith in Him kingdom people. As Kurt said, he rescues us. He redeems us to be the humanity that functions in God's image and God's likeness. He transforms us.

And although as history records and as we see today, there is rebellion against God, there's rebellion against Jesus, and there's rejection of Jesus. But Scripture tells us there will be a day when Jesus is honored. A day will come when Jesus will be Lord of all, sin will be judged, and the sovereignty of Jesus will be revealed.

Charles Spurgeon, a preacher in the 1800s once said, "Brethren, no truth ought to be more frequently proclaimed next to the first coming of the Lord and to his second coming." He

goes on to say, "You cannot thoroughly set forth all the ends and bearings of the first advent if you forget the second advent."

And so, as we begin and start to celebrate the very birth of Jesus, let's not forget that this baby Jesus is God. The Son is the Son of Man. He one day will be the supreme ruler of the world, a ruler who has stepped down from his throne, who takes on human flesh and brings salvation to both of you and to me.

And so, my question for all of us today is who is Jesus to you? As Kurt was saying if we ask Siri, Siri says Jesus was a first-century Jewish preacher and a religious leader. But this question, who is Jesus to you personally is so very important because the way we answer this question will determine our destiny. It will also determine how we live our lives day after day, what decisions we make, how we view our circumstances, and how we view the circumstances of this world around us. And so, Jesus is the Son of God, the Son of Man, the light of the world, and the king of kings who one day will be the supreme ruler of the world.

Is He your Lord? Is He your savior? Have you submitted your life to Jesus? He offers you His presence. He offers you His protection and His guidance, and he offers us to be a son or daughter of his perfect, everlasting kingdom.

Let's pray. Father, we thank you for all that you have done for us. It's by your grace Lord, that we know you and we bring glory to you. May we honor you, Lord Jesus. Amen.