

Well, this morning we are going to be looking at one of the most action-packed, energetic, exciting parts of the Bible. Go ahead and turn to Luke chapter 3, we're going to be looking at verses 23 to 38. Luke chapter 3 verses 23 to 38.

Now, in this section—that action-packed, exciting section is known as the genealogy of Jesus; a section that many—uh, I can't say preachers—many people go, “and Jesus was . . . skip.” But today, we're going to be looking at it because there are things in Jesus' genealogy that tell us about Jesus and give us reasons why we should serve and worship him.

So, we're going to be looking at the genealogy of Jesus in Luke chapter 3 verses 23 to 38. If you're following us on YouVersion, uh through the events through that, you'll have the text right in front of you, or if you're using any kind of other Bible app or if you have a physical Bible, you can follow along there.

Now, before we read the text, let me go ahead and—let's go ahead and have a word of prayer.

Heavenly Father, as we look at your Word, as we read your Word, I ask you to open up our hearts, our minds, our ears to what you are telling us. God, I'll admit many people might look at this section and just kind of breeze right over it or see it as nice info or sometimes outright ignore it, but God, show us in your Word through this text what it is we need to know about you and know about how we should relate to you. And I pray this in Jesus' name, amen.

Beginning in verse 23, Luke writes:

²³ Jesus, when he began his ministry, was about thirty years of age, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli, ²⁴ the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Jannai, the son of Joseph, ²⁵ the son of Mattathias, the son of Amos, the son of Nahum, the son of Esli, the son of Naggai, ²⁶ the son of Maath, the son of Mattathias, the son of Semein, the son of Josech, the son of Joda, ²⁷ the son of Joanan, the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the son of Neri, ²⁸ the son of Melchi, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the son of Elmadam, the son of Er, ²⁹ the son of Joshua, the son of Eliezer, the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, ³⁰ the son of Simeon, the son of Judah, the son of Joseph, the son of Jonam, the son of Eliakim, ³¹ the son of Melea, the son of Menna, the son of Mattatha, the son of Nathan, the son of David, ³² the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz, the son of Sala, the son of Nahshon, ³³ the son of Amminadab, the son of Admin, the son of Arni, the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah, ³⁴ the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, the son of Terah, the son of Nahor, ³⁵ the son of Serug, the son of Reu, the son of Peleg, the son of Eber, the son of Shelah, ³⁶ the son of Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem, the son of Noah, the son of Lamech, ³⁷ the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalaleel, the son of Cainan, ³⁸ the son of Enos, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.

Now that I have butchered plenty of names I'm sure, this, believe it or not, is an important part of Scripture. It's just a bunch of names. It's Jesus' lineage, Jesus' genealogy, but it's important to help us

understand who this Jesus is. Now, we're going to see some things in here, but in order to see it, we first have to understand the purpose of genealogies.

Genealogies in Scripture have a purpose. Now the purpose of genealogies, generally speaking, is they're indicators of the right to hold positions or possess things, or you could say it this way: indicators of status. They indicate that the person has the right to hold a position or possess some tangible thing in the world, and we're going to see that play out in the genealogy of Jesus. They're also—in genealogies—are also indicators of heritage, and that comes into the information we have about Jesus: Jesus' heritage.

Now, the purpose of Jesus' genealogy specifically. First, Jesus, we will see, is the son of David. That means he is the rightful heir to the Davidic throne. That goes back to status. Jesus is the son of Abraham (he is a Jew); this both deals with status and heritage. Jesus is the son of Adam (he is fully man) and Jesus is son of God (he is fully God), and we're going to see that as we go through these names. But I'm not going to be talking about every single name here and so that's good news. I could spend a while talking about every single person, but we're not going to. We're going to focus on the key parts. The first thing we're going to see in verses 23 to 31 is that Jesus is qualified to lead others.

Jesus is qualified to lead you and I and anybody else, and we see that through his priestly qualifications (leading as a teacher) and his royal qualifications (leading as a king). In verse 23, the first part of verse 23, Luke writes, "Jesus, when he began his ministry, was about 30 years of age." That is important. Now, we might just dismiss it and say, "Okay, he was 30." Well, there's more to it than that. This has Old Testament implications. This has a relevance to Jesus' qualifications to be a teacher of Israel.

Not just anybody could teach—they had to be qualified. And here it says Jesus was about—roughly estimating—"30 years of age." Why is that important? That's because 30 years old was the traditional Old Testament age when a person began working for God. In Genesis chapter 41 verse 46, Joseph was 30 years old when he started working for Pharaoh (and, by the way, Joseph is a very clear, very obvious type and shadow of Jesus). But Joseph was 30 years old when he started working for Pharaoh. In Numbers chapter 4, throughout the chapter, a census, an accounting was to be made of the men who were 30 years and older so that they could begin working for God. In Second Samuel chapter 5 verse 4, David was 30 years old when his reign began. Ezekiel 1 chapter 1—oh, I'm sorry that's redundant—Ezekiel chapter 1 verse 1 tells us that Ezekiel was 30 years old when he began his prophetic ministry. So we have kings, we have prophets, we have regular servants beginning their work at 30 years old.

Now, it wasn't an official law that they had to be 30. It became a very strong tradition that, by Luke telling us that Jesus was about 30 when he began his ministry, is telling us that Jesus met the qualifications to teach. He was of the right age. They couldn't look at him and say, "You're not old enough." No, no, no. He was. He was old enough. He reached the proper age, fulfilling the Old Testament tradition, Old Testament teachings, on age, and so the Jews could not disqualify him based upon his age.

Now, there's more to his qualifications to teach than just his age here. We've already seen in chapter 2 verses 46 and 47 that Jesus was wise enough to teach. How do we know that? Because he, as a 12-year-old boy, had shown such wisdom that it baffled the wise teachers of Israel. He was already teaching the

teachers at 12, showing his immense wisdom and here he's old enough to teach, so he is fully qualified to be the teacher of Israel and to lead people in teaching them about God. And everything that Jesus taught us about God and about himself is absolutely trustworthy. And, by the way, everything we need to know is recorded right in here [*holding up Bible*] or if you have a digital version, in there, too. We don't need any other information. God has given us all we need to know. As Paul said, "all Scripture is breathed out by God and is sufficient to make us holy and righteous and know everything we need to know about Jesus and about God." So, Jesus is qualified to lead others as a teacher.

But also in verses 23b (the second half of 23) through verse 31, we see that Jesus is qualified to lead as a king. Now I'm not going to read all of this; we'll just jump down to verse—let's take a look at verse 23. It says, "when he began his ministry, was about 30 years old, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph." Now, that's important. What this tells us is that Jesus was not the biological son of Joseph. So, how is he qualified under Joseph (and Luke goes through Joseph's lineage here)? Why is he qualified? Because he was the adopted son of Joseph and thus a full heir to anything and everything Joseph was an heir to. And so, while people thought he was Joseph's biological son, he wasn't; he was the adopted son, the legal heir.

And, by the way, there's some theological implications here. You and I as Christians—if you're a follower of Jesus who's repented of your sins and believed on Jesus alone—you and I are heirs of Jesus. Why? Because we are adopted children of God. And thus, as the adopted children of God, we are heirs, fully qualified by God—not by ourselves, by God's actions alone—qualified through his adoption to be an heir (and we see that in Ephesians chapter one, I believe). But Jesus is an heir through Joseph.

And then we jump down to verse 31 (turn the page). Verse 31 says, "son of Melea, son of Menna, son of Mattatha, son of Nathan, son of David." Jesus was an heir—the rightful heir—to David's throne, and that's important as Messiah. Messiah must be an heir to David's throne. Jesus was, Jesus is, and Jesus always will be. He is the heir to David's throne. Jesus has royal lineage.

And so, Jesus is qualified as a teacher and he's qualified as a king. And, by the way, there will be no other kings on David's throne besides Jesus; he is the fulfillment of the promise to David and to others of the coming Messiah who will sit eternally on David's throne and will rule forever. Jesus is the King of kings. Whatever person or entity you may follow as your leader, Jesus is above that. Jesus should always be number one. Jesus is number one. Before our spouses, before our children, before our anybody else in our family, before our jobs, before even this specific congregation Jesus is number one, and always will be and always should be. But is he? Jesus is King of kings, and so Jesus is qualified to lead others.

But then in verses 32 through the first half of 38, we see that Jesus is fully human. Fully human.

Verse 34, it says, "son of Jacob, son of Isaac, son of Abraham" (and, by the way, Matthew ends with Abraham, Luke goes all the way to Adam and beyond that), but "son of Abraham." This means that Jesus is a Jew. That's important because Messiah must be the seed of Abraham and a Jew. Jesus is.

This also indicates that Jesus is human, but he is not mere human, and we'll see that a little bit. Jesus is fully human. This fulfills, by the way, by indicating that Jesus is the son of Abraham, Luke is telling us that Jesus fulfills the promise made to Abraham in Genesis chapter 12 verses 1 through 3. The promise was basically this: that all will be blessed through Abraham and that Messiah will be the son of Abraham.

Jesus is the son of Abraham, and all who put their faith in Jesus and repent of their sins are blessed in Jesus Christ with salvation, thus blessed through Abraham. Jesus is the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant made by God to Abraham.

But also, Jesus is human, and that's emphasized in verse 38 (the first half of it at least): "the son of Enos the son of Seth, the son of Adam." And again, there're theological implications here. But there's also the implication of the fact that Jesus is human.

Now, today that may not be a big deal to say. Very few people—at least those who acknowledge Jesus' actual existence—very few would say, "No, no, no, no, no, no, he's not human." Most people would say, "Yeah, he's human."

Back in the time of the New Testament, in the Early Church, there was a big debate about Jesus' humanity. Many people denied that Jesus was a full human being. But Jesus, as a son of Adam, is fully human, which means that Jesus is not just a savior for the Jews (son of Abraham), he's also the savior for Gentiles (that's non-Jews). You don't have to be a Jew to be saved; you can be a non-Jew and still be saved. In fact, we see from Scripture that in Jesus Christ—Jew, Gentile? No: child of God. Child of God.

But Jesus is the fulfillment of Abraham's promise and the son of Adam, fully human. And, by the way, some other implications of this. If you—he says, "son of Adam," which points us also back to the fall of mankind. If you remember in Genesis chapter 3, Adam and Eve broke God's will, broke God's law, by eating of the forbidden fruit, and thus sin entered the world, and every single one of us deal with the consequences of that. We all have a sin nature because of Adam and Eve's sin.

But a promise was made to Eve in Genesis chapter 3 verse 15 that her seed will crush the head of the serpent (Satan), that her seed will defeat Satan. Jesus is that seed, and he did defeat Satan on the cross and in the resurrection. Jesus fulfills the promise made to Abraham, fulfills the promise made to Eve: he is Messiah.

But also, the fact that he's son of Abraham, another theological implication of this is actually drawn out by Paul in Romans chapter 5 verses 12 through 16. Jesus, Paul calls the "second Adam." How does that work? Well Adam gave birth to humanity. Adam cursed humanity. Jesus rebirths people and Jesus removes that curse.

By the way a week or two or so from now, we're going to be looking at where Adam failed, Jesus succeeded. So be sure you come every week so you can hear that one. But Jesus is the second Adam. And ultimately what we see here—besides Jesus being Messiah and the savior—is that Jesus is fully human. And if anybody ever denies the humanity of Jesus, they are outside of Christianity; they are not Christians, whatever claims they may make to the contrary. Jesus is fully human.

But not only is Jesus fully human, in verse 37—I sorry, verse 38—the second half of it, we see that Jesus is fully God.

Now, this is the topic that many today deny: they deny Jesus' deity. He says—Luke writes, the last four words in English—"the son of God." Jesus is God incarnate.

Now, the phrase, “son of God”: there are two possible interpretations of this phrase. Interpretation one, that Jesus is a mere man like Adam. How does that work in this interpretation? Well, Adam was a son created by God ergo Jesus was a son created by God. That’s one interpretation, and it’s a false interpretation. It is an unbiblical interpretation of the phrase “son of God.” How do we know? Because Jesus pre-existed. Jesus is eternal. Jesus has no beginning, has no end. In fact, Jesus said he is the beginning, he is the end. So, Jesus is not a mere man, although he is fully man; Jesus is fully God. He has a divine nature, and that’s the second possible interpretation of the phrase “son of God”: that Jesus is divine.

Now, here a little bit of nuance in this one dealing with Jesus’ divinity. As son of God, the phrase “son of God” for the Jews means to obey God, and we see that in John chapter 8 verses 39 to 47 when Jesus looks at the Pharisees and scribes and others and tells them, “You are the sons of Satan.” In other words, “You are obeying Satan.” To be the son of God is to obey God the Father. Oh, by the way, Jesus—God the son—did the Father’s will absolutely perfectly. Jesus committed zero sins. None. Not even a sinful thought or sinful desire. Nothing.

You and I cannot say that of ourselves. No man can accept Jesus. But you and I mere humans, mere men, mere women. We have sinful thoughts. We have sinful desires. We sin every single day. We may dismiss it, we may fail to recognize it, but we sin every day. We break God’s law all the time. But the good news is Jesus shed his blood on the cross for the forgiveness of sins and rose again on the third day, and so all who repent—that is, confess their sins, seek God’s forgiveness, turn away from their sins—all those who repent and believe in Jesus as their physically risen Lord and savior are forgiven and saved. And more good news: every single time you repent, Jesus forgives. Every time. Even if you have to repent every day, Jesus will forgive you every day. That’s how great his forgiveness is.

Jesus is divine. He obeyed God. But the phrase “son of God,” although it focuses on the obedience to God, it also indicates that Jesus had a unique relationship with God the Father. What is that unique relationship? Son. He is the son of God. You could also say it this way: he is God the son. Jesus is fully divine, having a divine nature in him.

So Jesus has two natures: a human nature by which he understands human issues. He understands the struggles and the strifes and the burdens and the hurts that we go through. He knows what it’s like to be abandoned. He knows what it’s like to be beaten. He knows what it’s like to be abused. He knows what it’s like to be mischaracterized. He knows what it’s like to be hated.

He also knows what it’s like to be loved and followed and adored. He understands that.

He knows what it’s like to be hungry, to be tired, to be exhausted, to be full of joy and full of sorrow. He knows what that’s like.

But he is also fully God because of his divine nature, and that’s something that many people today do not believe. As I said, historically, Jesus’ humanity was denied, but today it’s his divinity. And there are many out there today who call themselves Christians yet will tell you that either in total or at some point Jesus stopped being divine. And if anybody ever denies the deity of Christ, they are denying the Christ of Scripture, and they are not Christians. Reject them. I don’t care what label they put on themselves; to

deny the deity of Jesus is to deny Christ, and to create an idol for yourself and follow that instead of the biblical Jesus. Jesus is fully divine, the son of God, which means he has two natures.

Now, some other areas where we know—some other passages where we know Jesus is divine. In John 1:3 and in Colossians 1:16, we see that Jesus is not a creation, but instead he is the creator. He is the son of God, creator. But he did not express or reveal his divine nature in its fullness. It was covered up, you could say, withheld, and we see that teaching in Philippians 2 verses 5 through 8. But Jesus always is, always was, and always will be fully God.

This is what we see in the genealogy of Jesus. Verses that many people just skip right over because there's a bunch of names that we can't pronounce, and it doesn't seem like it's all that informative. And there's more we could get into in the genealogy, but the crux of it is this: Jesus is fully man, fully God, Messiah, savior.

So, when we worship God, when we worship Jesus, either here or in our car or at home, which Jesus do we worship? When we serve Jesus, which Jesus are we serving? When we proclaim the good news of Jesus, which good news and which Jesus?

The Jesus of Scripture—yes, dear Christians, Jesus is your friend, but he is also the absolutely holy and righteous God. We should learn from Thomas and have the same response Thomas had when he looked at Jesus and cried out, “My God and my Lord,” recognizing who Jesus is. Can we say that we recognize that Jesus is our Lord and our God?

Let's pray.