

# Mark 12:37

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

David therefore himself calleth him Lord; and whence is he then his son? And the common people heard him gladly.

## Analysis

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### **David therefore himself calleth him Lord; and whence is he then his son?**

Jesus' rhetorical question exposes the inadequacy of merely human categories for understanding Messiah. If Messiah is only David's biological descendant, David wouldn't address him as κύριος (kyrios = 'Lord'), a title of superior authority. The word 'whence' (πόθεν, pothen = 'from where,' 'how') probes the origin and nature of Messiah's sonship. The answer: Messiah is David's son according to the flesh (Romans 1:3) but David's Lord according to divine nature (Romans 9:5; Philippians 2:9-11).

This christological riddle points to the Incarnation—the eternal Son of God taking human flesh. Jesus is fully God (thus David's Lord) and fully man (thus David's son). The scribes' incomplete theology couldn't reconcile these realities; Jesus reveals them as necessary for Messiah's saving work. Mark notes **the common people heard him gladly** (οἱ πολὺς ὄχλος ἤκουεν αὐτοῦ ἡδέως)—Jesus' teaching delighted ordinary folk even as it confounded religious experts. The adverb ἡδέως (hēdeōs = 'gladly,' 'with pleasure') suggests enthusiastic reception. The crowds sensed Jesus' authority and were drawn to truth, even when they didn't fully grasp its implications.

## Historical Context

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This teaching occurred in the temple during the final week of Jesus' life. The religious establishment, threatened by Jesus' popularity and authority, sought

grounds to arrest Him (Mark 11:18; 12:12). Jesus' public questioning of scribal Christology challenged their authority and exposed their inadequate understanding. Within days, these same scribes would demand His crucifixion, ironically fulfilling Psalm 110's prophecy that God would defeat Messiah's enemies. The 'common people' (οἱ πολὺς ὄχλος, literally 'the large crowd') represents ordinary Jews who lacked formal theological training but recognized Jesus' wisdom. This dynamic—religious elites rejecting Jesus while common folk embraced Him—fulfilled Isaiah 29:13-14 and showed that spiritual insight isn't the province of human learning but divine revelation (Matthew 11:25-27).

## Related Passages

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**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

## Study Questions

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1. How does the mystery of Christ's dual nature (fully God and fully man) humble human reason while inviting faith?
2. Why did Jesus' teaching attract 'common people' while alienating religious experts, and what does this reveal about the nature of saving faith?
3. In what ways does contemporary Christianity need to recover the scandal of the Incarnation—God becoming human flesh?

## Interlinear Text

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αὐτοῦ οὖν Δαβὶδ λέγει αὐτοῦ κύριον καὶ πόθεν υἱός  
him therefore David calleth him Lord And whence son  
G846 G3767 G1138 G3004 G846 G2962 G2532 G4159 G5207

αὐτοῦ ἐστιν καὶ ὁ πολὺς ὄχλος ἤκουεν αὐτοῦ  
him is he And the common people heard him  
G846 G2076 G2532 G3588 G4183 G3793 G191 G846

ἡδέως  
gladly  
G2234

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