

Introduce

November 29, 2020

Good morning Fathom Church. My name is Eric Shelly and I'm one of the elders here at Fathom. I hope you all had a great Thanksgiving and a long weekend.

- As Chris mentioned in his announcements and as the wreaths behind me indicate, we are starting advent. Today is the first day of advent!
- Advent means "coming" and its traditionally been a time of anticipation and preparation for Christmas, when we celebrate Christ's birth
- But I read this week that Advent wasn't always tied to Christmas
- Up until about the 5th century, it was tied to other church events that took place at the start of the calendar year
- And Christians would spend this time in prayer and fasting for new Christians to be baptized during this season¹

So even though advent now isn't typically associated with a season of prayer and fasting, I want to take a minute to pray today as we start this advent season, for God to move in the coming weeks – in our lives, in the lives of those we come in contact with

Please pray with me. **PRAY**

- Well, this year, for advent, we're going to be in Matthew's gospel and study his account of Jesus' birth
 - We'll study the first 3 chapters of Matthew

So, hopefully you've got your Bibles. Please open them up to Matthew 1. Each week, we want every person to read the scripture passage on their own Bible, whether that's an actual book, a phone, or a tablet. Find your way to Matthew 1 in your bible. We'll be studying verses 1-17 of Matthew 1.

INTRO TO MATTHEW

As you're turning there, I want to start by giving a brief introduction to the gospel of Matthew before we dive into our passage.

- The book of Matthew is the first book of the New Testament
- Matthew is the first of the four gospel accounts of Jesus' life
- It was written by Matthew, also called Levi, who was a disciple of Jesus, and was a Jewish tax collector before Jesus called him to be a disciple

¹ <https://www.christianity.com/christian-life/christmas/what-is-advent.html>

- He's writing his gospel account to a Jewish audience
 - Mark wrote to a Roman audience
 - Luke to Greeks
 - And John's gospel was to a more universal audience
 - But Matthew is writing to Jews
- The book of Matthew has been called, the "Teacher's Gospel"² because he presents it in a way that is very suitable for teaching
- It isn't always in chronological order
- His accounts are typically more concise and abbreviated than some of the other gospel writers
- And he often structures the different accounts with an introductory statement and a summary statement... we'll see some of this in our passage today

MATTHEW'S OPENING SCENE

So whether you're writing a book, or writing a gospel account, or making a movie, you want that opening scene or that opening chapter to be gripping

- You want it to grab the audience's attention and set the stage for what's to come
- I was thinking about some of the great opening scenes or sequences of movies
 - I love the first scene of *The Godfather*, where Vito Corleone is sitting in his office, petting his cat, and talking about making someone an offer he can't refuse
 - Who can forget the first time they saw the opening scene of *Jaws*?
 - The opening scenes of *Star Wars* movies are always iconic with the famous *Star Wars* logo and music, followed by the scrolling yellow text which then fades to a scene from space
 - But I think my favorite opening scene for a movie is for the movie *Raiders of the Lost Ark*
 - It starts with Indiana Jones, wearing his iconic fedora hat, hiking through the jungle,
 - Getting betrayed by his guide,

² France, R. T. (1994). [Matthew](#). In D. A. Carson, R. T. France, J. A. Motyer, & G. J. Wenham (Eds.), *New Bible commentary: 21st century edition* (4th ed., p. 908). Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press.

- Using his bullwhip to escape trouble
 - Indy uses his instincts and some luck to navigate through a cave that is full of spiders, skeletons, booby traps, and blowdarts
 - Finding an ancient golden idol,
 - Setting off one of the booby traps – which happens to be a giant boulder that chases him through the cave, **SLIDE w/ PIC#1**
 - As he's trying to escape, he gets betrayed again
 - Until he narrowly makes his escape!
 - ... all the while, somehow, never losing his hat!
- I mean, that's how you start a movie! Its classic... so good!
 - I read somewhere that Steven Spielberg was actually worried that the opening scene of *Raiders* would be *too* good and that the rest of the movie would be dull in comparison
- A good introduction or opening scene is priceless – it sets the tone for what's to come next
 - It can help explain or give the essence of what the movie or the character is all about
 - The opening scene of *Raiders* shows you what Indiana Jones' character, was all about *and* what the Indiana Jones movies were all about – archeology, adventure, fedoras and bullwhips!
 - A good intro can pull you in and make you want to keep watching or keep reading
 - It conveys what's to come
 - And so, I imagine, when Matthew was writing his gospel account, he was probably thinking of a good way to start it, a good way to draw people in
 - And what better piece of writing to get people interested, excited, or hooked than... a genealogy
 - I mean, nothing draws readers in like a long list of names, right? Especially when you can't pronounce half of them
 - In the same way, nothing says "lets prepare for Christmas, by studying a genealogy on the first week of advent!"
 - But that's what we've got in store today, on this first week of advent. A genealogy. A long list of names

- But stick with me today... God's got something to say to us in this long list of names

So that's a very brief intro into the gospel of Matthew... Let's turn to our passage today. Again, Matthew 1, starting in verse 1

1The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

Ok stop. I know we're only one verse and one sentence into this passage... but this verse is an important one.

- To a Jewish reader, this verse alone would be like that first scene of *Jaws* or *Raiders of the Lost Ark*
- It would have gotten their attention because of 3 statements that Matthew makes in just this sentence alone.
 - First, he calls Jesus "Christ"
 - Now, Jesus' last name wasn't Christ
 - *Christ* is a title
 - It means "Messiah", or the promised, divine deliverer of the Jews
 - And this title was applied to Jesus
 - Matthew is saying, "This is the genealogy of Jesus, who is The Messiah". A strong, bold proclamation
 - Next, he refers to Jesus as the Son of David
 - Any Jewish reader would know that the Messiah must be a descendant of David
 - This was foretold in 2 Samuel 7
 - Matthew is stating that Jesus is David's descendant and therefore would qualify as Messiah potential
 - Finally, he refers to Jesus as the Son of Abraham
 - Matthew says that just like the Jewish nation came from Father Abraham, so did Jesus, the Messiah
 - In Genesis 12 and 22, God promises Abraham that through him, all families on the earth will be blessed
 - In linking Jesus to Abraham, Matthew is stating that this promise God made to Abraham,
 - This promise of blessing for all mankind
 - is ultimately fulfilled in Jesus
 - Jesus is a blessing to all families, all generations, all mankind

So, verse 1 would be an important verse and a powerful verse to any Jewish reader

- Just like a good opening scene of a movie, verse 1 captures the essence of what Matthew wants to say here about Jesus
 - That He is Messiah
 - From the line of David
 - Fulfilling the Abrahamic promise to be a blessing to all nations
- It's easy for us to skip or skim over verse 1, but that single sentence makes some powerful claims...
- that would have really gotten the attention of a Jewish audience even before they see the actual genealogy

GENEALOGY: Verses 2-6

- The actual genealogy starts in verse 2... let's keep reading together
- We'll go through the full genealogy somewhat quickly, and then I'll circle back with some observations for us... verse 2:

² Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, ³ and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram, ⁴ and Ram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, ⁵ and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, ⁶ and Jesse the father of David the king.

In verses 2-6, Matthew outlines the first few branches of Jesus' family tree. Some of these names will be familiar to you from the book of Genesis:

- It starts with Abraham, who we just mentioned
- Then Isaac (Abraham's son)
- Then Jacob (Isaac's son)
- Then Judah (one of Jacob's 12 sons)

A bit further, we have mention of some more names that may be familiar:

- Boaz who was the son of Rahab, the prostitute
 - If you recall, in the book of Joshua, we read that Rahab was spared by God when Israel defeated Jericho
 - ...because she showed kindness to the Israelite spies
 - God not only redeemed her sinful life, but also redeemed her actual, physical life. She was spared and not killed like so many others living in Jericho when Israel invaded

- God not only spared her life, but he included her in the family line of the Messiah
- In the book of Ruth, we read that Rahab's son, Boaz marries Ruth
 - If you recall from last fall when we studied the book of Ruth, that
 - Ruth was a Moabite – or a non-Israelite – she was widow who God redeemed through Boaz
 - Ruth is King David's great-grandmother and also in the line of Messiah
- So this first section of our passage takes us from Abraham to David. Let's keep going in verses 6-11

GENEALOGY: Verses 6-11

And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, ⁷ and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asaph, ⁸ and Asaph the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, ⁹ and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, ¹⁰ and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josiah, ¹¹ and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon.

In verses 6-11, we start with David and discuss the line of kings that followed him:

- Verse 6 mentions Solomon, David's son through *the wife of Uriah*. This is Bathsheba
 - You may know this story – David was king and he saw this beautiful woman, Bathsheba, who was married to Uriah. David wanted her
 - David gets Bathsheba pregnant and they have a son Solomon
 - So, to cover it up, David essentially had her husband, Uriah killed
 - David goes on to marry Bathsheba
 - But Matthew here, still identifies Bathsheba as *the wife of Uriah*, not the wife of David!
 - Matthew seems to be pointing out here that Solomon was born through adultery, through sin
 - Even through the sin of adultery, God is able to accomplish his will and purpose
- Next, we have a succession of kings after Solomon
 - These guys seem to go back and forth from good king to wicked king, good king to wicked king

- That was Judah's track record in that time of kings – some kings followed God closely – and as a result, so did the nation
- ... and some kings departed from the Lord – leading the people astray along with them
 - I know election season has passed, but this is why it's important to vote – and vote for leaders who will lead us morally as well as politically... because otherwise they may lead the nation astray
- This line of kings goes from David to Jechoniah... which takes us to the exile or deportation to Babylon
 - The exile occurred when the people of Judah – again, the tribe Jesus came from – were taken captive into Babylon
 - Judah was captive there for about 60 years before being able to return to Israel

GENEALOGY: Verses 12-17

Verses 12-17 lists further genealogy after the exile. Let's finish the passage:

¹² And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, ¹³ and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, ¹⁴ and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, ¹⁵ and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, ¹⁶ and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.

¹⁷ So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations.

So, this section takes us from the exile to Babylon up to Joseph, Mary, and Jesus. A few things to note here:

- First is that, Some of the names listed in this section do not even appear anywhere in the Old Testament.
 - One thing I did find interesting in studying this is that the Jews kept very careful family records in public registries,
 - and Matthew likely pulled the names listed in this section from those records
 - The accuracy of Matthew's account here has never been challenged. It's always believed to have been accurate because of how well the Jews kept these records

- Just like the rest of scripture, this account of Jesus' family line can be trusted
- Secondly, in verse 16, in speaking about Joseph and Mary, Matthew deviates somewhat from his earlier wording
 - Earlier in this passage, he mentions 4 women – Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Bathsheba
 - Each time, Matthew lists the father, his son, and then the mother. He says,
 - Judah the father of Perez and Zerah *by Tamar* (v5)
 - Salmon the father of Boaz *by Rahab* (v5)
 - Boaz the father of Obed *by Ruth* (v5)
 - David was the father of Solomon *by the wife of Uriah* (v7)
 - But here in verse 16, Mathew changes up. He says,
 - Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born
 - He changes the wording here to say, *of whom Jesus was born* to indicate that Jesus did not come from Joseph or Mary in the traditional sense...
 - Jesus came from God
 - He was physically born of Mary. Who married into Joseph's family line... but Jesus, the Messiah, came from God
- So, that's Jesus' genealogy – his family tree.
 - As I stated earlier, Matthew is writing to the Jews and this passage, this genealogy would be highly important to them and to their understanding of the Old Testament and OT prophecy about Messiah
 - But, as non-Jewish Christians, who already believe that Jesus is the Messiah... we don't need convincing that Jesus fulfills prophecy
 - And, in North America, we don't put much stock in genealogies and family lines...
 - So, what do we do with this passage?

Well, I've got 2 takeaways for us this morning. Here's the first: **SLIDE**

Jesus' family tree was full of imperfect people because Jesus came to save imperfect people

I've touched on some of these already, but let's just briefly go through some names in this genealogy again.

- We've got *Abraham*. He frequently lied to save his own skin, telling others that Sarah wasn't his wife, but was instead his sister. He lied out of fear
- *Jacob* lies to his father Isaac so he can steal his brother Esau's inheritance
- *Judah* hired and slept with prostitutes.
 - In fact, his daughter-in-law *Tamar* was a widow who was being neglected, so she dressed up as a prostitute so that Judah would hire her
 - Judah hires his daughter-in-law, who is pretending to be a prostitute, and gets her pregnant, and she gives birth to twins, Zerah and Perez
 - They are in the line of the Messiah
- *Rahab* was a prostitute in Babylon
- We've got king *David*. Lust, adultery, murder, abuse of power
- David's grandson *Rehoboam* disobeyed God throughout much of his rule, allowing the worship of other gods and cult prostitution
- *Ahaz* sacrificed his own son in an offering to another god and basically turned towards to foreign gods throughout his entire reign as king of Judah

I could go on, but I think you get my point... Jesus' family line is full of imperfect people... full of sinners... Because Jesus came to save and redeem sinners.

But there are some other "imperfections" in Jesus' family line. Note that these would have been seen as imperfections to Jews in that day and age

- One imperfection in Christ's family tree, his family line, includes Gentiles, that is it was not just limited to Jews
 - There are Gentiles sprinkled throughout the family tree
 - Rahab was a Canaanite
 - And Ruth was a Moabite
 - Yet both were used by God to continue the family line of the Messiah
- Another imperfection in Christ's family line is the prominence of women
 - Remember, in Bible times, women were considered to be a lower class than men – so Matthew's inclusion of women in the genealogy was definitely abnormal
 - But Matthew goes to lengths to point them out
 - I think that by talking about women so prominently, Matthew is telling us that women were highly important to God

- And that Jesus came to save women, just as he came to save men
- Third imperfection, younger siblings – especially younger brothers – are prominent in Jesus’ genealogy
 - Just like non-Jews and women, younger brothers were also considered a lower class in Jewish society
 - It was the older brother who received the birthright, the largest portion of the inheritance
 - The older brother is first in line for everything – and would be first in line to become king
 - But Jesus’ family tree is full of younger brothers
 - Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, David, Solomon, Perez and others were all younger brothers in their families
 - These would have all been deemed unworthy of significant inheritance in the Jewish culture...
 - Yet God considered them worthy of being in the line of Christ
- Jesus came from imperfection to redeem *our* imperfection

Illustration: Jonah

To illustrate this, I want look at Jonah. Not the swallowed by a whale Jonah

- I’m talking about a different Jonah. I’m talking about this guy **SLIDE w/ PIC#2**
- This is the Shelly family dog, Jonah. He’s a black lab, a little over a year old
- Last fall, we were looking for a puppy and we knew we wanted an English Labrador Retriever
 - Anne and I just love the big block heads and stocky builds that these dogs have
 - They’re great family dogs and love the outdoors, so they’re a great fit for our family
 - We wanted to get a puppy so our daughters could experience raising a puppy and all of the cuteness and chaos that comes with that
 - So, we started researching breeders
- With nearly all lab breeders, you can go onto their website and they’ll tell you about the upcoming litters of puppies

- They'll state that the next litter will come from this *sire* or father, and this *dam* or mother
 - And so, you can click on either the sire or the dam and see their full pedigree, their full family line
 - For Jonah's mom and dad, we can go back 4 generations to see their lineage
 - Who the breeders were
 - The American Kennel Club numbers of each of the dogs
 - DNA info
 - What color the dog was – black, yellow, chocolate
 - Pictures of each of the dogs in the family line
 - This stuff wasn't all that important to us – we just wanted a healthy black lab
 - But to some people, this stuff is very important – because they may one day want to breed or show their dog
 - People pay a lot of money for a lab with a good pedigree and family line
 - Lineage matters when it comes to certain dogs. Pedigree matters
 - The quality and purity of the dog's family line is important
 - Starting with near perfection in the family tree is important

Application: God uses imperfect people

But the good news for us, is that starting with perfection is not important to God. Starting with pedigree is not important to God. Starting in righteousness is not important to God.

- Because Jesus did not come to save righteous or perfect people. He came to save imperfect sinners
- And God isn't waiting for us to become righteous or become sinless before He will use us. He can and will use us where we're at
 - We're not expected to stay there in our sin, but He can certainly use us there
 - He can use us wherever we're at in our walk to accomplish His will
 - That is good news for all of us

- Whether its sins of lying like Abraham and Jacob
- Or sexual sin like Rahab or David
- Or sins of idolatry like some of the other Old Testament kings,
- God can still bring about redemption through it all

That's my first takeaway this morning: **Jesus' Family was full of imperfect people because he came to save imperfect people.**

The second takeaway is this: **SLIDE**

Jesus' Family tree was planted exactly where and when God wanted it

As we look at the characters and stories that are mentioned in this genealogy passage, there are ton of remarkable stories...

- These stories make up the bulk of the Old Testament!
- As you look at these stories, a prevailing theme that we see is how God worked in the lives of each of them to further his plan and accomplish his will
- One commentator says this:

This "list of names" is a vital part of the Gospel record. It shows that Jesus Christ is a part of history; that all of Jewish history prepared the way for His birth. God in His providence ruled and overruled to accomplish His great purpose in bringing His Son into the world.³

Illustration: landscaping

Anne and I moved into our home back in 2007... so going on 13 years ago. Our house was built in the mid-70s and we bought it from the original owners

- Who were probably in their late 60s when they sold it to us
- So, when we moved in, the house needed updating... LOTS of updating!
- And we've done this in phases over the course of the last 13 years
- It hasn't just been inside the house either – the yard and property needed updating as well
- When we moved in, the property was overrun with juniper bushes

³ Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). [*The Bible exposition commentary*](#) (Vol. 1, p. 13). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

- Juniper bushes are tied with poison ivy as my least favorite parts of God's creation
- I don't like them – they're ugly, scratchy, dirty, dusty, and full of spiders
- And they were everywhere – we couldn't see our next-door neighbor's house because of an overgrown 15' high juniper bush – it was ridiculous
- So, in our first few years in the house we began removing juniper bushes – we removed 18 total bushes!
- Finally getting these bushes out of our yard was great! It made the yard seem larger and cleaner, it created space for a garden, and for flower beds
- I began replacing the junipers with other plants and flowers, and as I'd do so, I would try to plan and anticipate the right or best places to plant new things
 - You try to space things out well, so it looks nice
 - But so, it still has room to grow
 - Trying to take into account the plant's need for sun vs shade, or lots vs less water
 - You ask yourself, as this plant grows is it going to get too big and block a window? Or choke out other plants?
- And inevitably, for some plants, I've had to transplant things... because I didn't plan well enough – I didn't see the big picture fully enough when I first planted
 - Sometimes a plant died, and I needed to start over
 - Sometimes I needed to uproot and move something completely
 - Because I couldn't always completely see how all of the plants and flowers and shrubs and landscaping would fit together

Application: how we view our circumstances, worldview issues, testimony

Thankfully for us, God is a better landscape designer than I am. You see,

- Some of my planting and re-planting came from not knowing how a certain plant may grow in a certain area – maybe it needed more sun than it was getting and so I had to move it
- Sometimes, a plant didn't get enough water or got *too* much sun and so it died altogether and I had to replace it with something else

- Sometimes I didn't have a plan at all... I'd just figure, 'I'll try this plant here and see how it does' – only to find it did too well and began to overgrow the rest of the flower bed
- I really didn't – and still don't – fully know what I'm doing when it comes to landscape design. I've just sort of made it up as I've gone along and learned some things along the way
- And it might be easy to think that that's how God works also... that he tries some things and then calls audibles when he needs to
 - It might be easy to think God is up there just making it up on the fly, making it up as he goes
 - Saying, "I'll try this person in this role, and if she can't hack it, then I'll try something else"
 - Or it might be easy to think that God makes mistakes and needs a re-do sometimes
- That sort of thinking is immensely popular today – but it also immensely underestimates God, his plan, and his sovereignty
 - It underestimates his creation design, making us in his image, making us male and female
 - It underestimates his plan and design for where, when, how, to whom we were born
- I think some of the biggest issues in society today – issues such as abortion, sexual orientation, religious liberty, and others – all have a significant influence from the false ideas that:
 - God can make mistakes
 - God doesn't have a plan
 - Or that my plan is better
- But if you observe how God worked throughout the genealogy that Matthew details here,
 - Then I think it becomes clear to see how God was at work and how God carried out his plan
 - And how that plan didn't have any mistakes in it, despite human sin and imperfections
- And if you believe that God has a plan and that He doesn't make mistakes...
 - Then you won't see your sin as a disqualification for God to use you

- You won't see God acting or moving in your life as a matter of chance or coincidence
- You won't see today's passage in Matthew 1 as simply a list of names
- Rather you'll see Matthew 1 as evidence of God unfolding his plan, his purpose, and his will throughout human history
 - God uses people – Jews and non-Jews, righteous and sinners, men and women, young and old, king and commoners – to accomplish his purpose
 - Just like a good landscape designer, God plants the right person, in the right place, at the right time
 - To accomplish his will
 - To bring his Son into the world
 - To provide salvation to those who believe in his Son
- And while the genealogy ends with Jesus, that doesn't mean that God stopped working and stopped working in this way
 - The rest of the New Testament shows the same approach
 - God using people imperfect people – of all kinds – to accomplish his purpose
 - He's a good landscaper
 - He's always at work
 - Always planting and pruning, watering and nourishing
 - To accomplish his will
 - He's planted you and planted me exactly where He wants us
 - In the families where he's placed us
 - In the neighborhoods where we live
 - With the skills and gifts and personalities and talents that we've got
 - With the strengths and weaknesses that we have
 - Because He's going to use us to accomplish his purpose
 - Just like he did with Abraham or Rahab or David or Asaph or Joseph and Mary

So, as we start the advent season and look towards Christmas for the next month, here's my encouragement and reminder to you.

- In the coming days and weeks, You're going to see lots of Christmas trees and images of Christmas trees
- This year, when you see a Christmas tree, view that tree as a reminder of Christ's family tree
 - And how God had been growing that tree throughout all of history
 - Culminating it in Christ's birth
- But also remember that God isn't done working. He's always planting, pruning, watering, feeding. **SLIDE**
- **You're a part of Christ's Family Tree. And God has planted you exactly where, when, and how He wants you**
 - To seek to accomplish his will
 - To love Him and serve His kingdom
 - To love your neighbors and show Christ's love to them

Let's pray.

LYRICS SLIDE W/ PADS

RESPONSES:

Well, every week at Fathom we respond in 4 ways:

The **first** is Communion – we take communion every week as a symbol and celebration of Christ's work on the cross. The crackers and juice represent Christ's body broken and his blood shed on the cross for those who proclaim Christ as Lord and Savior. So, whether you are here in person this morning, or watching at home, if you are a follower of Christ, you are welcome to join us this morning in communion. *If you are not a Christian*, we ask that you abstain from taking communion as this is a celebration for those who proclaim Christ as savior. So, grab your elements – your cracker and juice – and we'll take communion together here shortly.

The **second** way we respond is by Giving – We believe in giving to God our tithes and offerings – our first and our best – because in Jesus, God gave us His first and His best. If you're a guest with us today, we ask that you please be our guest and feel no obligation in any way to give. However, if Fathom is your home church, You can respond by going to **fathomchurch.org/give**

The **third** is Prayer – we believe in the power of prayer in our lives. And as we mentioned earlier, Fathom’s elders and staff would be honored to pray for you today and this week. Right now if you’re in need of prayer or would like someone to pray for you, go to fathomchurch.org/pray and you can submit your prayer request. Someone is monitoring that and will pray for you this morning.

The **fourth** response is Singing – Singing moves what we’ve heard in God’s Word from our heads to our hearts. We’ll close our time together this morning by responding to what God has done in our hearts by rejoicing in the gospel and by lifting our voices to worship Him.

So, I’m going to read the Words of Institution from the Apostle Paul, we’ll take communion, and then we’ll sing:

1 CORINTHIANS 11:23–26 –WORDS OF INSTITUTION

²³For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, ²⁴and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” **TAKE**

²⁵In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” **TAKE**

²⁶For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

Thanks church. Love you guys. Let’s sing together.

Resources:

<https://www.christianity.com/christian-life/christmas/what-is-advent.html>

France, R. T. (1994). [Matthew](#). In D. A. Carson, R. T. France, J. A. Motyer, & G. J. Wenham (Eds.), *New Bible commentary: 21st century edition* (4th ed., p. 908). Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press.

Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). [The Bible exposition commentary](#) (Vol. 1, p. 13). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.