

# GIFTS OF *Christmas*

## **Myrrh: His Death Will Make a Way**

*Week 4 | Dec 17, 2023*

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

#### **Lessons & Carols Christmas Service**

*Friday, December 22 | 6pm-7pm*

*Matthews Community Playhouse*

On Friday, December 22nd, we will be gathering at the Matthews Playhouse with other local churches across our city to celebrate the birth of King Jesus together. This will be a traditional Lessons & Carols service, where we will sing traditional Christmas worship songs, hear the story of the birth of Jesus read through various passages of Scripture, and take intentional time to reflect on the meaning of this season.

Childcare will be provided for ages 6 weeks - 2 years old. The service will be family-friendly, and should last about 45 minutes.

This is a small part of a citywide collaboration of like-minded churches in the Harbor Network, seeking to partner together to launch, lead, and multiply thriving churches.

#### **Holiday Gathering Schedule**

At the end of December, our schedule will change just slightly. Please note the following schedule updates:

- December 22 - Lessons and Carols - 6pm @ Matthews Playhouse
- December 24 - No Gathering
- December 31 - Prayer and Worship - 9:30am @ Dowd
- January 7 - Citizens 3rd Birthday! - 9:30am @ Dowd

### **REVIEW THE MISSION**

Take some time to review who various people are building relationships with and seeking to share the gospel with.

**Pray for these individuals - that God would open their eyes to the good news of the gospel.**

## PRAYER + SCRIPTURE

**Open with a brief word of prayer:** “God, we thank you for this time together. We open our hearts to how you might want to meet with us. Come Holy Spirit.”

**1-2 minutes of silent reflection.**

### **Read Isaiah 53:1-12**

Who has believed what he has heard from us? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned--every one--to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth. By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people? And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth. Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.

**1-2 minutes of silent reflection.**

**Close with this short prayer:** “Lord, you have existed for all of time, created us and the universe we live within, and though we have not lived up to honoring you in all that we do, you made a way for us to be with you still. Spirit, help us see our deep need for a Savior, and be thankful that our all-powerful God made a way for us. Amen.”

**As you reflect on Isaiah 53:1-12, what is the Holy Spirit showing or teaching you?**

## SERMON DISCUSSION

### **HIS DEATH WILL MAKE A WAY**

As we have learned in this series, Matthew is showing how the gifts of the Magi say something about Jesus by drawing connections to the Old Testament. So when he highlights – one of the gifts is myrrh – what he's alerting his Jewish audience to is that this child is not only a King and God with us, but myrrh points to the prophesied truth that He will die.

Matthew also shows us why Jesus has to die in what the angel told Mary when she conceived Jesus. He is going to be the one that saves us from our sins.

Through Jesus' life and death, He came to suffer and die on our behalf, so that we would not bear the guilt of our sins.

**How is the reality that Jesus came to die as our Savior good news to you right now?**

### **HE SAVES US**

The Bible is clear that we as people are not good or neutral. We can't just try our best and say that we're good people overall. According to the Scriptures we are sinful. Born into sin and choose to live in sin. And although we may not feel like our shortcomings and sins are all that bad, they are in fact an atrocity to God.

And just like a sheep, we can't save ourselves. We have wandered. We don't know the way back. We cannot do anything to fix the problem. We can't clear our own record. But that does not stop us from trying.

**What are ways you try to diminish your need for Jesus to save you? Either through "saving yourself" by other means or neglecting to remember the Gospel?**

### **WORSHIP KING JESUS**

Advent is the good news that the child came to die. We have good news to celebrate because Jesus came into the world to save it. To die and be raised again. According to the will of God. To save us.

Jesus came as the once and future king.

Jesus came as God with us now and forever.

He came to die.

But not just to die. To be raised. To defeat satan sin and death.

**Take some time to discuss plans to worship God on Christmas, and through the Christmas season, and then pray together, worshiping God for the gospel!**