**Family Imperfections**

**Introduction**

Family history and the idea of where we came from are important to people. People will pay money to have their DNA analyzed by companies like Ancestry.com to determine their family background and heritage. Ancestry.com touts 25 million members and over $1 billion dollars in revenue, so genealogy certainly proves itself to be important to at least a few people.

My family genealogy tells me my great-great-great grandfather Daniel Lefever was a gunmaker who invented the hammerless shotgun, meaning the gun lacks an external hammer. He later developed a version that cocked the strikers automatically when the gun was closed, technology still used in most modern American double-barrel shotguns. He also patented the automatic ejector system which ejected the shells when the breech was opened. His son, Charles Lefever, invented the Daisy Model 25 pump action BB gun, which is still manufactured today. Unfortunately, Daniel wasn’t the best businessman so there’s no family fortune awaiting me like the family of the men who founded Walmart.

Considering how important personal genealogy or family history can be for people, why is it that when we encounter a genealogy in the Bible many of us want to skip over reading it? Is it that the names are hard to pronounce? No connection to the names listed? General thoughts of “How does this apply to me?” or “Why is this important?” compared to the more life-applicable sections of scripture?

Knowing that all scripture is God-breathed and useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training, there must be a good reason why God included genealogies in the Bible. In the most basic sense, Biblical genealogies help confirm the Bible’s historical accuracy. When we consider the genealogy of Jesus, John MacArthur says “It tells more than who Jesus’ ancestors were – it’s more like an abridged tribute to God’s grace throughout redemptive history.” Although we don’t have historical details for all the included names, each person listed in Jesus’ genealogy is important: they are part of God’s plan of bringing the Messiah into the world. God showed grace to a long line of undeserving people, just as he continues to do with us today.

**Genealogical Differences**

The genealogy of Jesus is captured in two separate places in the New Testament: Matthew 1 and Luke 3. When comparing one to the other, the casual observer can see there are differences. Matthew’s genealogy starts with Abraham; Luke’s genealogy starts with Adam. There’s also a divergence in the genealogies after the mention of David, with Matthew having Jesus come from Solomon and Luke having Jesus come from Nathan. How do we reconcile these differences?

Some commentators believe that Matthew is presenting Joseph’s genealogy while Luke is presenting Mary’s genealogy: “Luke differs in the account of Matthew from David onward, but they both end their genealogies with Joseph. The best explanation for this seems to be that Luke followed Mary’s line (Jesus’ actual lineage) while Matthew followed Joseph’s line (His legal lineage by adoption).” (David Guzik)

Other commentators believe the two genealogies are necessary: “Luke shows that through Mary, Jesus was literally a blood descendant of David. Matthew proves that through His adopted father Joseph, Jesus was legally in the royal line. In every way possible, He had the right to rule.” (John MacArthur)

Theologian R.C. Sproul didn’t find an easy resolution to this matter and didn’t want to enter the debate. Instead, his biggest concern was why these genealogies are included and where they lead us. One primary idea we should understand is that each gospel had a different intended audience. R.C. Sproul elaborates: “When you look at the isolated portion of Luke and Matthew, something jumps out at you. In the material that is unique to Matthew, almost all of it exclusively deals with the application of Old Testament prophecy to Jesus’ claims of being the Messiah. When you see that, it’s as clear as the nose on your face that Matthew was writing for a Jewish audience.

When you pick up Luke and isolate everything unique to Luke, it jumps out at you that Luke is clearly writing to and for Gentiles because his great stress is on the universality of the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Jesus is not simply the Savior of the Jews, but the Savior of the Gentiles, and the kingdom of God is not limited to the geographical borders of Palestine, but it goes as far as the east is from the west, for every tongue and tribe and nation.”

Let’s jump into the text, starting in Matthew Chapter 1. A word of warning: I don’t speak Hebrew and I’m not a Jewish scholar, but I’ll do my best to correctly pronounce these names.

**Matthew 1:1-17**

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

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

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

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

**17So 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.**

The Jewish people would know to anticipate the Messiah coming from the line of David, which is the primary reason Matthew calls Jesus the son of David. By mentioning that David is from Abraham, Matthew links David back to the patriarchal father of the entire Jewish nation. Matthew starts his gospel by clearly telling his audience that Jesus is the authentic Jewish Messiah.

**Luke 3:23-38**

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

Some of the individuals found in Jesus’s genealogy are also among those listed in the ‘Hall of Faith’ found in Hebrews 11. These people were seen by God as faithful and having a heart for Him. However, that doesn’t mean they were free from sin, grievous mistakes, or that they had great parents. Let’s look at a few of the key figures and realize while none of them were perfect, God used them as part of his redemptive plan for the world.

**Righteous Failures and Unrighteous Contributors**

**Adam** – original sin yet Messiah promised through Him and Eve

**Genesis 1:26: “Then God said, “Let us make manin our image, after our likeness.”** The Hebrew word for man (adam) is the generic term for mankind and becomes the proper name Adam.

We know this story: God tells Adam and Eve not to eat from the tree in the middle of the garden, yet they disobey and eat the fruit. Adam and Eve had a direct relationship with God but even they disobeyed. This wouldn’t be the last time someone in the Bible had a direct relationship with God yet still greatly sinned.

Genesis 3:15 tells us **“I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspringand her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”** This verse captures the first promise of the redeemer, the Messiah. Immediately after the great sin of Adam and Eve, God spoke of His redemptive plan that would be accomplished through the offspring of the two people who caused the original fall of mankind.

**Enoch** – walked with God and then was no more because God took him

**Genesis 5:21-24: 21When Enoch had lived 65 years, he fathered Methuselah. 22Enoch walked with Godafter he fathered Methuselah 300 years and had other sons and daughters. 23Thus all the days of Enoch were 365 years. 24Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.**

Enoch lived during the time when people lived around 900 years. God took him before he was halfway through the normal life expectancy. All we know about Enoch is he walked with God and God took him. Hebrews 11:5-6 tells us **“Enoch was commended as having pleased God. 6And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.”** When we look at Enoch, we see thatwhen we spend our lives walking with God, He will take us at our appointed time and bring us into His presence for eternity.

**Noah** – faithfully built the ark but later got drunk

The name Noah means “rest.” Noah’s father Lamech says in Genesis 5:29, **“Out of the ground that the Lord has cursed, this one shall bring us relieffrom our work and from the painful toil of our hands.”** What does this mean? Some prophecies in the Bible have a dual fulfillment, which includes a short-term or present application and a long-term or future application. Short-term, Noah would bring rest and peace amid God’s coming judgment. Long-term, it may be pointing towards a much later descendant of Noah, the Messiah, who will bring ultimate relief from work and painful toil.

Genesis 6:9 tells us “**Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God.”** After the flood and after receiving a covenant and blessing from God, Noah got drunk from wine he made and lay in his tent naked. Although the Bible does not provide a reason why Noah got drunk, it remains a warning to believers: even those who have been saved by God’s grace can still fall prey to sin and temptation.

**Abraham** – the father of Israel

Genesis 12 captures God’s calling of Abraham. God tells Abraham he will become the father of a great nation, and that through him all the families of the earth would be blessed. This is yet another promise of the coming Messiah.

Abraham was blessed by God, but he wasn’t perfect. Let’s look at some of his missteps:

* Abraham lied twice about his wife being his sister, first to the Egyptians and later to Abimelech, trying to protect his own life rather than trust in God’s protection.
* God promised Abraham a son, but instead of waiting for God’s perfect timing, he and Sarah forced the matter with Abraham having child with Sarah’s maidservant. This decision ultimately had great implications on Abraham and the future nation of Israel as a whole.

Even with his continued mistakes, God’s did not take back His promises. God knew Abraham’s heart; Abraham believed God and trusted in Him, which God credited to Abraham as righteousness. As believers, we will have moments of mistakes and sins, but we find our forgiveness in Jesus. When God sees believers, He sees Jesus and credits Jesus’ righteousness to us.

**Jacob** – deceiver, favoritism of wives and children, blessed by God after struggle

Jacob, second-born of Isaac and taker of his brother Esau’s birthright and blessing. Jacob’s name means “he who hides his intentions,” which can be more plainly translated as “deceiver.” Although his deceptions rewarded him with unmerited blessings, they also led to a life of struggles.

* Jacob was able to get Esau to sell his birthright for a bowl of stew and later stole Esau’s blessing by tricking his father with his mother’s help. Jacob had to flee to avoid his brother’s wrath, traveling over 500 miles to his mother’s brother Laban.
* During his trip, God appeared to Jacob in a dream, which is captured in Genesis 28, telling him he would be the recipient of the covenant originally made with Abraham and Issac. However, Jacob received this blessing selfishly, with Genesis 28:20 quoting his response “***If* God will be with me and will keep me in this way that I go…”**, reflecting the same selfishness he had shown all his life.

However, God was working in Joseph, taking him on a journey from selfishness to submission.

* Jacob had to serve Laban for 14 years to obtain Rachel.
* Jacob struggled with God, not wanting to let go of his old ways while God was trying to work in him.
* Although Jacob continued his selfishness, preferring one wife, Rachel, and one child, Joseph, more than his other wives and children, he ultimately submitted to God’s plan. God recognized this internal change this by changing Jacob’s name Israel, which means “God rules,” and making him the father of the twelve tribes.

**Judah** – selling Joseph into slavery. Treachery of Tamar (Perez – son)

Even though Jacob eventually turned from his selfish ways and devoted his heart to God, he had sons that continued a path of sin. Judah, one of Jacob’s middle sons from Leah, was the ringleader of getting rid of his father’s favorite son Joseph and made other bad decisions.

Although God used Joseph to save all of Israel in a time of great famine, He chose to have the line of the Messiah run through Judah. Genesis 38 tells us the details of Judah choosing to unknowingly lie with his daughter-in-law Tamar, who had disguised herself as a prostitute to become pregnant by Judah. Three months later, Judah learned Tamar was pregnant and ordered her to be put to death. It was revealed by Tamar that it was Judah who impregnated her. Although the situation of Tamar was full of sinful decisions and actions, Tamar gave birth to twin boys, one of whom was Perez, who is found in both of Jesus’s genealogies.

Judah is also the patriarch of the tribe of Judah, who’s land was home to Bethlehem, the eventual birthplace of King David and more importantly, Jesus. The name Judah came to represent the entire southern kingdom after the death of Solomon, with Jerusalem, God’s Holy city, as its capital.

**Boaz and Ruth**

Ruth was a Moabite, not an Israelite. Who were the Moabites? Looking back to Genesis 19, we find the passage where Lot’s daughters get him drunk and lie with him. We are told both daughters became pregnant by their father and the older daughter bore a son and named him Moab. Moab became the father of the Moabites, a pagan nation on the other side of the Red Sea from Israel.

Ruth was a woman who was raised in a pagan nation, worshipped false idols and had no understanding of the true God. Yet after her husband, father-in-law and brother-in-law all died, she clung to Naomi and refused to depart from her. Ruth 1:15-16 tells us, **“And she (Naomi) said, “See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law.” 16But Ruth said, “Do not urge me to leave you or to return from following you. For where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God.”** Ruth made a life-changing decision to leave her gods, her family and her home country and follow Naomi back to Israel. She observed Naomi trusting in the Lord when Naomi had nothing, and Ruth responded by putting her own faith, and fate, in the hands of God. Our upbringing and religious or agnostic backgrounds do not affect when and how we come to the true God.

Bible commentator David Guzik notes: “Naomi’s return to Bethlehem, and the roots of David in Bethlehem, going back to Ruth and Boaz, are why Joseph and Mary had to go to Bethlehem to register in the census of Augustus. Ruth and Boaz are the reason why Jesus was born in Bethlehem.”

**David** – a man after God’s own heart but not free from sin

One of the most important people in Jesus’ genealogy is David: a man after God’s heart, the anointed king who united Israel, and the writer of nearly half of the Psalms. In 2 Samuel 7, God promises the Messiah will come through his line.

**11“Moreover, the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. 12When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. 13He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 14I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son.”**

This same David lusted after Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah, and had Uriah killed in battle after discovering Bathsheba was pregnant. God took the life of that child to punish David, but this adulterous relationship also brought about Solomon and Nathan, each found in one of the genealogies.

Although David committed serious sins during his lifetime, he heeded correction and made peace with God. 1 Chronicles 29 tells us David **“died at a good age, full of days, riches, and honor.”** While riches and honor are not guaranteed for every believer during our time on earth, we should all be after God’s own heart throughout our lives, laying up treasures in heaven, **“for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” (Matthew 5:21)**

**Solomon** – wisest man yet followed the world

Solomon took the throne right before David died. David, knowing God and God’s promises, gave his son these instructions found in 1 Kings 2, where we’ll turn now. Starting in verse 1: **“When David's time to die drew near, he commanded Solomon his son, saying, 2“I am about to go the way of all the earth. Be strong, and show yourself a man, 3and keep the charge of the Lord your God, walking in his ways and keeping his statutes, his commandments, his rules, and his testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses, that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn, 4that the Lord may establish his word that he spoke concerning me, saying, ‘If your sons pay close attention to their way, to walk before me in faithfulness with all their heart and with all their soul, you shall not lacka man on the throne of Israel.’”**

Soloman started out well as king, asking for wisdom over riches and became the wisest man in the world. He built God’s temple and wrote the book of Proverbs. However, this same Solomon took many wives from many different countries and eventually worshipped their gods. He thought he could find contentment in the things of the world instead of finding his contentment in God. Soloman spent many years as a prodigal son of sorts, wallowing in a life of self-indulgence before realizing at the end of his life that all those worldly things were meaningless. It is believed Solomon wrote the book of Ecclesiastes, where he discusses the fleeting vanity of the world and ultimately concludes the best thing a person can do is revere God and keep His commandments.

**Ahaz and Hezekiah** – very wicked father, very righteous son

Ahaz could be considered the most wicked of all the kings to rule over Israel or Judah. In his sixteen years as king, he performed numerous wicked acts, many of which are recorded in 2Kings, 2Chronicles and Isaiah:

* Made metal images for the Baals
* Made offerings to Baal, including his own sons
* Gave the silver and gold from the temple as a gift to the King of Assyria
* Copied the altars he saw in Assyria and had them placed in the temple
* Shut the doors of the temple, cut up the utensils and set up altars on every street corner in Jerusalem

Instead of serving and honoring God, Ahaz rejected God and turned to whatever felt good or whatever might bring him favor. When Ahaz died, his son Hezekiah, apparently one of the sons he didn’t sacrifice, took the throne. Hezekiah was 25 years old when he began to reign, so he witnessed his father’s entire reign and all the evil that was done. However, there is a significant difference between Ahaz and Hezekiah. Let’s turn to 2 Kings 18 verse 3 to see how the Bible introduces Hezekiah.

**“And he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, according to all that David his father had done. 4He removed the high places and broke the pillars and cut down the Asherah. And he broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made, for until those days the people of Israel had made offerings to it. 5He trusted in the Lord, the God of Israel, so that there was none like him among all the kings of Judah after him, nor among those who were before him. 6For he held fast to the Lord. He did not depart from following him, but kept the commandments that the Lord commanded Moses. 7And the Lord was with him; wherever he went out, he prospered.”**

How was Hezekiah so righteous when his father was so evil? Simply put, the actions and ways of our earthly fathers are not the pattern that automatically gets placed on our lives. We have a wonderful heavenly Father who provides us with His word and will direct our steps when we follow His ways instead of our own or the ways of our parents. Hezekiah’s choice to truly follow God despite his family history should be an example to all of us.

**Amon and Josiah** – wicked father, righteous son

Amon was Hezekiah’s grandson but was nothing like him. 2 Kings tells us **“he abandoned the Lord, the God of his fathers, and did not walk in the way of the Lord.”** He was apparently so evil his own servants conspired against him and put him to death in his own house. The people of Judah then made Josiah king in his place, who was eight years old when he began to reign.

Despite the ways of his father, Josiah did what was right in the eyes of God. He instituted a series of much-needed religious reforms to bring Judah back in line with God.

* At 20 years old he destroyed the high places, idols and alters to Baal
* At 26 he provided the necessary funding to repair the temple
* The Book of the Law was rediscovered and Josiah put it back into practice, including the celebration of Passover

Unfortunately, these reforms were not enough to change the overall course of Judah and Israel. Josiah was told by God that his humble heart and religious reforms would not stop the coming disaster at the hands of the Babylonians. Even with this knowledge of the future, Josiah remained committed to honoring the Lord, making a covenant **“to walk after the Lord and to keep his commandments and his testimonies and his statutes with all his heart and all his soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people joined in the covenant.”**

Theologian Leon Morris recognizes that “God’s hand is all over history. God works out His purpose, generation after generation. Limited as we are to one lifetime, each of us sees so little of what happens. A genealogy is a striking way of bringing before us the continuity of God’s purpose through the ages. The process is not haphazard. There is a purpose in it all. And the purpose is the purpose of God.”

**What Can We Learn?**

Given the variety of lives lived of all the people who make up Jesus’s family tree, what can we learn? Jesus came from a long line of imperfect people, yet this did not affect his sinless life and full commitment to loving God and loving others. Although we are all imputed with sin due to the original sin of Adam, we are not bound by the actions of our parents. A parent’s sins may incur long-term negative consequences on future generations, but their descendants do not fall under direct punishment because of those actions. Let’s look at a couple Biblical examples of how God views our lives independent of our families.

**Exodus 20:4-6: “You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. 5You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, 6but showing steadfast love to thousandsof those who love me and keep my commandments.”**

This passage certainly sounds like God will punish future generations for the sin of a parent or grandparent. However, there is a key phrase in this passage that one commentator does well to point out: “The important words are “of those who hate me.” If the descendants love God, they will not have the iniquity of the fathers visited on them.” This means God will not directly punish us for the sins of our ancestors. We should also view this passage on a national scale, being applied to Israel as a whole. This falls in line with what we previously discussed regarding Josiah: even though he instituted many religious reforms to bring the Israelites back in line with God, it did not turn the hearts of the nation and divert God’s plan to send the Israelites into exile.

Flip over a couple books to Deuteronomy 24:16 where God is laying out his laws for the Israelites: **“Fathers shall not be put to death because of their children, nor shall children be put to death because of their fathers. Each one shall be put to death for his own sin.”**

This verse tells us that we’re accountable for our own sin. James, the brother of Jesus, said similar in James 1:14: **“But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire.”** Our sinful desires are our own**.** We’re each responsible to have our own relationship with God. Parents may have a relationship with God and witness the great things he has done in their lives, but that doesn’t mean that relationship and knowledge will pass on to their children.

Turning to the New Testament in John 9:1-3, we find Jesus reassuring his followers that suffering is not indicative of sin, which is also true of what happened to Job. Verse 1: **“As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. 2And his disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” 3Jesus answered, “It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him.”**

I find that Pastor James Boice explains this interaction well: “They were thinking, ‘Sin produces suffering. There is a one-to-one relationship; therefore, it is either this man or his parents who are guilty.’ But it is simply not true that when anyone is passing through a particularly difficult time this can always be linked to something sinful he or she has done.” I believe we also find this statement to be true when looking at what happened with Job: he suffered greatly but had not sinned.

**Conclusion**

Maybe some of us didn’t have great parents; but even good, godly parents will let us down during our lives. However, we all have access to a great and perfect father who will never let us down. God is called ‘Father’ about fifteen times in the Old Testament. Jesus addressed God as ‘Father’ more than 160 times in the four gospels. Paul described God as ‘Father’ over forty times in his letters.

God wants to have a paternal relationship with us. He calls us to Him, adopting us into His family, giving us His Word as the best life guidance we could ever receive, and corrects us when we need it, all out of His love for us. One Christian author frames it this way: “God is your Father and He never changes His mind and abandons His children. He will never leave you nor forsake you. He adopted you into His family and you are His forever.”

None of us should let our age or family history prevent us from living a life fully committed and obedient to God. Although our parents or our own children may not follow in our same faithful footsteps, we cannot let that deter us from being faithful servants. David Guzik puts it this way: “Our destiny is not determined by our ancestors, but by our current relationship with God.”

I’d like to end our time together by reading a few verses that remind us of the nature of God the Father.

**Psalm 68:5: “Father of the fatherless and protector of widows is God in his holy habitation.”**

**Matthew 7:11: If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!”**

**1 John 3:1: “See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and *such* we are.”**

Communion

**Luke 22:14-20: “14And when the hour came, he reclined at table, and the apostles with him. 15And he said to them, “I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. 16For I tell you I will not eat ituntil it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.” 17And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said, “Take this, and divide it among yourselves. 18For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.” 19And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” 20And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.”**