

A Name Above Every Name, Genesis 10:1-11:9

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Introduction

Good morning, my name is Brad and I'm one of the pastors here. Ten weeks ago we kicked off a sermon series through the first eleven chapters of the book of Genesis, which we subtitled, Creating Culture. At that time we explained why such a series:

- First, because this is a transitional period from the first ten years of our church to the next ten years. And so we want to intentionally build on the foundation that's been laid by creating fresh culture.
- And second, we want to create a holistic culture, not one focused only the head (knowledge) or the hands (business), but that which tethers them together, the heart. We want to create a culture of soulfulness in all we say and do.

Let's take a moment to remember how the Lord has spoken to us:

- Genesis 1:1-2:3 (opening creation account) - Because God was Creator, Lord, and Savior from the beginning, he is Creator, Lord, and Savior to the end.
- Genesis 2:4-25 (second creation account) - Everything that God requires, he provides.
- Genesis 3:1-7 (fall of humanity) - Because humanity tasted the forbidden fruit and died, Jesus Christ tasted death for everyone and lived.
- Genesis 3:8-24 (curses of sin and death) - Because humanity departed from God and was laid in the dust of death, Jesus Christ was laid in the dust of death and returned to life.
- Genesis 4:1-16 (Cain and Abel) - In the midst of God's judgment, you capture glimpses of mercy.
- Genesis 6:1-8 (weird Nephilim passage) - This passage gives us a window into the heart of humanity, but more importantly, into the heart of God.
- Genesis 6:9-8:22 - (the flood) The story of God's flood and Noah's ark points us to God's coming flood and our coming Savior.
- Genesis 9:1-29 (starting over after the flood) - In all of life's highs and lows, God is good and points us to the real hero.
- Genesis 11:1-11:32 (two genealogies) - The ultimate work of civilization is to know God and make him known in all things.

What a summer! But how do we land this plane? Well, as we bring to a close this thought of creating culture in our church, and enter into a series about creating culture in our families, my mind has gone to Psalm 127 and this question: “Do we want to build a culture that looks to our own strength and ingenuity, or God’s? Something that we can boast in ourselves about, or something that only God can take credit for?”

The psalmist answers us,

¹ Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Psalm 127:1

This is a timely word as we look to today’s story of the tower of Babel. Turn there in your Bibles with me to Genesis 10:1-11:9, which you can find on page 7 if you’re using one of the Bibles in the chairs. The title of the sermon is “A Name Above Every Name,” and the main idea is taken directly from Matthew 23:12, which says, “Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.” I’m going to break down this passage in two parts:

- 1) The Table of Nations - 10:1-32
- 2) The Tower of Babel - 11:1-9

Instead of reading the entire passage (you’re welcome—although it might have been fun to hear me read names like Gomer, Nimrod, and Jobab [Joe Bob?]), I’m just going to read the story of Babel. So, if you are able, please stand with me to honor the reading of God’s word. I will be reading beginning at Genesis 10:32. Church, hear the word of the Lord:

³² These are the clans of the sons of Noah, according to their genealogies, in their nations, and from these the nations spread abroad on the earth after the flood.

¹¹ Now the whole earth had one language and the same words. ² And as people migrated from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. ³ And they said to one another, “Come, let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly.” And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar. ⁴ Then they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth.” ⁵ And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of man had built. ⁶ And the Lord said, “Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. ⁷ Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that

they may not understand one another's speech.”⁸ So the Lord dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city.⁹ Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the Lord confused the language of all the earth. And from there the Lord dispersed them over the face of all the earth. Genesis 11:1-9

May the Word preached here today echo in our hearts and among the nations. And all God's people said, *Amen*. You may be seated.

Exposition

As most of you know, last Saturday and Sunday were tragic days in our country and world as two mass shootings took place, one in El Paso, Texas and the other in Dayton, Ohio; one motivated by the hatred of immigrants and the other by the hatred of all people. This week I talked with my friend Job Juarez, who preached for us recently, who is himself originally from Mexico, and I asked him how we should respond. He said the most appropriate response from Christians is to lament and grieve and pray; that we should cry out, “Lord, this is not as it should be! Lord, have mercy on us! Lord, bring peace! Lord Jesus, please come soon!” Such prayerful responses may not seem like much, but they are the salt that God uses to preserve his mercy over all things in the midst of a rotten world.

And they are far more significant than the more common human responses to such things—one, of course, being apathy. But more unhelpful than apathy are responses that polarize into far ends of the spectrum, such as extreme nationalism or extreme pluralism. These are the kinds of things that seem to have fed the shootings themselves:

- Extreme nationalism being the focus on the things that divide humanity.
- And extreme pluralism being the focus on the things that make humanity all the same.

The Bible, we might be surprised to discover, actually holds in tension the things that divide and the things that unite; and, in God's timing, it does so in the very passage we're considering today.

After the great flood of God's judgment in Genesis 8, we saw that humanity started over with only one man and his family: Noah. And after that family began to live upon the earth again in Genesis 9, we saw that sin was still at play, which led to Noah blessing two of his sons and cursing the offspring of his third son, Ham, who had acted wickedly

against him. Genesis 10, then, shows us what came from this blessing and cursing, this family that ultimately populated the whole world.

- Thus, the reality that strikes us at the beginning of this passage is that humanity is actually one big family. We might look differently, talk differently, think differently, and reside differently, but no matter what, if you track us all the way back, we're the same family.
- But also, by the end of today's passage in Genesis 11, the other reality that will strike us is that humanity is actually divinely divided, intentionally dispersed by different languages that ultimately led to different nations, tribes, and peoples. It's somewhat like God's actions during creation, where he brought order from chaos by dividing things into neat and separate categories.

And so in Genesis' view, it seems foolish to respond to our world with extreme nationalism or extreme pluralism, because *at the same time* humanity is both one *and* divided. The New Testament carries this theme as well, for instance, when Paul was speaking to the Athenians:

²⁶ And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth [note: one family], having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place [note: yet a divided family], ²⁷ [but most importantly, why?] that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, Acts 17:26-27

This is why one of our mission convictions as a church reads,

Because God communicates the gospel to us in ways we can clearly understand, we are sensitive to native language and culture.

We give honor to the boundaries that God himself has made, and yet look to that which can unite us even in the midst of diversity. Today's passage and message, I believe, points to that one thing, that only thing, that can bring us together in peace.¹

1) The Table of Nations - 10:1-32

That brings us to our first portion of today's text, the table of nations. Look with me at the beginning of chapter 10. There we read,

¹ Allen P. Ross, *Creation and Blessing: A Guide to the Study and Exposition of Genesis* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1998), Kindle Edition, Loc 2777-2783

These are the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Sons were born to them after the flood. Genesis 10:1

So here we are at another genealogy, this the biggest and most intimidating one so far. And yet there's a pattern. Last week you may have noticed that both genealogies end with three sons:

- In Cain's line: Jabal, Jubal, and Tubal-Cain
- In Seth's line: Shem, Ham, and Japheth
- And next summer when we journey through the life of Abraham, one of the first things we'll notice is a genealogy that ends with three sons: Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

The point with all this is that there's serious intentionality on the author's part—it's pointing to something specific. It's drawing a line through the Bible from:

Adam (the man of creation) → Noah (the man of the new creation) → Abraham (the man of faith) → David (the man after God's own heart)

And eventually it would all come together in a way that has meaning not just for God's Old Testament people, the Jews, but for all people. We see this in the very first words of the New Testament:

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

But before we get there, a whole world grows in anticipation. And it starts from these three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.² Now, there are so many rabbit trails we could follow in dissecting this thing, but I just want to give one general explanation and point out two specifics.

First, the explanation. This isn't just a table of people. The author has arranged it in such a way that it includes the names of people, tribes, countries, and cities. He has basically created a sprawling map surrounding the Old Testament people of God. Imagine how beneficial this would have been for those people, not only in knowing their own origin, but that of the people around them.

² Ross, Loc 2666-2670

For example, why did they have so much trouble from groups like the Egyptians and the Philistines and the Babylonians? Well, in part because they came from Canaan, the cursed son of Ham.

But this knowledge wasn't meant to make the people of Israel prideful (there it is again—extreme nationalism), but actually the opposite. To recognize their common family origin going back to Noah should have reminded them of God's grace toward them, and that his mercy is over all the peoples he has made. We know this is true because in the very next chapter after Babel, God approaches Abram and says these famous words:

² And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing...and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”
Genesis 12:2-3

The table of nations was meant by God to ultimately be a table of blessing, where all would one day be invited to feast on his salvation.³ So, there's our general explanation. Now to the specifics. Look with me at verse 8, in the family line of Ham:

⁸ Cush fathered Nimrod; he was the first on earth to be a mighty man. ⁹ He was a mighty hunter before the Lord. Therefore it is said, “Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before the Lord.” ¹⁰ The beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. Genesis 10:8-10

Nimrod should stand out to us here, not just because his name is Nimrod, but because he is described as “a mighty man” and “a mighty hunter before the Lord”. What this brings to mind is the mighty men of renown described in Genesis 6—remember them? So, here's what we can put together about Nimrod: he was skilled killer of creatures and builder of kingdoms. In short, he was a king. What kind of a king was he?

That, we will learn about in a few moments in chapter 11, because the first place he established was Babel in the land of Shinar. This is not only significant because it shows the thread of humanity's sinfulness from long before the flood to long after the flood, it provides the origin of the wicked city of Babylon, which plays a significant role

³ Derek Kidner, *Genesis: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 1967), 112; Ross, Loc 2746-2748, 2752-2754

throughout the Bible, all the way to the very end, even in the book of Revelation, always displayed as people united against God.⁴

The second specific I want to point out is nestled in verse 25—look there with me. In the line of Shem,

25 To Eber were born two sons: the name of the one was Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided, and his brother's name was Joktan. Genesis 10:25

Did you notice that little phrase, “in his days the earth was divided”? What’s that about? This is the link between chapter 10 and 11, between the table of nations and the tower of Babel. How did there become such a spread of people, tribes, countries, and cities? Well, the earth was divided in the days of Peleg. What divided the earth? Look no further than the story of the tower of Babel.⁵

2) The Tower of Babel - 11:1-9

Which brings us to our second portion of today’s passage. Read with me at the beginning of chapter 11:

Now the whole earth had one language and the same words. Genesis 11:1

For a long time in the world after the flood there was only one language spoken.⁶ This may not be very hard to imagine since we live in a massive country where English is the common language in every part. But if you’ve traveled much overseas, you know that this is the exception to the rule. When I lived in another country the size of Texas, you could drive for an hour, get out, and the language would be different. Go another hour and it would be the same. There were 88 languages in that one country!

So, there is something unbelievably unifying and powerful about millions of people speaking the same language. But watch what sinful people do with such unity and power, as we continue reading in verse 2:

2 And as people migrated from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. 3 And they said to one another, “Come, let us make bricks, and burn them

⁴ Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, Word Biblical Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987), 335; Kidner, 115

⁵ Ross, Loc 2947-2949, 2955-2957; Wenham, 335

⁶ Wenham, 335

thoroughly.” And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar. ⁴ Then they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth.”
Genesis 11:2-4

At first glance it may not seem troublesome—just people subduing the earth. But let’s look more closely:

First, they find a good place to settle. There’s generally nothing wrong with that, granted that you welcome the Lord to dwell there with you, and so walk in his ways. But remember God’s great mandate in Genesis 1:28? He commanded the man and woman not just to subdue the earth, but to fill it. As people created with his glorious image, he wanted his glory to fill the earth as the waters cover the sea. But these people didn’t want to do that. That should remind us of something else from earlier in Genesis: Cain, the murderer of his brother who was meant to be a wanderer dependent on God, but instead refused by settling down and building a city. These people at Babel are of their father, Cain.

Second, they begin making bricks. This is definitely an impressive subduing of the earth, because apparently there wasn’t stone or mortar, which if you’ve ever played a round of Settlers of Catan, you know: you gotta have some stuff to build some stuff. So they make bricks and use bitumen (something like tar). These people are ingenuitive and motivated. But what’s driving them?

Third, they want to build themselves a city and tower that reaches the heavens. I have had the opportunity to travel to Dubai a couple of times, home to the world’s tallest building, the Burj Khalifa. It’s so tall that in a plane that was circling the city, two minutes after takeoff I was still looking *up* at the top of the building. I now hear there’s an even taller building under construction in Saudi Arabia. If building a tall tower is so bad, why doesn’t God keep these from being built?

Well, it wasn’t the work of humanity’s hands that condemned them, but their heart behind it. They were doing all this in order to make a name for themselves, so they wouldn’t be dispersed—so they wouldn’t fill the earth as God had commanded them. Basically, this was humanity’s greatest, most united attempt to dig in their heels and deny God.⁷

⁷ Ross, Loc 2807-2811

You would think that humanity, given all this creative ability and a world to fill, could find something better to do than rage and plot against their Creator! But since the day our first mother and father reached out to make a name for themselves by grasping forbidden fruit, we do exactly the same over and over.

We use power as the god to comfort our fears of not being known or accepted. That's why we prefer to act like we've got it all together, when in reality, on the inside we're basically afraid and insecure.

But not just individually—as people united by a common language and culture, we do what? We use power as the god to comfort our fears of not being something important in the world, of not being safe in the world.⁸ In fact, the most powerful people and nations are often the most insecure.

In reality, whether individually or collectively, our Creator God is the only one who can provide the name we're looking for, who can comfort us with a truth rather than a lie, that in him we can be known and accepted and safe.

For this reason, Jesus, when he was on the earth, asked the question,

²⁸ For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it? ²⁹ Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, ³⁰ saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.' Luke 14:28-30

He wants us to think about our tower-building. Why are we so motivated to make a name for ourselves and be self-sufficient? And do we really think we're actually going to attain it?

I mean, what if all the ants in my yard decided tonight that they're going to build a tower to keep me from coming out my front door in the morning, what do you think I'm going to do. Well, I'll just go out my side door. Or, if I do go out the front door, I'll just step over them on my way to the car, not even noticing their tower or their white-knuckled shout of resistance. This sounds very similar to verse 5:

⁵ And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of man had built. ⁶ And the Lord said, "Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language,

⁸ Ross, Loc 2980-2983

and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. ⁷ Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech.” ⁸ So the Lord dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. Genesis 11:5-8

Nice try, little ants! Except, thanks be to God he is attuned to his precious little ones rather than just walking over them.⁹

Here, we might be tempted to think that God is actually the fearful one: that because they are one people and have one language, they will be unstoppable; and so he must do something quick to protect himself. But the passage is actually meant to remind us of something from the flood. Look at the unbelievable Hebrew structure of the flood story (palistrophic poetry):

A	Noah (vi 10a)
B	Shem, Ham and Japheth (10b)
C	Ark to be built (14-16)
D	Flood announced (17)
E	Covenant with Noah (18-20)
F	Food in the ark (21)
G	Command to enter ark (vii 1-3)
H	7 days waiting for flood (4-5)
I	7 days waiting for flood (7-10)
J	Entry to ark (11-15)
K	Yahweh shuts Noah in (16)
L	40 days flood (17a)
M	Waters increase (17b-18)
N	Mountains covered (19-20)
O	150 days waters prevail ((21)-24)
P	GOD REMEMBERS NOAH (viii 1)
O'	150 days waters abate (3)
N'	Mountain tops visible (4-5)
M'	Waters abate (5)
L'	40 days (end of) (6a)
K'	Noah opens window of ark (6b)
J'	Raven and dove leave ark (7-9)
I'	7 days waiting for waters to subside (10-11)
H'	7 days waiting for waters to subside (12-13)
G'	Command to leave ark (15-17(22))
F'	Food outside ark (ix 1-4)
E'	Covenant with all flesh (8-10)
D'	No flood in future (11-17)
C'	Ark (18a)
B'	Shem, Ham and Japheth (18b)
A'	Noah (19)

The climactic moment is, when it seems like all hope is lost, God remembered Noah. Now look at the same Hebrew structure of the Babel story:

⁹ Ross, Loc 2984-2985

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- A All the earth had one language (*kol-hā'āreṣ šāpā 'eḥāt*) (1)
 - B there (*šām*) (2)
 - C one to another (*'iš 'el-rē'ēhû*) (3)
 - D Come, let's make bricks (*hābā nilb^enā l^ebēnîm*) (3)
 - E Let's make for ourselves (*nibneh-lânû*) (4)
 - F a city and a tower (*'îr ûmigdāl*) (4)
 - G And the Lord came down to see (*wayyēred YHWH lir'ôt*) (5)
 - F' the city and the tower (*'et-hā'îr w^e'et-hammigdāl*) (5)
 - E' that the humans built (*'āšer bânû b^enē hā'ādām*) (5)
 - D' Come, let's confuse (*hābā . . . w^enāb^elā*) (7)
 - C' everyone the language of his neighbor (*'iš š^epat rē'ēhû*) (7)
 - B' from there (*miššām*) (8)
 - A' (confused) the language of the whole earth (*š^epat kol-hā'āreṣ*) (9)
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The climactic moment is, when it seems like humanity has really done it this time, God intervenes. What God is doing here is what he does best—he's coming in to save us from ourselves.¹⁰ He knows that if we're permitted to carry on in our pride without consequence, we will exalt ourselves until we're only fit for destruction. And that's not ok with him, because the Bible goes on to tell us that he “desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”¹¹

Were the Babylonians to carry on with their plan, how could anyone have eventually come from among them righteous enough to save them? What offspring of the woman would crush the serpent's head if there was no faith to be found on the earth?¹²

So he graciously confused their language. Didn't even kick over their tower or crush their city. He simply divided the tongues, and they in their confusion dispersed from one another. And in so doing, God created cultures.

⁹ Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the Lord confused the language of all the earth. And from there the Lord dispersed them over the face of all the earth. Genesis 11:9

The thing that humanity feared most, was the very thing that came upon them: they were dispersed in submission to God's will. And the name they sought to make for

¹⁰ Wenham, 335

¹¹ 1 Timothy 2:4

¹² Luke 18:8

themselves, Babel, actually goes down in history as a pun for nonsense. The lesson for God's Old Testament people, the original readers of Genesis, couldn't have been clearer: the people who deny God will be scattered.

The lesson for *us* today is thus summed up best, I think, by the Gospel-writer, Matthew:

Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.
Matthew 23:12

Conclusion

Unlike many of the other parts of Genesis, the story of Babel leaves no sign of hope. There's no crushed serpent head or rainbow in the sky. Only people who have exalted themselves, and are walking away humbled.¹³ Thankfully, because we have the rest of the story, we know there is one, one among us all, who actually did the opposite. In Philippians 2 we read that Jesus Christ,

*⁸ And being found in human form, he **humbled** himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹ Therefore God has highly **exalted** him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.* Philippians 2:8-11

It's not just coincidence that prideful people like you and me do exactly what is described at Babel: we seek to make a name for ourselves, to make something significant of our lives apart from our Creator. And this is why the author of Ecclesiastes tells us, straight up, that we will be forgotten; throw some dirt over us and in a few years, no one will even remember we existed.¹⁴ But look at this, look at the God-man, Jesus Christ, who humbled himself to the point of death. What has happened to *his* name? It has become the name that is above every name, the name at which every knee will bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that—what name?—*Jesus Christ* is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

It is this name that when you call upon it, it does something not only to your tongue but to your heart; and it impossibly overcomes all that which has divided not only God from

¹³ Ross, Loc 2655-2662

¹⁴ Ecclesiastes 1:11, 2:16, 9:5

human for so long, but also human from human, and nation from nation. The prophet Zephaniah spoke of a day in which God

*will change the speech of the peoples
to a pure speech,*

*that all of them may call upon the name of the Lord
and serve him with one accord.*

¹⁰ *From beyond the rivers of Cush
my worshipers, the daughter of my dispersed ones,
shall bring my offering.*

¹¹ *“On that day you shall not be put to shame
because of the deeds by which you have rebelled against me;
for then I will remove from your midst
your proudly exultant ones,
and you shall no longer be haughty
in my holy mountain. Zephaniah 3:9-11*

Is this not the picture of Babel in reverse? A foreshadowing of the day in which the dispersing judgment of God would come back around as a blessed ingathering of all peoples?¹⁵ If Babel was a bookend for God dividing cultures and languages all over the world, then what is the other bookend?

We need look no farther than Acts 2. There we read,

When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. ² And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³ And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. ⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. ⁵ Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. ⁶ And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language. ⁷ And they were amazed and astonished, saying, “Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? ⁸ And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language? ⁹ Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰ Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, ¹¹ both Jews

¹⁵ Ross, Loc 2777-2783

and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians—we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God.” Acts 2:1-11

Don't you see Babel here? The seed that God scattered across the world at Babel, here he is finally harvesting at Pentecost by the sending of his Spirit. People from every nation under heaven, hearing in their own languages the mighty works of God. People still distinguished by their unique nation, tribe, and tongue, but about to be united into the family of God. What in the world has happened between one bookend and the other that this could finally take place?

Well, Peter would go on to tell them here: “know for certain [what has happened],” he says, “that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified...This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses...[so] Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins”.¹⁶

So as we conclude a sermon series that has talked so much about creating culture, about building something soulful and sacred, and we literally end with a story of people building a monument to themselves, we are reminded as individuals and as a church of the words of Jesus:

²⁴ “Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵ And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. ²⁶ And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. ²⁷ And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.” Matthew 7:24-27

Church, unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain.

As an enduring, tangible reminder of this, on the night that he was betrayed, he took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it, broke it and said to his disciples, “This is my body, which is broken for you; eat this in remembrance of me.” He also took a cup of wine, and after blessing it, gave it to his disciples and said, “This cup is the new covenant marked by the shedding of my blood. For as often as you eat this bread and drink from this cup, you announce the Lord's death until he returns.” **Today we are announcing**

¹⁶ Acts 2:36, 32, 38

that Jesus Christ is building a people from every nation, tribe, and tongue, and he will finish what he's started.

Our tradition here at Antioch is to come forward and break off a piece of bread and dip it in the juice. There will be stations here in the front; gluten-free bread will be available to your right. If you're a baptized believer, come and remember who you are and whose you are. If you're a believer but not yet baptized, before coming to the table, we would love to help you first come and declare your faith publicly through baptism. If you're not a Christian, this sacred symbol is not for you, but rather than taking communion, we encourage you to take Christ. He has made himself available to you this very moment. There will be pastors in the back to talk and pray with you about any need you have. Let's pray.

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