

INTRODUCTION **SLIDE**

Hey, if you have your Bibles, and I hope you do,

- please grab them and turn to Matthew chapter 28.
- You can open a phone or a tablet to Matthew 28,
- or you can use one of the hard-backed black bibles
 - under every single chair.
 - You'll find Matthew 28 on page **835**.

INTRODUCTION

I was on vacation for the last two weeks, so I missed it,

- but happy New Year!
 - You look great!
 - You look thinner already!

If I haven't met you,

- my name is Chris Martin...
- and I serve as the Lead Pastor here at Fathom.
 - Gosh, I'm so excited to be back with y'all today...
 - two-weeks off and I'm full of energy!

ILLUSTRATION: HEADACHES

5-years-ago I started getting headaches with bizarre visual disturbances.

- The headaches cause the center of my vision to go all blurry.
 - It's like when get a flash of light in your eyes,
 - and you see that blurry spot in your vision...
 - but it doesn't go away,
 - and I literally can't see things...
 - that are right in front of me.

So, I did what most guys do when medical stuff happens to us...I ignored it.

But one Sunday,

- I'm standing out in the hallway,
 - right before preaching,
- when one of these headaches hits me...
- and my vision got wonky.

And I came up here to preach, and couldn't see my notes.

- Now, I managed to make it through that sermon...
- but I got a little freaked out, so I went to the doctor.

And my doctor told me that I needed to have an MRI brain scan...

- to rule out anything scary...
 - which is a scary thing to hear...
 - when it comes to your brain!

Alright?!? Work on your bedside manner, bro!

So, I get the MRI...and here's what I read when they came back.

- *There is no atrophy.*
- *There is no hemorrhage.*
- *There is no mass lesion.*
- *There is no diffusion abnormality.*
- *No gross bone lesion is identified.*
- *And the paranasal sinuses are clear.*
 - I have no idea what most of that meant...
 - but the "no" in front of all those things was reassuring.

But right below this, I read the summary of the scan, and it said:

- "Unremarkable brain activity."
 - Which I thought was hurtful...
 - and unnecessary!

EXPLAIN: VISION

But I bring all that up...

- because as we start this year...
- I'm doing this two-week mini-sermon-series...
- called **SLIDE VISION**

Every time I get one of these migraines...

I get a small reminder of how important VISION is.

So, we're going to work through our VISION statement here at Fathom.

- And this is gonna be way different than our normal sermons.

These are gonna be two sermons on the parts of our VISION:

- which you can see on the two banners in this room...
 - GO DEEP
 - and REACH WIDE.

And one reason why we're doing this...

- is because 30% of you people...
- are new to Fathom in the last year.

Most polls put healthy church growth stats out there between 5-10%.

- But 30% of you are new.
 - And we want you to know what kind of crazy...
 - you're walking into here!

EXPLAIN: MISSION

Now, when I planted Fathom in 2015 I came up with our mission statement.

And our mission is this:

SLIDE WE EXIST TO GLORIFY GOD BY MAKING DISCIPLES

Now, here's the deal,

- this is the MISSION of,
 - not just Fathom Church,
- but of THE CHURCH universal.

THE CHURCH exists to bring glory to God through discipleship.

- And I know this is the same text that our elder Gary preached...
- a couple weeks ago...
- but I stole our MISSION directly from The Great Commission...
- in Matthew 28:19-20...

So, look at your text with me:

MATTHEW 28:19–20

[19] Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, [20] teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

EXPLAIN: VISION

So, that's our MISSION. Make disciples.

But then, in our first year of existence as a church...

- I went to a church planter's conference,
- and one of the breakouts was on vision casting.
- And the guy convinced me that we needed a vision...
 - not just a mission.

So, on my flight home from this conference,

- on a little Southwest Airlines drink napkin I wrote two words:
- **SLIDE GO DEEP**

So, we've been saying this for almost 10 years.

- We want to see you GO DEEP with God!

Our MISSION is what we exist for...it's a purpose statement.

- But VISION seeks to answer this question:
 - WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?
 - *"Yeah yeah yeah, I know you want to make disciples..."*
 - *but what does Fathom Church look like?"*

Well, that is what we spent all of 2023 talking about as a leadership team.

TRANSITION

And so, these next two weeks I'm gonna break it down for us.

- And this is all leading up to next Sunday,
 - January 21st, at 4pm in this room...
- where we will have our **SLIDE ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING**
 - where we'll talk specifically about...
 - what living out this VISION will look like in 2024.

So, please, come to that.

The next two weeks are pretty big.

But let's get going.

- We're gonna cover **SLIDE GO DEEP** today,
- and then REACH WIDE next Sunday.

So, here's the expanded vision statement of Fathom Church on GO DEEP.

- Remember...this is trying to answer the question:
 - *what does Fathom Church look like?*

VISION STATEMENT

SLIDE *We are a community of believers in Jesus Christ who invite and welcome all people to discover and deepen their relationship with God through the study of and submission to God's Word, responding in a life of worship unto Him, and living faithfully in a biblical community with one another.*

So, this is the first half of our VISION statement.

- The first half covers GO DEEP.

And all I'm gonna do today is break this sentence down for you.

COMMUNITY

First, **SLIDE** *We are a **community of believers in Jesus Christ...***

Now, that's a big deal...

- this whole thing...
- it's about Jesus Christ!

Hey, listen, there are all kinds of communities out there.

- I've got community with the neighbors on my block.
- I've got community with some families...
 - of the kids my daughter goes to school with.
- I've got community with some old college buddies.

There are lots of communities you can be a part of.

But they're always ABOUT something.

- My neighbors...we're ABOUT our block.
 - It's proximity-centered.
- Harper's school...it's ABOUT the class.
 - It's education-centered.

- My college buddies,
 - it's basically ABOUT us talking about...
 - how dumb we were in college.
 - It's just sharing dumb stories.
 - But that's nostalgia-centered.

But churches are supposed to be ABOUT Jesus Christ.

- That's why we say we're Christ-centered...
 - or Gospel-centered.

So, lots more to say, but first and foremost...this thing is ABOUT Jesus.

Next...

ALL PEOPLE

*We are a community of believers in Jesus Christ **SLIDE** who **invite and welcome all people...***

We picked those words very intentionally!

Fathom Church is a community for ALL PEOPLE.

- That means all kinds of people...
- all backgrounds of people...
- all demographics of people.

If you fall into the category of ALL...this church is for you.

- So, we've got people who were raised in church...
 - and people who Fathom is your first church.
- We've got recovering baptists, presbyterians, lutherans, catholics, methodists...gosh, you name it.
- There are different levels of income here.
- There are different ages here.

- I don't know if you've noticed but we're getting younger.
- Read any survey out there and you'll see that...
- Millennials and Gen-Z statistically are leaving churches...
 - Not here!
- Oh, and by the way, these 50-or-so college students...
- who have made Fathom their home church...are so legit!
 - All the Gen-Z bashing...
 - just hasn't been my experience!
- The future of the church looks brighter than ever!
- There are different politics here.
 - Like we aren't one side of the aisle or the other...
 - but we're not all moderates here.
 - It's a pretty mixed bag.
 - We've got Trump supporters...
 - and Bernie supporters...
 - and y'all are in the same small groups!
 - It's gonna make for an interesting November!

But this is for ALL PEOPLE!

ILLUSTRATION: ARRESTED

You wanna know how I got to the church where I got saved?

- I was a teenager, and I was arrested for shoplifting.
 - Some of you are like, "Hmm...I like this place already!"

So, I was arrested,

- and I got sentenced to do community service...
- and one of the places I did community service...
- was a local church.

So, as I'm dusting the pews and vacuuming this church...

- little did I know that a few years later,
- a friend would unknowingly invite me to that very church...
- and Jesus would begin to woo my heart...
- into a relationship with him...
- in that very church.

You got a story?

- It doesn't matter!
- Cause this is for ALL PEOPLE!

WELCOMES

- But more than just being a church for ALL PEOPLE...
- we are people who INVITE and WELCOME.

Hey, listen, I say this all the time,

but it's really hard to hide here.

- We are a WELCOMING church!
 - This is by the design of our leaders.
 - There are small churches that are not welcoming!
- But we want you to be welcomed here.
 - Not just greeted...
- but welcomed.

We call the hallway the gauntlet of greeting.

- And the staff and elders,
- we work really hard on knowing you.
 - Learning your names.
 - Hearing your stories.
 - And shepherding the members of this church.

INVITES

So, we WELCOME, but we are an INVITING church.

- We had 355 guests who we tracked in 2023...
 - that's not all...that's just who we could track.

And that's a lot for a church our size!

- Just by way of comparison,
 - that's 100 more than 2022,
 - and 200 more than 2021.
- And of those 355 guests...
 - 238 were personally invited
 - by someone else in this church.
 - That's 67%!

So, when people ask, *"What does Fathom look like?"*

- It looks like a place where people are excited to invite...
 - their friends,
 - and coworkers,
 - and neighbors,
 - and family members...
 - who don't have a church home...
 - to check it out!

You know we don't promote, don't you?

- We've never done a mailer,
- or a door hanger,
- or a facebook ad.
 - We've never done any of those things...
 - cause we don't need to!
- You are the promotion of the place!

Gosh, our wooden sign is only up on Sunday mornings!

- We are practically invisible...
 - but you aren't.

That's the kind of church we are.

DISCOVER

*We are a community of believers in Jesus Christ who invite and welcome all people **SLIDE** to **discover and deepen their relationship with God...***

ILLUSTRATION: THE F-WORD

So, in the first few years of the church, as we grew,

- God just continued to bring newer,
- less-mature Christians.
 - Like, we just had a bunch of immature Christians...
 - and even people who didn't have a relationship with God.

Like, maybe in year 2 or 3,

- I remember a husband of a gal who came.
 - He wasn't a Christian...
 - but he came a few times...
 - and connected with my preaching.

But I remember one Sunday, as I was standing in the hall after church,

- he came out and walked passed me,
- and said, "Great effing sermon, Pastor."
- But he used the real word! The F-word!
 - That's like the Gold Metal of cuss words.

Now, I told that story before,

- and some of you came up to me after church...
- and said the same thing jokingly!
 - Don't do that! Ok?

But that's just who God was bringing to Fathom.

But we didn't have enough mature believers to help disciple all these folks.

EXPLAIN: MATURING

And slowly, over the years, especially after COVID...

- Fathom has grown in more maturity,
 - which is a really good thing!
- Like, we have grown into more mature Christians.
- And more mature Christians have made Fathom their church.

But, probably 18-months ago I was meeting with the staff,

- and I had been reflecting on the state of Fathom,
- and I had realized that with all the growth as a church in health,
 - we hadn't seen as many fringe people...
 - unsaved people...
 - messy people.
- And I told the staff that I wanted us to start praying...
 - for more unsaved people to start coming...
- because with the mature growth,
 - we were ready to walk with some people...
 - and share the gospel with people...
 - and disciple some new believers.

And gosh you guys, if the Lord didn't just straight up answer that prayer!

- God just started bringing us unsaved people...
- or just, kinda, brand-new Christians.

Like, more than half of the baptisms we did last year...

- were brand new conversions!
- I mean, it was awesome!

And hear me,

- if you aren't sure about your faith,
- or you are brand new into this Jesus business...
- please know that you are so welcome here.
 - I went to church for almost two years,
 - just trying to figure stuff out,
 - before I really started believing in Jesus.
- So, you're welcome here.

DISCOVER

But this is that DISCOVER piece!

- We want people to DISCOVER,
 - for the first time,
- a relationship with God.

And that's happening!

- But we also realized that we didn't have...
- much of a mechanism for discipling those brand new believers.

So, a couple of our elders and a team have been working on this:

SLIDE DISCOVER GROUP

We're starting a DISCOVER GROUP.

- This is like a precursor for our discipleship groups,
 - but if you are newer to the faith,
 - or you are exploring Christianity,
 - or you just never feel like you got the basics...
 - of Christianity taught to you...
- then starting Sunday, February 4th...
- we want to invite you to our first DISCOVER GROUP.
 - It's 7-meetings...
 - every-other week...
 - on Sundays...
 - during second service...
 - where we'll just cover the basics...
 - of Christian discipleship.

TRANSITION: DEEPEN

So, DISCOVER...but then,

- we want all the people who call Fathom home...
- to DEEPEN in their relationship with God.

So, the question for every church to answer is HOW?

- How do we deepen?
- How do we actually make disciples?

I'm glad you asked! The VISION continues:

GOD'S WORD

*We are a community of believers in Jesus Christ who invite and welcome all people to discover and deepen their relationship with God **SLIDE** through the **study of and submission to God's Word...***

ILLUSTRATION: PREACHING

So, I became a Christian towards the end of high school.

- I got saved in the church I did community service in.
- And then I attended there for a couple years...
 - but the church I went to didn't really...
 - preach through the Bible like we do.
- They did kitschy topical stuff.

Like they did a sermon series called:

- *How to Keep the Honey in the Honeymoon.*
 - Gross!
- They did - *Submarine Christians:*
 - *Those Who Surface Christmas and Easter.*
 - That's a bit passive aggressive!

But, that was pretty much it!

And so, my knowledge of the Bible was pretty minimal.

- But my senior year of high school,
- a friend invited me to join him...
- at a Saturday night service at another church.

So, I went, and when I got there the preacher did something foreign to me:

- he asked us to open up our Bibles to the book of Acts,
 - which I had no idea where that was!
 - So, I used the table of contents...

- But then he proceeded to preach straight through a passage...
 - it was the first time I hadn't heard a sermon on a topic...
 - with a lame title!
- So, I came back the next Saturday night...
- and the preacher did the same thing!
 - He asked us to open up to Acts,
 - but then he just picked up right where he had left off,
 - and started up again.

And he did this week after week after week.

And they had tapes in the lobby. Remember tape ministries?

- College students...
 - Think podcasts...
 - In a plastic shell...
 - That you had to rewind.

But I got me some tapes!

And I didn't realize it at the time...

- but I was so hungry for the Bible!
 - And I found myself for the first time...
 - intellectually stimulated and satisfied...
 - as I dug into God's Word.

THE BIBLE

And church, that left a lasting mark on my life,

- and it's why we preach through books of the Bible at Fathom.

We are people of the book!

- God's Word is the first way we DEEPEN.
- We STUDY this thing.

SUNDAYS

Now, the most obvious place we do this is on Sundays.

So here's a little preview. We have 3 main sermons series this year:

In two weeks we'll begin **SLIDE 2 SAMUEL**

- The rise and fall of King David
 - We took three Spring semesters to cover all of 1 Samuel,
 - and I asked the elders if we should continue,
 - and they said y'all might form an uprising...
 - if we don't actually take on King David's story.
- So, the next two years, here's our spring study is 2 Samuel.

Then this summer we'll get back into **SLIDE THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW**

- Every summer at Fathom we spend time...
- slowly working our way through the Gospels.
 - We don't ever want to get away...
 - from the life and ministry of Jesus.

And then in the Fall, we're taking on **SLIDE 1 TIMOTHY**

- Sorry, I don't have a series design done for that yet.

And then, every once-in-a-while,

- we'll pause for a stand-alone or topical thing, like this.

But our primary method of preaching is just marching through God's Word.

PROGRAMS

SLIDE But then we STUDY God's Word in other programs.

- We study God's Word in our discipleship groups.
- We study God's Word in our men's and women's groups.
- Our kid's curriculum...
 - is a two-year journey through the entire Bible.

- Our youth group...
 - isn't just playing dumb games and eating snacks...
 - they're studying the same passages...
 - that we preach on in here.

SUBMIT

So, we STUDY God's Word.

But we also SUBMIT to God's Word.

And that's your part.

- We've got all these opportunities for you to study God's Word.
- But you've got to be the one who SUBMITS your life to it.

ILLUSTRATION: FEED ME

Listen, it's not just enough...

- for you to show up here once a week...
- and have me spoon feed you the Bible.

Hey, one of the things that I sometimes hear from Christians...

- is they'll say, *"Well, I'm not being fed."*
 - You ever hear that? *"I'm not being fed."*

Now, listen, if you're a brand new Christian...

- hey, you just keep coming...
- and let the church be the place of your primary feeding.
 - Now, you'd better be careful,
 - cause this ain't no mushy baby food...right?
 - There's chunks of meat in there,
 - so you'd better grow some teeth...
 - and start chewing real quick.

BUT...if I told you to turn to Matthew 28...

- and you could find it without the page number...
- or the table of contents...
 - then it's time to grow up! Alright?

And don't get me wrong, you need to sit under the preached word, too.

- And I'm gonna bring it!
 - I'm gonna preach this thing as hard as I can,
- and it's meat, y'all.
 - So, get ready to eat some steak...
 - medium rare...just like Jesus ate it.

But people show up all the time to churches and just say,

- *"Well, I'm not being fed!"*
- And when I hear that,
- all I hear is a big fat baby.
 - Milk and slop just smeared all over your face.
 - Just swinging your umbilical cord around saying,
 - "Feed me! Feed me! Feed me!"

Alright! Look here Jabba!

- It's not enough to just show up and listen...
- you've gotta open this thing up and dig into it.

Good luck getting that image out of your mind.

- Submit to it.
- Open this thing with others.
- Sign up for a group and ask hard questions of one another.
- This is why we're reading the Bible together this year.
 - If you aren't signed up for that, jump in.
 - Just skip ahead to where we're at.

You gotta submit all that you are under the good authority of God's Word!

WORSHIP

*We are a community of believers in Jesus Christ who invite and welcome all people to discover and deepen their relationship with God through the study of and submission to God's Word, **SLIDE** responding in a life of worship unto Him...*

CORPORATE

Now, notice,

- this doesn't say we respond in a song of worship.
- It doesn't say we respond in a service of worship.
- No, it's a LIFE OF WORSHIP.

So, when most people think about worship,

- we think of the corporate dimension,
 - specifically the music.
- And worship isn't LESS THAN THAT...no!
- But it's WAY MORE!

So, the corporate part of worship IS singing.

We're commanded to sing.

- Some of you say, "Well, I don't like to sing."
 - Sorry. That's how God wants you to worship him.
- Even if you don't like to read...
 - you aren't off the hook to be in God's Word.
- Even if you don't really like being around people,
 - you aren't off the hook to connect with your church family.

So, we sing corporately.

But we corporately respond in worship in a bunch of other ways.

- We pray.
- We give the first and best of our finances.
- We fellowship.
- We serve.

These are all part of the life of worship.

PERSONAL

But A LIFE OF WORSHIP is also personal.

- Do you spend time with Jesus personally?
- How is your personal prayer life?
- Do you ever fast?
- Are you being generous with your money?
- Are you resting well?

Your worship IS personal...it's just not PRIVATE!

And finally:

COMMUNITY

*...the study of and submission to God's Word, responding in a life of worship unto Him, **SLIDE** and living faithfully in a biblical community with one another.*

- Now, I hope I've adequately covered this...
- but you are not meant to do this Christian life alone.
- We do all this stuff TOGETHER!

CONCLUSION

So, you've got a choice to make about this **SLIDE W/PADS VISION**
Are you in or are you out?

- I mean, I kinda feel like Morpheus...
- there's a red pill and there's a blue pill.
 - College students...
 - back in the 1900s...
 - John Wick was in a different movie...

But here's what he says:

SLIDE *"You take the blue pill - the story ends, you wake up in your bed and believe whatever you want to believe. You take the red pill - you stay in Wonderland and I show you how deep the rabbit hole goes."*

Hey Fathom, GO DEEP is our **SLIDE VISION**...well, it's half of our vision.

But this is what it looks like to take the red pill at this church.

And it's an ok thing at this time of year to do a self-evaluation...

and make some sort of resolutions...or whatever you want to call them.

- And for sure, you should probably not watch as much Netflix.
- And quit yelling at your kids.
- And quit drinking so much.
- And back-off the pound cake a little.
- Ok? Go hit the gym.

Do those things!

But none of those things will bring the FULL LIFE that your heart desires.

Only a deepening relationship with Jesus will!

So, everything I just mentioned...

- like signing up for stuff and all that...
- it's all on the QR code
- or online at **SLIDE** fathomchurch.org/info

So, let's end with this quote,

- from Robery Murray M'Cheyne,
- minister in the Church of Scotland in the 19th Century...

SLIDE *“Unfathomable Oceans Of Grace Are In Christ For You. Dive And Dive Again, You Will Never Come To The Bottom Of These Depths.”*

Let's pray

RESPONSES:

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

- COMMUNION – THE LORD’S SUPPER
- GIVING TITHES & OFFERINGS – fathomchurch.org/give
- PRAYER - fathomchurch.org/prayer
- SINGING

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

[23] For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, [24] and 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**

[25] In 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**

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

Love you church, let’s stand and sing together.

RESOURCES CONSULTED:

- Martin, Joby. *Eternal Life*.