



This weekend I was reminded of the good news. There is a door standing open for us. Jesus has given us access. He's quite literally made a way for us where there was no way. All weekend I've been thinking about Matthew 22, and the kindness and severity of God. Today, I want you to know that the doors are wide open for you. The good news is simple: Jesus is the lamb that takes away the sins of the world. This is who He is. And maybe you know this morning that you are riddled with sin and failure, and have no hope in the world. Don't despair; Jesus can take away your sin too!

Jesus' ministry consisted of preaching, teaching and healing (Matthew 4:23), and we have been given His ministry, so we're going to make room for the full demonstration.

I. BEWARE OF COVETOUSNESS

Luke 12

15 Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

- A. We are far more American than we are citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven... wouldn't you agree. Covetousness is not only not condemned in our culture, it's celebrated! We are so consumed in consumerism, it's hard to really hear these words of Jesus as a command. We've bought into a system of greed. My concern for us isn't only about goods or wealth, it's about how we twist the gospel to free ourselves from it's requirements.
- B. You see, we are the possession of the Lord. And He is our portion. We are priests of the living God. Life is not about what we possess, but rather who possesses us!

COVET, v.t. (Webster's, 1828)

1. To desire or wish for, with eagerness; to desire earnestly to obtain or possess; in a good sense. *Covet earnestly the best gifts. 1 Corinthians 12.*

2. To desire inordinately; to desire that which it is unlawful to obtain or possess; in a bad sense. *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbors house, wife or servant. Exodus 20.*

- C. There is a coveting toward the Lord that moves Him, that pleases Him. In Psalm 2, the Lord instructs us to ask, covet the nations as an inheritance. He desires that we desire Him and His purposes. This is good. But there's another desire that is altogether unlawful.

James 4

1 What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God.

- D. Our source is the Lord. And when we truly live this way, we will be able to receive from Him. We will know what it means to be satisfied. We will learn the glory of living in contentment.



Philippians 4

[11] ... for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. [12] I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. [13] I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

E. It's a change of perspective that we need...learning how to do life through Him and with Him, and not just for Him. It's about surrendering to the journey.

GREE'DY, a.

1. Having a keen appetite for food or drink; ravenous; voracious; very hungry; followed by of; as a lion that is greedy of his prey. Ps.17.

2. Having a keen desire of any thing; eager to obtain; as greedy of gain.

F. Greed is about more than money. It's about the cravings of the flesh. Greed says the end justifies the means. Greed makes life about the satisfaction of our appetite... and you should know by now that the flesh can never, and I mean never, be satisfied.

G. Do you know that we are entering into the first season where an entire generation has been exposed and fed a diet of pornography is coming of age. The first internet generation is coming of age and getting married. There are incredible scientific studies relating to how pornography effects the brain. We've got a generation that has embraced greed for sexual experience, will it be surprising then that the reality of marriage and the commitment to selflessness will be tested beyond limits? This generation is more unprepared than any previous generation for the work involved in making a marriage. This should grip our hearts!

H. There is a promise for us! If we will honor the Lord, and regard and obey His word, He will protect us from the covetousness.

Exodus 34

[21] "Six days you shall work, but on the seventh day you shall rest. In plowing time and in harvest you shall rest. [22] You shall observe the Feast of Weeks, the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the Feast of Ingathering at the year's end. [23] Three times in the year shall all your males appear before the LORD God, the God of Israel. [24] For I will cast out nations before you and enlarge your borders; no one shall covet your land, when you go up to appear before the LORD your God three times in the year.

II. HONOR MARRIAGE

Matthew 19

[3] And Pharisees came up to him and tested him by asking, "Is it lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause?" [4] He answered, "Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, [5] and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? [6] So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate." [7] They said to him, "Why then did Moses command one to give a certificate of divorce and to send her away?" [8] He said to them, "Because of your hardness of



heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. [9] And I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery."

- A. Jesus is raising the standard here. He doesn't come to abolish the Law, but to fulfill it!! Jesus takes away any excuse for divorce. And his disciples know it...which is why they say this:

[10] The disciples said to him, "If such is the case of a man with his wife, it is better not to marry."

- B. And so Jesus gives them a solution:

[11] But he said to them, "Not everyone can receive this saying, but only those to whom it is given.

[12] For there are eunuchs who have been so from birth, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. Let the one who is able to receive this receive it."

- C. These are the options. Marry for life, committing to what God has joined together, or become a eunuch. These are the options.

III. MEN AND WOMEN HAVE DIFFERENT ROLES

Ephesians 5

[22] Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. [23] For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. [24] Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.

[25] Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, [26] that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, [27] so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. [28] In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. [29] For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, [30] because we are members of his body. [31] "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." [32] This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. [33] However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

- A. Why is there such an onslaught against marriage? The answer is right here in the passage... because marriage is supposed to be a picture of Christ in relation to His church. It is to be the demonstration of holiness. You want to know why this generation is so cynical towards God... more than any other? All you need to do is look at the divorce rate in the church. If the mystery of God is to be understood through the picture of marriage, then the enemy has a very simple job: Distort marriage, and the image of God is distorted too.
- B. Why is there such turmoil in the middle east over this tiny plot of land called Israel? Geographically it's not all that desirable. So why the strife? The issue of Israel isn't really the issue of Israel... it's



the issue of God. The issue is that God chose. God said. And all of hell fights against God's right to choose.

- C. God has given us boundaries. And I'm here to declare that the boundaries are not burdensome. No, rather I can say like David said,

[6] The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; indeed, I have a beautiful inheritance. (Psalm 16:6)

- D. The boundaries are not taxing. The parameters do not hinder our freedom. Jesus is the truth, the way, and the life. Choosing Him is not burdensome. Waiting for His timing is not a drag. Choosing to walk in uprightness is wonderful.

IV. KEEPING THE MARRIAGE BED PURE

Hebrews 13

4 Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral. (Other translations say, fornicators)

FORNICATION-

Consensual sexual intercourse between two persons not married to each other.

1 Corinthians 6

[9] Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality,

[10] nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. [11] And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

- A. Marriage is a calling. More than any other ministry, the ministry of marriage was designed to reveal the same oneness between Christ and His church. I want to speak vision into your marriage. If the Lord can grow out a limbs, He can resurrect your marriage.
- B. Couples and engaged couples, I want to speak to you. If you are struggling with immorality in your relationship I want you to take seriously this warning from the Lord. If you desire God's blessing, then there are conditions. God made marriage. He loves marriage. Remember it was God who formed Eve for Adam. It delighted the Lord to present her to him. Marriage union delights the Lord.
- C. I don't care if you've been saved for 10 years, today is the day of salvation. Repent and re-enlist! Can I tell you a secret? Focusing on the boundary line is not the same thing as enjoying the inheritance. There is an order that God has prescribed... Spirit, soul and body. Salvation works in exactly this order. We receive salvation first in our spirit, then our soul and body align to the work! I implore you to put on the wedding garment (Matthew 22) that's been provided for you. The doors are open for you. He's done His part. The invitation is for you and it's for today. Everything has been provided. All you need to do is receive it.