

Exodus 19-20

Mount Sinai

Image Church // Mountains Week 3

Intro

We are in a series called **Mountains**, where we're looking at key mountaintop moments throughout the Bible...

We are on a journey that will lead us to Easter...

- **BTW you got a card** last week if you didn't get one, grab it today on your way out! I want to talk about it real quick!
 - *Walk through card...*
- One other exciting thing about Easter is that **WE'RE GOING TO BE ADDING A SERVICE on Easter Weekend!** *God is doing something, we need to add an opportunity for ppl to hear about Jesus!*
 - *We're going to be doing services at 9 and 10:45*
 - **NO ONE has to miss the service this year!**
 - Then, the week after Easter, we will go back to normal service time at 10 am.
- Time of prayer...

Alright, turn in your Bibles to Exodus 19...

Build the tension:

I borrowed a buddy's boat... *The Educator...*

- Boat that cut off on me...
- Something wrong with the engine that I couldn't fix on the water... I'm stranded...
- I call another buddy of mine, a taxidermist named Mike Faircloth... *AKA Pickle-juice...* Happened to be on the lake that day and pulled me in...

I was stranded and my only hope was to **depend** on my buddy...

Here's the thing, this is a picture of a greater reality when it comes to where we are Spiritually...

We are stranded...

Exodus 19-20¹

¹ In the third month from the very day the Israelites left the land of Egypt, they came to the Sinai Wilderness. ² They traveled from Rephidim, came to the Sinai Wilderness, and camped in the wilderness. Israel camped there in front of the mountain.

Ok, let me give you a little context around what's happened here...

We talked about Abraham last week... Well, he fathers Isaac... Isaac fathers Jacob and Esau...

- Jacob lies and steals Esau's birthright Esau goes off the rails...

God comes to Jacob and changes his name to **Israel**- this is where we get the nation of Israel- this is God's chosen people... Jacob (Israel) father's 12 sons who would become the 12 tribes of Israel... One of them is named Joseph...

God uses Joseph in Egypt to preserve his people (Israel) through a famine...

- God's people end up in Egypt...

Joseph dies, and a new king takes over in Egypt who didn't know Joseph. He said the people of Israel had become more numerous and powerful than the Egyptians, and so he began to oppress them...

- Enslaves them...
- They kept growing in number,

So Pharaoh tried to thin them out by commanding that every son that's born must be thrown into the Nile...

¹ **Works consulted:** Joby Martin, *Mt. Sinai*; JD Greear, *Great Failure, Greater Hope*

- Moses is born to an Israelite woman... Mom is smart and ends up putting him in a basket near Pharaoh's daughter. She finds him adopts him, and ends up hiring Moses' mom to nurse him...
- Moses grows up in Pharaoh's house...

One day Moses is out, and he sees an Egyptian beating an Israelite, and Moses steps in and kills the Egyptian... Then he runs away... He's out tending sheep one day, and God comes to him in a burning bush and says I want you to be the one to deliver my people from Pharaoh and Egypt...

- Moses says I can't. God, you can because I am with you...
- Plagues happen...
- The king lets God's people go but then decides to chase after them...
- They come to this Red Sea moment...
- God parts the Red Sea for Israel, and they walk through on dry ground, and then the Egyptians try to follow, and God closes up the Red Sea, drowning all of them...

Israel has finally escaped Egypt and the reach of the King...

They travel through the wilderness and come to Mount Sinai....

Verse 3:

³ Moses went up the mountain to God, and the Lord called to him from the mountain: "This is what you must say to the house of Jacob and explain to the Israelites: ⁴ 'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. ⁵ Now if you will carefully listen to me and keep my covenant, you will be my own possession out of all the peoples, although the whole earth is mine, ⁶ and you will be my kingdom of priests and my holy nation.' These are the words that you are to say to the Israelites."

Now don't miss this... **God starts by saying look what I have done...** Look at the salvation I have provided you and Israel with my hand... *I carried you on eagles' wings...* You didn't deserve it, you didn't earn it, and yet I chose to provide it for you...

And **then** after God says that, He points him to **obedience...**

- **IOW** Moses: Salvation has come to you, so obedience should flow through you...
- Obedience is to be the response to the salvation that God has provided...

We can't miss the order here...

And what we see in this is that **obedience is the mark of surrender to the God who saves...**

- This isn't about paying God back. This is about surrender...
- And there's a difference... Trying to pay God back is guilt-driven and works-based. That's drudgery and burdensome...
 - And it puts the burden and onus on you to come through...
- God's not saying I did this for you now pay me back...
- He's saying see who I am and what I have done, I am God, surrender to me as God...
 - And that surrender is marked by obedience to God...

Illustration: If I came to you when you needed a home and I gave you a house... You would be fired up... But then, if I came behind it and said, but you have to pay me back, it changes everything...

- I didn't give you the house. It's not a gift to you... It's more like a bait and switch...
- And now, your ability to stay in the house is contingent on your ability to pay me back...
- You're now obligated to **respond** by paying me back...

Verse if I gave you the house and asked nothing of you, and you **respond** by joyfully moving into the house and enjoying the blessing of the home and building a life there...

God has given you something incredible, and you respond in joyful surrender walking in that which God has provided...

And the purpose of God's call to **surrender** that's marked by **obedience** is to establish a people that are set apart... This is what it means to be **holy**... What it looks like to be a kingdom of priests...

See, what God's doing is **establishing a people for Himself** to be set apart for His glory and to be the means by which He reveals Himself to the world...

This was true then, and this is true now: the world should look at God's people and see something different that directs their eyes to God!

And so what God's going to do is show His people what that looks like... **He's going to lay out His standard of living**...

But what you're going to see is that **there's a problem**... Not with God or what God gives, but a problem with us and what we do with it...

Verse 7:

⁷ After Moses came back, he summoned the elders of the people and set before them all these words that the Lord had commanded him. ⁸ Then all the people responded together, "We will do all that the Lord has spoken." So Moses brought the people's words back to the Lord. ⁹ The Lord said to Moses, "I am going to come to you in a dense cloud, so that the people will hear when I speak with you and will always believe you." Moses reported the people's words to the Lord, ¹⁰ and the Lord told Moses, "Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow. They must wash their clothes ¹¹ and be prepared by the third day, for on the third day the Lord will come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people. ¹² Put boundaries for the people all around the mountain and say: Be careful that you don't go up on the mountain or touch its base. Anyone who touches the mountain must be put to death. ¹³ No hand may touch him; instead he will be stoned or shot with arrows and not live, whether animal or human. When the trumpet sounds a long blast, they may go up the mountain." ¹⁴ Then Moses came down from the mountain to the people and consecrated

them, and they washed their clothes. ¹⁵ He said to the people, "Be prepared by the third day. Do not have sexual relations with women." ¹⁶ On the third day, when morning came, there was thunder and lightning, a thick cloud on the mountain, and a very loud blast from a trumpet, so that all the people in the camp shuddered. ¹⁷ Then Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. ¹⁸ Mount Sinai was completely enveloped in smoke because the Lord came down on it in fire. Its smoke went up like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain shook violently. ¹⁹ As the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke and God answered him in the thunder. ²⁰ The Lord came down on Mount Sinai at the top of the mountain. Then the Lord summoned Moses to the top of the mountain, and he went up. ²¹ The Lord directed Moses, "Go down and warn the people not to break through to see the Lord; otherwise many of them will die. ²² Even the priests who come near the Lord must consecrate themselves, or the Lord will break out in anger against them." ²³ Moses responded to the Lord, "The people cannot come up Mount Sinai, since you warned us: Put a boundary around the mountain and consecrate it." ²⁴ And the Lord replied to him, "Go down and come back with Aaron. But the priests and the people must not break through to come up to the Lord, or he will break out in anger against them." ²⁵ So Moses went down to the people and told them.

So Moses went up the mountain the first time, and God said to him, **go back down** and tell the people what I have done and what that means for them and the promise of my faithfulness...

Moses goes down and tells them, and then Moses goes back up...

God sends Moses back down and tells him to consecrate the people and to set up boundaries...

- This **consecration** was a purification process - this is not to clean themselves up for God and be received by Him... This is a process that points to a greater reality...

- It points to the purity and holiness of God and the filthiness of the human condition because of sin... And the need and desire to be made clean...
- And there are **boundaries** that are set up around the base of the mountain... This is a physical picture of a very real reality- they are separated from God because of their sin...
 - They can't go near God. They can't even get near the mountain where God's presence is residing...
 - If they do, they will die...

What we have to see here is something so often forgotten, and that's the holiness of God...

What we see here is a God that comes down in fire, a God that shakes the mountain, a God that controls the skies- thunder and lightning surround Him, and trumpets blast at His arrival...

- He is the very essence of purity...
- His power can't be comprehended...
- His glory can't be seen...

One of the biggest problems in our culture today is a low view of God... A watering down of His majesty and glory...

- We should be awe-struck at the mention of His name...
- When we miss that, we miss who we are compared to Him...
- We don't see how great the divide is... We don't see how great His demand is for holiness...

And it's in light of who He is that He calls us to live a life submitted and surrendered to who He is... And what He's about to do next is show us what that looks like...

But you're going to see that **there's a problem**... Not with God, but with us...

Exodus 20

¹ Then God spoke all these words: ² I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the place of slavery.

³ Do not have other gods besides me. ⁴ Do not make an idol for yourself, whether in the shape of anything in the heavens above or on the earth below or in the waters under the earth. ⁵ Do not bow in worship to them, and do not serve them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, bringing the consequences of the fathers' iniquity on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate me, ⁶ but showing faithful love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commands. ⁷ Do not misuse the name of the Lord your God, because the Lord will not leave anyone unpunished who misuses his name. ⁸ Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy: ⁹ You are to labor six days and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. You must not do any work—you, your son or daughter, your male or female servant, your livestock, or the resident alien who is within your city gates. ¹¹ For the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and everything in them in six days; then he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and declared it holy. ¹² Honor your father and your mother so that you may have a long life in the land that the Lord your God is giving you. ¹³ Do not murder. ¹⁴ Do not commit adultery. ¹⁵ Do not steal. ¹⁶ Do not give false testimony against your neighbor. ¹⁷ Do not covet your neighbor's house. Do not covet your neighbor's wife, his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor. ¹⁸ All the people witnessed the thunder and lightning, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain surrounded by smoke. When the people saw it they trembled and stood at a distance.

Ok, so here's what we need to do, let's walk through these **10 commandments that were given at Mount Sinai**...

- If this is God's standard for living defined, we need to understand the scope of what each of them means...

And here's what I want you to do, as we walk through them, let's take inventory of where we're at with them...

Commandment 1: ³ Do not have other gods besides me.

IOW: there is nothing that comes before God... He is to reign **#1** in your life at all times...

- *Let me ask you this*, has there ever been a time in your life when that's not true?
- Have you ever put anything before God or above God in your life?

The answer is yes. It was yesterday when I was selfish and shaped my life around myself...

So we're 1 commandment in, and I'm 0-1...

Commandment 2: ⁴ Do not make an idol for yourself,

An **idol** is anything in your life that you love, serve, and look to more than God...

- Has there ever been a time in your life when you loved and were shaped by something other than God?
 - All you have to do is look at where you spend your time, talent, and money to figure this out...
- Is there anything that's taken your heart away from worshipping God?
- Has your profession ever been the thing that you're more dedicated to than God?
- Has your money, the stuff you want, your sport, or your degree been something you've been more concerned about than God? ...
- You could ask it like this: *has what your life looks like ever been more important than what your doing with your life for God?*

Commandment 3: ⁷ Do not misuse the name of the Lord your God,

- Have you ever disregarded the name of God by using it with a cussword?
- Have you ever flippantly used His name in a joke or a sentence without reverence?

- Have you ever used God's name lightly or in a way that's not done in adoration or worship?
- And here's the thing, it's not just limited to speech... What about this, have you always faithfully represented God's name well in the way that you live?

Commandment 4: ⁸ Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy:

At the heart of this commandment is trust, surrender, and worship...

God designed a weekly rhythm that He established at creation with the call to step away from work and take time to worship God, trusting Him as the ultimate provider and sustainer...

The NT would reshape the Sabbath around Jesus. He's the fulfillment of the Sabbath, and we're to **rest in Him...**

- We need to set aside time weekly to focus on and rest in Jesus! A day where you focus special attention on Jesus in a way that deepens your love for Him. ²

Illustration: Only people doing it right is CFA...

- **BTW:** Think how many people thought CFA would never make it closing on a Sunday? Like yeah, right, that will never work...
 - And yet the Lord blessed it!
- CFA is onto something, *except they hosted the NEXT conference on a Sunday... Turns out even CFA falls short...*

So here's the question, have there ever been a week where you've not set aside time for the purpose of resting in Jesus??

Now you're going to notice a shift here with commandment 5... The first 4 all have to do with your relationship with God... These next 6 all have to do with your relationship with other people...

Commandment 5: ¹² Honor your father and your mother

² John Piper, *Remember the Sabbath to Keep it Holy*.

This has to do with how we relate to authority... Parents and others...

- Have you always honored and obeyed your parent's authority over you?
 - **BTW:** It's obey while you're in the house, and honor after you leave... *Not talking about obedience in wrong things while you're at home, and not talking about agreeing with things after you leave... Honor is something you choose to give...*
- Have you ever been dishonoring to your boss? Talk about them, not listen to them??

The answer is not a chance! *We're halfway through, by the way; how yall doing? I'm 0-5...*

Command 6: ¹³ Do not murder.

Finally! Here's one we can follow through on...

- **Wrong**, Jesus defines this for in **Matt. 5:21** as *being angry at someone without cause, or hating someone in your heart, or hurl insults... Then you're guilty of murder...*

Some of yall broke this one on the way to our gathering this morning... **ATL traffic**- a tool for God's sanctification...

- *Or getting your kids ready this morning...*
- *Or with your wife in the car... I know half or yall got in a heated argument on the way in let's be honest!*
- *Might not have said it but you thought it!*

Can you say that you've never been angry without cause, you've never hated someone in your heart, or hurled insults at anyone??

Command 7: ¹⁴ Do not commit adultery.

Now here we go, some of yall are like I definitely have this one...

Well, Jesus defines this one for us too... In **Matt. 5 28** he says that if you have ever looked at someone with **lust**, you've committed adultery in your heart...

This is any thoughts of physical intimacy or sexual desires for someone you're not married to... That's in person or on a screen...

Can you say that you've never had those?!?

Command 8: ¹⁵ Do not steal.³

- Can you say that you've never taken anything that doesn't belong to you?
- *For my 80's babies all I have one word for you **Napster**...*
 - *I know we were all confused on sharing and stealing then...*
- Have You ever taken credit for something that you shouldn't have?
- Have you always given people what's rightfully theirs? This includes the company you work at!

Command 9: ¹⁶ Do not give false testimony against your neighbor.

- Have you ever lied before??
 - *No?!? Liar!*
- You ever not told the whole truth or exaggerated the truth?
- You ever gossiped or slandered someone?

Command 10: ¹⁷ Do not covet

- Have you ever had a deep desire for someone else's stuff?
- Have you ever longed after someone else's life, looks, success, or status?
- You ever struggled with contentment?
- Have you ever been jealous before- resenting someone for what they have??

So there's the 10 commandments, How did you do? Anyone nail all of them, or how about any of them?!?

There's not a person in this room that can say that... We're all **0-10!**

- This is the one thing that we all have in common...

³ JD Greear, *Great Failure, Greater Hope.*

And I know our tendency is to think, *I'm not that bad, I only violated some of these a little bit... And there are a few of these that I might justify...*

Here's the thing: **God doesn't grade on a curve...**

- *I used to love those classes, except there would always be one smart kid that would mess it all up...*

God's standard is His standard, and to break one of them is the same as breaking all of them... Because God's standard is perfection because He is perfect...

Which brings me to what we talked about at the beginning...

Remember I told you **there was a problem...** This is it... We can't live up to God's standard, not even a little bit...

So the question is, then, why did God issue these commands if He knew that we couldn't keep them?!?

- *He gave them to us as a **mirror**... So that we can see ourselves for who we really are in light of who God is... Sinners in need of a Savior!*

God wants us to see into the depths of our hearts and our inability to live according to how God's called us to live... He wants us to see the huge gap between us and Him...

- That's cruel! No, it's not- it's grace! See, here's the thing, if we don't have a standard, we don't know we miss the mark...

Illustration: *In Golf, there is a standard # of swings it should take to get it in the hole... This is how you know if you're really good at golf or really bad...*

- *Think about if there was never a standard set... You would go out and play and come back and feel like I played great!*
- *Or you would start comparing yourself to other people...*
- *But you wouldn't know the reality of where you stand without a set standard...*

The commandments reveal our inability to keep them exposing our hearts...

So, where is the hope in all of this??

Here's what God does. After He lays out the law and how He's called us to live, he's going to implement a sacrificial system...

- Innocent unblemished animal would be taken, hands laid on it... Symbol of the transfer of the sin onto the animal...
- *And then the innocent slain for the guilty...*
- The death of the animal was done as a payment for sin...
- It's how justice was served, the animal took their place...
- Something had to die in order for them to live...

The purpose is to show that in the midst of our disobedience and in the midst of our sin, God provides a substitute sacrifice...

And here's the thing that we see in that... Our salvation is not contingent on our ability to follow the rules. It's contingent on our FAITH in God's provision...

- God pointed to His provision in the **OT** through the sacrificial system...

God would establish that provision once and for all through Jesus...

The perfect Lamb of God that would be slain in our place as the ultimate payment for sin!

Romans 3:20–26

²⁰ For no one will be justified in his sight by the works of the law, because the knowledge of sin comes through the law. ²¹ But now, apart from the law, the righteousness of God has been revealed, attested by the Law and the Prophets. ²² The righteousness of God is through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe, since there is no distinction. ²³ For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; ²⁴ they are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. ²⁵ God presented him as the mercy seat by his blood, through faith, to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his

restraint God passed over the sins previously committed.²⁶ God presented him to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so that he would be just and justify the one who has faith in Jesus.

God demands perfection; the gospel is that he also supplies it.⁴

- The gospel is that our sin was so bad that Jesus had to die to save us.
- But through His death, we receive new life! Jesus didn't stay dead, He rose from the dead, and it's through His resurrection that we can have new life through faith in His finished work...

Great Exchange...

You have been justified, you have been redeemed, you have been made righteous...

- When you were far off you've been brought near...
- When you were dead in your sin you've been made alive...

It doesn't matter what you've done, where you've been...

You are not too bad or too far gone... We are all equally separated from a perfect and Holy God and there is only one hope and only one way...

- And God is the only one who could do it... Jesus would come down and live perfectly in our place...
- Everywhere we messed up, everywhere we broke the ten commandments, He fulfilled them perfectly in our place...
- Then He would go to the cross...
 - Dying in our place, paying for our sin...
- He would raise from the dead... And extend to us new life through His finished work!

Not your work but His work!! This is the grace and mercy of God! You can't become righteous. You have to **receive** righteousness... Through Faith!

Some of you need to receive that this morning...

- Been around the things of Jesus but never surrendered to the work of Jesus...
- Know that Jesus died, but haven't seen it as death in YOUR place...
- That you deserved the cross, and HE took it for you...

For so many people, Christianity is lip service and not life surrender...

- When you surrender, it changes everything!
- You get a new heart and new power...
- You're life begins to be transformed not by your works but by how Christ is working in you!

Illustration: When you move into a new office space... Looks like the previous person...

- Over time, it starts to look like you...
- The same is true when you surrender...

Some of you need to surrender this morning!

This leads me to the last part of this... For those of you who are Christians...

- Is Christ characterizing your life??

Some of you are settled into a complacent cycle in your life...

- Not motivated, stagnant, stale...

You're taking for granted what you have been saved from and who you have been saved to...

You have a minimized view of sin in your life... You have settled... Sitting on your *blessed assurance, Jesus is mine...*

- You lack dependence...

⁴ Ibid.

Here's the thing: *no one, no matter how long they have been walking with the Lord, can nail these commands **in a week!***

What the gospel does, is it exposes the depth is sin in your life, **but in that**, it also points you to a love that greater than anything you could ever dream...

- And that kind of love compels... 2 Cor. 5:14
 - *One died for all, therefore all died, so that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for the one who died and was raised...*

Illustration: *Rembrandt was a painter famous for his use of light. His secret, he said, was not the streaks of light he painted but the amount of time he spent darkening the canvas so that the streaks of light appeared all the more brilliant.*

- *You'll never comprehend the glory of the gospel until you see the darkness it penetrated.⁵*

And here's the thing this is why the Word of God is so important... it shows us the glory of God, where we fall short, but then it points us to where God has stepped in, how we should depend on Him and what it looks like to walk in dependance...

What the 10 commandments point us to is **dependance**...

Dependence drives us deeper into the work of Jesus!

Conclusion [VAMP]

Some of you need to respond to the gospel for the first time this morning!

⁵ Ibid.