

Introduction

1. Between the Ghosts

(1) A large part of my life was lived between 2 kinds of ghosts

1. The ghosts behind me
2. The ghosts in front of me

(2) Transparent vs Vulnerable

1. This series will give considerable attention to these ghosts.
2. 20 years of preaching has come to this
3. I have been transparent, but not very good at being vulnerable
 - **Transparent** - what happened in my life
 - **Vulnerable** - how it affected me; my thinking, my emotions

2. This is a series about Jesus

(1) Specifically, how Jesus changes people & keeps changing people

(A) Four texts important to my life

I. The Ghosts Behind Us (p. 36-39)

1. We all have ghosts in our past (p. 36-37a)

(1) I was born East of LA in Whittier, CA.

1. House I live in **slide 1**
2. House I grew up in **slide 2**
Parents - **slide 3**

(2) My parents:

1. Father, born in Iowa, raised in Eagle Rock, near L.A., was a former Air Force linguistics expert who now worked for Dunn & Bradstreet.

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2. Mother, born in Mazatlan, first generation, catholic, immigrant who paid her way to citizenship by waitressing among Hollywood elites, while slumming it in East L.A.

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(3) Neither of them knew how to be parents.

Slide 6 1. My mom's mother, was old school ... but teetering on abusive much of the time

Slide 7 2. My dad's dad, was largely absent, floating in & out

5. Both would repeat this legacy as my parents.

(4) Abuse & Absence

1. Mom - abuse
2. Dad - absent

(5) Surrogate Families

Slide 8 1. Looked to my surrounding neighborhood & the thriving gang culture was willing to embrace me; arms wide open

2. Learned how to lie, cheat, steal, harm

3. Stabbed one kid by the age of 14, arrested for breaking, entering by 16

Slide 9 4. Had to be transferred at 17, gf pregnant by 18.

Slide 10 5. Military would become my next surrogate family

(6) Always felt shame & broken

1. Everything I did to feel accepted or loved, only created more layers of shame

(7) Maybe "the woman" felt this way

2. We all are condemned by our ghosts (v39)

(1) What are the ghosts of our past.

1. Sin, trauma, abuse

I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted within my breast; - Psalm 22:14

2. Whatever makes you feel "out of joint" in this world

(2) The label of "sinner" brands itself into our DNA

1. We feel condemned by the sins we commit & the sins committed against us.

2. We have not learned yet:

...and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word... - Hebrews 12:24

3. We all are looking for a way out of condemnation (v37b-38)

(1) This is a woman looking for something that speaks a better word

(2) We are willing to cause a scene for whatever we think that might be.

(3) These are the ghosts in front...

II. The Ghosts in Front of Us (v.40-42)

1. We all look for ghosts in our future (v.40-42a)

(1) What are the ghosts in front of us...

1. Anything that we think will justify us; who will set me free from the penalty weighing me down

2. I call them ghosts because they have no substance, we never really catch them, they don't really ever work.

And the world is passing away along with its desires... - 1 John 2:17

3. But we can't believe that...

2. We all love the ghosts that seem to save us (v.42b)

(1) We will give our love to any thing that will set us free from the ghosts of our past

(2) For me: success, money, position

(3) For Simon: religion

(4) Idolize → villainize

III. The Ghost Within Us (143-48)

1. The ghosts in front of you can't save you. (143-46)

(1) Simon can't live up to his own salvation narrative

1. Fails even the most basic religious practices

(2) No matter how many promotions were given to me, no matter how successful... nothing... not marriage, not family... nothing could undo this "out-of-joint" soul

(3) What if nothing could?

1. This realization is the first step towards true freedom.

2. Because if I can learn no ghost ahead can save me, then you're closer to learning no ghost behind can condemn you

2. The ghosts of your past can't condemn you (v47-49)

(1) Where does this leave us?

1. If nothing ahead can save me, then where do I look?
2. If nothing behind can condemn me, then why do I feel this way?

(2) How is Jesus different than any other ghost?

1. v47 - Only Jesus can condemn & only Jesus can forgive

And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. - Matthew 28:17

2. How can I trust! ?
That He can take this pain,
remove this condemnation,
& set me free! ?

And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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, - Matthew 28:18-19

(3) What makes Jesus' so different is His authority.

1. We are condemned in our sin, but not necessarily by our sin.

2. So what makes Him condemn us? The ghosts ahead. The things you think can save you from the ghost behind.

(4) Jesus is the only one with authority to promise the Ghost within.

So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. - John 8:36

...where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. - 2 Corinthians 3:17

1. The whole function of the Holy Ghost is the awakening of freedom.
2. Freedom by providing power, transformation & conviction.

Conclusion (v54)

1. Faith in the Giver of the Ghost within

(1) On an empty highway out of Georgia I found a small bible

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(2) I don't relate to this woman

(3) Point of the text (v47)

1. Simon thinks he's safe from the Ghosts behind by the ghosts ahead.

2. Which is exactly the thinking that condemns us.

3. When you realize this... you can

2. Now, go in peace ←

(1) Peace is fully manifest in stages. (series = my stages)

1. Bible is full of people w ghosts

VIDEO - Gospel for the Ghosts