I. INTRODUCITON

A. PRAYER

1. Glorious God above, we ask that you come down into this place now through your Spirit so that we may better understand the truths revealed in Scripture. Let our ears hear your words and not mine. Let our minds so we can discern your will. Let our hands do your will, not ours. As always, may the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight. Get glory in this place. And God's people said, Amen.

B. MAIN THEME

1. Start with our big idea: **We are formed by Jesus for our neighbors.**
2. Illustration
   a) Are you a reservoir or a river? | One receives, the other gives.
   b) Similarly, God pours grace, mercy, forgiveness, etc., but what do you do with it?
   c) He pours into us grace, mercy, love, hospitality, etc., but never intends for us to be reservoirs...
   d) His grace flows through us...

C. SERMON SERIES

1. Formed between the mountains
2. What God has done thus far... up to this point... describe chapter 19.
3. God takes another step by drawing them closer into his presence.

D. ORIENTATION TO TEXT

1. Find me in Exodus 20, and 24.
2. Chapters 20-24 answer the question: What does life with this god actually look like, and what happens when God's people live according to his ways?
3. This story has a remarkable progression.
4. God's words lead to God's table, and God's table leads to God's glory.

E. TRANSITION

1. And it begins with God giving his words to Israel. Jump into the story with me. Moses has come down the mountain. Israel is gathered at its foot. And now something extraordinary happens: **God speaks directly to the people.**

II. GOD'S WORDS

A. TEXT

1. **READ EXODUS 20:1-2**... Do you know what comes next?

2. THE TEN COMMANDMENTS - can you name all ten?
   a) Don't have any other gods | Don't have any idols
   b) Don't bear God's name in vain
   c) Remember the Sabbath and keep it holy
   d) Honor your father and mother
   e) Don't murder | Don't commit adultery
   f) Don't steal | Don't bear false witness | Don't covet.

3. WHAT WE CALL THESE
   a) We call them the 10 Commandments - the Bible calls them the 10 words
   b) More than regulations - foundational covenantal words.
   c) Notice how it starts? With Grace.

B. INTERPRETATION

1. GRACE - God gives grace first - I fear we have read this and thought the Israelites had to earn their salvation.
   a) God's words don't create the relationship; grace did.
   b) God's words give shape to the relationship.

2. GOD'S WORDS ARE GOD'S VALUES
   a) Commandments - words - really values.
      (1) "Do not murder" gives a boundary - underneath is the value: human life.
      (2) If human life matters, then it goes further than do not murder. Defend, uphold, care about others. A person who values others.
      (3) Beneath all 10 are the greatest commandments

3. THE TEN WORDS APPLIED
   a) Never meant to be the ONLY TEN LAWS governing Israel. Foundational principles.
   b) Do not murder is clear, but what about when somebody hurts others
   c) Do not steal is clear, but what about when your livestock destroys another's property?
   d) Do not bear false witness sounds clear... but what if your neighbor is your friend and they've gotten into trouble with the law?

e) What if they are an immigrant?
f) What if they're your enemy?
g) How do God's values work when life gets complicated?
h) These ten words are case laws, giving Israel examples of how to apply God's values.
i) In other words, God isn't just giving them answers. He's teaching them how to think like him. To have a mind like his...

C. APPLICATION

1. DO YOU HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST?
   a) Paul clearly says we have access to God's wisdom **READ 1 COR. 2:16**
   b) We are being formed to think the way God thinks...
   c) Formation isn't learning and abiding by rules. It's learning to see every face, every situation, every story through the eyes of Jesus.

2. WE TEND TO REDUCE GOD'S WORDS TO SIMPLE RESTRICTIONS
   a) These aren't rules to take away our freedoms. They are transforming us from the inside out into the image of Jesus.
   b) We read "do not" and hear what God takes away.
   c) Instead, I challenge you to hear what God is creating
      (1) A society where life is protected
      (2) Marriages are protected
      (3) Property is respected
      (4) Truth matters
      (5) Where the poor aren't exploited
      (6) Where foreigners aren't mistreated
      (7) Where even enemies receive mercy.
      (8) All of these are based on the 10 commandments.
   d) It forms a people into a holy nation, a light.
   e) It's establishing God's will on earth as it is in heaven. BLESSING

D. TAKEAWAY

1. **God's VALUES in us bring HEAVEN through us.**
2. Goes directly to Jesus' prayer in Matthew 6:10.
3. Moses records everything God says Ex. 20-23. Then goes down the Mt.
   a) **READ EX. 24:3-4**

E. TRANSITION: But God doesn't simply give Israel words to live by. The relationship he's forming them for is more personal than that. Because after the Words comes a meal.

III. GOD'S TABLE

A. ILLUSTRATION

1. Erica and I got married May 22, 2010. Refuge CC. Stan, Jake. Vows, ring
2. But then came the party afterward: food, 200+ people, DJ, dancing, speeches, tears, laughter.
3. It was a celebration of vows... that's where the story goes next in Ex.

B. TEXT

1. **READ EXODUS 24:9-11** "Saw God, and they ate and drank"

C. INTERPRETATION

1. VS. 8, 10 - THEY SAW GOD
   a) Ex. 19 - don't come any closer; now 70 elders halfway up it.
   b) One scholar said it was like looking up into the sky and seeing through the floor of his throne room. Seeing the souls of his feet.
   c) Another says that God was present with them to some degree.
   d) Others say it was Jesus before he was born and laid in a manger.
   e) Regardless, it's the ordinary captivated by the extraordinary w/o consequence.
   f) Then they ate and drank.

2. VS. 10 - THEY ATE AND DRANK WITH GOD
   a) What do you think they ate? Not ribs or pulled pork, no hot dogs.
      (1) Maybe brisket? More likely sheep or goat.
      (2) Make no mistake, this is a dinner party hosted by the Almighty.
   b) God's hospitality takes the focus
      (1) Celebration of the vows made in the covenant relationship
      (2) "The holy hour and happy hour flow together here"
      (3) Grace in covenant made this possible; when you eat together, you grow together. Table fellowship is huge. God hosts his new family.
      (4) First act of family... they eat together... how should we live this?

D. APPLICATION

1. WE WELCOME BECAUSE WE'VE BEEN WELCOMED
   a) See this... hospitality originated with God. He is the original host.
      (1) Invited Adam into his Garden.
      (2) Invited Abraham to a land he'd give to his descendants.
      (3) Invited these elders onto this mountain for a meal.
      (4) Hospitality is about taking outsiders and making them insiders

b) God is a hospitable God. We saw this last week.
c) Before Israel ever welcomed a stranger, God welcomed Israel
d) God brought these outsiders and made them insiders.

2. NONE OF US DESERVE IT. HOSPITALITY IS GRACE ENACTED.
   a) Grace is more than mere forgiveness. It creates space for relationship
      (1) Old wounds are healed
      (2) Relationships are restored
      (3) Then they can live in the joy of God's grace.
   b) Let me show you how... true story.

E. ILLUSTRATION

1. 2016, Wanda Dench sent a text to who she thought was her grandson to Thanksgiving dinner. Wrong number
2. Went to a 17-year-old kid named Jamal Hinton. Realized they were strangers.
3. Jamal asked... can I still get a plate? Wanda said yes.
4. And he kept coming back. One holiday after another. Became family.
5. All because someone said, there is a place for you here.

F. TAKEAWAY

1. Our TABLE is an INVITATION for STRANGERS to see God.

a) If we're being formed by Jesus for our neighbors, one of the simplest places formation becomes real is around our tables.
b) Our tables become places where outsiders become guests, guests become friends, and friends encounter something of God's welcome.

G. TRANSITION

1. But Moses isn't finished climbing. He's heard God's Words. He's eaten at God's table. And now God calls him farther up the mountain.

IV. GOD'S GLORY

A. **TEXT -** God calls Moses from the dinner table, probably halfway up the Mt, to go the rest of the way. To enter the cloud of glory at the summit.

1. **READ EXODUS 24:15-18**

B. INTERPRETATION

1. MOSES WAITED SIX DAYS TO BE INVITED INTO GOD'S PRESENCE.
   a) Can you imagine what that must have been like? Sensory overload.
   b) Maybe he ate, maybe not, rested only after exhausted.
   c) After six days, hungry, tired, God speaks. Moses, enter my presence.
   d) Six days he labored, then on the 7th, he entered God's rest. Sound familiar?
      (1) Textual clue that nods toward the creation week in Genesis 1.

2. MOSES THEN ENTERS GOD'S REST.
   a) Most important part, the destination of Exodus was never merely freedom from Pharaoh. The destination was God's presence.

C. APPLICATION

1. The destination of salvation is not merely escaping hell. It's presence with God.
   a) The closer we get to God, the more we begin to look like, sound like, and even smell like God.

2. We are formed by being with God.
   a) Campfire with the kids at the house. - our activities.
   b) Then we head inside; the first thing is to throw our clothes in the washing machine because they smell like smoke.
   c) Stay close to a fire long enough, and you carry evidence of its presence with you.
   d) That's literally what happens to Moses.
   e) When we are around Jesus, we can't help but walk away from those formative moments... smelling like Jesus. Stretching the illustration

3. Paul gives another analogy... reflecting.
   a) Paul looks back at this story and writes this
   b) **READ 2 Corinthians 3:18** - We reflect the Lord's glory.
   c) The more time we spend with God, the more we reflect him back into the world.
4. What happens when you spend a lot of time around someone you love?

a) What they love might become something you love
b) What matters to them begins to matter to you.
c) That's what happens as we are in proximity to the glory of God. His love begins shaping what we love. His desires shape ours.
d) Spending time with God rearranges our priorities.
e) Examples
   (1) The glutton prioritizes Christ more than food
   (2) The addict prioritizes Christ more than a fix
   (3) The arrogant prioritizes Christ more than prestige
   (4) The Anxious learn to prioritize Christ's presence more than control
   (5) The ambitious prioritizes Christ more than power, money, or fame
f) The more time we spend in the glory of Christ, the more we become like him. Formed into his image.

D. TAKEAWAY

1. **We BECOME like the one we BEHOLD.**
2. When we do, others will see God's glory shine through us.
3. Moses beheld the glory of God, and Moses literally reflected that glory to others.
4. Paul says that through the Spirit, as we behold the Lord's glory, we are being transformed
5. We become like the one we behold.

E. TRANSITION

1. Now let's go home on this...

V. CLOSING

A. MAIN THEME
   1. When we become like the one we behold, his grace flows through us like a mighty river.
   2. Heaven reaches the world through us
   3. Strangers are brought near and become insiders.
   4. His glory is reflected into the world.
   5. And the world will change.
   6. You are formed by Jesus into Jesus for your neighbors.
      a) To love your neighbors
      b) To reach your neighbors
      c) To serve your neighbors
      d) To invite your neighbors
      e) To teach your neighbors
      f) To protect your neighbors
      g) Your relationship with God is not just for you; it's to share with those around you so that through you they might behold the glory of God.

B. Let's pray
   1. Heavenly Father, you are glory. I ask that you shape our hearts into yours so that what breaks your heart also breaks ours. So that what you desire is what we desire. So that what you want is what we want. I pray that we apply the values of your ten words faithfully today by valuing people, pursuing you, and hungering for righteousness, not so that we abide by rules, but because we are enraptured by being in your presence.
   2. I ask that you reveal to us those neighbors who need you most and lay a burden on our hearts to reach them. Let us use our homes and tables to invite them into your family, for your glory.
   3. We ask these things in the name of your Son, Jesus, Amen.

Operation Christmas Child - Boxes, labels, and instructions are available in both foyers. Unsealed boxes need to be returned by November 8, please. **NLCC covers the $10 postage per box.**

Praise Night - Wednesday, October 28 at 6:30 pm. A nursery will be provided for toddlers age 3 and under only. Kids age 4 and up will be in the service.

Trip to Operation Christmas Child Processing Center - If you would like to go to Aurora, IL, to help process Operation Christmas Child boxes, please sign up at the information center by November 1st. The group will leave the morning of December 2nd and return the evening of the 3rd. Hotel and travel expenses will be shared. Please see Belinda Scholl or Cindy Claar with questions.

Update on IDES

WE are starting PHASE 2 on October 26. We expect 15-20 out-of-town visitors to stay with us in our building for at least three weeks as they begin restoring three homes. One in Centerville, one in Hagerstown, and one in Cambridge.

But here's what that means for us: we have an opportunity to once again show God's hospitality. We need help making lunches for all these visitors. We'll also need help with dinners. So we have a sign-up, and all it entails is coming to make sandwiches.