I. INTRODUCTION

A. ILLUSTRATION

1. Interstellar Song STAY plays
2. Explanation of dissonance - don't harmonize, unsettled, long for home.
3. This song you hear is from the soundtrack to the movie Interstellar
   a) Tell the story
      (1) Legend has it that Christopher Nolan went to Hans Zimmer and said I need a sound that represents a broken family. Hans put some notes together, made a recording, and sent it back. Nolan's response was, that's the sound; now I need to write the story for it. This is that sound.
      (2) Cooper leaves his children at home to explore the universe in search of a new home for all mankind.
      (3) The heart of the story is dissonance: an unsettled separation between a father and his children, especially his daughter, Murphy.
      (4) The music makes you feel it.
   b) Soundtracks shape the emotional composition of a film, a play, or an auditorium.
4. I believe if Exodus 19 had a soundtrack, it would sound something like what you are hearing. - feel dissonance, tension, and an unsettled feeling because two realities are in conflict.

B. MAIN THEME

1. Today, I want us to feel the disconnect between God and his people.
2. **Perhaps to make it more pointed - I want us to feel the problem of sin.**

C. TODAY

1. Find me in Exodus 19
2. Here is the "Last time on Formed between the mountains" preview.
3. Now it's time for Moses and the people to know their God as promised in Ex. 3
4. But now they must confront the tension at the heart of their relationship w/ God. Sin. Sinful people cannot enter the presence of a holy God.
5. God and the people want proximity. Sin creates separation.
6. We feel the dissonance of that conflict.

D. PRAYER

1. Heavenly Father, I pray that you give me the words to speak, the courage to speak truth, and the wisdom to speak into lives. Exodus 19 is not just the Israelite's story. It is our story. I pray that you help us find our conflict, our tension in our relationship with God and bring it to resolution. As always, may the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight. Lord, you are our rock; you are our redeemer. Get glory in this place. God's people said, amen.

E. TRANSITION

1. Exodus 19–20 tells the story of how God draws them near, God tells them to stay away, and then God makes a way. It is the gospel story in two chapters.

II. GOD DRAWS THEM NEAR

A. STORY -

1. They travel and arrive at Mt. Sinai, the mountain of God. - fulfilled Ex. 3.
2. **READ EXODUS 19:3-6**

B. INTERPRETATION

1. Pay attention to the order of what God says here, because the order matters.
   a) Reminds them of what he has done. Seen this pattern before.
   b) Brings it back to grace. "You saw what I did" - unmerited favor.
   c) Look at how he describes the grace...
2. "I brought you to myself" - hospitality - Grace in action
   a) That's hospitality
   b) Not just having someone over at your house - it is bringing them near.
   c) Every part of the story has been about this | the call | the plagues | the Red Sea... about being in proximity, to be close with his people.
3. "You will be my treasured possession" - Identity - hospitality's result.
   a) His hospitality gives them an identity.
      (1) Identity is a big topic right now. Many claim they want freedom to express what they believe about themselves.
      (2) They perform their identity and expect applause.
      (3) But then the performance of identity becomes predicated on the belief that others will affirm and applaud it.
      (4) In pursuing freedom of expression, you've actually enslaved yourself to the applause of others.
      (5) When it doesn't come, anxiety and fear and uncertainty creep in.
   b) Here in Exodus, God gives them their identity.
      (1) "You are mine", not Pharaoh, not slaves, my people.
      (2) Grace through hospitality allows us to receive praise and acceptance from the only one who matters. Our Father in heaven.

C. IILLUSTRATION

1. Think of a newborn baby.
   a) Baby did nothing to be born.
   b) Baby boy who looks like dad but has his mother's eyes.
2. We looked down at Hannah and said you are ours, and filled with love for her
3. We looked down at Charlie and said you are ours, and filled with pride for him
4. Looked down at Oliva and said you are ours. And filled with peace for her.
5. Looked down at Jack and said... uh.. you are ours. And filled with hope for him.
6. Those are our four children, made space for each of them in our family.

D. TAKEAWAY

1. **Here's the truth - God's hospitality defines our identity.**

E. TRANSITION

1. God says, You're mine. I brought you to myself...
2. But then abrasively says... do not come up the mountain... huh?

III. GOD SAYS STAY AWAY

A. STORY

1. God tells them not to come any further, or they will die.
    a) God tells them to prepare for his arrival in three days - consecrate themselves. Clean themselves. But God also makes a boundary.
2. **READ EXODUS 19:18-21**

B. INTERPRETATION

1. Inherent tension. A sound of dissonance is playing in the background.
    a) I want you with me - he told Moses, bring them here.
    b) You can't come near me. - Don't come up the Mountain.
2. How can the Hospitable God also be a Hazardous God?
    a) God is not malevolent - he is holy.
    b) Malevolent - intending or desiring harm. | Exodus says otherwise... rescued
    c) The danger here isn't because of malevolence but because of HOLINESS.
    d) Holiness is more than moral righteousness. Distinct, pure, unlike anything.
    e) His presence isn't dangerous because there's something wrong with God. His presence is dangerous because there's something wrong with us.
3. How is a boundary hospitable?
    a) God's glory is veiled - protected - because of Israel's sinfulness.
    b) The boundary is merciful
    c) Hospitality is not always the removal of boundaries. In this case, it is keeping his guests safe from his holiness.
    d) Invite a toddler into my home - hospitality isn't giving them free rein.
    e) Boundary isn't rejection - it's mercy.

C. ILLUSTRATION

1. Pause here to say - everything we see in Exodus 19-20 is a grander version of Exodus 3. At this point in the story, the sound is deafening.
    a) God is pulling out all the stops.
    b) Do you know where that phrase comes from? - Pipe Organ. Opens up more pipes to be fuller, grander, bigger, louder.
2. They did this in the Interstellar soundtrack. A barrage of music when danger is real. Fills the air with suspense, drama, glory.
3. In Exodus 3, everything was subtle but clear.
4. In Exodus 19, everything is blaring. The air is thick with sound.
    a) Burning bush to the whole mountain on fire
    b) Voice of God in the bush; God is shaking the mountain
    c) Removal of sandals for holy ground: don't come closer, or you will die
    d) The commissioning of Moses to the commissioning of a people
    e) It's recapitulation. The same moment again, but this time much more intense.

D. APPLICATION

1. Sometimes God creates boundaries for us and it feels unsettling. Doesn't it?
2. My kids hate the word no, something we may never truly shake.

3. But no is not always a rejection.
    a) We may lack important information, not understand complexity
    b) God tells us no all the time in our prayer requests… even good things.
    c) Lord, deliver this person from cancer. Father, heal my child. God, would you please provide financially?
    d) We pray these things from our perspective, which is good, and maybe it is. But we can't see.
4. God tells us we can't see everything. He understands we can't understand
    a) And the great mystery of faith is that sometimes no means we experience something painful or difficult or hard, but God will redeem..
5. God wants the Israelites in his presence like in the Garden of Eden.
    a) But sin makes that impossible.
    b) So here, sit and observe as I pull out all the stops.
    c) Wonder in the mystery shrouded by the cloud.
    d) But come no closer…
    e) Which leads to our next fill-in-the-blank.

E. TAKEAWAY

1. God's hospitality protects the vulnerable

F. TRANSITION

1. But that's not all; let's look at the next part of the story. God makes a way.

IV. GOD MAKES A WAY

A. STORY

1. READ EXODUS 20:18-21

B. INTERPRETATION

1. Moses as Mediator - Moses went up.
   a) Moses became the official mediator in this moment. The go-between.
   b) Moses stands between representatives of each.
   c) Up and down. Up and down. Windows on the bus go up and down.
   d) Moses is playing into the music of the situation.
   e) But Moses cannot resolve the dissonance. Infected with the same sin.
   f) A few chapters later, he asks to see God's glory- the answer is not my front but my exhaust.
   g) Dissonance
   h) How do these two parties ever come together?

C. ILLUSTRATION

1. Return to Interstellar. Dissonance makes you feel like something isn't finished.
2. There has to be resolution. It has to come home. We call that Consonance.
3. Sinai is only dissonance. No Resolution.
   a) Come near, stay away.
   b) The rest of the OT keeps that tension.
   c) Tabernacle - curtains shroud God's glory
   d) Priests can enter - but only on certain days
   e) Sounds of Dissonance continue. When will the resolution arrive? When does the music come home?

D. JESUS

1. This is the gospel story - At Sinai, Moses goes up. In Jesus, God comes down.
2. John 1:14 - dwelled is the word tabernacled. No cloud or shrowd, just flesh.
   a) Jesus touches lepers, eats with sinners, welcomes children, sits at tables.
   b) But close only counts in horse shoes and hand grenades.
   c) The problem is not the proximity. The problem is the heart filled with sin.
   d) So Jesus does something Moses never could. He makes atonement.
3. READ 1 TIMOTHY 2:5
   a) Moses stood between God and Israel
   b) Jesus stands between God and all people.
   c) He carried our sin up the mountain to his Father's presence with his blood, so we can access the Father.
   d) And on that day we call Good Friday, we get a description that sounds oddly familiar.
   e) Darkness, ground shakes, thunder rumbles, but then the curtain splits.

E. TAKEAWAY

1. God's Hospitality brings us home.

V. CLOSING

A. READ HEBREWS 12:18-24

1. The author of Hebrews looks back at this story, and here is what this pastor has to say about it.
2. "You have not come to what could be touched, to a blazing fire, to darkness, gloom, and storm, to the blast of a trumpet and the sound of words."
3. That's Sinai.
4. That's Exodus 19
5. That's Moses as mediator.
6. But he goes on...
    a) Instead, you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem... You have come to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant.
    b) Do you hear the sound of Resolution?
    c) At Sinai, keep your distance. In Jesus, come near.
    d) At Sinai, do not cross the boundary. In Jesus, the bridge is the blood of Christ.
    e) At Sinai, Moses went up. In the Gospel, Jesus came down.
    f) The dissonance resolves.

B. And once you've been welcomed like that, it changes how you welcome others.
1. And now God tells us
2. Come closer.
3. Not because God became less holy
4. Not because sin became less serious
5. Not because the fire went out
6. But because Jesus made the way possible.
7. The mediator has brought us together; the chord resolves. We are home.

C. We were the outsiders.
1. We were the ones standing at a distance.
2. We were the ones who couldn't get ourselves in.

D. And God made a way for us.
1. That's why hospitality isn't an optional Christian virtue.
2. Hospitality is what happens when people who have been welcomed by God begin welcoming people like God.
3. We bring people near. We protect the vulnerable. We make room.
4. Maybe the simplest way to say it is this:
5. **Hospitable people are simply people who remember how they got into the house.**
6. And church, Jesus, is how we got into the house of God.