

## Our Hiding Place

### The Refuge of Relationship

- I have been preaching on a series that God is our hiding place – He is our refuge and safe place.
- God is who we go to when we need strength.

Remember:

- We were created to **need** this hiding place / refuge
  - Everyday Satan offers you a **false** refuge.
  - Every refuge other than God is not an answer, but it becomes part of the **problem**.
1. All false hiding places / refuges promise you safety and peace, but in essence, they give you **bondage**.
    - Numbers 35 talks about the 6 cities of refuge.
    - Joshua 20 speaks of this hiding place.

#### **Joshua 20:1-3**

The Lord also spoke to Joshua, saying, <sup>2</sup>“Speak to the children of Israel, saying: ‘Appoint for yourselves cities of refuge, of which I spoke to you through Moses, <sup>3</sup>that the slayer who kills a person accidentally or unintentionally may flee there; and they shall be your refuge from the avenger of blood.

Verse 3 – notice: they

### **Joshua 20:4-6**

<sup>4</sup>And when he flees to one of those cities, and stands at the entrance of the gate of the city, and declares his case in the hearing of the elders of that city, they shall take him into the city as one of them, and give him a place, that he may dwell among them. <sup>5</sup>Then if the avenger of blood pursues him, they shall not deliver the slayer into his hand, because he struck his neighbor unintentionally, but did not hate him beforehand. <sup>6</sup>And he shall dwell in that city until he stands before the congregation for judgment, and until the death of the one who is high priest in those days. Then the slayer may return and come to his own city and his own house, to the city from which he fled.' "

Verse 9 – notice: the cities for all

### **Joshua 20:9**

<sup>9</sup>These were the cities appointed for all the children of Israel and for the stranger who dwelt among them, that whoever killed a person accidentally might flee there, and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood until he stood before the congregation.

Remember the word: they

- All 6 cities had nothing **physical** to protect any one.
  - The word, "they" refers to the elders and the congregation – the congregation not **attenders**.
2. God is our hiding place / refuge but the refuge in relationships with God's people **protect** us.

If you want real protection, get involved in the **congregation**.

3. The wolf catches the sheep that **periodically** attends, not those who are faithful.
- \* A hiding place is not a thing; it was found with **God**.
  - \* A refuge is not a thing; it is found in relationship with **others**.

### **Matthew 22:34-46**

<sup>34</sup> But when the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. <sup>35</sup> Then one of them, a lawyer, asked *Him a question*, testing Him, and saying, <sup>36</sup> "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" <sup>37</sup> Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' <sup>38</sup> This is *the* first and great commandment. <sup>39</sup> And *the* second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' <sup>40</sup> On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." <sup>41</sup> While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, <sup>42</sup> saying, "What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?" They said to Him, "The Son of David." <sup>43</sup> He said to them, "How then does David in the Spirit call Him 'Lord,' saying: <sup>44</sup> 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool"' ' ? <sup>45</sup> If David then calls Him 'Lord,' how is He his Son?" <sup>46</sup> And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore.

4. So the two commandments **hang** all the law and the prophets.

These two commandments the whole Bible is hung on.

- Love **God**
- Love your **neighbor**

Say it a different way:

- Your relationship with **God**
- Your relationship with **each other**

5. You can't make it on this earth without a **relationship**.

Here is the problem: Satan wants to replace those relationships or substitute with things that cannot do so.

Here are wrong replacements:

A. Satan wants to replace relationships with **things**.

- Adam and Eve were living in Paradise and Satan comes and says that piece of fruit will make you **happy**.

They gave up paradise for a **thing**.

6. When Adam and Eve sinned, they lost their **relationship** with God and each other. Before sin, they were best friends, and after sin, they had enmity between the man and woman.
7. God wanted us to have two things: a relationship with **Him**, and a relationship with **each other**.
  - Adam and Eve were not created because He needed them, rather, He created Adam and Eve because He **wanted** them.

Things cannot replace relationships.

B. **Isolation**

Ever hear this saying: there is strength in solitude. That's a **lie**.

- There is only strength in **unity**.

Some say: I just need to get alone! No you need to get alone with **God** – you also need to be with God's **people**.

Satan's picture of success:

- By having a person in his house alone with his door shut saying I can't be with anyone - I can't be **vulnerable**.

Loneliness is not of God.

Turn to Acts 2 – watch what God does after Jesus paid for sin and then sent the Holy Spirit.

**Acts 2:42-43**

<sup>42</sup> And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. <sup>43</sup> Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.

8. We will have their **pattern**.

- They met **twice** a week – met in church, then met from house to house.

## Acts 2:44-47

<sup>44</sup> Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, <sup>45</sup> and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.

<sup>46</sup> So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, <sup>47</sup> praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

9. The early church was so focused on God's heart and God's plan that God **applauded** from Heaven. Then He poured out His **power**.

Here is the third:

### C. **Unrighteous** relationships

(We are supposed to have relationships with God and God's people)

- Bad company **corrupts** good morals.
- 1 Corinthians 5 says if you have a friend who has sin problems, don't even sit down and have dinner with him.

Why did God say it this way?

Answer: You are telling the guy his behavior is **okay** with you.

I won't get in relationship with him – it will rub off on you.

We need to **encourage** one another to stop the stuff. I care enough about you that if your headed for a cliff, I'm going to tell you about it. A friend that won't confront you of sin is not a friend.

Protection and refuge is found in the **elders** and the **congregation**.

10. No one is perfect, but everyone is pointed in a direction so I can't find perfect friends and the friends I choose are pointed toward **Jesus**.

2 Corinthians 6:14 says don't be unequally yoked with unbelievers.

Here is the fourth wrong replacement:

D. **Religion**

Religion is wrong and was invented by **man**; relationships were invented by **God**.

11. Religion just makes you feel **better** about your sin but doesn't make you **change**.

Religion: you worship beads, your worship gold crosses, worship fish → there is **no power** in any of these.

Fifth problem:

E. A wrong **concept** of relationships

I found a God that treated me well – **sports**

Sixth problem:

F. **Busyness**

What's keeping you so busy? Remember Mary and Martha?

Mary had the gift of **sitting**, Martha had the gift of **servicing**.

Remember who got rebuked – **Martha**

Yes, we need to serve, but we need to sit and listen to Jesus.

God was in Martha's home – she didn't listen to God – that wasn't **important**.

Busy – means we cut out the **wrong** thing in our life.