

I. The Matrix

- A. The room is dark. Two men are seated across from each other in arm chairs. Lightning and thunder shake the house, as a storm is raging. These two men have never met before. The younger of the two licks his dry lips and tries to steady his shaking hands. The older is tall and shadowy and dressed all in black. His eyes are shielded by dark round glasses. Like some kind of spiritual master, he is considering whether or not to except the younger man as his disciple. His name is Morpheus.
- B. The young man is Neo.
 - 1. MORPHEUS: I can see it in your eyes. You have the look of a man who accepts what he sees because he's expecting to wake up. Ironically this is not far from the truth. Do you believe in fate, Neo?
 - 2. NEO: No.
 - 3. MORPHEUS: Why?
 - 4. NEO: Because I don't like the idea that I'm not in control of my life.
- C. Morpheus explains that the world has been pulled over Neo's eyes to blind him from the truth.
 - 1. NEW: What truth?
 - 2. MORPHEUS: That you are a slave, Neo. Like everyone else, you were born into a prison that you cannot taste or smell or touch. A prison for your mind...
- D. If you've seen the *Matrix*, you know that Neo takes the red pill... thunder crashes, and the rest is metaphysical, science-fictional history... if by history you mean fantasy.
- E. We'll come back to this.

II. Introduction

- A. Pardon our dust. We're under construction. Actually, Pathway is not under construction. You are. I am too.
- B. So Under Construction is the name of our new series, which I'm starting right now.
- C. Today is part one, so you're in on the ground floor.
- D. I want to pull together a whole lot of parts of the Bible. Let's start here.
 - 1. *"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. (Galatians 2:20)*
 - 2. *that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love... (Ephesians 3:17)*
- E. It's a remarkable thing to think of Christ dwelling in your heart. God in you. Christ in you. The Gospel of John tells us that Christ is God himself pitching his tent with us (John 1:14). Paul calls it "the mystery" and says it is rich in glory (Col 1:27).
 - 1. The title of the series is Under Construction. The subtitle of the series is Making My Heart Christ's Home.
- F. This is the construction project. The human heart is a mess. It would be like inviting Jesus over and he shows up, but your place is a disaster area. Pizza boxes. Empty cups from T-Bar. Half eaten muffins. Crawling with ants. Dirty laundry everywhere. Dishes piled in the sink. And it smells bad.
- G. So, if Christ lives in your heart, the idea is to make your heart the nicest possible place for Jesus. That's what God is doing. That's what we are doing as Christians.
- H. We are growing and maturing so that Christ may feel at home in our hearts. This makes all the difference in the world.
 - 1. The title is Under Construction. The subtitle is Making My Heart Christ's Home. The illustration is the Tabernacle.
- I. So that's what I want to talk about now.

III. The Tabernacle

- A. When we talk about the Tabernacle, we are talking about a tent. Actually, about a very specific tent.
 - 1. **The Tabernacle was a tent, built as a portable worship center for God's people, when they wandered in the wilderness, back in the days of Moses.**
 - a) *"And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them. According to all that I show you, that is, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so you shall make it. (Exodus 25:8, 9)*
- B. So let's rewind to those days.
 - 1. The Jews are slaves in Egypt. They cry out to God. God sends a deliverer. His name is Moses. Moses goes to the king of Egypt, called the Pharaoh. He says, "Pharaoh, let my people go!"
 - 2. Pharaoh says, "No way, we like having slaves."
 - 3. God sends down ten terrible plagues against Egypt. Finally Pharaoh says Okay, go!
 - 4. The Jews go. The Pharaoh changes his mind. He chases them. They're trapped! "Now, I've got you," he says!
 - 5. But God says, "No you don't." In a mighty miracle, God parts the Red Sea. The Jews go through on dry ground. God then unparts the Red Sea. The armies of Egypt get swept away.
 - 6. This is called the Exodus because the people Exited Slavery.
 - 7. Now, the Jews are free. They have been redeemed.
 - a) Just like you and I have been saved. Never forget that in the great pattern of Biblical spirituality, redemption comes first, which is salvation. And then walking with God comes second, which is sanctification.
 - b) Last weekend, we saw salvation come to the house. It was remarkable, really. We saw so many people make a profession of saving faith in Christ, in both services and online. Seventy-eight in total.
 - c) You were redeemed. You were set free from armies of sin.
 - d) And had your personal Exodus from slavery to sin, and Satan, and Death. God parted that Sea, and by faith you went through. Every salvation is a mighty miracle of God.
 - (1) You got saved. That's first. Now you live saved. That's second.
 - (a) Salvation. Then sanctification.
 - (b) Which is what happened with God's people after God parted the sea.

8. Three weeks later, God has his famous meeting with Moses. This meeting happens on a mountain called Sinai.
 - a) God gives his Saved People his Laws, which are the famous Ten Commandments, plus a lot more.
 - b) In addition, God gives very detailed instruction on how to construct a tabernacle.
 - c) So now, the Tabernacle goes under construction.
- C. The Tabernacle itself was not very big. It was forty feet long and fifteen feet wide — so 675 square feet. Big for a tent, and a small size for an apartment today.
 1. [We've set up our stage so it's 40 feet from this cone to that cone.]
- D. The Tabernacle itself was a tent within a tent within a tent. The whole thing was enclosed by a courtyard.
- E. Every bit of furniture and every board and tent stake meant something. The Tabernacle grounds included altars for sacrifices, a laver for cleansing, a place of incense for prayers, and above all else, the Ark of the Covenant, where God met with his people.
 1. This is where priests worked. This is where sacrifices happened. This is where God's truth was communicated. This is where the gospel was proclaimed. This is where salvation was illustrated. This is where the people rallied. This is where the most sacred artifact among the Jews was kept, the ark of the covenant.
 - a) And, supremely...
 2. This is where God met with his people.
- F. The Tabernacle was extremely important. Because for the next 40 years, the Jews were going to wander in the wilderness. And everywhere they went, the Tabernacle went with them. It centered them. It grounded them.
 1. It was called the tent of meeting, because God met with humans there.
 2. It was called the tent of the testimony, because God communicated truth there (Numbers 9:15).
 3. It was called the sanctuary, because wherever God meets his people is holy ground (Ex 25:8).
- G. So for forty years, they wander in the wilderness And everywhere they went, the Tabernacle went with them. It centered them. It grounded them.
- H. I was surprised to find out how much the Bible talks about the tabernacle. Do you realize there are 50 chapters in the Bible devoted to the Tabernacle. Fifty chapters! If you put them all together as one book, that would be the fifth longest book in the Bible by chapters. That's more chapters than in 61 out of 66 books in the Bible.
 1. You can find these chapters in Exodus (13 chapters), Leviticus (13), Numbers (18), Deuteronomy (2), Hebrews (4).

IV. The Plan

- A. So God said to Moses, build a worship center, build a tabernacle. And when you build it, build it exactly like this. God told him the size, the shape, the textures, the materials, and even the colors and designs of everything.
- B. God was making a monument to truth in an age when people couldn't carry around books. They learned truth from oral tradition, and from rituals and symbols.
 1. The tabernacle was the Bible in three dimensions. A revelation of God that the human mind could never figure out on its own.
 2. It was a portal out of the mass hypnosis—out of the trance—of a culture swamped by satanic lies.
- C. The tabernacle was an extensive, all-embracing, exhaustive, in-depth, encyclopedic, radical, depiction of God-created truth.
 1. The curtains and walls taught your separation from God. The priests taught your need of a mediator. The altar taught your need of forgiveness. The items made of wood taught the human nature of the Savior. That these same items were overlaid with gold taught the divine nature of the Savior. A God-man would come to save us from our sins. The sacrifices taught substitutionary atonement—that God would forgive your sins through the death of a substitute, and allow you into his holy presence. The lavers taught cleansing from sin.
 2. And on an on.
 - a) **The Tabernacle was designed to be a Truth Machine on earth.**
 - b) But long before it became a truth machine in earth, the Tabernacle was something else.

V. The New Testament

- A. When the New Testament looks backward in history to the days of the tabernacle it says this—
 1. *Now to sum up—we have an ideal High Priest such as has been described above. He has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of Heavenly majesty. He is the minister of the sanctuary and of the real tabernacle—that is the one which the Lord has set up and not man.* (Hebrews 8:1, 2, Phil).
- B. Let your mind be blown.
- C. What Moses built on earth was based on what God built in heaven.
- D. The earthly tabernacle was a reproduction. It was a miniature copy. When Moses built his tabernacle, he was reflecting on earth the relationship between God and humankind in heaven.
- E. That's why he had to get it so exact. That's why it was so precise. This wasn't just a fancy venue for the worship of God, it was a depiction of the truest truths of how God and humans can connect.
 1. *These men are serving what is only a pattern or reproduction of things that exist in Heaven. Moses, you will remember, when he was going to construct the tabernacle, was cautioned by God in these words: See that thou make all things according to the pattern that was showed thee in the mount.* (Hebrews 8:5, Phil).
- F. The tabernacle Moses built was a truth machine on earth.
- G. That is because it is an exact reproduction of the Ultimate Truth machine in heaven.
 1. Where does truth come from? Where does reality come from? Where do you find your truth?
- H. Truth flows from the heart of God. Truth has its foundation in heaven, in the nature and attributes and will of God. To dwell with God is to dwell with truth.
 1. We do not find truth by looking to our own hearts. We do not find truth by listening to what culture says. We do not find truth by our feelings. We do not find truth by majority vote. We do not find truth by Googling it.

- I. The source of all truth, true truth, the only truth, is the heart of God. Physics comes from him. Chemistry comes from him. Math comes from him. Philosophy. Science. Theology. Relationship advice comes from him. Love comes from him. Because we come from him and so does everything else.
 1. The earthly tabernacle taught truths that originated in the heavenly tabernacle, which is the heart of God.... so....
 2. **We find truth (reality) not by looking within, but by listening to God.**
- J. And the reason our world is in such a mess is because we have collectively stopped listening to God.
- K. When I say that the tabernacle was a portal to heaven, here's what I don't mean.
 1. I don't mean it was anything like Stargate.
 2. I don't mean it was anything like Raiders of the Lost Ark.
 3. It was not about technology. It was not about mystical out of body experiences, teleportation, glory clouds, trances, or near death experiences.
- L. What I do mean was that the tabernacle was a teaching aid. It was a three dimensional depiction of four dimensional truth. Like I said, it was a truth machine.
 1. Truth about God's nature. Truth about human sin. Truth about the Savior. Truth about the way of salvation. Truth about what comes after that. Truth about the infinite worth and immeasurable riches that belong to you in Christ. Truth about heaven. Truth about hell.
 2. It's all there symbolized in the fabric and furniture and the feasts and the features of the tabernacle.
- M. The people back then didn't have Bibles yet. But when the common people came to the tabernacle, the priests could teach them, and show them the symbols and lessons and truths and doctrines that would free them from the dominion of darkness and transfer them into the kingdom of God's beloved Son.
 1. The tabernacle was a copy and a shadow of these heavenly truths. It was a pattern, a model of these realities.
- N. There's a truth you need to know about God:
 1. **God wants you to know him, because to know him is to love him.**
 - a) *'Then I will give them a heart to know Me, that I am the LORD; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God, for they shall return to Me with their whole heart. (Jeremiah 24:7)*
 - (1) So God has woven markers of his heart into all creation, so that you could know him.
 - (2) And God has filled his people's history with teaching aids and object lessons—like the tabernacle, so that you could know him.
 - (3) And God has given us his own heart, written in the Bible so that you could know him.
 - (4) And God sent Jesus into the world, God revealing God, so that you could know him.
 - b) God wants you to know him, because to know him is to love him.
 - c) But the world tries to erase the knowledge of God.
- O. So this is the truth you need to know about the world.
 1. **The world (its institutions and philosophies) wants you to forget God so that you don't know him and therefore can't love him.**
 - a) *Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, (1 Timothy 4:1, 2)*
 2. The world is fogged in; it's in mass hypnosis, drunk on deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons.
 - a) Its values diminish God. Its philosophies deny God. Its morals disrespect God. Its cultures ignore God.
- P. Because God knew that this world would be crazy.
 1. God knew that this world would live in a trance. In a moral fog. In an intellectual fog.
 2. God knew that this world would be full of deception and lies and of doctrines of demons as the Bible says.
 3. God knew that this fallen world would be a morally broken pain machine.
 4. God knew that this world would be full of oppression, slavery, addiction, cruelty, selfishness, greed, racism, sexism, duplicity, violence, tyranny, and narcissism.
 5. God knew that there would come a day when people saw no problem with these things.
 6. God knew there would come a day when everything was upside down. When what God called wrong people called right and what God called right people called wrong.
 7. And God knew that the world would be hypnotized by Satan and under his spell.
 - a) The matrix of darkness would crowd out the light. So that everyone would do what was right in their own eyes. And not even see a problem with that. Instead of looking to heaven for truth, they looked to their own hearts, and out came a golden calf, and they worshipped that. They still are.
 - b) So God told Moses to build a tabernacle just like this.
 8. **The tabernacle was to the ancient world what the red pill was to the Matrix... and the Bible is to the present world what the Tabernacle was to the ancient world.**
- VI. I want to meet God
 - A. People say, I want to meet God. I want to hear God. I want to encounter God.
 1. And they run all over the world and pay a lot of money looking for that meeting, and that voice, and that encounter.
 2. A spiritual leader back in Moses's day would say, hike over there to the tabernacle. Study its design and proportion. Let a priest teach you and show you the truth of God. It's the tent of meeting. Go meet with God there.
 3. But that was in Moses's day.
 - B. A spiritual leader today would say something else.
 1. If you said to me, "I want to meet God. I want to hear God. I want to encounter God."

2. Do you know what I would say to you?
3. I would say to travel across the world, climb a Mountain in Tibet, to the sacred shrine, go up on your knees on the sacred stairs, drink some holy elixir of kombucha, visit some self appointed apostolic guru, and then come back home.
4. When you get back home, find your Bible, and go somewhere, anywhere, and read your Bible, because that is where you meet God. That is where you hear God. That is where you encounter God.
 - a) **Your Bible is the new tent of meeting, because God meets with you there.**
 - b) **Your Bible is the new tent of the testimony, because God communicates with you there.**
 - c) **Your Bible is a new sanctuary, because it is the holy ground where you encounter God...**
 - (1) **...every single time you study it.**
5. But people might argue back. I tried that, it didn't work.
 - a) I didn't meet God. I didn't hear God. I didn't encounter God.
6. And I would ask, How do you know? Why do you say that?
 - a) Because nothing happened. I didn't feel anything special.
7. And I would say to you...
 - a) Oh yes, something happened.
 - b) I'm absolutely positive that something happened.
 - c) When you cracked open that Bible, or when you set foot into that Bible study, or when you leaned into that Bible teaching, or when you got down on your knees to pray, a whole lot happened.
 - (1) In that very second the angels rushed to set a wall of protection around you.
 - (2) The demons screeched and ran away.
 - (3) The devil roared and fled from you.
 - (4) The very nanosecond you peered into an open Bible, the Holy Spirit turned on the floodlights to illuminate truth to your soul.
 - (5) Principles and truths and verses and doctrines were laid up for the building project that is your heart.
 - (6) Healing power was applied to your emotions.
 - (7) Supernatural Wisdom was constructed into your intellect.
 - (8) Courage and strength were added to your free will.
 - (9) Fortifications were built. Muscle was packed on. Your armor grew mightier, your confidence grew greater, because your faith grew invincible.
 - (10) When you met with God in Scripture, Your Father in heaven smiled and a celestial cheer echoed through his glorious throne room.
 - (11) A new flood of grace and blessing and provision was sent down the pipeline into your world.
 - (12) And a whole crew of radiant angels went to work expanding and enhancing the mansion in heaven that already has your name on it.
 - d) All of this was immediate. All of this was real. All of this was the divine encounter you've been looking for.
 - e) And the reason you don't feel it or sense it is simple.
 - f) God has ordained that you will walk by faith, not by sight. And if Heaven opened every time your Bible opened, you wouldn't need faith.
 - g) There is no official feeling of the presence of God. There is no official feeling of the power of God. There is no official feeling of an encounter with God.
 - (1) You can feel weak. You can feel strong. You can feel tired. You can feel excited. Sad. Mad. Happy. Glad. Scared. Anything.
 - h) Go by faith, not feelings. God loves faith more than any of us realize.
 - (1) And every time God's truth is mixed with your faith, that is the victory.
8. The Christian life is supernatural, but now how we think it is.
 - a) Our idea of supernatural is fireworks.
 - (1) **God's idea of supernatural is the still small voice.**
 - (a) *Then He said, "Go out, and stand on the mountain before the LORD." And behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind tore into the mountains and broke the rocks in pieces before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice. (1 Kings 19:11, 12)*
 - b) So quit looking for fireworks in your feelings or encounters with God.
 - (1) And quit judging yourself if you don't find them.

VII. Conclusion

- A. God has a tabernacle in heaven. It is a place of truth. It is a place of loving fellowship with him.
- B. Moses built a reproduction on earth.
- C. And now the Holy Spirit is building a reproduction inside of you. In your heart. A sanctuary of truth. A sanctuary of loving fellowship with him.
- D. You are the new tabernacle, that Christ might be at home in your heart.
- E. Next time, we'll go deeper into how that happens.
- F. Welcome to a life of faith that is under construction.