

Walls into Windows – Week 4

Welcome to CHC. My name is Bobby and we are extremely honored each of you are with us today.

My prayer for you is that this church, this body of believers, would be a place of hope and of refuge for you.

Today is going to be a fun day. I've been excited to preach this all week.

We are closing out our relationship series today. We've been looking at different attributes that help create better and healthier relationships in our lives.

I'm convinced there is nothing more important in this world than our relationships. With God and with others.

Often, when we look at some of our relationships, there are walls there that divide us. They keep us from connection. Maybe you can think of a relationship or two that have walls up right now.

Our heart throughout this series is to help you turn those walls into windows. Windows that will help your connection and move you to healthier and stronger relationships.

As we close out this series today, I want to give you some homework. Ask God two questions and pray until He gives you the answers.

- 1. What relationships in my life have walls?**
- 2. What steps can I take to turn those walls into windows?**

All of us have had or will have some trouble in our relationships. Conflict and disappointment is inevitable.

As we pray these prayers, please understand something. Some people don't want windows and it's never going to happen.

When we look at Jesus' story, we see this. Jesus treated people the right way. Loved them better than could be loved and still had people who hated him and tried to kill him.

The apostle Paul told the church...**Romans 12.18 | If possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.**

Some people, no matter how hard you try, do not want windows in that relationship.

But notice what Paul says and this is our focus...**"As far as it depends on me."**

What can I do to help turn walls into windows?

A quick recap...we have been looking at different elements of healthy relationships:

Humility – Honor – Holiness – Today we are going to look at an attribute that is important but not one we think about much. **Hunger**

I figured if we are going to talk about hunger then I better bring some food.

Obviously today we aren't talking about physical hunger...what is going to tear down some walls in my relationships is a spiritual hunger. A hungering in your soul.

Let me illustrate it like this. How many of you have ever went and opened your fridge or pantry staring at all the food, and said..."we don't have anything to eat."

Or maybe you went to the grocery yesterday and your teenager is hungry and says, mom why don't we have any food?

What we are really saying is not that there is literally no food. What we are saying is none of this in front of me sounds very satisfying. I want something else.

Just like our body needs nourishment, so does our soul. I believe each of us is built with a natural spiritual appetite. We may not even know it or understand it. Here is what we believe.

You are made by God, for God

All of us feed on things that we think will fill us up.

You must be certain you are feeding on the things that are best for you. The things that are going to truly satisfy.

How often do you feed on things that are unhealthy?

passion | possession | position | prestige | power

success | sex | stuff | salary | status | social media

These things will always leave you feeling empty. This hunger we are talking about today can only be filled by God.

If I'm made by God and for God...what does he tell me to hunger for? Let's look at a few scriptures together.

Matthew 5.6 | Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

These passages here in Matthew 5 offer solid truths for living as a disciple of Christ.

If you want a filled life or fulfilled life. Some translations use the word satisfied. If you want to live a life that is fulfilling and satisfying, you must hunger for righteousness.

I want to expand this a little to our topic. If I want to have relationships that are healthy and fulfilling, I must hunger and thirst for righteousness.

If I want to see some walls turn into windows, I must hunger and thirst for righteousness.

Jesus tells his disciples what they should hunger for...righteousness. 1 of the 8 keys to serve God. Let's define this. Simplify. Two-fold.

Righteousness is being right with God.

Romans 1.16-17 | ¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, first to the Jew, and also to the Greek.¹⁷ For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith, just as it is written: The righteous will live by faith.

Righteousness speaks of right relationship with God and with other people.

There is good news and bad news here.

The bad news is that true and perfect righteousness is not possible for man to attain on his own; the standard is simply too high.

The good news is that true righteousness is possible for mankind, but only through the cleansing of sin by Jesus Christ and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

To simplify...God does this for you.

The second part of righteousness is...**Living right as God intends.**

1 John 2.29 | ²⁹ If you know that he is righteous, you know this as well: Everyone who does what is right has been born of him.

Position and practice. Vertical and horizontal.

Why should I care about being right with God?

It's the only way to live. It's the only way to Heaven.

Proverbs 12.28 | There is life in the path of righteousness, and in its path, there is no death.

When you are disconnected from God. When there is a wall between you and Him, you are not really living. You are just existing. You are filling your life up with "food" that will keep you empty.

True life comes only when we surrender to Him.

We are made by God and for God...only when we hunger and thirst for Him will our lives be fully satisfied.

Illustration: Explain love for music. The theological giants U2 figured this out many years ago when they wrote. "I still haven't found what I'm looking for."

I have climbed the highest mountains, I have run through the fields, Only to be with you, Only to be with you, I have run, I have crawled, I have scaled these city walls, These city walls, Only to be with you, But I still haven't found what I'm looking for.

There is a worldly weariness that bleeds through from the song's opening lines. The song adopts the perspective of one who has seen much, from great heights (climbing highest mountains) to regrettable lows (crawling). And yet, there remains a certain dissatisfaction, a deep desire to pursue meaning.

I believe in the Kingdom Come, When all the colors will bleed into one, Bleed into one, But yes, I'm still running, You broke the bonds and you loosed the chains, Carried the cross of my shame, Of my shame, You know I believe it, But I still haven't found what I'm looking for.

Bono confesses the great Christian hope: a Kingdom yet to come when all is blended together in perfect union. To leave no doubt as to the distinctly Christian nature of this hope, he adds the line about carrying the cross of shame.

And yet, he continues, there is still a sense of incompleteness in the present, a yawning awareness that even though history ends in glory for those who believe, our present days are often marked by numbing ordinariness.

C.S. Lewis once said that **"If we find within ourselves a desire for which no earthly satisfaction can be found, perhaps this is evidence that we were made for another place altogether."**

Being right with God leads us to true satisfaction. In my vertical relationships as well as my horizontal ones.

Today's message is kind of simple. **What are you hungering for?**

Is it things that continuously leave you empty?

If you're not hungry for God its because your full of something else.

“Deeply joyful and spiritually whole are those who actively seek right relationship with God and, in so doing, discover that He alone can completely save and satisfy their souls.”

Conclusion:

I want to begin to close our time a little different today. I want to read this passage of Scripture over you today. For just a moment before we do this, let's take some time and ask God to speak to our hearts.

Read Psalm 34

We set out at the start of this series to take a look at some key elements of healthy relationships. I pray that God has shown you the places you are winning and the places you are losing.

Are there any walls up in your relationships because you have been hungering for the wrong things?

Can we take a moment to pray for those relationships right now?

Salvation
Sanctification
Surrender