

The Book of Genesis

Genesis 3:8-13

“Burying the Disgrace of Sin under Flimsy Leaves until God by His Inner Voice strikes our Inner Conscience”

18th Message in The Book of Genesis

Sunday 29 March 2020

Glenvista Baptist Church

Genesis 3:8-13 (ESV) ⁸ And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. ⁹ But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?” ¹⁰ And he said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.” ¹¹ He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” ¹² The man said, “The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.” ¹³ Then the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

Introduction

- a) Over the last two Lord’s Days, beloved friends, we have considered the devastating effects of disobedience, and we have come to see the far-reaching implications and destructive consequences the rebellion of the first man and woman had in the Garden of Eden. We have to some extent considered the depths of depravity commencing in the Garden and as we proceed in **chapter 3**, we now ask ourselves the question whether there is anything that can truly deal with the depths of our depravity. We find ourselves now in a passage which many commentators call **“the passage of confrontation”**. Adam and Eve are caught in their sin. That’s where we find ourselves today; that’s where we need to see that it is only Christ the Second Adam that can rescue us from the multiple consequences which the sin of our forefathers Adam and Eve brought upon us.
- b) In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. At the end of the sixth day, when His work was finished, God saw all that He had made, and it was **“very good”**. There was a beautiful harmony in the world, and peace between God and man. The Lord was well pleased with the first two human beings. God loved them and they loved God. Also, the man and the woman loved one another. It was a great joy for them to be together. This too was very good. The man and the woman loved their world and their work. The earth was a blessing for them, bringing forth all kinds of good things, and the

man and the woman were a blessing for the earth as they joyfully tended it with love and care. During those days in the beginning, there was peace on earth everywhere, even in the hearts of the first two human beings. Then the man and the woman sinned and there was no longer peace.

- c) Dietrich Bonhoeffer in his little book **“Temptation”** describes most adequately how the temptation which we see even in the Garden of Eden works: “With irresistible power desire seizes mastery over the flesh. It makes no difference whether it is sexual desire, or ambition, or vanity, or desire for revenge, or love of fame and power, or greed for money. Joy in God is extinguished in us and we seek all our joy in the creature. At this moment God is quite unreal to us, he loses all reality, and only desire for the creature is real. Satan does not here fill us with hatred of God, but with forgetfulness of God. The lust thus aroused envelops the mind and will of man in deepest darkness. The powers of clear discrimination and of decision are taken from us. The questions present themselves: “Is what the flesh desires really sin in this case?” “Is it really not permitted to me, yes – expected of me, now, here, in my particular situation, to appease desire?” It is here that everything within me rises up against the Word of God”.¹
- d) And so, everything in Eve rose up against the Word of God. Our mother failed and she failed miserably. Yet her husband Adam had a greater culpability because God's Word had been directly given to him even before Eve had been created; we also see that he was with Eve during the time of temptation; and Adam not taking up his God given responsibility to lead his wife, allowed his wife to partake in sin whilst he simply remained looking on.
- e) Adam and Eve's existence was now one of death. And as a result of this, sin instantaneously penetrated every aspect of their being. Both Adam and Eve were at once utterly sinful and completely depraved. And where once both Adam and Eve freely communed with God in the garden in the cool of the day, sin disrupts the harmony between man and God, and Adam and Eve go into hiding.

Point 1 – “Alarmed at God’s voice as soon as His Law sounds in our ears” (Gen 3:8)

Genesis 3:8 (ESV) **“⁸ And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden...”**

- a) **V8** So, we ended in **verse 7** in the last hour by seeing that immediately after their sin both Adam and Eve knew that they were naked, the eyes of both were opened, **“and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths”**. Ironically, in the presence of an omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent God, Adam and Eve tried to hide their sin by covering their naked bodies with clothing made from the leaves of a tree. How utterly

¹ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Temptation*, London: SCM Press Ltd. (1961) page 33

foolish for the first man and his wife to think they could hide from God. Adam and Eve were alarmed at God's voice as soon as God's law sounds in their ears. Verse 8 tells us, "And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden." Suddenly at the sound of God's voice, both Adam and Eve realized that the clothing which they made for themselves were of no avail in the presence of an omniscient holy God.

- b) In Romans 2:15 we read, "¹⁵ They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them...". This means the law of God is both written and impressed on every man's heart and as a result of that, all know the difference between good and evil. **The frightful reality however is that we see in the first man and woman that they attempt to bury the disgrace of their sin and under flimsy leaves until God, by his voice, strikes them in their inner consciences.**
- c) **V9** God's law came to Adam in the form of a question when the "Lord God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?". Note that the text says that "the Lord God called to the man" - now this should cause us to really hearken and see what's happening here. This is no doubt not the first time the Lord God speaks to the man, but this time the way that the Lord God speaks to the man has very different implications. This calling is a calling that suddenly brings fear and alienation upon the man and the woman. This call was a call that came with strength upon the conscience of Adam; God now comes closer and God confronts Adam in his sin. To this John Calvin responds, "In the same way we also are alarmed at God's voice as soon as His law sounds in our ears; but we snatch at shadows until He, calling upon us more vehemently, compels us to come forward to stand before His tribunal." ²
- d) Beloved we need to be reminded that what happened here happened within an instant; the first couple in the garden instantaneously passed from life to death, from sinlessness to sin, from harmony to alienation, from trust to distrust, from ease to disease. It didn't happen over a period of time; it didn't even take a day; it happened instantaneously; even in a millisecond; Adam and Eve lost their innocence and were now utterly guilty before holy God.

² Alister McGrath and JI Packer, *Genesis, Calvin, The Crossway Classic Commentary Series*, Crossway Publishers (2001) page 45

e) Beloved friends, what we see unfolding here is common to all of human nature; this hiding from God, this shrinking from God remains part of our fallen condition. This we inherited from our forefather Adam, this both you and I are guilty of. And that dear friends, is why the comparison which we studied last Lord's Day is of such crucial nature to remember. For you see, what came with the transgression of the First Adam, can but only be undone by the sacrifices of the Second Adam. Without the sacrificial atonement of Christ on the cross of Calvary there could be no propitiation for sin, there could be no ransom for an act as grievous as this, there could be no reconciliation between God and man. The law had now been broken, the stipulations of the covenant had now been transgressed, and God, the Covenant-Maker and the Covenant-Keeper, steps in and deals with man in his sin. And it's at the very first dealing with man in his sin that the very first signs of the school of original sin transpires.

Point 2 – “The First Signs of the School of Original Sin” (Gen 3:9-11)

Genesis 3:10 (ESV) ^{“10} And he said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.”

- a) **V9** We see that the sacred sound which the first man and woman heard before, and which had originally filled them with so much joy, now becomes a sound that brings them but only dread. A dread that causes them to hide. Yet the Psalmist makes known that there is no place in which we can hide from the omnipresence of God. He writes in **Psalms 139:7-8**, ^{“7} Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? ⁸ If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there!” You see beloved friends, the problem with our sin is that we not only believe that we can hide from God, but that we can even privatize our thoughts. This however is not true and in **Psalm 139:2** we see the Psalmist so clearly saying, ^{“2} You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar.”
- b) **V10** Nonetheless here in the garden we see that Adam thought that he could hide from God, but the text is abundantly clear in showing us **that God finds Adam**. You cannot hide from God. Nothing is hidden from His all-pervasive eye. He sees all things; He knows all things; He is in control of all things and nothing goes beyond Him. All is naked before the eyes of Him who made all things. The Lord God is walking in the garden in the cool of the day. The mere fact that this is stated in the text is perhaps an indication of a daily

appointment time at which the Lord God met with Adam for communion and fellowship.

- c) What however is introduced before us now is that on this occasion instead of Adam consciously waiting for the appearance of God in the Garden for his daily time of fellowship with God, Adam is now hiding among the trees hoping to avoid seeing the Lord God altogether. And this, dear friends, is the very first sign of the school of original sin. This is the first sign of the bondage of decay. This is the first tangible reminder that man is no longer walking in close communion and fellowship with his God. And what then particularly indicates that Adam realized that something is wrong, is Adam's sudden awareness of his own nakedness. Up until now Adam being naked had not been a problem, him and Eve had no shame. Their nakedness was normal and had brought no reason for concern. Yet now flagrant sin had entered Adam's body and would contaminate all future generations.
- d) **V9-10** God asks Adam where he was. And Adam now realizing that he had been found by God comes out of hiding mumbling a halfhearted excuse before God. Now notice that this process was filled with grace. God does not directly make an accusation to Adam. The question **"where are you"**, is really asking **"why are you there"**, **"is that where you should be?"**, **"come out and face me Adam!"**. You see what we see here is that God was drawing Adam from hiding rather than driving him from it. God was as it were nudging Adam to come to his senses and therefore the process was graced.
- e) **V10** Adams response however contained no admission of wrongdoing. The only thing Adam did say was, **"I heard the sound of you in the garden and I hid because I was afraid."** That's the closest Adam came to any indication of acknowledgment of guilt. But notice this is not a confession of sin. And so, what we see here is that Adam is more concerned about how he felt about his nakedness than how he felt about his sinning and transgressing the law of God, and in so doing breaking the covenant stipulations that God had made with him.
- f) **V11** Now notice as of **verse 11** that God is restoring the order of authority which has been marred by sin as a result of the Fall. Hence God addresses Adam first, because Adam bore the primary responsibility as federal head over all mankind. As much as this process was bathed in grace from the beginning God now presses hard upon the issue by asking Adam two questions. The first of those questions is found in **verse 11a**, **"Who told you that you**

were naked?”, and the second question God poses to Adam in **verse 11b**, was, “Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?”. And then came the excuses, one after the other. And in these excuses, we see the bondage of man’s will to sin, and the decay that comes along with it.

Point 3 – “The Bondage of Decay” (Gen 3:12-13)

Genesis 3:12-13 (ESV) ¹² The man said, “The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.” ¹³ Then the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

- a) **V12** We see that sin so rapidly pervaded the hearts of both Adam and Eve that as God begins to question them, Adam blamed his wife and Eve blamed the serpent, and not one of them was willing to acknowledge their own personal guilt. In actual fact beloved, we see here the worst form of blasphemy taking place in the garden of Eden, as Adam casts the blame on God Himself. And so instead of Adam praising God for His goodness, Adam now blames God for his troubles.
- b) As a result of Adams sin the process of decay enters upon all of the known creation. Since Adam had been appointed to exercise dominion over the earth, and since Adam was beginning to die his dominion over all that God entrusted to him, would effectively also begin the process of decay. That’s why we know **Romans 8:22** teaches that the whole creation groans and travails in pain together until now. This process the Apostle Paul calls **the bondage of corruption** or perhaps better for our discussion even **the bondage of decay**, for in **Romans 8:20 and 21** we read that the creation was made subject to vanity; it was made subject to futility.
- c) **V12** Adam cannot admit that he’s guilty, Eve puts the blame on the serpent and Adam ultimately blames God. Total depravity now rules and reigns within our first parents. Adam’s boldness is clearly demonstrated here in that he utters coarse blasphemy. And it needs to be seen that Adam had deliberately set himself up as a rebel against God. And to prove how Adam was caught in his own sin, Adam in no way has the ability to confess that sin, and instead of owning up to it we see in **verse 12** him blaming God by saying, “The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me the fruit of the tree, and I ate.” So, watch carefully the cycle of decay, for instead of owning up his own sin, Adam blames it on Eve, yet not content with this Adam accuses God of giving him a wife who had brought him his ruin.
- d) Now beloved what needs to be seen here this Lord’s Day, is that we are trained in the very same school of original sin and we are all too ready to resort to vices of the same kind but to no avail, for no matter how hard we try skirting away from this issue, the

unbelief that seduces us away from obedience to God, is within us all, for you see it is the pride within us that brings forth contempt.

- e) **V13** In his role as Judge God now focuses his attention in **verse 13** on Eve and it is as if God is saying to her, “How could you be so wicked as to do this to your husband?”, “How could it be that you were so perverse that you counseled your husband in such a manner?”. And then Eve's immediate response is very similar like that of Adam's, “**The serpent deceived me, and I ate.**” Again, another example of blame shifting. Instead of being struck dumb in the presence of God, Eve like her husband lays the blame on another, pointing accusingly to the serpent. To shift the blame onto someone or something else is a common vice of humanity and is a way of evading our own sinful responsibility.
- f) And beloved friends the truth that we need to learn from this is that we are responsible for what we do or fail to do, and we will each be judged accordingly. Therefore, blaming our background, our parents, our genes, our spouse, or even our society, for our own wrong choices is ruled out of court by God.

Conclusion:

- a) The conclusion of the matter is abundantly clear for the Scriptures teach that no one, from Adam, to the very last man on earth will ever get away by passing the buck. It's proved in Genesis, isn't it, that what the first man and woman tried, miserably failed and no one after them will manage to succeed in doing so. In the New Testament our brother James so clearly under divine inspiration states, “**13 Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God,” for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one.**” (James 1:13).
- b) We cannot blame God; we cannot point the fingers at anyone else; we learn here that we cannot even blame the devil, for we remain solely responsible for our own sin. Each man, each woman, each boy, each girl, will give an account to Christ Jesus on the Day of Reckoning. So, I guess the bottom line question that should be asked, is what are we sons and daughters of Adam to do, since we share such solidarity with Adam in our sins, in that we are thoroughly sinful, and utterly responsible, and that we alone bear the blame? What is the answer? The answer to that question beloved friend lies but only in the rescue that comes by Jesus Christ, the Second Adam, as we saw in our last hour. And the Apostle Paul adequately explains in **Romans 5:17**, “**17 For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.**”

- c) Friends the only one, the only man in history who never tried to pass the buck is the Second Adam, because as the sinless God-man, Jesus Christ never had to pass on the responsibility for sin, because He had no sin. Jesus the sinless Lamb of God came to rescue a fallen and depraved world from its own sin. Instead of passing the buck, Jesus Christ, the sinless God-man, Messiah and Savior, rather said “Pass the blame to me”, and the buck stopped with Jesus. There, on the cross of Calvary the blameless Messiah hung suspended between two blameworthy thieves. There is a literal display of Christ the innocent hanging among the guilty. What a beautiful display of the gospel.
- d) And as we know one of the thief’s respond to the gospel, he ceased his cursing and he began listening. And on that hill, we know that the miracle of rebirth took place. Because, you see, it was in the darkness of Calvary, as the curtain that separated the Holy of Holies was rent in two, from top to bottom, that the way to the Father was opened by the sinless sacrifice of Christ the Messiah, and the way was made for sinners through repentance and faith to come home. That very moment that guilty man's sin was lifted from him and placed on Jesus.
- e) The blame no longer was on him, the blame now fell on his Lord and on his Messiah. Friend allow me to ask you the question: have you stopped passing the buck? Have you come to the place where you have acknowledged that the guilt of your sin is yours alone? And then friend have you passed it on to Jesus?
- f) We cannot bury the disgrace of our sin under flimsy leaves, like Adam and Eve tried. We need to recognize that we are naked in the sight of God. And unless we repent, and unless we are clothed in the very righteousness of His Son, we will die naked and for such remains but only the terror and the agony of everlasting punishment in the flames of hell.
- g) Pass it on to Jesus, repent of your sin, and know the blessedness of being clothed in a righteousness not your own.

Amen

Soli Deo Gloria

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