

Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Confrontation in Eden

Scripture: Genesis 3:8-13

Code: 90-240

We're going to look at the third chapter of Genesis, back to our prolonged series on origins...origins, something that occupies our society a great deal...as philosophers and educators and politicians and scientists and just plain folks try to sort out why the world is the way it is, how it got this way and where it's headed. Well the Bible tells all that God ever intended us to know about origins. And we are looking at the third chapter of Genesis which describes the origin of sin...the origin of sin.

Sin, of course, explains all the troubles in the world. All the decay, all the disease, all the dysfunction, everything evil, everything wrong, everything imperfect and, of course, death all comes from an event that occurred and is recorded in Genesis 3. Genesis 3 is actual history, it is not myth, it is not legend, it is actual history. It is the true and accurate record from God about how sin came into the world and it was sin that caused all the problems that exist in our universe.

It is important to understand how sin came into the world. It is important to understand the universal problem in order that we can understand the cure. We cannot understand redemptive history and its ending unless we understand its beginning. We cannot understand why it is important to have a Savior, why it is important that He dies, why it is important that He returns again and restores this planet to a somewhat Edenic character, and then ultimately destroys the entire universe and in its place recreates a new heaven and a new earth. We cannot understand all of the sweeping elements, the comprehensive elements of redemptive history unless we understand the problem and how it came about. We cannot understand why man is the way he is unless we understand Genesis chapter 3. It explains the universal condition of man. It explains why there must be a Savior and why the universe must ultimately be destroyed and a new universe brought into existence in its place.

And as I said to you a few weeks ago, understanding Genesis 3, as well as Genesis 1 and 2, is the only foundation for an accurate world view. If you do not accept Genesis 1, 2 and 3, if you do not understand them, if you do not believe them, you cannot fabricate a correct world view. You must understand that God created the entire universe as it now exists in six 24-hour days. You must understand God's purpose in creating man in His own image, giving a helper to him, namely woman, you must understand that as the substantial foundation of the physical universe and of man's role in it. You must understand Genesis chapter 3, the Fall of man, if you do not understand those and believe those to be exactly as represented in the Bible, you have a faulty world view and you're trying to understand the world in a way that cannot be understood. All that comes out of that is wrong and misunderstanding and leaves us without a proper answer.

Man did not evolve to the heights of where he is today through millions of years of physical evolution or psychological evolution. Man did not evolve from anything into what he is today, he fell into what he is today in one act...in one moment on one day. He fell from what he once was in perfection and innocence in the image of God into the depths of sin and depravity. He didn't ascend from anywhere. He did not over millions of years become what he is. He became what he is in one moment of time on one day. He descended from the wonder of his original creation in the image of God to his current condition in sin and under divine judgment. It is critical to understand that he was created on one day in full maturity. He was created for fellowship with God and to enjoy the world that God had made. And he plunged from the perfection of that original creation into the fallenness which has marked him ever since. And it all happened in one event. That event is described for us in the third chapter of Genesis verse 1.

"Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made; and he said to the woman, 'Indeed, has God said you shall not eat from any tree of the garden?' And the woman said to the serpent, 'From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden God has said you shall not eat from it or touch it lest you die.' And the serpent said to the woman, 'You surely shall not die, for God knows in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God knowing good and evil.' When the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was a delight to the eyes and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate and she gave also to her husband with her and he ate. And the eyes of both of them were opened and they knew they were naked and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings.'

Now we've already studied those seven verses. We met the solicitor who is Satan, the one who having fallen out of heaven because of his own rebellion is cast down to earth, that wicked Lucifer now known as Satan, or the devil, comes and solicits evil from Eve, first of all, and through Eve from Adam. His strategy is deception. His strategy is to lie about God, to plant thoughts in the mind of Eve that are untrue of God, that God is not kind, that God is not good, that God is harsh, that God is somewhat narrow, that God is holding back from her something that is good. And that you can't trust God's Word, even though He said you would die, you won't die. So God doesn't even tell the truth.

And through the strategy of deception comes the seduction. The seduction starts to take place, as indicated in verse 6, when lust begins to conceive sin. She begins to realize the tree was good for food and it was a delight to the eyes and if she ate of it, it would make her to know good and evil and that would make her wise and she would become like God. And so she was seduced by the lust that arose in her own heart. Then you find the very act at the end of verse 6. She and her husband both eat and that is the act of disobedience that results in the shame of verse 7. Their eyes are opened, they understand evil not by some academic process, they understand evil because it is now in them and they feel it. And they feel it even in the sexual realm so that they become embarrassed about

what they had never been embarrassed about, that is their nakedness and attempting to cover their guilt, they cover themselves with some leaves that they have sewn together to try to hide the shame.

With that one act on one day before they had any children, when it was just the two of them...we don't know how long after their creation...but on that day an avalanche of sin was loosed that would never stop until the final destruction of this universe. Adam and Eve had pulled a stone from the base of a mountain and were horrified to discover that fatal rock slide would bury them and all humanity in its environment in the dirt and rubble of sin. And the depths of man's sinful depravity immediately becomes clear. All we see in the first seven verses is that they feel guilt and shame. That doesn't really tell us much about how deep this change is. For that we come to verses 8 to 13.

"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. Then the Lord God called the man and said to him, 'Where are you?' And he said, 'I heard the sound of Thee in the garden and I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid myself.' And He said, 'Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?' And the man said, 'The woman whom You gave to me, she gave me from the tree and I ate.' And the Lord God said to the woman, 'What is this you have done?' And the woman said, 'The serpent deceived me and I ate.'" We can stop at that point.

Boy, this is a dramatic change. This is a hundred and eighty degree reverse of their attitude toward God. They were so instantly corrupted by that one sin so as not only to feel the shame of that corruption, but to resist any fellowship with God and to resist any honest repentance, though they knew their condition and were confronted by God about their sin. The conversation is evasive, it is deceptive and it shifts blame. And it tells us the nature of depravity. And I know there are lots of theological definitions of depravity but let me give you a MacArthur definition of depravity. Depravity is a condition in which one is unwilling to honestly repent. I mean, that's really what depravity is. Not only is it a condition in which one is unwilling to repent, it is a condition in which one is unable to repent.

Depravity is not just seen in man's inability to stop sinning. It is really seeing deeper in his penchant for avoiding repentance. Even when he can see the sin, experience the sin, feel the guilt, feel the shame, even when confronted by God he will do anything and everything to deceive and evade and shift the blame away from himself. He will do anything to avoid God if he can, but if he's finally confronted by God he will not acknowledge his own sin. And that's really the essence of depravity. It isn't that Adam and Eve didn't know they sinned, they knew they sinned, they knew they disobeyed. They had experienced sin. They had experienced the knowledge of evil. They had experienced change. They had experienced wicked corrupt thoughts that somehow related to their sexual conduct and therefore covered themselves in that area. They were feeling guilt before God from their consciences and that's why they were hiding from God. They knew they were subject to judgment

and the judgment was death...in the day you eat you will die...God said.

But in spite of the shame, in spite of the guilt, in spite of the lust that they were feeling, in spite of the corrupt thoughts, in spite of accusing consciences, in spite of judgment from God, in spite of impending death, rather than repent they tried to evade. Depravity is a condition in which the sinner will not repent and cannot repent of his sin. And that's exactly what you see here. And it's the same thing going on since then, even until now. Depraved sinners may understand that what they have done is sin. They may feel shame about that sin. They may have to face their corruption. They may even make resolutions to change their lives and stop doing the corrupt things they do. They may also recognize as Romans 1:32 says that they are worthy of death. But they cannot stop from sinning, nor can they honestly repent.

So, what they do is hide from God. And that's the essence of the action of depravity. Since it cannot stop sinning, it cannot stop its passions, and since it will not repent and since it understands that there is God and there is judgment, the only thing left to do is to hide from God...one way or another. Atheists hide from God by saying there is no God. Self-righteous people hide from God by saying God is not as holy as some people would think and I'm good enough to please God on my own. Other people hide from God by redefining Him.

I read an article yesterday that said ninety percent of the people in America believe in God...ninety percent. But the vast majority of those 90 percent believe God to be the God that they have decided He will be in their own minds. Convenient.

Depravity is that condition of the sinner in which he cannot stop his sinning and he cannot and will not repent. And so he is left to hide from God. That's why where the Word of God is preached and God is worshiped, such as in our church, and God is exalted, sinners are not comfortable. They need something to hide behind. They don't want to walk into a place where they're going to be exposed to the true and living God who sits in judgment on their condition. That's exactly what we see in Adam and Eve. They are now experiencing evil. It is twisting and perverting the one relationship that existed because there are only two people between the man and the woman and has sexual connotations, they were having thoughts about the sexual realm that were perverted, and so they try to cover that. They're feeling the corruption, they're feeling the shame, they're feeling the guilt, they're afraid of God because they're afraid He will execute them because that's what He said He would do. Rather than repent and seek God's forgiveness, they hide.

Let's look at verse 8 and just follow the narrative. "They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day." Now let me just stop you there.

They're awake to evil. They feel the embarrassment of sexually wicked thoughts. They understand evil because they're now experiencing it in them. They've had some time to experience it. I don't

know at what point during that day they fell, but when we come to verse 8 it's later, some time has passed since they fell, since they found some fig leaves and sewed them together, maybe taking some kind of vine and weaving it through the leaves they made their coverings. They have fallen. They have felt the guilt. They have felt the shame. They tried to cover themselves and some further time has passed. Don't know how long but time enough for them to be frightened. The coverings really didn't do it for them, they were looking for a place to hide.

It's later in the day now. They've had sufficient time to feel the impulses of wickedness in them. In fact, it's...it's the cool of the day. You notice that in verse 8? It's the cool of the day. What is that? Well the word "cool" here is actually the word ruach which is the word for "wind." Kasudo(???) the great Jewish commentator says, "It is the time of the day when the usual wind springs up toward evening." In the evening as the sun began to set in that paradise, the warmth of the sun began to pass, the evening began to come on, the coolness of the air began to be experienced, it was in the cool of the day, the evening when the gentle breeze began to move, the sun having disappeared. And I would just call your attention, in the Hebrew there's a definite article there...it is THE cool of the day as if designating not some...some period of the day on that day, but THE cool of the day as if it indicates a normal occurrence. The cool of the day almost being a title for evening...toward evening when coolness began to set in and you could feel the coolness of the breeze.

So, they've had enough time. We can assume it was earlier in the day that they sinned. It was earlier yet in the day they made their coverings. And now it's reached the evening and they've had enough time to feel the shame and make the coverings and to try to deal with all these new impulses. It's near the end of daylight and as the day comes to its close, verse 8 says they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day. Sometimes the word "sound" is translated "voice." But I think it is best, as the NAS has translated it to translate it sound. You cannot hear a voice walking but sound you can hear when someone is walking and this Hebrew word, although it can be translated voice, is also translated sound in a number of Old Testament texts...2 Samuel 5:24, 1 Kings 14:6, 2 Kings 6:32 would be three examples. They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden.

And the rather casual mention of that would indicate to me that this is something God did frequently. It's not like this was some monumental event that had never happened. It perhaps was a somewhat normal event, something God did often.

Now you say, "Wait a minute. God is a spirit and a spirit has not flesh and bones, as Jesus said." That's true. God is the infinite spirit, God is the eternal spirit who has no feet, who has no corporeality, not physical form. And so the presence of God is not going to make any sound. Now the Lord is here with us, isn't He? He inhabits the praise of His people and we don't hear any sound. But on several occasions in the Old Testament, this is a wonderful, wonderful area of study, on several occasions in the Old Testament, particularly in the book of Genesis, God appeared in

physical form. That's right. God appeared in visible, physical form as a man. He could be seen and He could be conversed with.

That shouldn't surprise us. Isaiah had a vision of God in Isaiah chapter 6 verse 1 and he said, "I saw the Lord high and lifted up." Well, when Isaiah saw the Lord, did he see a spirit? I can't see in a vision even a spirit. What did he see? Well, according to John 12:41 it says, "These things Isaiah said because he saw His glory and he spoke of Him." And you know who that's referring to? Jesus Christ...Jesus Christ. Isaiah actually saw Jesus when he saw God on a throne. He saw a preincarnate Christ. There were occasions in the Old Testament when the Lord appeared in a physical form prior to His incarnation. These are called theophanies, appearances of God, or Christophanies, appearances of Christ. And apparently the divine Lord was comfortable in human form even before the incarnation. After all, man was made in the image of God and the second member of the trinity, the Lord, would ultimately be made a glorified man forever. So there's no discomfort for God to take on human form. Some of us probably think that the first time God ever took on human form was Jesus Christ. No. There were preincarnate appearances of God where the Lord Himself took on human form.

So, the Lord God probably in shining glory, some manifestation of the Shekinah, actually took on the form of a man and was walking in the garden. Not this time alone but perhaps many times. If you go through the book of Genesis you will find the Lord appeared to Hagar in Genesis 16, called the messenger of the Lord and the angel of the Lord, that was a preincarnate appearance of the Lord Himself to Hagar. You will find in Genesis 17 and 18 that the Lord appeared to Abraham. You will find in Genesis 26, I believe it is, that the Lord appeared to Isaac. You will find that in Genesis 28, Genesis 32, Genesis 35, three separate occasions the Lord appeared to Jacob which was the last of these Christophanies in the book of Genesis.

E.J. Young, the great Old Testament scholar, writes, "God is the infinite one, He is a spirit. In order to reveal Himself to man in an intimate way, He did appear during Old Testament times in human form. Such appearances were called theophanies and these theophanies found their culmination in the incarnation of the second person of the trinity. Preincarnate appearances of the Lord is what they were. In most loving and tender condescension God appeared in the form of a man so that He might speak to man as friend to friend." So, one of the blessings that Adam and Eve enjoyed in the garden, the blessing of their unfallen condition was intimate conversation with God the Creator who appeared to them in visible, physical form like a man, though no doubt a shining man, perhaps something like the transfigured Christ of the New Testament. Man cannot speak face to face with a spirit, so God graciously appeared in human form so that man could speak to Him directly and hear Him speak directly.

Well, up to this day whenever they would have heard God walking in the garden, they would have run to Him. They would have rejoiced at His sounding voice. But now everything is opposite. Now when

they hear the sound of Him walking in the garden, they run away from Him to hide. God had come walking this evening, the evening of their Fall, at the end of a terrible, terrible, terrible day. And there is no rush on their part to God, no outburst of love, no cry of confession, no cry of repentance, no seeking of restoration. Quite the opposite characterizes the sinner. He kind of likes what he feels. This wickedness has its attractions. Rather than run to God to see if there's a remedy, he tries to hide. This is a totally new behavior.

Verse 8, "And the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden." Here began the flight of the sinner from God, his judge. Man is still trying to do the impossible escape from God in God's own garden. One way or another the sinner tries to escape God. He may deny His existence, that's a form of escape. He may reject the true God of Scripture and invent a god of his own. He may suppress the knowledge of God. One way or another the sinner tries to banish the God of the Bible. Even Darwin said, "Of course there is a God, of course I believe in God but not the God of the Bible."

Well, it's no more foolish to hide from God's presence in the midst of the trees in God's own garden than it is to hide from God by espousing vigorously a philosophy of life that excludes the true God. So Adam, who was to be the keeper of the garden, to protect the garden, now seeks protection from the Creator by means of the garden. So he hides among the trees of the garden. Trees given for his joy now hide his sadness. The trees a source of life to him are now hiding him from death. How ironic, it is God's garden, how can fallen man hide from God in God's own garden? Well, for that matter, how can fallen man hide from God in God's own universe? Wherever man goes he's in God's territory. Whatever he sees points back to God. Whatever he hears points back to God. This is God's world and there is no escape from His presence.

There's only one way to successfully flee from God and that is to run to God. Adam and Eve didn't know that. They couldn't know that. Their minds had been darkened. And they were told in the day they ate they would die and they hear God walking and there's panic because they think maybe God is coming to execute us. We must hide.

It reminds me of Psalm 139, "Where can I go from Thy Spirit?" Verse 7, "Where can I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend to heaven, Thou art there. If I make my bed in Sheol, behold Thou art there. If I take the wings of the dawn, if I dwell in the remotest part of the sea, even there Thy hand will lead me, Thy right hand will lay hold of me. If I say surely the darkness will overwhelm me and the light around me will be night, even the darkness is not dark to Thee and the night is as bright as a day. Darkness and night are alike to Thee." No way to go. No way to hide. But that's what the sinner tries stupidly to do.

In Revelation 6 the sinners at the end of the age begin to feel the judgment of God and they cry for the rocks and the mountains to do...what?...hide them...hide them from the face of God. How foolish.

There is no place to hide.

And yet the folly of philosophers continues to attempt it. I was reading a book, I mentioned it last Friday night, called Dismissing God, a really helpful book by Bruce Lockerbe(?) in which he traces the dismissal of God from our literature. There's a quote in there by Carl Hime(?), "The transcendent is no longer there. The Creator has become an impossible thought, not frame-able by the mind."

That is the thinking of secular man. There's no God, the Creator, God of the Bible who can fit into human minds. The most crass, the most gross expressions of the philosophical dismissing of God probably were articulated by Madeline Murray O'Hare in her mocking brash vulgarity. She had three bumper stickers, one said, "God is just another addiction." Another said, "Jesus Christ, Superfraud." And a third said, "Atheists do it without guilt." But writers from Emily Dickinson, Matthew Arnold, Herman Melville, Stephen Crane, Samuel Longhorn Clemens, alias Mark Twain, Hardy Yates, D.H. Lawrence, James Joyce, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway, Arthur Miller, right on down to Woody Allen have all played the part of dismissing God in literature. Woody Allen who is a Jew, who has the great heritage, mocks God in his imitable style by quipping, "Not only is there no God, but try getting a plumber on the weekend."

And that's the way it is in our society today. That's the way it is among the literate and the elite and it trickles down. But it isn't anything new. When I was reading the book and reading the chronicle of how we have dismissed God, there's a new way to dismiss God, but dismissing God isn't anything new. Adam and Eve immediately wanted to be distant from God. Sinners have always tried to hide from God, which is the...certainly the most pervasive irrationality in the mind of the sinner.

But God came seeking the hiding sinner. And here we find the first sight of grace, the first expression of kindness, the first indication that there might be a possibility for reconciliation because we don't find God thundering into the garden. We don't find a bolt of lightning coming out of heaven and incinerating Adam and Eve. Rather verse 9 says this, "Then the Lord God called to the man and said to him, 'Where are you?'"

Now this is a rather gentle approach, don't you think? This is certainly not what you might have assumed if they're going to disobey God they're going to die. You might assume some instant act of divine judgment would fall on their heads. But instead you find God initiating the confrontation that begins in a very gentle manner. Here is gospel truth for the first time. "Where are you?" And here is the seeking God and God still seeks sinners.

Frankly, had God just killed Adam and Eve, it would have been a righteous execution, right? There's nothing in them that elicits from God any deserved kindness. It is just an indication of grace here. This is grace. This is the first time we've seen grace. And it isn't grace that grants them salvation at this point, it is grace that withholds from them destruction.

The fact of the matter is, when God says in verse 9, "Adam, where are you?" He's not asking for information. He's not wandering around saying...Where are you, Adam? He knew where Adam was. He knew everything...omniscient. What He was really wanting from Adam, listen carefully, was for Adam to step forward on his own and confess his sin. It was a compassionate, loving, gracious, merciful God who is by nature a Savior seeking a sinner. And when He says "where are you?" He's not so much asking "where are you located in the garden?" as He's asking "where are you now in terms of your condition?" The word "called" in the Hebrew, "The Lord God called to the man," is a word used often in the Old Testament for summoning someone to give an account. It is so used in Genesis 12:18, Genesis 20 verse 9, Genesis 26 verse 9 and 10, Deuteronomy 25:8. So what you really have here is God calling the man to an account. This is God coming in with a warrant for Adam's arrest. But it's a rather compassionate approach, it's a gracious approach because God could have rendered sentence on the spot.

He comes for an accounting. He is the great judge. He found Adam because verse 9 says, "He called to the man and said to him," which means He found him. He knew exactly where he was. He confronts him face to face and He says, "Where are you?" in the manner of saying, "So where are you now, Adam, now that you have sinned, now that you have disobeyed Me, in what condition do you find yourself? Explain your condition. Where are you, Adam?"

Now what do you think He's asking Adam to say? "I'm in sin. I have sinned." This is an opening for repentance. "Tell me your condition, Adam. So you did what you did. So you disobeyed Me. So you followed the lead of Eve who was seduced and deceived by the serpent and now you've gotten yourself into this situation and got these ridiculous loin coverings on and you're hiding in here, explain to Me your condition."

See, the question is not for information about Adam's location because He speaks to him face to face. He says to Adam. It's a question like the one in chapter 4 verse 9. You remember Cain killed Abel and then the Lord says to Cain, "Where is Abel, your brother?" Do you think the Lord didn't know where he was? He knew where he was. He was dead on the ground. It was plain where he was. There was a corpse lying there before the open sky. He was trying to illicit a response out of Cain about what had happened. God is not asking for information because in verse 10 He said, "What have you done, the voice of your brother's blood is crying to Me from the ground." He knew Abel was dead. He knew where Abel was and the blood of Abel was soaking up the ground and crying out to God for vengeance. God was giving Abel (John means Cain here) the opportunity to own what he had done.

That's what he's doing with Adam. He's saying, "Adam, you're hiding, aren't you? What condition are you in?" This is God coming to the sinner in a gracious way, giving him the opportunity to acknowledge his condition and Adam responds with half truths, evasion, deception and blame

shifting. And the reason is, first of all, because he likes the feelings of sin. Men love darkness. There's a certain...there's a certain joy in these new feelings. And his pride is too great to acknowledge the reality of what he has done so that even before God Himself whom Adam has walked many an evening and conversed in intimate and pure fellowship, can't bring himself to tell the truth. He cannot break the pattern of sin, nor can he repent. That's depravity. He has not the capacity to stop the sinning or to honestly repent. He lost the pure innocence that he possessed.

Verse 10, this is Adam's reply. "He said, 'I heard the sound of Thee in the garden and I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid myself.'" Oh come on. This is ridiculous. He just covered himself, how naked was he? That is not the issue. I...I was just embarrassed that You would see me with only limited clothing. You see, the man can't tell the truth now. That is the mark of depravity. Cannot tell the truth about his own condition. He will not acknowledge what he is. That single-minded experience of truth which he had known up to this day where he spoke only the truth and loved only the truth is gone, it's corrupted and now he evades and he deceives and he shifts the blame. He cannot come to an honest owning of his true condition.

Frankly, he's not repulsed by his sin, kind of likes it. Doesn't like the consequences of it all the time, certainly doesn't like the consequences of having to face God. But it's not the sin he doesn't like, he won't even admit that. It's the consequences he fears and that's why he said, "I heard the sound of You in the garden and I was afraid. Afraid, because I, of course, remember You said in the day I'm going to eat that I'm going to die. And I was naked and it was embarrassing and so I hid myself." He didn't say anything about I sinned. He doesn't say anything about offending God who gave him life and gave him paradise. He never admits his sin, neither does Eve in this whole conversation.

So, here are the first words of fallen man. "And he said, 'I heard the sound of You in the garden and I was afraid because I was naked. I hid myself.'" The first characteristic of depravity, it seeks to hide from God. It understands its nakedness. It understands its corruptness. But it doesn't want exposure to God. I don't expect unbelievers to come flooding into this church, do you? I know churches that are mostly populated by unbelievers, that's because you can go there and not be exposed to God. You can go there and still hide from God.

Satan had promised them freedom from God's limiting control and Satan had told them that God was less good than God purported to be. And that by eating they would be like God and therefore they would free themselves from God's restraining control.

Well, they didn't get freedom, they got slavery to sin, slavery to shame, slavery to guilt and fear. Sinners fear God. Romans 1:32, "They know that those who do those things are worthy of death but they do them just the same and they approve of those who do them," that's Romans 1:32. The sinner understands his sin, he understands his corruption, understands his guilt, understands shame...that's built into the fabric of his life. Understands that there's an accountability before God, he understands

all that, can't do anything about it. Still loves his sin, cannot repent, will not repent, but runs to hide from God one way or another. That's depravity. "I was afraid." Fear replaced joy.

So God is summing Adam into court and God is bringing Adam to the bench, as it were, and saying, "Tell Me about the condition you're in, explain to Me." Adam is fallen but fallen man is self-protective in his proud wickedness. And rather than Adam saying, "O God, I did what You told me not to do, I confess I sinned and I ate and I am so sorry. What can I do to be restored to You?" That's not going to happen. Depravity doesn't work like that. There's no confession. There's no repentance. There's no asking for forgiveness. What he does is say, "I was afraid of You."

Now, all of a sudden, God is the bad guy. Sinners love to do that. They damn the God of the Bible. They damn the God of quote/unquote "fundamentalism." They damn the God of the Old Testament and the God of the New as well. And God is this overbearing, unkind, judgmental, threatening executioner. They'll have nothing to do with such a God. Adam...Adam. "I heard the sound of You in the garden and I was afraid. You frighten me. Afraid because I was naked." He will not say because I sinned. This is evasive. He's fallen and he will not acknowledge his sin.

So God digs a little deeper. Look at verse 11. "And He said, "Who told you you were naked?" Boy, that is a good question. Really...who told you you were naked, you've been naked since I made you. Who brought this up? Who told you this? Who told you and Eve that you were naked?

Well what's the answer? Nobody, there wasn't anybody. Didn't have any neighbors. Nobody existed and there weren't any talking animals. Nobody told them. That's exactly the point. "Where did the shame come from, Adam? How did you all of a sudden decide that you were naked and that this was inappropriate?" And God is just going a little bit deeper and saying, "Come on, Adam, you know that that shame rose up inside of you as a direct result of what you did when you disobeyed Me. Come on, Adam, let's get pass the nakedness, where did that idea come from? When did you first realize you were naked? Come on, Adam."

You see, Adam and Eve experienced that indictment, that consciousness of nakedness because they had violated their conscience. They had fallen into sin and corruption and the shame and awareness of being naked rose up from inside of them. The answer to the question "who told you you were naked?" is nobody. Nobody told them they were naked. They felt that nakedness. Adam should have said, "You know, nobody told us that, but all of a sudden we felt shame, we felt that we were naked and we felt that there was evil thoughts and expressions that would lead to evil conduct and action and we felt this pervasive kind of evil and we wanted to try to find a way to cover it." He didn't say that.

This is an opportunity to confess. This is an opportunity to repent. But that's not how depravity acts. Well, Adam wouldn't confess. You know something? God did it for him. He actually did it for him.

Look what is next in verse 11. God answers the question, "Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" Can't get any more specific than that, right? Where is Adam going to go now? He's tried to evade everything. God finally says the words, "Have you not eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat? Isn't that what happened, Adam? Didn't you disobey Me? Isn't that why you feel shame? Isn't that why you tried to cover yourself? Isn't that why you're now hiding, Adam? Come on, Adam. Why would you all of a sudden be afraid of Me? Well why would you all of a sudden be conscious of your nakedness? Well why are you hiding in the trees there when I come along for our evening communion? Isn't it because you...isn't it because you did what I told you not to do, Adam? Isn't it because you ate of the tree when I told you not to eat of it? Isn't it really a direct result of your sin and your rebellion?"

Now here is God actually putting the words in Adam's mouth. All Adam has to say is, "Yes, God, I ate of the fruit and since I ate I have felt the corruption and the evil and the shame and the nakedness and the fear that You would judge me and that's why I'm hiding." He could have said that. Doesn't say that.

Look at this, verse 12. "And the man said, 'The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me from the tree and I did eat.'" He is not going to confess. He has spoken in half-truths and evaded things and now it's blame shifting. I mean, he has got nowhere to turn because now it is clear that God knows he has done what God told him not to do, the only prohibition that God gave. He's done it. He's eaten when he was told not to eat. There's no way to escape that so all that he can do, all he has left is to say, "O but I am a victim." You cannot get a straight answer out of a depraved man. You cannot get an honest confession or repentance. His fallen nature is now corrupt. Corruption is evasive, it is deceptive, it is self-protective, it is self-justifying, and it is blame shifting. The sinner doesn't take the responsibility even for what he does when you've got him in a corner and he has to admit that he did it, he still will not take responsibility for what he did. So he says, "The woman whom You gave to be with me," so initially he's blaming Eve, you know, he says, "I went to bed single one night, woke up married. You could have picked any woman You wanted, I mean, I didn't even know what a woman was. You gave me this woman. She's the problem and actually You're the problem because You picked her."

This is pretty weak stuff because from the very beginning if she was his helper and he was the leader, she was the follower and he was the head, yet he followed her right into sin. She was created by God for a wonderful purpose, to be his true helper and she became his destroyer. She was created to be led by Adam, she became Adam's leader with disastrous results. And he blames God.

You know, that's what sinners do ultimately. You know, when their whole sinful world collapses in on them, ultimately it's God's fault, He made the world the way it is. He put me in this kind of circumstance. Boy, this is amazing. In one day, one actual day, one 24-hour period, this man and his wife have gone from praising God to blaming God...total reversal. "You did it, if You hadn't made

that woman, this never would have happened. Singleness is preferable," he's saying. However, exceedingly difficult to reproduce and they were to fill the earth. So what God gave was the best that God had to give and necessary as in the case of all other living things. She was the best. She was the necessary complement to man. And Adam foolishly followed her.

So, he says, "The woman You gave me, why she just gave me from the tree and I ate." It was just that simple, was it? She walked over and said, "Try this, Adam." Come on. But that's the way it is with depravity. It just always wants to see itself as a victim. There's really nothing wrong with me...he said...there's something wrong with her and something really wrong with You.

Isn't it amazing. Depravity settles in so fast and turns the lover of God into the hater of God. Still the way it is today, don't ever admit you are a sinner and if you can't get out of it because it's very obvious that you have sinned, then you can blame God for the circumstances that caused you to do it, or the people that influence you to do it. Blame it on somebody else. Maintain your victim status. That's what the sinner does.

So, evasive, deceptive, blame-shifting, but depravity will never own up to its true condition. And I guess what's really sad is there's no repentance and so there's going to be judgment. Verse 17, we're going to get to it later, He says to Adam, "Because you listened to the voice of your wife, you've eaten from the tree about which I commanded you saying you shall not eat from it, cursed is the ground because of you," and He goes on and on and He pronounces this curse on Adam and Eve and throws them out of the garden. And it's just a tragic picture.

They are now, listen carefully, void of any love for God. Adam doesn't love God. Eve doesn't love God. They resent God. They see God as a frightening figure who is going to bring about death. They see God as their judge, not their friend. They see God as the author of their sin because it's God who creates the circumstance in which they fall. And so they resent God. They hate God. They despise God. They want to be out of God's presence. They want to keep their distance from God. Their hearts are now void of any love for God. Listen further, they have no interest in God's honor. They seek immediately in a self-defensive response to dishonor God, to indict God. They have no interest in God's glory. Their hearts are now void of righteousness. They are empty of holiness or purity. They are full of sin. They refuse to repent. The only emotion they have toward God is to resent God and at the same time fear God.

It's true of Adam and it's true of Eve. Look at verse 13. "The Lord God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" And He's coming to her now with the same approach. "Explain yourself, Eve." By the way, Adam was no defender of his wife, was he? He blamed her and God. Adam didn't try to protect his wife, but he's supposed to be a protector of his wife. That relationship has become so twisted that Adam blames her and God. So God goes to her. She's now unprotected. Adam isn't doing anything but blaming her. And He says to Eve, "What have you done? What have you done?"

Again, He's not asking for information, He's endeavoring to enlist a confession. "What have you done?" It's the same question in chapter 4 verse 10 when God says to Cain, "What have you done?" And God knows exactly what he's done, he's killed his brother. So God isn't seeking information, He's saying, "Eve, will you own up to this?"

Verse 13, "And the woman said, 'The serpent deceived me and I ate. I am a victim.'" Self-justifying blame shifting again. Well, she can't deny that she ate. But she wants God to think she is a victim of circumstances which God must have created because God created everything, including serpents.

So here are these who one day earlier were lovers of God, now indicting God for what's wrong in their lives. This is depravity. This is how it acts always...classic definition of depravity. It can be defined as a condition of the human soul in which there is disobedience to God, lack of fellowship with God, the sentence of death, an unwillingness to acknowledge sin, a concern only for the consequence of sin, not sin itself, in which there is no desire to repent, in which there is no desire to turn from sin, in which there is blame shifting and a constant effort at self-justification and self-exaltation.

This is what Jeremiah said when he said, "The heart of man is deceitful and desperately wicked." And the condition cannot be changed by the sinner. Adam and Eve were fallen. They were lost. They were unsaved. They were shamed. They were guilty. They were impenitent. The plight of all sinners and the depravity was so pervasive that they would not and could not repent. Paradise was lost. And the very last thing that a depraved sinner would ever do is to own up to his sin before God, confess his lost and undone condition. Even when the sinner is conscious of his wickedness, he seeks shelter behind his own self-righteousness and trusts in his own good works to counterbalance his evil. Or, he redefines God in his own terms. Or, like the atheists, he dismisses God all together.

I think Adam and Eve felt, if I can say it that way, experienced a sense of moral distance between themselves and God. He was holy, they were sinful. I think they felt that. I think the unregenerate feel that. But there's no love for God there so there's no desire to restore that, just to run from God and hide and indict God for whatever is wrong in your life.

You say, "What's the remedy?" Folks, nobody would ever be saved unless God in sovereign grace shattered the bonds of that depravity. And that's what He does when He awakens the dead to life.

Well, next time we're going to see the judge passing sentence on the impenitent depraved couple. Let's pray.

Such dishonor to You, O God, is distressing to even speak about. We would honor You and glorify You in everything. You are holy, holy, holy. And we are the wicked ones. Thank You for sovereignly bringing us to the recognition of our sin that we might be saved, for granting us grace to love You and to seek to honor You. That is our desire. That is our prayer. Amen.

Available online at: <http://www.gty.org>

COPYRIGHT (C) 2015 Grace to You

You may reproduce this Grace to You content for non-commercial purposes in accordance with Grace to You's Copyright Policy (<http://www.gty.org/connect/copyright>).