

**Genesis 3: 8 -15; “The Lord God came Walking”, Sermon # 9 in the series-
“Beginnings”, Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on June 30th, 2013
in the Morning Worship Service.**

The Lord God, it says in verse 8, came walking in the garden in the cool of the day seeking for two people whom He had created, whom He loved, and who He had fashioned to worship Him and to have sweet fellowship with. Perhaps the cool of the day was when He was accustomed to come to them, to receive their devotion and that they might behold His glory. Now, we know that The Father does not have a body of flesh and bones. We know that God’s Holy Spirit, cannot be perceived in His approach, and so I must conclude that this is a pre-incarnate manifestation of the second Person of the Trinity, the Son of God.

It was not as though God the Son did not know where they were. It was not as though He did not know that they had sinned. It is not as though He did not know what He would do next. For it is the nature of the Son of God to seek and to save that which is lost, whether in the Old Testament or the New. We see Him in a glass darkly in the Old Testament, speaking with Abraham by his tents, wrestling with Jacob at the Fords of the Jabbok, and walking with the three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace. But here we find Him walking in the garden in the cool of the day.

He was walking to investigate; He was not running, He was not rushing to judgment. He came not in the heat of the day to convey His passionate anger against their sin, nor in the dead of night, to create within them the fear and dread of Himself, nor early in the morning to show His haste. For our God is slow to anger and patient and longsuffering toward sinners. He came in the cool of the day. He came as One who had lost His children, or his friends. He came to ask questions. He came indeed as a righteous Judge, but He also came as the Savior of sinners.

He came not only to bring curses, but also to make promises. He came, not only to bring questions, but also to provide the answers that guilty sinners would need to hear. The questions of the Lord God to Adam and Eve after they ate of the fruit of the tree, show us much about what God would have to do for sinners to bring them back into his favor, and to spare them from Eternal judgment. They could no longer save themselves from that judgment; they had lost their free will to do good in their fall. So God Himself would have to provide a different way. We find here that there were 3 questions which God spoke to Adam and Eve which were indicative of His great concern for the salvation of sinners then, and His great concern for them now.

1st of all – The question: Where are you? (verses 8-12)

Whenever God asks a question it is not for His own sake, but rather it’s for ours. It’s so that we might understand what He already knows. This question was asked so that it might make a real impression upon those whom He was speaking to. God knew that Adam and Eve were hiding, but he wanted Adam to voice his answer to him, so that the truth would come out, and that Adam would be convicted of his sin. Whenever we see God asking questions of His people in the Bible, it is His gracious way of bringing conviction to the ones who are guilty.

God could have come to Adam and Eve in a legal way with thunder and lightning, and loud accusations and denunciations of their sin. But instead God is calling to Adam, “Where are you?” Parents, will you not take notice of God’s holy and wise methods of dealing with sinning children? Those whom God loves unto salvation, He graciously shows His concern for where they are. They are lost, they are undone, they are afraid, and they are hiding.

Adam and Eve knew that they were naked; they were experiencing shame for their disobedience. They did not want to face the majestic, holy God whom they had rebelled against, and whose commandment they had broken. God wanted to show His erring children, first of all, that they had sinned against His love, His light, and His goodness. They had sinned against the One who had loved them as a Father and a friend. Judgment indeed must fall upon them

because they had broken the Covenant of Works. But as He revealed this to them, the Lord God would show them that, really, they had not believed in His goodness to them.

The question – Where are you, showed them that God knew that they were lost without Him. It showed them that God cared enough to seek for them and find them, even when they were at their worst. Romans chapter 5, verse 8 says, "But God demonstrates His own love towards us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." The reason that the Lord God sought for them that day, in the way that He did, asking this question of concern, was that His plan was to send Jesus to die for the sins that they had committed that day.

For it was their sins which had made them afraid of God, and caused them to hide. Where are you this morning? Are you hiding from God? Do you see how wretched and miserable you will be if you live and die in an unconverted, unbelieving state? Will you really live your life without God and without hope in this world and think to find happiness in the next? Are you hiding from God, from his presence and power and His scrutiny of your life? Do you fear to live without Him, but you are afraid to come near to Him?

God is seeking the lost this morning through the preaching of His word. Will you come out from behind the trees and see that God through the Lord Jesus Christ will give you the forgiveness of your sins if you will confess them to Him? Will you not see that though your sin is grievous that the Lord God is full of mercy to sinners? This is a point which both sinners and saints have not taken sufficient notice of; that God is merciful to sinners who apply to Him.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord, God will be gracious to those who feel that they are overwhelmed with a sense of their sins; if they will only wait in faith for Him. Sometimes, I am saying, even Christians feel like fleeing away from the presence of the Lord, and turning back to the world's perspectives of what they think will help, because they sense many things in their soul which cause them to be afraid. They are afraid that they do not measure up in God's sight. "I hid myself because I was afraid", Adam says to God. He was thinking to himself, "I did not think that You would show me mercy."

They both thought that they could not expect any mercy from God. Let me ask if this is you? I would like to have all of us turn over to Isaiah Chapter 30, verses 15-18. It says here: "For thus says the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel: 'In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and confidence shall be your strength.'" "But you would not, and you said, 'No, for we will flee on horses'—Therefore you shall flee!" "And, 'We will ride on swift horses'—Therefore those who pursue you shall be swift!" "One thousand shall flee at the threat of one, at the threat of five you shall flee, till you are left as a pole on top of a mountain and as a banner on a hill."

"Therefore the Lord will wait, that He may be gracious to you; and therefore He will be exalted, that He may have mercy on you." "For the Lord is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for Him." Here we find God promising Israel that if they would repent of their looking to the mighty people of the world for help and deliverance (Egypt in this case), and if they would rest in His promises of mercy, then in their quiet trust and confidence in Him, He would come to them at the right time, and be merciful to them.

But they would not believe it. Instead they fled to Egypt, some of them. They would ride on swift horses, but God would be swifter in sending His judgments upon the nation through their enemies, the Assyrians or the Chaldeans. But notice this; On some, who were trusting in Him and waiting for His mercy, He says this in the NASB; verse 18 – "Therefore the Lord longs to be gracious to you, and therefore He waits on high to have compassion on you." "For the Lord is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for Him."

This is the nature of God with regard to all of His Elect people. He longs to be gracious to them. He waits on high to have compassion on them. "How can it be so," you say to me, "seeing their sins were so very great?" It was because His wrath and anger against their sins was to be fully satisfied in the Person of Christ, and not in the believing sinner. This is why the Lord God,

the pre-incarnate Christ could come walking to Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden in the cool of the day, looking for them, and calling, "Where are you?" The Covenant of Grace was already at work. The Lamb of God had been "slain from the foundation of the world" in the mind of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. And so the Lord God could show mercy to Adam and Eve, and give them gracious promises.

The 2nd Question which God asked Adam was: "Who told you?"

In verse 10 of our text Adam says, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself." "And the Lord God said, "Who told you that you were naked?" "Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?" You see, it was the voice of Adam's violated conscience that told him that he was naked, and that there was shame in that nakedness. He was afraid, and He felt vulnerable, not only physically, but spiritually before God. He felt lost and afraid because he had lost that which had been given to him, and which was most precious in God's sight; he had lost his original righteousness. The image of God in him had been defaced and marred by sin. He was hiding from God because he was afraid of what death would mean for him.

He was hiding from God because he knew that God could see perfectly well that he had sinned. And so he wanted to cover his transgressions by hiding his iniquity in his bosom. It is as if he is saying to God, "I can't let you see me like this". I will not only hide from you, but if I can, I will hide my sin from you as well." In Job 31: 33 it says, "If I have covered my transgressions as Adam, by hiding my iniquity in my bosom..." This is the nature of fallen, sinful man. This is the state of alienation from God that exists in every son of Adam who comes into the world to this day.

John Owen says, "Sinners generally live in a neglect and contempt of God, in an enmity against Him; but whenever they are convinced of a necessity to endeavor a return unto Him, the first thing they have to conflict with is fear." "Beginning to understand who and what He is, and also how things stand between Him and them, they are afraid to have anything to do with Him, and judge it impossible that they should find acceptance with Him." "This was the sense that Adam himself had upon his sin, when he was afraid and hid himself." I would further add that sin has so affected the nature of man that he cannot see the truth that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom". Without grace being given to him he cannot understand that God can be merciful to him. But when God conveys that saving grace, there comes an apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ.

Fallen man does not know how to fear God in the right way, in the way of reverencing Him. Fallen man does not see that God's essential goodness is based upon His righteousness and holiness. All that I am able to see, once I correctly understand that I am a sinner, is that if God is righteous He must judge me, and punish me for my sin. And if I have come to know that He is a righteous Judge, then I feel afraid of Him. And since I am afraid of Him, I do not think that I can draw near to Him to confess my sins and inadequacies. But instead I must flee from Him, and hide from Him, and be very afraid of Him.

That is the reaction in the heart of a person when they know that God is real, and that He is a righteous Judge. They are afraid, even afraid of God's loving voice seeking them out, in the gospel. This is why God sent His only-begotten Son into the World. It was to deliver us from all of our fears. Turn with me over to Hebrews 2 : 14 - "Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

We can see from this verse that one of the main designs of the devil was to bring about, within the fallen man and woman, the fear that relates to death and judgment. He wanted that fear to become a form of real bondage. They would all their lifetime be subject to bondage.

Adam and Eve knew that God had threatened death to them if they ate of the forbidden fruit. When they did eat of it their eyes were opened and they did have the knowledge of good and evil. But instead of it making them wise and like God, it took much of their God-likeness away. Their innocence and their righteousness, which were natural to them, were entirely lost, and what took its place was a spirit of the bondage that their sin brought them into. They experienced the fear, that gnawing fear, that not only physical death would someday come, but that spiritual death was already working in them.

Sinful passions were at work in their members to bear fruit unto death. These fleshly lusts waged war against their souls, and the spirit of bondage leading to fear was created in Adam and Eve. It holds many people captive in our time as well. This verse in Hebrews gives us a great and certain hope though, in what Jesus Christ has done. It is the anchor of our souls. It says that He would partake of our human nature, and as the Son of God, He would share in our nature, and die for our sins. He would suffer and die, so that the devil would no longer be able to wield the power of death through his deceptions.

He would die in order to release us from this bondage of having fear. Certainly, this is a love too great to describe. Jesus Christ delivers us from our greatest enemies that we “might serve God without fear.” (Luke 1: 74) Our greatest enemies are Satan, and our sinful hearts, which join in together to deceive us and to ruin us. They cause us to suspect and question God’s goodness and love to us. But this wisdom is only “earthly, sensual, and demonic.” (James 3:16) “Who told you that you were naked?”

The knowledge of sin is something that we could very well have done without. But Satan, who is a murderer and a liar, would have us to believe that the knowledge of sin will make us wise. It will only make us wise to do evil. The grace of Christ will make us wise as serpents and innocent as doves. It will make us bold to stand for the truth, and to speak the truth, in a way that will honor God.

The 3rd Question which shows God’s great concern for the salvation of sinners is: What is this that you have done? (verse 13)

Adam had tried pass the blame on to his wife. He confesses that he did eat of the fruit, but the fault he shifted from himself. He says in verse 12: “The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree.” This should show us that fallen human nature never likes to directly assume responsibility for its sins. If we do not have grace to own our own faults, we will attempt to shift the blame for our sin to someone else or something else. In this regard, Eve did better than Adam. She confessed her sin truthfully. She says, “The serpent deceived me and I ate.”

The Lord could not pass by any of these sins. He would not have been righteous if He had let anyone there that day escape the blame for what they had done. As a righteous judge, He knew that He had to reward each person according to their words and their works. But He also knew what He Himself would eventually do for both of them at the cross. He loved them with an everlasting love, and so would receive their confession as the beginning of what He would do for them. Even so, in regard to ourselves, here today, God is looking for you to confess your sins and to forsake them. I am quite sure that He can never be pleased with blame-shifting.

When you come to make a true and real confession of sin you must acknowledge it to be yours, and not the fault of someone else. What someone else has done to you does not mean that you are justified to sin against God, or against them. That is using other people’s wrong actions to justify your wrong conduct or words. This shall never stand in the Lord’s judgment. We see here from this passage that the Lord would bring His curses upon each of the three involved in the Fall. And so we need to ask ourselves today: “What is this that I have done?” Not, what is this which my wife has done, or my husband has done, or my children have done, or my boss has done, or what has some other Christian done?

In our confession of sin, let us focus on assuming the responsibility, like David did when he numbered the people. In 2nd Samuel 24: 17 he said, when he saw that the Lord had sent a plague upon Israel and 70,000 people died because of his sin, "I have sinned and done wickedly; but these sheep, what have they done? Let your hand, I pray, be against me ..." God heeded his prayers for the land, and the plague was withdrawn. Once we know what harm our sins have done, what dishonor they have brought to God, if we are true Christians, we do not want to appear before God or others as trying to rationalize it away as if it was someone else's fault. We will own it.

Jesus Christ, the greater David, said at the cross, "Let your hand, Father, be against Me for the sins of all who will believe in Me." He had no sins of His own, but He would take yours, if you will believe in Him. God knew how to answer His own questions. He knew what he would have to do to the guilty parties. We will look at this in our next sermon, but we cannot end this message without showing that even in the midst of His wrath against the sin of Adam and Eve, He remembered mercy.

There was no mercy for the serpent, for He does not give aid to the seed of angels, but out of sheer mercy and free grace, God gives His first promise of a salvation for sinners, and the destruction of the works of the Devil, through Jesus Christ, in verse 15. "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel." God knew that His Son was the only One who could deal with sin and all of its consequences; sin and all of its manifestations. Sin is a threat to all that He has created, and His government of the whole Universe.

He would take the woman whom Satan had deceived, and through one who would be born from her, would come a line of promised persons who would be shown grace and favor; not to believe the devil's lies, but to be at enmity with him. Eve's godly line of descendants would eventually bring forth One who by His righteous life, and sacrificial death, would bruise or crush the head of this serpent. What Satan would do to Him and to his kingdom would only be to bruise His heel. This was the first prophecy of Jesus Christ, who in due time would come and die for our sins. This was God's answer to his own questions. When men and women cannot answer God, it is because of their great guiltiness before Him.

But let us be encouraged to believe in Him and hope in Him continually. He has provided the answer for the sake of His own great Name, and for the sake of all sinners who will believe in Christ. He has provided a new and living way; grace to pardon, grace to cleanse, and grace to save and change the hearts of the vilest of sinners.