

Bible Study

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[0 : 01] Good evening, it's a pleasure to be with you tonight. I would prefer to be with you in person, but the case is that that's not possible.

And it is amazing to think that even a year ago, we wouldn't consider that God would have used such a platform to do his work.

And we'll be reading in Genesis 3, 6 to 15, and we're picking up the reading after Eve's initial interaction with the serpent.

Genesis 3, starting in verse 6. So when the women saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate.

And she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

[1 : 11] 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.

But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, Where are you? And he said, I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.

He said, Who told you you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree which I commanded you not to eat? The man said, The woman who you gave to be with me, she gave me the fruit of the tree, and I ate.

Then the Lord God said to the woman, What is this you have done? The woman said, The serpent deceived me, and I ate. Then the Lord God said to the serpent, Because you have done this, Cursed are you above all livestock, And above all the beasts of the field.

On your belly you shall go, And dust you shall eat, All the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, And between your offspring and her offspring.

[2 : 25] He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise his heel. Through the briefest of research, And scanning a couple of psychological studies, Children can experience shame, embarrassment, And guilt from the ages of two to three.

We've all seen a child running and hiding, In response to knowing they've done something wrong. I even know of a boy who was so poorly behaved over a sustained period of time, He lost the joy of celebrating his birthday.

The loss of the birthday, or the sin which led to such a loss, was not what shamed him. Having to listen to his parents, explain to his grandparents, What he had done, and the punishment he now faced, Was what brought true shame to that boy.

His standing in his grandparents' eyes, Was of utmost importance, Which made him desire to run, And hide, And never be found. You, yourself, like me, May recall some of your earliest memories, Where a moment of guilt, And shame, Of something you've done, Has resonated so profoundly, It's easy to recall, Even if, In hindsight, It was just a mere infringement, Made against either your parents, Or your friends.

Our focus tonight, Is specifically surrounding verse eight, And Adam and Eve's response to their shame, 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.

[4 : 14] Time doesn't allow us, To fully examine this passage, So tonight I'll be focusing on two points, One, Man's response, Hiding and hurting, And two, God's response, The grace offer.

Firstly, Hiding and hurting. When hearing God walking in the garden, The man and his wife hid themselves, Shame brought Adam and Eve low, Low in spirit, And low in form, And hiding to conceal oneself, Both physically and emotionally, Is the second result, Of the story of the fall.

Firstly, That they were immediately aware, Of their sin and shame, Which had been brought upon themselves, By themselves, Through the temptations of the evil one.

But secondly, The attempt of hiding, Not just in person, But the shame which beheld them, Due to their sin. It's a perversion of the natural order.

God and man, Though never equal in any way, Are together, In perfect relationship, From the moment God formed man, To the moment of his fall.

[5 : 27] God lives eternally reliant on himself, His power, His holiness, But man, Is reliant completely on God, For his life and nourishment.

When sin disordered, The eternal nourishment, And relationship with God, Man was sent, On the greatest negative tailspin, That has ever, And will ever, Be known.

We know, That Genesis 3, Is not the end, Of God's story with man, And praise be to God, It's not. Looking at man's reaction, To his newfound state, They did not hide, Due to their sin immediately, Only when they heard, The presence of God, In the garden, That they hid.

Yes, In verse 7, Their eyes were opened, Not physically, As sin entered, Through their open eyes, From verse 6, So when the women saw, That the tree was good for food, And that it was a delight to the eyes, But they were made aware, Of their shame, And their nakedness, And what a shame it was, To have known, What it's like, To be in perfect communion, With God, And now to know, To know the vast depravity, Of their current position, In comparison, If we look at that in context, The reverse is true of us, We as saints, Have only known depravity, And then only look forward, To the perfect communion with God, The loss, And grief, That Adam and Eve, Must have experienced, In this fall, Cannot, Be underestimated, Hiding, In response to God, Due to a self-awareness of guilt, Is all too commonplace,

Isn't this too often, The state of man, He will sin, Sometimes sin, Again, And again, And again, And his only reaction, When the thought of God, And his holiness, Comes upon him, Is to act, Like an ostrich, With sand in his hair, To do everything, In his futile power, To hide himself, From the Lord, Even though, The Lord being everywhere, Such attempts, Are purely unintelligible, However, Just as the practice, Of sinning, Can become worryingly repetitive, So can the practice, Of hiding, Trying to convince oneself, This is where I can hide from God, If only I do not think, Or contemplate God, And can hide from God, If only, I busy myself, With everything possible, To have no time to know, God's existence,

[8 : 18] Never mind presence, Then I might just be okay, And this is the plague, For Christians via the fall, We can still live in the mindset, Of listening to the evil one, And believing his lies, Over God's truths, And staying in a self-judged, Purgatory, Which might for a time, Relieve the conscience, In the most superficial way, But only leads to damage, Of the soul, And dulls us to uselessness, And empty experience, Of grace, This can also be said, Of the Christian, That is aware of his backsliding, But says, I must get myself right, Before I return to God, Or, God cannot see me in this state, What foolish words, As guess what, God does see you, In whichever state you're in, And isn't calling you, To do anything, Other than coming to him, At the feet of the cross, As you are, Let me clarify that point, Even further,

A coming to Christ, Is not to do this, In a self-serving repetition, To feel the emotional lows, And highs, Of such an experience, But to come to him, As you are, Be ministered by his spirit, And walk again with him, Turning back on the old ways, Which time and time again, We know, To be a fool's errand, And walk in faith, Through grace, Which Christ purchased, At so great a cost, Even if we play, The best acting role, Of our lives, And self-denial, Of what sin plagues us, We know it, Bring it to Christ, Truly repent, Walk in his freedom, Purchased by Christ's blood, We are living, In a fallen world, And that's a reality, We have to be aware of, We have to know our reactions, Caused by this fall,

And that we hide, It's in the passage, In Genesis 3, Verse 8, And in knowing this, Let us use this knowledge, To change our habits, That hinder growth, And much quicker, Actually know, Immediately, Come to Christ, Every time we sin, And confess, And repent, So we can live, In intimacy, With the father, As best as we can, On this earth, Waiting for that intimacy, And perfect relationship, To be made perfect, By Christ, Calling us home, Or Christ's return, Continue to pray, For sanctification, To become more like Christ, Every day, And know that our God, Is a God of answered prayers, The psalmist, In Psalm 66, Writes, But truly God has listened, He has attended, To the voice, Of my prayer, We also know, He will not leave us absent,

Christ himself said, I will ask the father, And he will give another helper, To be with you forever, Even the spirit of truth, Whom the world cannot receive, Because it neither sees him, Nor knows him, But you know him, For he dwells with you, And he will be in you, The more we become like Christ, The less we are to fall, To the lies of the devil, God is a God, Who saves his people, Walking with Christ, Is so much better, In every way, Than hiding from him, In sin and shame, Secondly, And more briefly, We will look at God's response, The grace offer, God is patient, Slow to anger, And abounding in love, We see this in verse 9,

As we read, But the Lord God called to the man, And said to him, Where are you? Are these words from God a surprise?

[12 : 36] God has the right, To instantly kill Adam and Eve, Which we see in Genesis 2, Let me take you there, In verses 16 and 17, And the Lord God commanded the man, Saying, You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, But of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, You shall not eat, For in the day that you eat of it, You shall surely die, He has the right, To storm in, And confront them instantly, Face to face, In just and vengeful anger, Be it in fire, Or at the head of a mighty legion of angels, But he doesn't, He calls out to them, Why?

Because this is the character of God, He is merciful, And loving towards his people, A God of his covenant, When Jonah's lamenting, God's work of redemption in Nineveh, He speaks to this character, Saying, For I knew you were a gracious God, And merciful, Slow to anger, And abounding in steadfast love, And relenting from disaster, God, In grace, Spoke patiently, To Adam and to Eve, Let us also be aware, Of the scene in this passage, It's important to understand, The absolute sovereignty, And majesty of God, In this scene, Adam and Eve are hiding, And the devil is still present, As we see God dealing with the devil, In verses 14 and 15, And understanding this,

We can be aware, That in no way, Does the devil match up to God, In any sense, If the devil was an immediate threat, God would immediately extinguish, That threat, But in this passage, The serpent is merely a bystander, Waiting to be dealt with, And with grace, Still in the forefront of our minds, What happens, In verse 15, Out with God directly dealing with Satan, Adam and Eve were privileged, To be the first hearers, Of the future gospel of hope, And heard it, From the very mouth of God, Directly, Telling of Christ, Who has dominion, Over evil, It reads, Let me bring you there, I will put enmity between you, And the woman, And between your offspring, And her offspring, He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise his heel,

In a moment, Of what seems total hopelessness, The God of hope, Provides a way of salvation, Paul speaks of this hope, In Titus, Saying, Waiting for our blessed hope, The appearing of our God's, Great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, As I said before, Genesis 3 is not the end, Of God's story with man, Even within the setting, Of Genesis 3, There is a signal, Of what is yet to come, In verse 21, If I can read that for you, And the Lord God made for Adam, And for his wife, Garments of skin, And clothed them, Previously, Adam and Eve, In an ineffective attempt, To cover their shame, In verse 7, Clothed themselves, And sewed fig leaves, God, In his infinite mercy,

Grace, And love, Provided for Adam and Eve's needs, Before they were rightly, Expelled from the garden, And prepared, Garments of skin, Which would last, Not like, The fig leaves that, If you were lucky, Would need replaced, Every two days, Let me draw your attention, To the words, Of the text, He clothed them, He clothed them, Not, He made them clothes, And left them to get on with it, But he clothed them, As a foreshadowing, Of what a believer, Is to know is true, It is an essential, Biblical truth, That God clothes his people, Those who believe, In Christ, He clothed them, With Christ's righteousness, The final clothing, That is better than fig leaves, And better than animal skin, But perfect, And sufficient, For us to stand before God, Instead of hiding,

[17 : 31] Finally, With this knowledge, Of the grace, And the knowledge, That we have of Christ, Never hide, From God, But like the writer of Hebrews, Said in Hebrews 12, Verses 1 to 2, Therefore, Since we are surrounded, By so great a cloud, Of witnesses, Let us lay aside, Every weight, And sin, Which clings so close, And let us run, With endurance, The race that is set, Before us, Looking to Jesus, The founder, And the perfecter, Of our faith, Who for joy, For the joy, That was set before him, He endured the cross, Despising the shame, And is seated, At the right hand, Of the throne of God, Let us not be like Adam and Eve, Never hide, Not again, Run to God, In the sure hope, Of Christ's words, All that the Father gives me, Will come to me, And whoever comes to me,

I will never cast out, Amen.