

Creation: *Broken* Part 2 Genesis 3:7-13

Introduction: To illustrate what we'll be looking at this morning I wanted to show a short clip of two young boys caught in their disobedience, and how they dealt with it.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wTVaW0dusM>

We all know there is a God
We all know we have sinned
We don't like to admit our sin
We don't know what to do with the feelings that come from that knowledge

Born Broken by the Consequences of Sin

Then the eyes of both were opened, and **they knew** that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and **made themselves loincloths**. 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 that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?'

The man said, '**The woman whom you gave to be with me** she gave me fruit from the tree and I ate.'
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.'

Guilt ---- *escape route of DENIAL*

On a single day after the creation of the entire universe, mankind changed from intimate relationship with God to one that saw Him through a lens of fear, one to run from, and One whom they could not be in His presence anymore. We remember that the Satan disguised himself by embodying a serpent and through interrogation and false statements deceived Eve into eating from the forbidden tree, and she gave to her husband who had abdicated leadership by allowing his wife to lead, and he followed suit and ate. What happened next had **profound effect on Adam, Eve, marriage, relationships, the creation itself, and every person who's ever been born since then**. We each carry with us the SAME CONSEQUENCES of sin naturally, and until Christ opens our eyes and breaks the chains of sin, we will continue to carry them.

Immediately after eating, what the serpent had told them came true. Once innocent of evil, the couple now **knew they had sinned, seeing that they were naked**. With their eyes being opened, they now had a **secondary choice**, as we all do when we make sinful decisions: were they going to admit their sin and cry out to God, or were they going to try to mitigate their sin on their own. This choice confronts everyone to this day.

Notice that the choice they made was to move down a path of **denial and concealment**. Sin brings guilt. We stand guilty before a holy God, deserving His wrath. It also brings with it **feelings** of guilt. Both of these, the reality and the feeling, are things we must try to rid ourselves of since they are enemies of our peace and happiness. So we must **deny the reality of sin and God Himself in order to try to flee from our guilt**.

Deny the reality of sin

Denial of sin takes several forms. One way to rid ourselves from the feelings of guilt is to simply continue to sin, numbing ourselves to the effect of guilt when we violate our conscience or the law written in our hearts. This numbing means we no longer feel bad, but the downside is that we no longer feel anything at all. This happens to those who've been abused and now give themselves over to the sin done to them. It also is characterized by addiction, so given over to a sin that we feel we cannot stop but we also don't feel the rush like we once did.

The second way is to deny that what we do is **wrong at all**. We must convince ourselves that we are **good** that we are geared and created a certain way, and thus our actions are consistent with our makeup. Modern psychiatry says that step one in dealing with guilt is to deny that wrong is wrong. It goes something like this:

Stop magnifying - Ask yourself if your self-punishment fits the crime...it probably doesn't

You are not your actions - You're responsible for you actions but they don't make you a bad person

Self-compassion - Forgiving yourself makes you behave better. Thinking you're a bad person makes you act worse

Apologize - Say you're sorry for what they think you did wrong, not what you think you did wrong

Ask 'what can I learn from this?' - Torturing yourself doesn't make you a better person. Learning does¹

What is interesting is that denying wrong in our mind is NOT the first step but the last, the end of the line in a spiral downward into depravity. When we reach a point of **rational justification of sin, we now function out of a DEBASED or insane mind** (see Romans 1:28-32). We are left with surrounding ourselves with people who will approve of us and getting rid of those who would remind us of our sin.

Deny the reality of God

The second denial to deal with guilt is to get rid of God Himself. What ties humanity together is a knowledge of God (Rom. 1:18-20), regardless of culture, religion, or geographical point on the globe. This can happen by adopting forms of *atheism* (there is no God, only chance) or creating God in our image. God is something less than supreme, and we are ultimately not accountable to Him. I just talked to a friend who ministers in Vietnam and he said the people he shares with there have that view of a creator God: he is there, but He has no bearing on my life.

To get rid of our feelings of guilt, our sinful and depraved minds must deny that there is sin at all, that we are really good, and that we are NOT accountable to the sovereign God of the universe. However, there is no joy or happiness in this denial, and **guilt inevitably leads to SHAME**.

Shame ---- escape route of CONCEALMENT

Eyes opened, the first man and woman made for themselves coverings of the nearest (and perhaps biggest leafed) plants. In perfect creation, they were naked and NOT ASHAMED (2:25). There was no reality of evil, no imperfect motives, no selfish action or pride driven move. But shame comes when we realize that we have done wrong, have violated God's command, have feelings of guilt, and now do not know what to do with all of it. Since we don't know how to handle shame, the only way to deal with it is to **hide or conceal**. This is why we have such a hard time opening up about our personal sin in relationships, why we put up fronts, why we want to portray the best of who we are to people, rather than the reality. Shame is why we do not have **openness in marriage**, why we isolate, and why we hope no one ever finds out the **skeletons in our closet....AND WE ALL HAVE SKELETONS**. Ultimately shame breaks down **trust** since we are only willing to share most, but not all of what goes on. Adam and Eve concealed like we do today:

¹ "How to stop feeling guilty, 5 secrets backed by research," bakadesuyo.com

Conceal by Deflection

Since we do not want to deal with the reality of what truly goes on in our heart, we tend to conceal by deflection. This happens two main ways. **1)** We focus on the externals rather than what goes on in our heart by **comparing ourselves to others**. We compare up (we are just as good as that person who is perceived as good) and down (we are much better than that person). If we can fix the gaze of others on the externals, they will not get too close to who we really are. Too many people say they want to be known (I don't have any real friends....no one at that church is like me or takes the time to get to know me), but when they ARE FINALLY KNOWN, they leave! It is a scary but glorious thing to be fully known and also fully loved. **2)** We focus on "corporate sin", rather than our own individual sin. We can confess the sin of the church, or our government, or of the evil that exists "out there", but not the sin that exists in the recesses of our own heart. What does this look like? Just listen to a politician when they are confronted about an issue ---- it takes them about 3 seconds to shift the conversation to the wrongs done "out there" rather than their own responsibility.

Conceal by Assumption

The second way of concealing is to make assumptions. We assume that **time cancels out sin** - when feelings of guilt and shame fade away. Remember, time is an important component in dealing with our sin, but time alone does not heal or solve. It's **always Time + Truth + Obedience** that heals. That is why some of us still are dealing with the guilt/shame of things that we did or were done to us when we were younger, teenagers, or things that could have happened decades ago, but we carry them with us and allow them to affect our relationship with God and others, even if no one else can figure out what is going on. We also make the assumption that there is **safety in numbers, that since everyone does it, it must be acceptable**. Even in the church we can be given over to sanitized sins, and get lulled into thinking that since it is socially acceptable, it is ok and will not affect us.

Sin brings about guilt and shame, since we are aware of the fact that we have violated God's command and glory. Left alone, guilt and shame cause us to isolate, hide, deny, and conceal the reality of our sin, which breeds loneliness and misery. But the consequences of sin do not stay there. It also bleeds into our mind and causes us to act out of fear.

Fear --- escape route of FLIGHT

If we look at verse 8 we see something fascinating. We see God expressing ultimate **grace**, as He approaches the couple not out of wrath but gentleness. God would have been justified to simply end Adam and Eve, exercising justice by taking their life. But instead He approaches them as He had done before. The verse sets up in a way that it seemed like this was NORMAL interaction at the end of the day when the cool or wind would blow, he'd approach the first couple and have intimate, face to face interaction. Many times in the OT, either through a *theophany* or *christophany*, God would meet with mankind (Genesis 18:1; 32:24-25 28-30). Before Jesus incarnated Himself, God would meet with this couple, since there was no sin separating them. **Think about that!** Each evening they would be able to converse with their one love, their creator, Lord, and sovereign. **This is what we were designed for!** Like any good father He wanted to be by His kids, to converse with, and enjoy. Our fear of God is that of awe and wonder, the kind that recognizes the strength, power, and wonder of God, yet which draws us into the safety and security that comes from being in His huge hands (John 10). Psalm 139 frames the understanding that we cannot get away from God, "*Where can I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence?*", as a reason for assurance and praise, not fear. But sin flipped this assuring kind of fear to one of terror and **flight**.

Flight Away ---- rather than toward --- God

Notice that Adam and Eve unknowingly and comically started the first game of cosmic hide and seek with God. After concealing themselves from each other, they began to hide themselves from God's presence among the trees! Crazy, since God can see through trees and stuff! But the reality of sin caused them to run, to try to get away from His gaze and His presence. In one sense, this is altogether logical:

Luke 12:5 - *"But I will warn you whom to fear: fear Him who, after He has killed, has the authority to cast into hell. yes, I tell you, fear Him."*

Hebrews 10:31 - *"It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."*

Revelation 6:15-17 - *"Then the kings of the earth and the great ones and the generals and the rich and the powerful and everyone slave and free, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, calling to the mountains and rocks 'Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who is seated on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand.'"*

Sin SHOULD make us uncomfortable with God. In fact, our hope is that if you come to this church on a regular basis, that you would be made uncomfortable with your sin, as we understand that we cannot have our sin AND have a relationship with God simultaneously. If you are here living in habitual sin and are comfortable with it, you are deceived. Sin SHOULD cause us to run and hide, to move away from what we were created for. For Adam and Eve, in one moment they went from intimacy to fear, from drawing close to running away, from conversing to hiding. Most people do that today. They are running away from God, seeking answers elsewhere, hoping to find another solution to their problems other than turning to God since that would require both **admission and change**. Sin keeps us from both.

Flight From Misplaced Fear

Notice how God approached Adam. He asked Adam where He was, even though He could see him. This was a gracious offer to Adam to come clean, to admit his need, failure, and disobedience and run back to God. But he did not. Instead, he now professed his **being afraid of God Himself!** It was not that God had changed, but man's guilt/shame now saw God as a threat. It's like a teenage kid who loves the fact that mom and dad come home every night, where they enjoy a meal and family time. But when that same child throws the party thinking his parents are out of town, only to discover they came home early, the entrance of parents move from security to terror, from running toward to running away.

God is just, consistent, and wrathful against sin. He hates our sin. But He created us for intimate and familial love with Him, and thus offers us His kindness, grace, and relentless love. Fear has to do with punishment (1 John 4:18), where perfect love casts out fear. That is why we run to God when we sin, immediately, without having to work something out first. Christ is our propitiation (1 John 2:1-2), the One who bore the punishment, so we do not have to run away. What love! What grace! What a Savior!

Responsibility --- escape route of BLAME SHIFTING

Finally, we see God confront Adam and Eve about the incident. God asks the direct question about what happened. Again, this is gracious. He is giving them an opportunity to come clean, to confess and turn. He put the ball in their court by asking "**Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?**" The response of both tells us so much about ourselves. Neither of them were able to take responsibility for their actions, but turned to the blame game.

Blame anyone --- or everyone --- else

Note that God went to Adam first, even though Eve sinned first. Adam bore responsibility not only for himself but for his family. He abdicated this leadership role by failing to protect and care for her, and instead following HER lead, and now had an opportunity to make a good second choice. But sin had taken root and now he very quickly gave into his depraved nature and began pointing his finger at others rather than owning his own sin. He not only turned the blame to his wife, but also to God who gave her to him. This is a far cry from poetry and exhilaration when he first saw her. "I went to sleep single and woke up married?!!" Plus, it was not like I had a choice of ladies since she was the only one. Not to be outdone, Eve also could have taken responsibility for her actions, but she instead blamed the serpent because of his deception. **Neither Adam or Eve were willing to confess their sin, thus they were not able to be restored in a right relationship with God.**

Blame shifting is a killer in our marriages and relationships. We have such a high view of ourselves that we think the reason for our unhappiness is someone else, anyone else, or our circumstances, or what God has given us. The reality is, every time we complain about circumstances or consequences, we are directly blaming God for our plight. Instead of realizing that He should snap His finger and wipe us out because of our sin, we think we are entitled to our demands. If blame shifting went away and men took responsibility for leading in a marriage and women took responsibility to submit to Christ, marriage and crisis counseling would go away.

Blame by Playing the Victim

What both Adam and Eve were signaling was that their sin **was NOT THEIR FAULT....they were victims of the plot or work of someone else.** This is what we see in our culture and world today. In the book "The Rise of Victimhood Cultures", Campbell and Manning show how American culture has shifted from an **honor culture**, where offenses were retaliated against directly and victims had extremely low moral status, to a **dignity culture** through the 19th and 20th centuries, where direct but non-violent tactics were infused using avoidance rather than confrontation and legal action rather than personal, and passivity became normative, to our current culture of **victimhood**. **In this, our current culture**, victims have the highest moral status, and there is high incentive to publicize grievances of the injured or offended on social media rather than confrontation or the courts.² Someone, anyone, is to blame for my unhappiness, decisions, circumstances, or consequences, BUT DEFINITELY NOT ME!!!!

As long as we continue to blame others rather than take personal stock of our own sin, we will forever be in misery. The problem in my marriage is me. Who God wants to change in my marriage is me. Am I the only sinner? No, but my biggest concern in terms of sin is that which is IN ME, rather than that around me. The irony of all of all of this is by admitting our sin we can actually be free from our guilt, shame, and fear.

Born Again to Hope for the Consequences of Sin

Confess Personal Sin

Romans 2:3-5 *"Do you suppose, O man --- you who judge those who practice such things and yet do them yourself --- that you will escape the judgment of God? Or do you presume on the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience, **not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to***

² Bradley Campbell and Jason Manning, "The Rise of Victimhood Culture: Microaggressions, Safe Spaces, and the New Culture Wars", 2018.

repentance? But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed."

1 John 1:8-10 - *"If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and his word is not in us."*

Since the hard-wiring of our mind is that we do not want to admit our failure, weakness, and sin, the important step to any significant change is confession of sin, admitting that we have NOT lived up to our responsibility, and CANNOT live up to it. We are helpless in the fight against our flesh, except for the grace of God and the work of Christ. Its also why **confession and repentance are tied together**, as we admit and then turn, turning away from sin toward God and obedience.

Fathers, husbands, men, on this day we must take stock in our lives, in our leadership, and in our responsibility. This is not a "I've got to try harder" Sunday or a "I guess I'm the bad guy who can never do anything right" Sunday. This is an opportunity to find forgiveness, both from our Father and from our spouse, kids, or friends. This is NOT a day to keep the status quo, think that everything is just fine, and to look at everyone else in the room. It is a day to take stock in the status of our soul and the condition of our relationships.

Run to Jesus

Matt. 11:28-30 - *Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.*

The confidence we have is that we have a Father who does not let us down, who never sleeps, who has done all the work, who knows all of our sin and shortcoming, who died for us, who offers us rest, who asks us to come to Him. Every good father that I know loves their kids no matter what, are long suffering, and would do anything for them. This is our Father, our dad, our Savior, and our Lord.