



“A Future with Hope: Naked and Afraid”

Third Sunday after Pentecost
Saturday and Sunday, June 9 and 10, 2018

All Services

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Camp Hill, Pennsylvania

Genesis 3:8-15; Psalm 130; Mark 3:20-35

Grace and peace be to you from our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Let's take a look at this:

[Click here](#) for video of the Southwest Uber customer and bank robber commercial-
“Wanna get away?”

Sometimes you just want to get away. When I was a kid, and I don't remember how old I was, probably seven, eight years old, I had done something in the house that my mother was really upset about, and she was really, really mad. I don't even remember what it was. But I decided in that moment, in the heat of the moment that the best option for me at this particular time in my young life was to try to get as far away from my mother as possible, and so that's what I did. I just decided I am just going to take off. So, I ran through the house, it wasn't a big house, a little ranch house, I ran through the house, got to the front door, hit the screen door, in those 1970's screen doors remember those, the thing flew open and hit the other side of the brick wall. I went out on the porch, a little tiny porch and I knew, I knew that if I pivot to the right there was a place, a little space in between the shrubbery that we had and if I could just hit that corner, jump over the shrubs, right in that little tiny corner I would be well on my way of getting away from my mother. So that's what I did. Through the front door, pivoted to the right, jumped through the shrubs, hit the ground, took two steps and then **BOOM!** My mother grabbed my left arm. And I was impressed, I was impressed my mom could run that fast.

I thought I was going to be able to get away from my sin, but sometimes you can't get away from it.

We had a friend who had a problem with alcohol and she would buy two bottles of the same wine. She would only put one in the rack and when she would finish the one bottle she would take and hide the empty bottle and then take the full bottle and put it back in the rack so that her husband wouldn't find out. He found out any way. You might have seen the story this week about the man who is suing CVS up on Long Island, NY. His wife had called in a prescription and she called back to see if the prescription was ready and the pharmacist then said, “Oh by the way your husband's

Viagra prescription is available as well for pick up." She didn't know anything about that. Turns out he was having an affair.

When I was on internship, the person who had been the treasurer for twelve years decided to move and so the pastor decided it would be a good time just to do an audit since he had been the treasurer there for so long. The day after the announcement about the audit the treasurer came in and said, I've been stealing for the church for the last ten years.

And you know when people like to tell stories about other people. When they like to gossip about one another, just in case you are one of those people, just so you know, we always find out. It always comes back to us. We know who the gossips are. You can't hide from your sins.

The story in Genesis is a wonderful story. The back story is Adam and Eve were put in the garden to take care of it, to be involved with God in his creation to name the animals, and just to live, to live life to the fullest in this garden and God said to them enjoy this, but just don't eat the fruit of a particular tree, and of course you know what happens, that's exactly what happened. Eve takes the fruit, she eats it, she gives it to her husband. He doesn't put up any fuss about it by the way, he eats the fruit and now we have where we came in our particular reading. I love the description that happens at first. God is going for a walk at the time of the evening breeze. I love the detail that is added, you know the evening breeze. In the Middle East because of the desert air environment the wind blows off of the Mediterranean and just cools everything down for hundreds and hundreds of miles, the temperature drops by ten, fifteen, twenty degrees and it makes the evening very lovely, very beautiful. I always imagined God walking through his creation and just enjoying what he has created. In my head he's always walking with a nice cigar or something, just at the time of the evening breeze you know, just enjoying. Then he notices where are Adam and Eve? Of course, we know they are hiding. And God knows too.

And then a series of rhetorical questions begin. God starts asking these rhetorical questions. Now rhetorical questions are questions you know the answer to already. God as he's asking already knows. The first question is:

- **Where are you?** Now God is omni present, God is omniscient. God knows exactly where Adam and Eve are, even as he asks that question. And Adam replies, "I heard you in the garden and I was afraid because I was naked." And then in the next question you can sense God's heart breaking as he even asks the question.
- **Who told you that you were naked?**
- **Have you eaten from the tree** that I commanded you not to eat? You know Adam and Eve were what's commonly known as ashamed. They were ashamed of what they had done. God has placed them in this beautiful situation and just said, just don't eat the fruit from the one tree, and now they're feeling ashamed. Before they were naked and unashamed. But because of

their sin now they are naked and afraid. They are even afraid of the creator that previously they had had this relationship with where he walks with them at the time of the evening breeze. And now it's all gone. The man's response is kind of interesting. We joke about it a lot, it's that kind of relationship that men and women have together, you know, it's Eve's fault. And of course, that's where he goes right away, did you catch that though, there's more than just that. It's the woman that **YOU** gave me, did you catch that? It's the blaming not only the woman, but also God that created the woman in the first place. And in the fourth question:

- **What is this that you have done?** This is directed toward Eve. Eve does the same thing as Adam. "It's not me, God. It's the Serpent, he tricked me and that's why I did it."

Adam and Eve's response, I think is the real sense of what we have when we talk about the Fall. It's not so much the eating of the fruit. But the real sin, the grave sin is this blame game that they go on with each other **and** with God so that all of their problems no longer have anything to do with themselves, it's all because of what either somebody else or even God himself has done in their life. And we see this unleashing of sin and death into the world, the world in which you and I live in ever since then, because brothers and sisters, we all know about blame, don't we? We use all sorts of language to talk about what it is. Whether it's blaming or passing the buck, fall guy, dupe, patsy, dodge a bullet, cop out, scapegoat, don't look at me! It was her!

Dr. Robert Anthony a former professor at Harvard Business School taught a lot about organizational management said this:

"When you blame others, you give up your power to change."

Adam and Eve, you and me, we try to hide from who we can become by just blaming others. We hide who we can become and who we can become are people who are forgiven by God. People who are made righteous because of what God does for us and in our life. Not because of what we try to pass off to somebody else. God wants to know for each of us, "Where are you?" He wants us to be near him. That's why we see in the Bible this kind of renewed recommitment that God seeks to have with us all the time. So, he gives the Ten Commandments so that he can establish a deep covenant with us, a relationship. What are the Commandments? The first three commandments have to do with our relationship with God, right? I am the Lord you God you shall have no other gods. Honor my name. Remember the sabbath, keep it holy. Again, it's about honoring God's name and remembering him. And then the next seven commandments have to do with our relationship with other people, right? Don't kill, don't steal, don't commit adultery, don't covet other peoples stuff, don't bear false witness. It's all about those close relationships that we have with other people.

Jesus says the same thing when he gives the disciples the Great Commandment. The Great Commandment is "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and love your neighbor as yourself."

What God is seeking to do is to reestablish, reconnect with us. He's seeking to reconcile himself to us. It's a restoration of relationship, that's why he sends Jesus. To be that great reconciler between us and God so that you and I would never have to be naked and afraid again. But instead that we might be clothed with the very righteousness of Christ, that we might be able to live in peace and joy in God's garden. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

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