

“Hide-and-God-Seek?”—Genesis 3:8-9

The text for this sermon, the theme of which is, “Hide-and-God-Seek?”, is Genesis 3:8-9. Adam and Eve *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?”* This is the text.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus:

When I was a young child I used to play a game called “Hide-and-Go-Seek.” The whole purpose of it was to make sure that you could hide from the person who was “it” in such a manner that you weren’t found. We had to be very creative with our ways of hiding and remain very quiet so that the other person would not find us. At the same time, we were supposed to try to get to “home base”—the “safe” place—without being caught by the person who was “it.” This was a challenge of a different sort. The whole game required a combination of awareness, fear and strategy to avoid being caught.

Unlike the fun which the game “Hide-and-Go-Seek” creates for children, it appears in our text that it was no fun for Adam and Eve. Their hiding from

God and His seeking them was definitely no child's play. Their actions completely redefined their relationship with God, with each other and with all of creation! To this day people hide from God because of their sins, thus engaging Him in an activity called "Hide-and-**God**-Seek." However, the combination of awareness, fear and strategy to avoid being caught which this activity requires works to the detriment of your soul.

Breaking Yahweh's command by eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil gave Adam and Eve a new awareness. All of a sudden they experienced something which was completely foreign to their nature—the knowledge of evil experienced in the dominion of the devil in contrast to God's goodness experienced on the earth. Such awareness also affected their "strategy" when they encountered *the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day*—they ran and *hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden* because they were afraid! It was time for "Hide-and-**God**-Seek."

However, this fearful reaction to the LORD's presence goes much deeper than simply an awareness of evil. The LORD had told Adam in Genesis 2:17 that *in the day he would eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil* he would **surely die**. And die, they did! After breaking God's command by eating from that tree they experienced the results of dying spiritually, watching how

sin separates relationships.

Upon eating the fruit their spiritual death produced shame in the sight of their God-given identity as man and woman. Genesis 3:7 says: *Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.* Threatened by their sexuality they tried to hide their shame and separate themselves from each other with clothing. The battle of the sexes started and it's been raging ever since—all because of sin!

This separation carried over even in the presence of Yahweh when He sought them out and confronted them about their sin. Admitting that he sinned while refusing to accept responsibility for his action, Adam blamed Yahweh along with his wife—*The woman whom **You gave to be with me**, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.* (cf. Genesis 3:12) After all, she was God's idea in the first place!

Their spiritual death displayed its ugliness in shame of how God made them, in not being able to accept responsibility for their sin even when “caught red-handed” and in ultimately blaming God for their terrible choice. Sound familiar? It should! Ever know anyone who didn't like some characteristic or personality or body trait in himself? Psychologists say it is a result of a low self esteem. The Holy Spirit says it's a result of sin 'cause God don't make junk!

Ever know anyone who had to admit he did the wrong thing but rambled on with explanations, excuses and justifications in refusal to accept responsibility for doing it? Guess that covers us all, huh? Ever know anyone who blamed God for his messed up life, struggles, choices and suffering? Hmmmm . . .

While encountering much of the behavior of my children as they were growing up they would hear their father say many times, “Genesis 3 in action!” As they got older they finally asked me what that meant. Referring them to the account of the fall into sin I would tell them how Adam and Eve tried to blame someone else for their sin because, even though they knew and admitted they did the sinful deed, they didn’t want to accept responsibility for it! I explained that it is best to accept responsibility for your sinful choice by confessing it to God and receiving absolution—“You’re forgiven in Jesus!” Certainly it did not stop their sinning . . . or trying to blame someone else for it. However, whenever they heard, “Genesis 3 in action!” immediately they knew this involved their sin in their relationship with the LORD and their need for confession and absolution.

When God questioned Adam & Eve it wasn’t a matter of God not knowing the answers to His questions. After all, Hebrews 4:13 says that *no creature is hidden from God’s sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of Him to Whom we must give account*. The questions were God’s way of allowing them

to see the depth of their new-found sinfulness, showing them the seriousness of their actions as displayed by separation in their relationships. When we are defensive or make excuses about our sin its our way of trying to hide from God's Law which condemns us as guilty. Romans 2:15 says it shows *that the work of the law is written on our hearts, while our conscience also bears witness, and our conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse us*. This is what it means to be lost in sin.

What is it that will bring you to an immediate or eventual acceptance of responsibility for your sin? What is it that will bring you to confession? God! God in His faithfulness comes to your rescue because you cannot do it! Amidst God's harsh words of judgment on satan and the consequences of sin for all mankind, **He speaks His Word of promise for us sinners!** In Genesis 3:15 God said to the devil: *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*. Since this sin now runs so deep in the heart of human beings Yahweh promises to deal with it for us Himself! It is this gospel promise which guides, governs and directs the whole of the rest of Scripture so that you need no longer run and hide from God!

We experience the fulfillment of this promise in the Person and Work of Jesus Christ. He is the seed or *offspring* of a woman who crushed the devil's

power in you through His perfect life, death and resurrection **for you!** He has made it possible for you to open yourself up completely to God in faith and experience once again a perfect relationship with Him!! Proverbs 28:13 says: *Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.* It is Jesus Who makes such confession possible for you and, no matter how vulnerable you may feel by laying open all your sins before the LORD, you are safe at home in His forgiveness!

In this out-of-control state of sin God not only gives you the promise which restores broken relationships between Himself, you and others, **He restores those relationship for you!** As a father with an undying love for his children Yahweh has an dying love for you in Jesus, even when you try to hide from Him. He will continually seek you out through His Holy Spirit as His Law convicts you of your sins so that in this activity of “Hide-and-**God**-Seek” you can be restored in a perfect relationship with Him forever! Stop hiding. Repent and trust in the work of Jesus’ perfect life, death and resurrection for the forgiveness of your sins. Know the certainty of Your heavenly Father’s love as He continually seeks you out in Jesus to restore you to Himself forever! “Ally-ally-auks-in-free!!” Amen.

For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ Who is your life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

(Colossians 3:3-4)