

# The First Open-Air Sermon

by Gawin Kirkham

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*Gawin Kirkham's sermon explores humanity's tendency to hide from God and emphasizes the importance of finding refuge in Christ.*

**Scripture:** Genesis 3:9, Psalm 139:7, Proverbs 28:13, Amos 9:2, Jonah 1:3, Matthew 2:2, Luke 19:10, Revelation 6:12

**Topics:** "Fear Of God", "Hiding In Christ"

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## Description

Gawin Kirkham preaches on the searching question asked by God in Genesis 3:9, 'Where art thou?' highlighting how man has been hiding from God out of fear since Adam and Eve's time in the Garden of Eden. Kirkham explores the reasons for this fear, including God's holiness and man's sinfulness, and how people try to hide behind various facades like innocence, ignorance, and religiousness. He emphasizes that the only true hiding place is in the wounded side of Jesus, referencing Proverbs 21:3 and Psalm 143:9.

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## Transcript

### THE SEARCHING QUESTION

"Where art thou?" -Gen. 3. 9.

[This sermon outline was taken from the book, "The Open-Air Preacher's Handbook" written by Gawin Kirkham. Brother Kirkham was the Secretary of the Open-Air Mission of London, England. The book was published in 1890, but has a timeless message for street preachers of today.]

Ask the Audience: "What was the first Open-air Text ?"

The reply will generally be an inquiring look at the Preacher.

Then tell them that the first Preacher was the Lord God Almighty: the hearers were Adam and Eve; the place was the Garden of Eden: and the Text was, "WHERE ART THOU?"

I. Hiding.- Adam was hiding from God. This is what man has been trying to do ever since.

II. Reason for Hiding.- FEAR. "I heard Thy voice in the garden; and I was afraid." (ver. 10.)

III. Reasons for Fear.-

GOD's Holiness.--Illus., MOSES- Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God." (Exod. 3. 6.)  
ISAIAH- See Isa. 6. JOHN- "I fell at His feet as dead." (Rev. 1. 17.)

MAN'S SINFULNESS--Illus., JOB- "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear," etc. (Job 13. 5)

IV. How Men Try to Hide.- Behind their innocency; their ignorance; their respectability; their sincerity; their circumstances; their indifference; their religiousness, etc.

V. Trying to do the Impossible.- "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper." (Prov. 28. 13.)" Though they dig into hell, thence shall Mine hand take them," etc. (Amos 9. 2-4.) Illus., DAVID"Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit?" etc. (Psa. 139. 7-12.) JONAH- "Rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord." (Jonah 1.3)

VI. Only One Hiding-Place.- The wounded side of Jesus. "A prudent man foreseeeth the evil, and hideth himself." (Prov. 21. 3.) Illus., DAVID- "I flee unto Thee to hide me." (Psa. 143. 9.)

" Rock of Ages! cleft for me,

Let me hide myself in Thee."

VII. It Will Soon be Too Late!- See Rev. 6. 12-17. Men hide themselves in dens and rocks, but are overtaken by the great day of wrath. Only those who are hid in Christ will then be safe.

NOTE.-It is interesting, in connection with this subject, to notice that the first question in the Old Testament is- "Where art thou?" while the first in the New Testament is- "Where is HE?" (Matt. 2. 2.) This opens the door of hope to the hiding and the fearful ones; because "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke 19. 10.)

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