

Fig Leaves ■ Hiding Our Nakedness

by Tim Conway

This sermon delves into the story of Adam and Eve in Genesis 3, focusing on their realization of nakedness and shame after eating the forbidden fruit. It emphasizes how mankind, like Adam and Eve, tries to hide their guilt and shame with 'fig leaves,' representing futile attempts to cover sin and inadequacies. The sermon highlights the need to come to Jesus, who offers true covering and redemption, urging listeners to cast off their self-made coverings and find true salvation in Christ.

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Scripture: Genesis 3:7, Genesis 3:21, Ephesians 1:7, Revelation 3:18, Isaiah 61:10, Matthew 11:28

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Description

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Transcript

You can turn in your Bibles to Genesis 3. This is the sixth message. First message, we were in Genesis 3. We looked at dogmatic assertions. The second, third, and fourth message, we were basically in chapter 1, thinking about God creating.

In the fifth message, which was last week, we came back to Genesis 3, primarily, although a little bit of two, and we considered the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. We considered that the serpent convinced Adam and Eve that God had ulterior motives. God wasn't really to be trusted.

He was a jealous God. He was a selfish God. He was a little God.

That God was against them. I want to deal with fig leaves. I want to deal with nakedness.

Look with me at Genesis 2.25, right at the end. You turn to chapter 3, but look at the verse that completes chapter 2. "...And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed." And now we come to chapter 3. Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, did God actually say, you shall not eat of any tree in the garden? And the woman said to the serpent, we may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said you shall not eat of the

fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it lest you die.

But the serpent said to the woman, you will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it, your eyes will be opened." Now you might just want to hold on to that phrase because we're going to see it again. "...And you will be like God, knowing good and evil.

So when the woman 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. And here it is again, then the eyes of both were opened." One thing you want to remember about the devil, what makes his deceptions so deceptive is how much truth he mixes with his lies.

It's not all lie. If it was all lie, you'd find him out just like that. "...And the eyes of both were opened." Now based on what the devil said, would you expect what's next? You might say the eyes of both of them were opened to make them wise.

That's not what it says. They knew that they were naked. Okay, now they had been naked before.

That's what 2.25 says. And it says they knew it. And they knew it because their eyes were open.

"...And they sowed these..." That's what they had. Oh, yeah, these were leaves from a pre-fall garden, pre-flood. They were probably bigger.

This is a fig leaf. "...They sowed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths." How'd they sow them together? Well, they did. Probably bigger.

"...They sowed them together and they made loincloths." The KJV says they made aprons. "...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? He said, I heard the sound of you in the garden." Notice this. You definitely want to notice this. "...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? And then looked down at Genesis 3.21, and the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them." Adam. Oftentimes as Christians, we become very engaged with, and rightly so, the concept of in Christ. In 1 Corinthians 15, it talks about being in Adam.

Men are either in Adam or they are in Christ. Do you know Adam? Adam. I don't know why I say it like that.

I imagine the Hebrews say it like that. That means man. That's what that name means.

We are in man. We're in the prototypical man. Adam.

You think of the parallels. What does it mean to be in Christ? If you're in Christ, Christ is your life. If you're in Adam, we don't typically think this way, but Adam is our life.

If we're in Christ, Christ defines our life. To be in Adam, Adam defines your life. And where do you find out what Adam is? Where do you find out this prototypical man? Where do you see him? You know what? We

get glimpses in different places.

You get some glimpses of him right at the end of chapter 1 of Genesis. You get some glimpses throughout Genesis 2, but primarily, the window that we have into this prototypical man is in Genesis 3. When you go beyond there, you get a little bit of genealogical information. You get the fact that he's father to Cain and Abel, Seth.

But the primary place that we find this Adam is Genesis 3. Genesis 3, we by nature are in Him. We by nature are Him. We by nature keep on repeating what He did.

Why? Because we're like Him. You know what? To be in Christ, Christ is the prototype. To be in Christ is to be becoming like Christ.

To be in Adam is to be like Adam. That is the reality that governs your life. And here's the thing, if you come over and you look into the window of Genesis 3, I'm going to tell you who you see through that window.

You see all of us. He's the representative. And you know the amazing thing? This is revelatory to me.

I am recognizing that the more I look in here, that the reality is what I am seeing is you and I am seeing me. I am seeing that the world goes on perpetuating what's in Genesis 3. The whole human race goes on perpetuating the actions of Adam and Eve. We do what they did.

And the author of Ecclesiastes has it right. What has been will be. What has been done will be done.

And you know how he says next? What? There's nothing new under the sun. This is so true. When we look at them, what do we find? Think about it.

The first time we looked at Genesis 3, what did we find? Dogmatic assertions. Just on one dogmatic assertion, the devil says you will not die. And what did they do? They ate the fruit.

They rebelled against God. They raised their fist against Him. And men go on believing that.

Men go on believing all these dogmatic proclamations that are set forth. We've got it happening. One of the primary things I emphasize in that first message was all these dogmatic theories being set forth by science.

And we just embrace them and run. And man does that. Man is so ready to do that.

What they did, we just keep right on doing. Last week, we came back to Genesis 3. You know what we looked at last week? We looked at the fact that in spite of all that God had done for Adam and Eve, when the devil said, oh, God knows. He knows.

He's withholding. I mean, He knows that if you eat this fruit... We looked at the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And we looked at how Satan put this spin on the character of God.

Oh, He'll be jealous of you. You'll become like Him. He caused them to doubt the character of God.

God's holding out on us. God's against us. God's trying to deprive us.

He's trying to keep back what will really make us happy. And that's what people just go right on doing and thinking about God. Look, when we look into this window of Genesis 3, we can't look at some detached stranger.

You'll see yourself. We can't afford to just sit back and consider this casually in some kind of detached way. That doesn't work.

I'll tell you what happens in this chapter. God confronts each one of us in this chapter just the way He confronted our first father. The Lord God called to the man and said to him, where are you? Adam, where art thou? And that is really what's happening through this book.

God calling out to man. Where are you? How did you get there? God speaks to us. To us individually.

He speaks to us constantly in this book about where we are, why we are there, how we ever got there, and how we can escape being where we are. That's the issue. It all happened back then there at the beginning and it all just keeps right on going.

It's just repeated. It's astounding. You know these naysayers that say, oh, that's all myth, that's archaic, that's all dusty, that's irrelevant.

They're saying that because Satan has blinded their eyes. If you have eyes but to see, Genesis 3 is so relevant. It's so accurate.

It's astounding anyone could read this chapter and not conclude it must be true because this is exactly what I've been doing and what you've been doing. It's no different. It's an account of me.

It's not divorced from real life. It's an account of men and women as we see them in the world today. And so man goes on just turning round and round and round in the same circles and never arriving.

Man is just spinning on and on. And you know what? It's the same with nakedness. You say, what do you mean? Let's ask some questions.

What is nakedness? What is it really? I recognize that's something we have to wrestle with. What is nakedness? Okay, you say it means you don't have any clothes on. You're exposed.

Oh, it's more than that. And you can see it from these verses that it's more than that. We'll look.

We'll dive in. But what kind of jumps out at me is why is nakedness even an issue here? I mean, let's think about this. Look at Genesis 3.10. Adam, where are you? What does Adam say? I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked.

Now, look, let's just think. Just think about this. That's not what I expect Adam to say.

You can say, well, that's what I expect him to say. Well, yeah, you expect him to say it because you know what the Scripture says and you've read it enough times, but you've come to expect it because you know what's there. But listen, let's get away from Scripture and let's go to a child that you just caught stealing something.

I remember one of the parents was saying just recently, telling me that his daughter was caught stealing something. When mom and dad caught them, do they say, I'm afraid? Yeah, they may say they're afraid.

Do they say, I'm afraid because I'm naked? No, they don't say that.

And you say, well, they don't say that because they're not naked. Yeah, but you better remember something. When Adam said this, he had these on.

A criminal. A criminal in a courtroom. He's trembling.

You say, why are you afraid? Does he say because I'm naked? He doesn't say that. But the truth is that's precisely what Adam says. Adam, where are you? I'm over here in the bushes.

What are you doing over there in the bushes? Well, I heard you coming and I was afraid. Why are you afraid? I would expect an answer like this. Well, Lord, You said in the day we eat thereof, we're going to die.

I'm afraid of the punishment. I don't want to die. But He says, and it's so tightly together, I was afraid because I was naked.

But you know what? He has these on. And yet, He still says, I'm naked. You know, there may be a whole lot more to the reality of that in that little girl and that criminal in a courtroom.

When they say we're afraid, they may be so used to being naked that they don't even think to say that's why they're afraid anymore. See, this is all new for Adam. He had never felt this before.

We get so accustomed to this feeling of nakedness that we don't even call it that. And then, can you imagine Adam over there stitching these together? Adam, why are you doing that? We're naked. We've got to cover ourselves.

What good is that going to do? God told you that in the day you eat thereof, He's going to die. You know you're going to die. He's coming in the cool of the day.

I mean, you're in trouble. You think that's going to help you? What are you hoping to do? Camouflage yourself and sit off in the bushes somewhere? And He's not going to see you? He's going to pass by? He's coming. He told you you're going to die.

You're going to die. What do you think those things are going to do for you? But you know what? I don't think He's being rational at all. Rationality's gone.

Why? Because of His conscience. His conscience is just screaming, You're naked. You're exposed.

You need a hiding place. Irrationality's gone out the window. Listen, it's no more rational for what He's doing there than you've seen it in the book of Revelation on the day of judgment when the Lamb and the wrath of the Lamb and He's on His throne and He's getting ready to judge mankind.

And what happens to all the people? What happens to the kings and the generals and the admirals and all the great people and the slaves and everybody? Where are they? They've run into these caves and you know what they're hoping will happen? The mountains will fall on them to hide them. It's the same kind of thing. It's this idea.

It doesn't matter if they have fur coats on. It doesn't matter if they have snowmobile suits on. It doesn't matter what they have on.

There's this sense we've got to get as far into this cave as we can and even that's not good enough. We need this thing to follow us. Even though we've got these fig leaves on, here comes God, this isn't enough.

We've got to get in the bushes. We've got to get farther away. Consciousness is saying, further in, further in, farther away.

You've got to run. No, He's not being rational. And why? Why? What is all of it? You need to remember something here.

You need to remember that it doesn't just say, I heard the sound of you in the garden. Or it doesn't just say I was afraid because I was naked. I mean, catch that.

I'm afraid. I was afraid. Why are you in there? Why are you hiding? Where are you at? I'm afraid because I'm naked.

But you see, the first part of that is, I heard you coming. I just got to thinking. I remember one time I heard Paul Washer.

He told me this story. He said he was working down in Peru. He said he was working with a fellow laborer.

And he said God specifically told him that his co-laborer was committing adultery. Paul said he didn't know what to do with that information. He said he was in a quandary.

Where did this come from? He thought for certain. It just seemed like it was a strong conviction from the Lord. And when he finally confronted his fellow laborer, it was all true.

When Paul told me that story, I thought, you know, it can kind of make you uncomfortable to be co-laboring with somebody like that. Somebody who knows what you're doing. And it makes me think of the disciples.

Jesus says, Jesus, what were you guys talking about on the way? We were talking about who was going to be the greatest. You're this Samaritan woman at the well. Go call your husband.

Well, I don't have a husband. Yeah, that's right, you don't have a husband. You've had five husbands.

The man you're with isn't... You start to get around Him, and I think being around Jesus would be scary. This is a man who knows thoughts. One day, he knew their thoughts.

They said, who can forgive sins but God alone? You know, they were thinking that. Not shouting it, they were thinking that. And he knew that.

Or you think of the time when Peter denied his Lord three times. Do you know what Luke's account says? Peter looked over there, and Jesus' head turned, and His eyes looked right at Peter. Those eyes.

Adam and Eve, they walked with the Lord in the cool of the day. And though they had no sin, there was a sense the eyes of God, they see right through you. You remember what Jesus said to those churches in Revelation 2 and chapter 3? I know your works.

He knows. He knows. And there's no hiding.

And that was the reality. They'd been around Him. They'd walked with the Lord God in that garden.

His eyes! His eyes are piercing. His eyes know. Those eyes.

You're naked before them. You know, Bunyan picked up on this in his Pilgrim's Progress. Do you remember there was a day when Pilgrim came to the Interpreter's house? Now, in a lot of the abbreviated accounts, this part sometimes gets chopped off, but it's one of the last things that happened to Pilgrim when he was in the Interpreter's house.

The Interpreter brought him to a man who had a dream. And listen to this man's dream. The man says, this evening I was fast asleep and I dreamed, and behold, the heavens became extremely black.

Also the sky was laced with lightning and thunder in a manner that was terribly frightening, so much so that I was greatly distressed. Then I looked up in my dream and saw the clouds roll across the sky at an unusually swift rate, at which I heard the great sound of a trumpet, and also a man sat upon a cloud attended with thousands of heavenly beings, and they were all in the midst of flaming fire. I saw the man that sat upon the cloud open the book, and he commanded the world to draw near.

And the bottomless pit immediately opened up very near where I stood. I saw many caught up and carried away into the clouds. But I was left behind, so I also sought to hide myself, but I could not.

For the man who sat upon the cloud continuously kept his eye on me. Further, my sins all came to mind and my conscience accused me from every direction. Christian asked the man, but what was it that made you so afraid of this sight? And remember, that's what we're dealing with here.

We're dealing with the fear of Adam. And now Christian asked this man, what made you afraid? The man said, this frightened me the most, that the angels gathered up several standing near me while I was left behind. Also, the pit of hell opened its mouth near where I was standing.

Furthermore, my conscience was in an agony on account of the judge keeping his eyes focused on me with a look of angry disapproval. Adam didn't just say, I was afraid because I was naked. God is coming, and I'm naked before Him, and I am afraid, and I need something.

I need leaves. I need dirt. I need bark.

I need branches. I need something. No, he's not rational.

Whatever he can find, he's feeling like he's got to do something. His conscience is screaming, I'm exposed. The eye of God is upon me.

I can't get away from it. It's awful. And even though he covered himself with these fig leaves, it's not enough.

God is coming. We're still exposed. We've got to hide more.

Conscience is screaming, fig leaves aren't enough. Go further in. Nakedness.

Such an odd thing. I mean, clothing, if you think about it. Clothing.

We think so much about it, and yet, we think so little about it. Oh yeah, people spend lots of time buying expensive clothes. But do you really think about where they came from? Why does man even wear clothing? They have this account.

They came to Jesus and saw the demon-possessed man, the one who had had the legion sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid. You know, there's a connection between being in your right mind and being clothed. They go hand in hand.

The Lord God did not go into the garden that day and indicate that Adam and Eve's desire to be clothed, to be hidden, to be covered. He never indicated to them that their desire was wrong. He never indicated to them that what their conscience was screaming after was wrong.

Not at all. In fact, that covering, now to go against that, now to go against it, now to pursue... Listen, a pursuit of nudity is not going back to our former innocence. It's not striving to get back to where we were.

It's not a good thing. Them trying to cover themselves. God didn't say, well, there's no need for that.

You need to go back to how you were. No, God actually provided a covering. Not only did God provide a covering, one of the first things you see as you advance forward is in the days of Noah.

You'll remember, Noah was naked. Noah was in his tent and his son Ham saw his nakedness and Noah cursed Canaan, the son of Ham, for what Ham did to him. And then you'll remember when God is constructing his altar, he said, there will not be steps that go up to my altar lest your nakedness be exposed there.

You come into the New Testament, the reality is that modesty is desirable. And the thing is, public nudity today, it's not a return to innocence. It's only further rebellion against God's moral standards.

And God ordains clothing. It's really a testimony to us of something that we have lost. Of a glory that's been lost.

And you know for all the public nudity, people buy clothes and people buy blinds and people buy curtains and people buy doors and people buy fogged windows and the list goes on to prevent people from seeing us naked. The evolutionists tell us, oh, millions of years ago, what, some ape-like forefather, he was cold and fashioned some kind of clothing or fashioned some kind of blanket or fashioned some kind of coat. Oh look, a creature that's as wise as man, him being cold and figuring out I need to fashion a blanket.

Yeah, that's reasonable to think. But you know what evolutionists can never get away from? It's the shame of it all. And you know you can go to the most primitive societies.

We can go to North Sentinel Island. I did that. You pull up the video footage of North Sentinel Island and you know what? They have clothes on.

I know they don't have much, but they have clothes on. Even the most primitive, the most pagan, the most dark cultures on our earth, they wear clothing. Because you just can't get away from the shame.

I want to read two verses. Look at these. And the man and his wife were both naked.

That's 225. Look at 225. The man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

They were naked and not ashamed. Genesis 3.7 Then the eyes of both were opened and they knew that they were naked. The eyes of both were opened.

Let me ask you this. Does that sound like a good thing or a bad thing? Typically, the way we use it. Somebody's eyes were opened to something.

Is that good? Is that bad? The eyes of your hearts may be enlightened. That's a New Testament concept. One that we see in Ephesians.

Basically, with a New Testament slant, it sounds like a good thing. But do you know what it sounds like? It sounds like exactly what the devil said would happen. In 3.5, God knows that when you eat of it, your eyes will be opened.

And you'll be like God, knowing good and evil. So what? Were they blind to their nakedness before this? Did they not have eyeballs? Did they not have the capacity with their eyeballs to look at each other and recognize that they didn't have clothes on? I mean, certainly they could have. But I'm just thinking that the thought of clothing probably never even occurred to them.

I mean, yes, they were naked. And yes, before they ate that fruit, I would say this, they had not been naked. I don't believe before they ate the fruit they were naked.

You say, hey, wait a second, 2.25 says they were naked. How can you say that they had not been naked? They were clothed with something. I mean, they're persons.

They were clothed with innocence. I mean, one of the things we have to recognize is when we begin to deal with these things, there are always spiritual realities. Even when they said we were afraid because we were naked, they had covered themselves.

There was a sense of nakedness that goes way beyond fig leaves and clothing. And you see that. You see that the concept of nakedness is very much a spiritual reality.

They were clothed with something before this. They were clothed with innocence. They were clothed with an unfallen image of God.

When God made them, at the end of the sixth day, He said God saw. This is the first time it was repeatedly being said, good, God saw that it was good. On the end of the sixth day, God saw that it was very good.

That includes Adam and Eve. There was a very goodness that clothed them. They were clothed with something that they lost.

When they ate that fruit, it was gone. At once they were conscious that they had lost something. And you know, let's bring this home.

Like I said before, when we go to this window and we look in, we don't just see Adam and Eve. We see us. I'm talking, this isn't theory.

I'm talking to men and women and we know it. We know in here. We know in the core of our being.

We want something. We miss something that we once had. Man goes on with this feeling, the simple truth that men and women ever since have had this sense, consciousness.

There's nothing more obvious. A sense of loss. We've lost something.

We've got it wired in us. We were made for something more than just to be here like brute beasts and then die. There is a sense of shame that dogs our steps.

And it's not just when we don't have clothes on. Oh yeah, there's that. But there's this sense of a need to hide.

There's a sense of a need for these. We've got to do something. Man is constantly restless.

There's a sense of something higher, something above, something better, something beyond. There's a sense of wanting to get back to where Adam and Eve were. This is how it is.

How do we even define this constant search for something that we don't have, that we don't seem able to find? Oh, I really believe it. We're in Adam by nature. Unless we're saved and we're then in Christ.

But you know what this has done? It's like left us with this memory, this recollection of what we once were. And it's a memory that seems to call to us. Come back here.

Just that sense. Can you imagine? Those eyes. Those eyes of the living God.

They pierce. You can't escape from them. Can you imagine? To walk in His presence and He smiles and He sees through you and there's no shame.

There's nothing inside the conscience that's screaming, you better hide! You better hide! I mean, even now as Christians, you think about the judgment day and there's a reluctance. There's that hesitation. Judgment day.

The God who sees everything. I'm going to stand before Him and have to give an account for everything that's been done in the body before the judgment seat of Christ. You feel that hesitation.

You know that hesitation. Memory lingers. And this is the whole human race.

A sense of something else. And our first parents, you know the thing is, they put these on, they didn't lose a sense of the shame. When they heard God coming, they ran.

When God clothed them with those animal skins, they didn't lose their sense of shame. They went out of Eden. They didn't lose it.

It's not gone. And all their posterity is gripped by it still. The sense of nakedness didn't depart.

And it never has. And the reality is our nakedness haunts us. We're restless.

We're ever ill at ease. We find it difficult to sleep sometimes. We find it difficult to live with ourselves.

We find it difficult to walk through life with a conscience that isn't saying things to us on a regular basis. Calling us back. Accusing, excusing, yes.

There is an urging within us. And it cries out for something bigger and better. We can't get rid of it.

We can't get rid of this urge, this desire. And it's not just simply some evolutionary impulse. We're conscious of wanting to recapture something.

We really do. There is a desire. There is a desire.

There is a shame that we feel. There is a sense of sin and guilt. Our conscience is constantly saying to us, such things, we're trying to recapture something that we know we once possessed.

And I was just thinking about this haunting feeling. You have men aching. Men desiring.

Men wanting to get back, to recapture, to go back to that memory. To once again be clothed with what our first fathers were clothed with. And I just recognize this.

The vast majority of mankind is just going to pass off into the darkness without ever having found it or recaptured it. Just lost in the darkness. Forever with that conscience dogging their steps.

Forever naked. Forever without a hiding place. Men, they're desperate for fig leaves.

Desperate. You know what happens to Adam? We just keep going round and round. I'm in trouble.

I've sinned. My conscience is telling me, hide, escape. You need a covering.

The covering, man loves fig leaves. Because you know, these represent man saying, I'm going to fix it. I'm going to sew them together.

I'm going to cover myself up. Man is desperate for fig leaves. I was thinking of the church at Sardis.

I preached a message. The church that was dead. Do you know what was true of Sardis? They had a name that they were alive, but they were dead.

Men love to hide behind the fig leaves of names. I've come across people. I'm a Christian! Do you know what them saying that is? It's just a fig leaf.

That's all it is. It's as though a name is going to protect you from those eyes of God. Oh, you need something more than a name.

If the reality of the name's not there, think about what men try to hide behind. Behind knowledge. It's like, well, maybe the answer's out there in astronomy, out in the universe.

It's like man is always thinking if we can just see further, maybe we'll see an alien. It's going to answer all the questions. It's going to make it right.

Or politics. Have you ever seen, oh, here comes an election! It's going to fix it all! I mean, man just has this sense. Things need to be fixed.

Things need to be recaptured. Things need to be set right. Something's wrong in all of this.

But if we could just know more, if we could just have the right politician, men are always trying to hide behind something that they imagine is going to fix this thing. We've lost something. How can we get it back? Religion is a favorite with mankind.

I've got a family that just moved here. They were in a church of Christ. See, man loves to say, I'm going to fix it.

Baptism. Baptism is my hiding place. The religions of man, I think back there to coming out of John's apartment in Kathmandu and you walk by this Hindu temple.

And if you just look over at their god, it's this deformed, hideous little statue. You'd almost think it was comical. Man's attempts at religion are so amateur.

Almost laughable. I mean, do you ever just look at a pope wearing that hat? It is laughable. That is what men do.

That's their religion. Pope hats. That's going to fix it.

And man's always trying to figure it out. He's always stitching it together because there's a sense in him. Something's wrong.

Something's wrong. And there's this shame. And you know what? It's like an hourglass going down.

You and I are headed to the judgment and we are headed to those eyes. And we can't run far enough. And so we're frantic.

And so we're always pulling at these leaves because we're headed there. And you know what? You can try to hide behind your lies and you can try to hide behind your scientific theories and you can say, I'm not going to believe all that. I'm not afraid.

There's no God. We've got it all figured out by science. And you know, man, he can print his shirts and say, no fear.

And he can try to hide behind that. But it doesn't square with the facts. Men are terrified.

You say, no, I'm not. Why do you spend so much time trying not to think about death? A bold sinner I worked with at Miller Curtin Company, I said, do you realize 100 years from now everybody in this cafeteria, there's about 500 people in there probably, every one of us will be dead. He said, I try not to think about that.

Does that make it go away? Is that a hiding place? It doesn't fix it. Man is desperate for these fig leaves. Desperate! He'll try anything and everything.

Except what? Except the God that they have run away from. Don't you see what God is saying? You know the only indicator in Genesis 3 that those leaves are no good? Is the fact God replaces them. God provides a covering.

And it took the death of animals. And up until that time, there was no indication at all that there was the death of any animal life. And God provided for them.

All this false religion. They scoff at the Gospel. They try, they try, they try.

Have you ever watched a Catholic? I remember Jehovah's Witness coming to my door. And I said, do you really believe that doing all of this is going to earn you a place? He said, yes, I believe that. But you talk to those people.

How do you know when you've done enough? And you watch these people that get really entrapped in false religion. How do you know when you've done enough? Well, we don't. And that's why we invent things like Purgatory because that's the backup program.

Because men never know. You know what? All that men do and all the fig leaves they tie together, and no matter how much they've got, they still are headed towards those eyes of God on judgment day. Those eyes that don't get off, man.

And they're just frantic. I don't know if I've done enough. I don't know if I've done enough.

I've got to keep going. I've got to keep doing. And man is terrified.

And he likes to tell you. He likes to sit there all smug and confident when there's no storm clouds and when everything's good and he's healthy. Oh, but let those storm clouds come in.

Let all of a sudden the doctor find cancer. And men are terrified. They're absolutely terrified.

And say, I won't be alarmed. I'm going to take the scientific view. Well, yes, you do that.

But that knowing of your conscience is real and you can't get away from it. Man just has this. You know what the Scripture says? What does it say about the wicked? They run.

They flee. When what? And when there's no reason. You know why? The wicked is skittish.

There's something in him that's constantly saying, run, hide. It just keeps on going. That's what happened.

God comes, they ran. You want to see mankind? He just keeps running. He keeps running.

What you find is that stolen fruit, it was not as pleasant as they thought it was going to be. You remember some places in Scripture where something sweet in the mouth, but it was bitter in the belly? Well, that's what they found. And we try to convince ourselves we're wonderful, we're good.

Men try to sedate it. Well, I'm just going to turn up the noise so loud that I can't hear it, that I can't feel it. I'm going to take so many drugs or drink so much alcohol, I'm just going to sedate this thing away.

Have you ever noticed deathbeds are eerily silent places? Say you don't believe in God. Problem is you have a sense of God. Have you ever noticed how atheists always want to argue? It's like, if you're right, just be quiet.

Don't argue with anybody. You've got to know the atheist, they just go on arguing with themselves. They lash out at Christians, but they're really just arguing with themselves because they know.

And they've got a sense. There's a conscience in there screaming at them too. And they may try to silence it and sedate it, but there's always the still of the night, the close crack of the thunder, the near miss at a stoplight, something that causes them to come face to face with death and with eternity, the great folly of man.

You see, He just keeps running and He keeps hiding in His trouble, His misery, His wretchedness. He runs away, always running, always running. This is the saddest, this is the most tragic part about man.

The thing He just keeps on doing. He runs away from His God in His shame, His misery, His wretchedness. He just keeps running away from the sound of God.

I heard you in the garden! I heard you! And so what did you do? I'm the God that has the animal skins. He died. He died spiritually that day.

Don't question that. He died. He lost His communion with God.

He doesn't realize that the very God in whose face He spit is the only one who can save Him. And so He just keeps running. He doesn't realize God is ready to save Him.

He doesn't realize what's spoken of in those animal skins. They speak of God's way. They speak of God's salvation.

What happens? Death takes place and man is clothed. God was speaking. God was speaking.

Adam, where are you? And He speaks to us. Where are you? God speaks today and man still runs. I would just say this, my dear friend, you who are there in sin, you're being addressed by the voice of God.

That voice, that voice is coming to you in the cool of the day. Are you afraid? Are you resisting? Do you feel that God is against you? If so, you're just repeating what Adam and Eve did. I want to encourage you, give up on the fig leaves.

Give up on trying to rid yourself of that sense of guilt. Give up trying to solve your own problems. You never will.

Your conscience will follow you. Some of you, it will follow you right out into hell. It will just follow you.

You think you can silence it. Now you can't. The shame.

The shame. You'll never silence it. You're never going to get rid of that sense of failure, the sense of guilt, the sense of shame until you come to the Lord Jesus Christ and believe that He has taken your guilt and your shame.

And we don't like to talk much about it, but when they put Jesus on that cross, He didn't have any clothes on. The full shame. He became sin.

We sang about it. A hiding place. There is a hiding place and there is blood that will calm the conscience.

He became sin. You need to believe that. That He died for your sins.

That God has punished your sins on that cross and offers you free pardon. Jesus Christ was crucified on Golgotha's hill. Come out of your hiding place.

Come out from behind those bushes and behind those fig leaves. Come to Him. Run to Him.

Don't delay. Go to Him. Cast yourself at His feet and bring your nakedness to Him.

He alone can clothe you. He told some people somewhere one time, I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may be rich. And He says, I counsel you to buy from Me white garments so that you may clothe yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen.

You know what He's saying? Go buy from Him. Go do business with Him. You say, what do I possibly have to buy with when I'm naked and I'm wretched and I'm poor? Well, that's what you have to buy with.

That's the currency of heaven. Your poverty. Your nakedness.

You go to Him naked and He clothes you. And so many men and women have this idea, I've got to put fig leaves on before I can go to Him. Why? They do you no good.

He's just going to peel them off anyway. No, you go naked and He'll give you the white garments to clothe yourself with. He who has no money, Scripture says, come buy and eat.

Most in this world, they play at religion. They're afraid not to attend church. Why? Because they've got to be stitching together their fig leaves.

I've got to go there. Sometimes I wonder, people go to these churches that are dead. The preaching is dead.

The singing is dead. The praying is dead. But they keep going.

They keep going. They sit there and they do their duty. They do their work and they knit their silly aprons.

And all the time, they miss the gold and the white garments that Jesus promises. Jesus says, it's Me. It's Me.

Come to Me. Buy from Me. I'm the hiding place.

I'm the one who will give you the white garment. You must do business with Me. And I'll give you that which will cover your shame.

And if He covers it, it's covered. Father, we need a hiding place. And we are so thankful You didn't just damn all humanity right on that day.

But You gave promise. You gave a promise about the seed of the woman. And indeed, many of us in this place, we rest in the white garments that He's given to us.

Robed us in righteousness. Thank You, Father, for Your salvation. It's in Christ's name we pray, Amen.

You're dismissed.

Video: https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/NiUSzvIAW_w.mp4

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