



## **Clothed with Christ**

Genesis 3:1-13; 21

Pastor Daniel Barrett with David Beebe

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The passage of God's Word we will be focusing on today is Genesis 3:1-13 and verse 21. I invite you to open your Bible or utilize your cell phone or handheld device, as we examine this text together. God's Word will also be displayed on the screen. If you do not have a Bible of your own, I invite you to take one of the Bibles here in the Worship Center. It is God's gift to you.

### **Genesis 3:1-13 (ESV)**

*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, 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.*

*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 of 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."*

When examining this passage of Scripture, it involves four parties: Adam, Eve, the serpent, and the Lord God. When seeking to understand what God's Word means, the Bible is always the best interpreter of itself. In Revelation 12:9, the identity of the serpent is revealed:

*And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world – he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.*

We know from Scripture that Satan is opposed to God and engages in activities seeking to thwart God's purposes. Jesus spoke about Satan on several occasions. In fact, after Jesus was baptized, He was directly tempted by Satan, but Satan's efforts were unsuccessful. While Adam and Eve allowed themselves to be led astray by Satan, Jesus remained steadfast, grounded in His devotion to God, the Father, and refuted Satan's lies with the truth of God's Word.

What about us? How does Satan, as one who still tempts people today, impact us? 1 Peter 1:8-9a says this:

*Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith.*

**We are exhorted by God's Word to be ALERT to the schemes of the devil**, understanding that just as there is a physical realm, there is also an unseen realm where spiritual forces of darkness are at work against us. The key is to be balanced. When we take it to one extreme, that Satan is behind everything bad and we need to watch out because Satan is around every corner and is constantly trying to trip us up, we can unwittingly give Satan credit he is not due and end up focusing more on Satan than God.

It's noteworthy that Jesus was not constantly tempted by the devil. Satan is not omnipresent – he is not everywhere, all the time; only God is. Note what is recorded in the Gospel of Luke: “And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time” (4:13). Satan came and tempted Jesus in the wilderness, left Jesus, and then waited until an opportune time to go and tempt Jesus again somewhere else. Considering this, we need to be mindful that we, too, will be tempted from time to time, whether by Satan or other fallen angels, demons, and we need to be on guard.

The other extreme to avoid is this: living as though there is no such thing as spiritual forces of darkness who are actively at work in an unseen realm, and that it is nothing but a fairy tale. To take such a position is not only to one's detriment, it neglects to take into account what is clearly seen and experienced in the physical world. Throughout history, when examining the cruel ways people have treated one another and how countries have gone to war against other nations to advance their own interests, the practice of deception, exploiting vulnerabilities, manipulating others, and devising harmful plots against others is on full display. Considering this, is it really that much of a stretch to believe that the same practices we experience in a physical realm also occur in an unseen, spiritual realm?

Just like a microscope enables us to see and understand what our eyes alone cannot perceive, God's Word serves as a lens for us to look through to be knowledgeable of things we would otherwise be unaware of. Genesis 3 starts off by describing Satan as being crafty. To be clear, this is not referring to one who excels in arts and crafts. If you have a DIY project you want to undertake with someone else, you definitely want to partner with a creative, crafty person to take on your next do-it-yourself project. But this is a different kind of crafty. In the context of Genesis 3, Satan is characterized as one who is clever, cunning, and skillful at achieving his goals through deception.

First and foremost, Satan disputed the validity of what God said. This is what the Lord God commanded Adam:

*You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die (Genesis 2:16-17).*

When Satan approached Eve, this is what he told her:

*You will not surely die (Genesis 3:4).*

Next, Satan asserted that God was holding out on her:

*For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil (Genesis 3:5).*

We human beings ... we don't like missing out on things, do we? Has anyone here ever heard of the phrase FOMO? It was coined by Patrick McGinnis in 2004 in an article he wrote for The Harbus, the magazine of Harvard Business School. FOMO simply means “Fear of Missing Out.” As an MBA student at Harvard, he noticed how he and his peers were constantly overscheduling themselves to attend various social events or taking advantage of different opportunities out of fear that if they didn't, they would be missing out.

Have you ever experienced FOMO in your life? One can make a case that Eve did:

*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 (Genesis 3:6).*

Satan sought to convince Eve of the following: what God told you is not true, and God is withholding something good from you.

The strategy Satan employed was effective. Eve fell for the devil's deception. As a result of Adam and Eve's disobedience, sin entered the world, and when sin came, it brought death, both physical and spiritual. But this wasn't it. When Adam and Eve disobeyed God, they also experienced overwhelming regret.

After Adam and Eve ate fruit from the tree God commanded them not to, Scripture says that the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked. While the text we are studying today starts at Genesis 3:1, we need to note what is said immediately before it. In the last verse of Genesis 2, it says, "And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed."

### **Once Adam and Eve disobeyed God, it brought personal SHAME.**

The Oxford Dictionary defines the word shame as *a painful feeling of humiliation or distress caused by the consciousness of wrong or foolish behavior*. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines shame as *a painful emotion caused by consciousness of guilt, shortcoming, or impropriety*. To compensate for their shame, Adam and Eve sewed fig leaves together to reduce the inner pain they were experiencing, but it in no way resolved how they felt.

The allure of sin can be very compelling, so whenever we are tempted to do what God prohibits, we need to focus on the character and nature of the Giver of life and the truth of His Word. God is a good God who gives good gifts. Therefore, whenever God says not to do something, it is not because God is withholding something good from us, but rather He is trying to keep us from something bad.

The next time we are enticed by something that is contrary to God's will, despite how appealing it is, regardless of how desirable it seems, may we not fall for the lie that God is holding out on us, for God's will for our lives is good, its pleasing, and its perfect.

When considering what God's Word says, if we are being transparent with one another, we have already come to discover the reality of this passage of Scripture in our own lives. Just like Adam and Eve disobeyed God, we have disobeyed God. Just as Adam and Eve experienced the distress of personal shame and went into hiding because of their sin, we have experienced such pain ourselves and often hide when we sin.

For the next part of today's message, I would like to invite David Beebe to come up and share. A few weeks ago, David accepted God's calling for his life to be part of the Celebrate Recovery Leadership T.E.A.M. here at Edgewood, alongside the other team members, Cathy Thomas, Fred Husman, and Amanda Hodge. As the Administrative Pastor here at Edgewood, I am currently serving this team and supporting them in any way I can. They are all doing a fantastic job, along with all the other leaders at CR, and I praise God for the ways God is at work in this important ministry. David has grown tremendously in his walk with the Lord over the years, and all of us are blessed to hear from him now as he ministers God's Word to us.

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Hello, my name is David Beebe, a gratefully saved believer in Jesus Christ in process of being sanctified, while being someone who struggles with insecurity, regret, resentment, anxiety, binge eating, approval, and technology addiction to name a few, but most of all an addiction to anything that "comforts" me or distracts me from dealing with what I need to.

Now you may be asking yourself with wide eyes looking at the person next to you, “Why in the world would Pastor Brian allow someone like me, with that long list of sins and vices, to speak?” That’s a good question! I asked myself that when looking in the mirror today, and the only conclusion I came to was that Pastor Daniel bribed him with either a large crate of cheese curds freshly curded (if that’s a word), or perhaps Green Bay Packers football tickets, and Pastor Brian had a lapse in judgment. The children of Israel didn’t make the best decisions when not in the Promised Land, and Pastor Brian says that Wisconsin is the Promised Land, and he lives in Illinois now, so it kind of adds up, doesn’t it? Just saying...

Outside of that, you also may be thinking to yourself, “Didn’t the Apostle Paul write a letter or two (if not more) to churches that had church members who were people like me? Didn’t he write out stern letters to those who were idolatrous, resentment-filled gluttons?” The answer is yes. He did.

He wrote letters like that, and when I read those letters, I know with the conviction of God that those letters are also for me. And guess what – even for you. We are all sinners to whom Paul would write a convicting correcting letter to, because we, as members of the body of Christ, need it. And whom the Lord loves, He corrects. Can I get the best Baptist amen on that? Now, if you just amen’ed, why did you do that?! I shouldn’t be soliciting for amens; that’s egotistical.

All that aside, there are a few reasons I introduced myself like that today. First, it’s how we introduce ourselves to one another in Celebrate Recovery. To be underscored, bolded, italicized, and highlighted is that who we are in Christ is the first part of who we are – the core identity. We are intentional about not making our struggles with sin, hurts, hang-ups, and habits the core of who we are, the first part in referencing ourselves.

We went from:

- Orphans to heirs with Christ
- Prodigals to children welcomed home
- Slaves to sons and daughters
- Spiritually dead to alive in Christ
- Sinner to Saint

And yet, even though that is the core of who we are now, the good work of God’s sanctification takes time. LOTS of time for some of us, especially for me. We are people under construction, and the Holy Spirit, as the lead foreman, has a LOT of hard and stubborn hearts to break up, mine being one of the hardest. You think construction season in the Quad Cities is bad? You haven’t seen anything yet!

The second reason we at Celebrate Recovery introduce ourselves in this way – a very pivotal reason, I’d say, is equal to the first reason – is to keep up the continual practice of not hiding.

Not to hide ourselves from ourselves, hide from others, and most importantly, hide from God. Since the very first transgression against our Creator in the Garden, our instinct when we sin and fail is to go off and get away from God, to hide, sew on some fig leaves, and cover up our shame and nakedness. In fact, our propensity to hide is just as second nature to us as our propensity to hide. No, that’s not a typo in my notes; I said hide twice. I just wanted to emphasize how much we are capable of hiding.

And even wilder, is that often when we hide from God when we sin, we are good at hiding ourselves in even more sin. It’s like the Matryoshka Dolls of Russia, where there is a doll within a doll, within a doll, and so forth. Or like I will one day do for my kid’s birthday – wrap a box within a box within a box. If you serve in the Children’s Ministry here at Edgewood and are around my son Josiah or my daughter Selah, SHHHHH don’t tell them I said that.

But we do hide from God when we sin. That's what I am here to share with you all – we are natural hiders. And when we hide, we often hide in other sins. In fact, David of the Bible, the man my mom named me after, the young boy and King who was called a man after God's own heart, failed and sinned greatly against the heart of his Creator and God. David, a man who should have been with his men during the times of battle, found himself alone and perhaps bored, as they probably had fewer channels on TV compared to when Pastor Ed was a kid, which was about 20 years before David was alive.

And when men are alone and bored, sin can happen.

King David, being alone and bored, led to lust, adultery, murder, and hiding sin. For each of us, when alone, bored, and restless, when not connecting with God and others, has a high chance of giving in to temptation and sin. That's where David found himself.

The man that God used to defeat Goliath found himself in a situation allowing the giant of lust to taunt and tempt him, leading him into a sin that he wanted to cover up, trying to hide the reality of His sin. And when the sin of adultery wanted to make itself known through a child being conceived, David tried to get Bathsheba's husband, Uriah, to know His wife in the biblical sense, you all know what that means, and convince Uriah that the child that was David's was actually his. When that didn't work, David decided to create a soap opera twist by putting Bathsheba's fella at the frontlines of battle, which would inevitably lead to Uriah's death, and the sin finally hidden – or at least that's what David thought. It wasn't until Nathan the prophet confronted him about his sin that David stopped hiding and removed the metaphorical rug to conceal his sin. And from that point we get Psalm 51, which details David pouring out his heart to God and bringing his sin into the light of God's truth.

Let's look at some key parts in Psalm 51, verses 1-5, 10-13, and 16-17 (ESV):

*<sup>1</sup>Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. <sup>2</sup>Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin! <sup>3</sup>For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. <sup>4</sup>Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment. <sup>5</sup>Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.*

While **SIN** runs in our veins, **MERCY** flows from God's heart.

*<sup>10</sup>Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. <sup>11</sup>Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. <sup>12</sup>Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit.*

While our default behavior is **REBELLION**, with consequences that can lead to ruin, God's default nature is **REDEMPTION** and **RESTORATION**.

*<sup>13</sup>Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.*

David knew the goodness of God, even in the midst of how sinful he was, and what sins he committed. Being able to experience the hope that came from experiencing the steadfast love and mercy of God that he was not worthy of, caused David to want to share the hope of God with others. At Celebrate Recovery, it's the same for us who have experienced and are experiencing hope, healing, and freedom. We want to shout to anyone with ears what God has done in our lives, amidst all the rubble and rebellion.

*<sup>16</sup>For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it; you will not be pleased with a burnt offering. <sup>17</sup>The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.*

While **SIN** runs in our veins, **MERCY** flows from God's heart.

I used to hate being named David. My mom named me David because my dad's name was David, and my story with my father is one of layers of multiple kinds of abuse, trauma, rejection, and pain that I've healed and will continue to heal from. Yet because of who he was when others weren't around, compared to who he was when others were around, I didn't want to be named after him.

Yet my dad aside, the second and primary reason my mom wanted to name me David was to be like the David of the Bible, a man after God's own heart. And that was great at first, but after I noticed my same sex attraction as a teen, and a porn addiction that started at 14 and continued until it began ruining my marriage, I didn't see a man after God's own heart. I saw a porn addict, a video game and TV addict, and a food addict. I saw a "Me" addict.

While I was a "Me" addict, I saw someone who would hide these sins as best as he could. I would hide from the sin of one shame, inside another sin. I was a crimson sinner with scarlet letter after scarlet letter, with each repeated sin making me more and more untouchable to God.

Yet I failed to remember and meditate on how Jesus tended to touch and embrace the lepers and any untouchable or stigmatized person of His day. We should meditate on this before we make snap judgments of anyone we see or come across, as we are just as naturally inclined to sin as the next person outside of these four walls. People may get arrested for a DUI, murder, assault, and so forth, yet we forget that sin's charges against us are even more permanent and deserve greater punishment outside of what our legal system can implement. Considering this, before we think we are better off than some criminal with a record, or some person we hear about in the news, we need to remember all *our* sins that held Christ to the cross. Yet by the grace of God, whether criminal records or our sinful records, God's part in our lives has the final say.

So, we remember that **while our default behavior is REBELLION, with consequences that can lead to ruin, God's default nature is REDEMPTION and RESTORATION.**

God broke me and is breaking me of my tendency to hide. He did the painful but good work of starting to break my addiction to myself after I recognized that I could lose the three humans I loved most: my wife and two kids. At that point, I started to find joy in being named David. Not on the basis of David's sin after sin after sin. But on the basis of King David who recognized it, allowed the conviction of God to take a hold of Him, and how he dove into the ocean of humility, brokenness, and repentance, being washed ashore to the grace and mercy of God that not just changed his life, but sustained him every single day of his life. And while in one Psalm David lamented and repented of the sins he tried to hide, there's another Psalm that David wrote which indicates that no matter what or where David tried to hide, he could not hide from God.

Psalm 139:7-12 says this:

*Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there! If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me. If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light about me be night," even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is bright as the day, for darkness is as light with you.*

Jeremiah 23:24 echoes what David said:

*Can a man hide himself in secret places so that I cannot see him? declares the Lord.  
Do I not fill heaven and earth? declares the Lord.*

I lived a long life hiding from life's pain within sin, and then I hid from the shame of those sins, in other sins. So much of my life was spent in hiding. Edgewood, let me encourage you – and anyone joining us online – you do not have to spend your life hiding from God or others. God calls us to be real first and foremost with Him,

and then with those around us. Church should be the safest place to be real about how we are struggling, the ways we are sinning, and when we are hiding. That's what I love about Celebrate Recovery. I can open the closet door to my skeletons, and when I think I will be met with shaking heads of disappointment and rejection, I'm met with compassion and love as others open their closet and show me their skeletons.

But it doesn't stop there. Celebrate Recovery has given me the tools to help me let God into that closet of skeletons and hiding and allow Him to create life from dead old bones, just as He did for Ezekiel. By consistently coming on Friday night, completing a 12-Step group, and having people in my life who lovingly hold me accountable, God has used Celebrate Recovery to help me grow more into the likeness of Jesus. To frame it differently, it's the good ole process known as sanctification.

God has used Celebrate Recovery to show me that I don't have to hide, and that I can be honest and real WHILE also being loved. Something I didn't think was possible. I encourage you to find the freedom that comes from letting God be the one to seek you out in the midst of your hiding. And if you need a place that feels safe with safe people you can be real with and loved at the same time, come to Celebrate Recovery with Jacie, our kids, and me. We would love to have you in our Celebrate Recovery family.

God is a God of steadfast love, grace, and mercy, and He counts to ten by the cross of Calvary and says, "Ready or not, here I come!"

Let Him find you today.

You can never win a game of hide-n-seek with God. You can't hide from Him forever. And while you wait for Him to find you, don't sew fig leaves together like Adam and Eve did. Fig leaves of legalism, busy ministry work, outright pride, or subtle pride of sinning in "lesser" ways than others. Leaves of shame, leaves of avoidance. Just come out of hiding and meet the God who clothes the repentant wayward sinner with His righteousness. Not clothing created by the shed blood of animals, but by the shed blood of His son.

Ready or not, He's looking for you.

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When examining Genesis 3:8-11, two key elements stand out. The first is the series of questions God poses to Adam:

- "Where are you?"
- "Who told you that you were naked?"
- "Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?"

Considering that the God of the universe knows everything that happens, the reason for asking such questions is not to be informed, but rather to give Adam an opportunity to take responsibility for what he did. God could have confronted Adam, laid out what he had done, and explained the consequences of his actions. But God did not start there. Instead, he first gave Adam an opportunity to own what he did.

Parents, supervisors at work, teachers, coaches, and others in similar roles, rather than being quick to confront people and tell them about the bad decisions they have made, may we instead emulate what God has modeled to us. By doing so, it provides valuable space for thought and personal reflection. After having time to consider their actions and the implications of what they have done, the person can then take responsibility.

When Adam was given this opportunity, he chose not to own what he did. Instead, he deflected blame to others. Adam pointed to Eve – "She gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." To make matters worse, Adam also pointed to God – "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate."

It was at this point that Adam would form a lone line, with him at the very front, of one person after another for centuries to come, who would deflect blame and point their finger at someone else, even God Himself. It's no wonder the Bible says the following in the book of Proverbs: "People ruin their lives by their own foolishness and then are angry at the Lord" (19:3 NLT).

Once Adam's finger is pointed at God and then Eve, Eve proceeds to point her finger at the serpent, saying the reason she ate of the fruit was because the serpent deceived her.

When people choose not to take responsibility, it perpetuates the shame they are living with, and it prevents them from moving forward. If this is where you find yourself today, know that God doesn't want you to remain stuck where you are. This leads us to the second key element: God's pursuing love.

Genesis 3:8 (ESV) says:

*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.*

Even though Adam and Eve rebelled against God, God still pursued them in love. Church, this was not a one-time action by the living God of all creation. How good it is for all of us in the world today to know that when we, too, rebel against God, God still pursues us in love. This is clearly evidenced by the fact that around 2,000 years ago, Jesus left heaven ... and came to us. This is why Romans 5:8 says, "God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

When Adam and Eve disobeyed what God commanded, that could have been it for them. God could have rightly said, "I gave you everything to eat from except one tree. Even though I warned you that if you ate from it you would die, you went ahead and did what I told you not to do. I created you to share life with me, but you made your choice."

But God did not do this. In His mercy and grace, God pursued them in love.

Let's take another look at verse 11: "Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?"

The heart of the matter is not the tree itself, or the fruit that was eaten from it; it's the One who gave the command: "Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?"

When Adam and Eve held the fruit in their hand, it wasn't just about the ramifications of whether they obeyed or not, for Adam and Eve were also faced with a decision that would impact their relationship with God. What mattered more to them? The fruit and all that they hoped it would bring ... or the God who gave them the command? The answer to this central question would be revealed in the choice that they made.

The same is true for us. Whenever we are tempted to do something wrong, we should certainly take into account the consequences of sin, but even more importantly, we need to realize that whenever we go against what God has said, what we are communicating to God through our actions is this: what I am about to do means more to me than You.

Church, this is something that God wants us to understand. **Sin is never just about actions (or inaction); it is first and foremost about how RELATIONSHIPS are adversely impacted by sin.**

To help us better understand this, consider the following question: Why is it that when someone sins against us, Jesus instructed us to go directly to the person afterward? Found in Matthew 18:15, Jesus said this:

*If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone.  
If he listens to you, you have gained your brother.*

Sin brings separation. Therefore, when someone sins against us, we are to (1) personally approach the person to address what happened – “go and tell him his fault,” and (2) lovingly seek to restore the relationship – “if he listens to you, you have gained your brother.” Both are part of the process Jesus laid out for us.

This is why whenever someone sins against us, we should not turn to someone else to take care of it for us. For example, imagine another person lying about you. As a result of what is said, malicious things are spread about you, your reputation is damaged, and you are really hurt over the person’s actions. Consider what this would be like if it persisted for weeks. The pain would get worse and worse, the bitterness and resentment you have would grow deeper, and the ramifications of what is being said about you would become more severe.

But then, you see someone who knows the person spreading lies about you. You quickly approach the individual and plead with him or her to tell the other person to stop lying about you. To your relief, it works. From that day forward, the person doesn’t tell another lie about you, and eventually, the lies fade away.

When this approach is taken, although the matter itself is addressed and resolved, the relationship with the other person remains in ruins. This is why Jesus said whenever someone sins against us, we are to (1) personally approach the person to address what happened – “go and tell him his fault,” and (2) lovingly seek to restore the relationship – “if he listens to you, you have gained your brother.”

This is what God modeled for us in the garden. When Adam and Eve sinned against God, God personally approached them to address what they did, and as Adam and Eve were in God’s presence, God did something very significant. Toward the end of chapter 3, in verse 21, it reveals what happened next:

*And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them.*

This is the first recorded sacrifice in the Bible. While Adam and Eve covered themselves with fig leaves, note what God did: He covered them with garments made of skins. Animal skins. For Adam and Eve to be covered by God, it involved the death of an animal, making it the first blood sacrifice. This was a foreshadowing of what was to come.

When John the Baptist saw Jesus coming toward him at the Jordan River, he said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29).

John 3:16 says, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”

Romans 3:23 says, “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

Romans 6:23 says, “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Romans 10:9 says, “If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.”

It is only through Jesus that our sins can be forgiven, and our shame sufficiently covered. Galatians 3:26-27 says this:

*So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ (NIV).*

Perhaps you are listening to this message today, and if God were to ask you the question, “Where are you?” how would you respond? If you are far from God because of your sin, then it’s time to stop hiding in shame and come to the God who is pursuing you in love. Admit what you have done (take responsibility), ask for God’s forgiveness, invite Jesus to come into your life and begin following Him as your Savior King, and move forward in God’s grace, in line with God’s good, pleasing, and perfect will for your life.