



The Kingdom Perspective

The Fear of Shame

Hello, this is Pastor Don Willeman of Christ Redeemer Church. Welcome to The Kingdom Perspective.

Fear is very powerful and controlling. Bad fear, that is fear not rooted in the fear of God, will constrain you and keep you from growing as a person. It will stunt your spiritual, emotional and relational development.

Now, one of the most powerful controlling emotions is that of shame, and it is very much related to fear. When we are tempted towards shame, we are being driven by a particular kind of fear—a fear of relational connection, or maybe better said, disconnection. Shame says, “I am fearful of being vulnerable, because I don’t want to be seen as inadequate. I don’t want to be uncovered in the nakedness of my soul. I’m fearful of being rejected and despised.”

We all experience this sense of shame at times. The Bible suggests that this fear is deeply rooted in our human psyche, precisely because it is deeply rooted in the history of the human race. When our first parents Adam and Eve sinned, their initial experience was that of fear and shame.

Listen to Genesis 3. Adam says to God: “I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself” (Genesis 3:10).

Now, here’s the good news. Adam would have never had this conversation with God, were it not for God pursuing Adam in his shame. Adam had swallowed the lie of sin and shame. But God’s pursued Adam, still. And in this we see the foreshadowing of the gospel of Jesus. In the gospel, God’s comes after us. In our shame we do not seek God; but in His grace He seeks us. Jesus put it this way, “The Son of Man has come to seek and save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10).

Something to think about from The Kingdom Perspective.

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.”

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

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