

XXI. L.E.A.D. in Biblical Perspective  
*Lifestyle of Evangelism and Discipleship*

“Where Are You?”

Genesis 3:1–13

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In this study we will be looking at Genesis 3. One of the things we have been talking about in terms of evangelism is the value of questions. The reason I like to use questions when sharing Christ with people is because it's what the Lord does. Jesus set before us a magnificent example of how to use questions but He is merely doing what His Father had done. Notice where and how He does it in Genesis 3. Be on the lookout for the questions in this text.

Genesis 3:1–13 says [1] *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?’” [2] And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, [3] 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.’” [4] But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. [5] For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” [6] 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. [7] Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.*

*[8] 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. [9] But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?” [10] And he said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.” [11] He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” [12] The man said, “The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.” [13] 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.”*

I thank the Lord for this moment that we can consider the Divine derogative, the Divine question – where are you? I think questions are very important and this is a question God directs to Adam. This is one of those questions that is more than what the question seems to be asking. Usually this question has something else behind it. You can arrive there by knowing who is asking the question. In this text it's God who is asking the question. If God is asking the question then most would certainly want to answer the question. We don't know all of the questions God could have asked before this but we do know this is the first recorded question from God to Adam, to humanity. This question is clearly a probing question.

I have heard this question – where are you – from my parents. I'm sure you have heard this question as well from different people. I have been in my study reading a book, taking notes and I receive a phone call from my wife saying ‘Where are you?’ I know at that moment in time before I answer that question that I am not where I'm supposed to be and I'm searching

desperately to find a good reason to say ‘It’s not my fault.’ This probing question is related to the fact that I’m not where I’m supposed to be and so it is in this text.

In this text, we don’t know what the span of time is but we do know that something had been put in place that God had made Adam and Eve for fellowship. One of those moments of fellowship would be in the cool of the evening. Genesis 3:8 says [8] *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.* From this verse it seems that the normal practice here would not be to hide but to show yourself here, where they would have this unhindered fellowship with the Lord.

I can’t help but remember a preacher’s joke here where the preacher went to the parishioner’s house and knocked on the door. No one came to the door but he thought he heard someone in the house so he continued to knock and then sensed that they weren’t coming to the door for some reason. So he took out a business card and wrote on the back ‘I knocked on the door, Revelation 3:20.’ Revelation 3:20 says [20] *Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.* The next Sunday the business card showed up in the offering plate at church and on the other side of the business card was written ‘Genesis 3:10’ – I heard the sound of thee knocking and I was naked so I hid myself.

I want you to see three things from this text that has now hindered the relationship. One, I was naked. Two, I was afraid and three, I hid myself. Here we see guilt, shame and fear. Some have a tendency to initially suppress these things and others will try to overcome it and then suppress them. Some will deny it or medicate it. We try to find a way to deal with this guilt, shame and fear. We all experience each one of these in our lives. People build whole cultures on this. God brings an antidote to them. Adam and Eve didn’t want to be with Him because of their fear, guilt and shame. Therefore He is asking them ‘Where are you?’ for He knows where they are supposed to be. They are supposed to be with Him. “Why are you not with Me in fellowship?” Here He asks Adam ‘Where are you?’ but the question is now why does He have to ask.

The reason He has to ask this question is because something has come into this world that has broken that relationship between God and Adam and Eve. Sin has broken that relationship. We don’t know when Satan fell. There are some passages of Scripture that give us some information about his fall in Isaiah and Ezekiel but we have no chronology of his fall. We do know here that he has fallen and been cast out of heaven in the judgment of God and that now with his constant schemes he is at work. We see it in the book of Genesis and it runs throughout history. Satan comes disguised as a serpent. He comes deceptively in terms of purpose and he comes with lies.

Satan also begins to come with his own questions. These questions are designed to break that relationship that Adam and Eve have with the Lord. He also does something that the Bible tells us to always be aware of and that is he loves to package sin with the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the boastful pride of life to give to us. He asks Eve ‘Did God say you can’t eat of any of the trees?’ She replies ‘No, just the one that is in the midst of the garden. God says if we eat of it or touch it we’ll surely die.’ She adds the ‘touch it’ part which means she is already adding to the Word of God and we see her fixation over what she doesn’t have instead of rejoicing in what she does have in the Lord. Therefore Satan then comes with the outright lie.

Satan basically says to Eve ‘You’re not going to die. God knows if you eat of that fruit then you will actually be like God.’ Wouldn’t that have been a wonderful time for Adam to step

up and say ‘Time out! We already are like God for we are made in His image.’ The real selling point was not to be like God but it was to take God’s place, to be God and that everything in that garden is all about you, not all about God, His glory and your joy in that glory. Then when Eve saw that the tree was good for food – *lust of the flesh* – a delight to the eyes – *lust of the eyes* – and then by partaking she could be like God knowing good and evil, to make one wise – *the boastful pride of life* – she ate.

One of the most interesting studies to do in the Bible is to study a person who falters and falls and see how those three things – the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the boastful pride of life – show up time and time again. We even see how Satan tries to use these same three snares on Jesus, the Second Adam, in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1–11). Here Jesus has been fasting forty days and forty nights. Matthew 4:3 says [3] *And the tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.”* The snare here is the lust of the flesh. Satan even quotes the Bible back to Jesus in Matthew 4:5–6 which says [5] *Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple [6] and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, “‘He will command his angels concerning you,’ and “‘On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.’”* The snare is the boastful pride of life. Matthew 4:8–9 says [8] *Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. [9] And he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.”* The snare is the lust of the eyes. Satan is constantly using these three snares in our lives.

As Satan uses these three snares there is only one answer. Neither Eve nor Adam ran to that answer. The answer is by the power of the Spirit of God to bring the Word of God and say ‘Be gone, Satan.’ This is what the Second Adam, Jesus, does. Even in all of Jesus’ weakness of prayer and fasting He kept bringing the Word of God to Satan. He would say ‘It is written...It is written... It is written...’ And that is why pastors labor so hard to preach the Word and not just give ‘talks’ on a Sunday, so that you have the gravitas of the Word. Now you can know the Word and not know the God of the Word but you can’t know the God of the Word without the Word of God. And it’s the Word of God and the power of the Spirit of God that keeps you focused on the majesty, supremacy, sufficiency, glory and grace of God that is found in Jesus Christ.

This question – where are you – is really getting to the heart of the issue. You are not where you are supposed to be because of sin. You are not with Me, you are with your sin and because you are in your sin, what are you doing? We can have as much of a secular humanism movement as you desire in this country/world but you can rest assured that you will never vacuum out a society religion for man has to have it. Man will always come up with a man-made religion to try to solve his sin problem of fear, shame and guilt. Adam was no different. Adam has fear, shame and guilt so where are you, Adam? He is hiding in the trees. People are always hiding. In fact, you may be doing that right now.

Maybe you are hiding behind the tree of consumerism where if you just buy enough stuff your fear, shame and guilt will go away. In fact, I really don’t have a sin problem for I’m just discomforted. Things just aren’t working out but if I just have more things they will. Maybe I just need to get the right label on the things then perhaps I don’t need so many things so it becomes the tree of conspicuous consumerism. How many of us are hiding behind the tree of entertainment?

The other day someone said to me ‘Harry, can you believe how much this professional football coach makes or how much this professional baseball player who hits only 240 makes?’

Maybe I should have stayed in baseball if this man makes 18 million a year. I said ‘I believe it. I don’t have anything against them for they live in a capitalistic society and that’s the going rate for what they do.’ My problem is the society that puts the value on it. I remember when I was looking at the salaries for actors, ball players and athletes and wondering where would it stop for it can’t go any higher and then what I didn’t know was the insatiable appetite we have to be distracted with entertainment. Maybe that will be the answer, if my team wins I’ll be okay. Or we hide behind the tree of power where we like to control or be in control. We hide behind the tree of affluence or pragmatism.

To get rid of all this we need to surrender to Jesus and that is what He calls us to when He calls us to Himself. His call is a non-negotiated surrender but sadly we want to be in control. What else do we do? We will sew leaves together to try and cover up our fear, shame and guilt that we sense before the Lord. How many of us are trying to cover up our sins with our works righteousness? I think one of the great evidences of someone who is saved is someone who is coming to church but coming to church doesn’t save you. One of the great evidences is to honor the Lord with the sacraments of baptism and the Lord’s Supper but they don’t save you. One of the great evidences is good, solid, sacramental stewardship but giving money isn’t going to save you.

It’s amazing how we’ll take these evidences of a saving relationship with Christ alone as our Lord and Savior and yet try to put our trust in those things instead of Christ Himself. Sin not only brings death but we can even put our trust in things that are good if they are the products but when we try to do them in place of God’s grace and cover up our sin with our works then what we have done is sown together our own leaves. That doesn’t work either.

The next question God asks Adam is ‘Did you eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil?’ A probing question takes on even more of a probing nature. Did Adam say ‘Lord, forgive me for I ate of the tree and sinned against you?’ No, that is not what he said. There is another thing that we can go to and we’re becoming very adept at this one in our society. We say, ‘I’m not responsible for my sin. The woman gave me the fruit and by the way, You’re the One that gave me the woman. I’m a victim.’

Ladies just in case you are taking extra delight here God then directs this question to the woman and says ‘Did you eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil?’ She says, “It wasn’t me, it was the serpent.” She basically is saying ‘The devil made me do it.’ I’m just a victim and not responsible for what I did. So we have hiding behind trees, leaves and victimhood. It doesn’t work. How do I know it doesn’t work? I could share with you my testimony so personally I know it doesn’t work.

I know it doesn’t work because of what the Scriptures tell me, even right in this very text. Genesis 3:7–10 says *[7] Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. [8] 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. [9] But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?” [10] And he said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.”*

Adam was not naked when he heard the sound of the Lord for he was clothed with fig leaves. He was hiding in the trees but yet Adam was naked because none of our man-made efforts to deal with our sin ever work. You still have the fear, the shame and the guilt. It’s still there. Resolutions won’t remove it. Our righteousness which is like filthy rags won’t remove it.

Our religious rituals won't remove it. Whatever we have done to get rid of the guilt, shame and fear, doesn't work and it won't work.

I fully aware that whenever I am talking with people that don't yet know Christ and I want to know where they are, I already know where they are if they are apart from Christ. They are in their sin and their sin is producing shame, fear and guilt. They are trying to deal with that in some way that I don't yet know but if I ask enough questions it will soon become evident. What I want them to know is not 'where are you' but 'where could you be?'

It's no accident that this first question is directed to Adam because when He is asking Adam He is asking you. When Adam sinned I sinned for I'm in Adam. Because I'm in Adam the question that is addressed to Adam as a person is also addressed to me. We call the doctrine federal headship which is born out through all the Scripture. In Adam we die, in Christ we're made alive. I Corinthians 15:21–22 says *[21] For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. [22] For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.* This is no leap at all for me to know that when He is asking Adam this question, He is asking me this question.

He is asking all of us this question – where are you? Are you in your sins with all the frenzied efforts to dismiss the fear, shame and guilt that is not working? What you do may give some momentary relief but it will not work. It's amazing and overwhelming the exotic lengths (philosophies) we'll go to, to deal with sin rather than coming to Christ whom God sent to pay for our sins but there is a very simple message. God has another Adam and that is Jesus Christ the Son of God who came into this world for you to take your sins upon Himself and to pay for your sins at the cross.

Now because of what Jesus did He offers to us, not our sewed together leaves to cover us, but the robe of His righteousness to clothe us. He doesn't give us trees to hide behind but He gives us the blood of Christ to eradicate and remove all of our sins. God's answer to what happened in the first Adam is what He has done with the Second Adam, Jesus Christ, who has come into this world to pay for those sins. The glorious truth of what God has done in Christ can be yours by surrendering and saying 'Lord, I believe that You died for my sins and that I'm a sinner. What I have done to cover up my sins hasn't worked and won't work but what You have done in Jesus does more than work. You deliver me, save me and I am Yours and You are mine.' What a glorious gift that He offers to you.

Where are you, in Christ or in your sins? You know. If you have never come to Christ, the amazing thing is that He has come for you by His Spirit, with His Word, with His Message. Jesus says in Matthew 11:28–30, *[28] Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. [29] Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. [30] For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*

I would be absolutely derelict if I didn't say this to you; the Bible says in Hebrews 9:27, *[27] it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment* and there is no recycling, no second turn but a day is coming where you will die and then the judgment. There is a new heavens and a new earth to have and there is a hell that is unending but will be endured forever of the wrath of God. Then someone on that last day will ask the question, 'where are they' and no preacher on that day in any funeral service can preach you where you aren't. No preacher can put you into heaven on that day but here stands one today who knows he can't get you to heaven but by God's grace I have known the One who came from heaven to save me and He'll save you too.

If you are in Him then I will be able to answer on that Day where you are. To be absent from the body is to be present with their Lord and Savior (II Corinthians 5:8) and that's where they are because they came to Him who asked them this day – where are you. You may be thinking that you need to think about this so you want to put this off but my dear friend man knows not his time (Ecclesiastes 9:12).

I arrived in Birmingham, Alabama in the year 1999 and I received a phone call from Macon, Georgia in the year 2000. I was asked to come to Macon because a young man named Buzz I had pastored in Charlotte, North Carolina at Christ's Covenant had died. Buzz was not even 40 years old. He had been found working out in his basement and had died there. There were so many people there when I arrived and they all wanted to know 'where is Buzz?' I was able to share with them that God's Word says that all who come unto Him will never be disappointed, will be secured and sealed by the blood of Christ and have been secured and sealed by the Spirit of God. I could tell them where Buzz was because I knew where Buzz was before his last breath. Buzz was in Jesus and now he is with Jesus.

When I do a funeral for someone I love to use their Bible and so I had Buzz's Bible. I opened up his Bible at the funeral and pulled out a napkin to show those there. On that napkin was my hand writing which I could recognize anywhere. On that napkin was written 'our situation, God's solution, your salvation.' Buzz was coming with his beautiful wife and his three kids to church. I could tell he was not interested in those sermons but then he would increasingly listen a little bit more each time. One day he asked me if we could talk and we did. He had played golf and so we had that in common. We did that together a number of times. He said to me one time 'You sure don't play golf as if you played in college, are you sure you played on a college team?' and I said 'That was a long time ago' and then I said 'You have been coming to church, are you sure you know Jesus?' so I turned the table on him and we both laughed.

We kept playing golf together and I would keep sharing the Gospel with him. Then one day he wanted to talk to me about the Gospel so we agreed to meet for a meal and talk. This is when I pulled out a napkin and wrote down; 'Our situation, God's solution, your salvation.' I shared with him the glorious truth. 'Buzz, isn't it wonderful to know we're sinners for we know what our problem is. We have a bad record, a bad heart but God has a solution. He gave His Son Jesus to go to the cross to kill your old heart and give you a new heart when you come to Him. He will take that old record and nail it to the tree to cancel it out and you can have a new record of His righteousness and every time God looks at you He sees the perfect righteousness of His Son. All you need to do is turn from your sin in repentance and put your trust by faith in Jesus alone and what He has done. And surrender because He paid it all.'

I even quoted the hymn *Jesus Paid It All* to him that said;

*I hear the Savior say,  
"Thy strength indeed is small,  
Child of weakness, watch and pray,  
Find in Me thine all in all."*

Refrain:

*Jesus paid it all,  
All to Him I owe;  
Sin had left a crimson stain,  
He washed it white as snow.*

After a while, Buzz pulled the napkin over and looked at it and said 'Preacher my dad told me that whenever I go out to eat with a preacher that I have to pay for it' and I said 'Buzz,

you have a very smart dad.’ He said ‘Now I’m going to pick this ticket up so you are free to go and you’re telling me that Jesus loved me so much that He went to the cross and picked up my tab and paid for it. If I come to Him then I’m free to go be with Him.’ I said ‘Buzz you got it, now does He have you? Surrender.’ Buzz said ‘Let’s pray.’ When we finished he put that napkin in his Bible. I didn’t know that seven years later I would be pulling that napkin out of his Bible.

So, where are you, in your sins or in Christ? Everlasting life – then we will know where you are when the last breath is drawn here. Because He is yours now you will be with Him then. The amazing thing is the life you get to live for Him, by Him and in Him all the way there. Let’s pray.

Prayer:

I know probably a significant number of people reading this have realized they are sinners and have quit trying to cover it up with the trees and leaves of the world, the trees and leaves of religion nor to continue in playing the victim and blaming everyone else for the choices of idolatry and sin that we’ve made and you have come to Christ. The Spirit of God brought you from death unto life. What a glorious day it was when you said ‘I surrender all’ and I rejoice that your answer to that question – where are you – is a resounding ‘by the grace of God I am in Christ and Christ is in me and that is my Hope of glory.’ Also know that you have the privilege to live this before others and to share that with others, because they need to hear it. You are saved by faith and faith comes by hearing the Word of Christ. Ask the Lord who you might be able to share this with. Then I would ask for those reading this who are searching and questioning ‘where is God?’ God is here by His Spirit and He is calling through His Word, ‘Come to Me!’ You don’t have to be where you are. His Son has come and gone to the cross, triumphant over the grave and is at the right hand of the Father. He is ready to receive you and the Father now by His Spirit is saying to you, ‘Come to My Son for in Him is life evermore. Come and surrender.’ Jesus I come to You. If you would like to talk and pray with someone please contact us at Briarwood at (205) 776-5200. There was a time I was where you are – in a hallway, after a funeral on my knees and this is what I said and I invite you to say it; “Jesus, I am fully aware that I am a sinner. I have become abundantly aware that I cannot save myself. I refuse to hide any longer in the tree of atheism, consumerism, power, pleasure and immorality. I am not going to cover up with my own works righteousness for my leaves do not make a good clothing but I come to You Jesus who takes away my fear, guilt and shame because You take away my sin.” I came to Him that day. I would invite you to make this your day. Where are you? Jesus, I’m here and I surrender all to You. Father, I thank for these moments we could be together in Your Word, in Jesus’ Name, Amen.

Power Point

THE QUESTION

Where are you?

1. Who is asking?
2. Whom did He ask?
3. Why did He ask?

Your Answer