LESSON 1 | MONDAY

Hiding From God

QUESTION SCRIPTURE WORD STUDY KEY POINT

LESSON FOCUS: God's loving character is revealed in the freedom He gives and in His call to sinners who hide from Him.

I. The Character of God

Q. What is God like?

1 John 4:8, KJV

8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

Q. Does that mean God is a SOFTY?

- Is He super-nice?
- Is He a teddy bear?

In the Greek: “love” = agapē (ἀγάπη), Strong’s G26

- love; affection or benevolence.

“ho theos agapē estin” = “God is love.”

- God does not merely DO loving things.
- Love is intrinsic to who He is.
- Therefore, we may conclude that anything God does must be consistent with who He is - and who He is is LOVE.

If everything about God is an expression of Him being love,

- then freedoms which He gives us
- MUST itself be an expression of His love.

The question remains: What does God's character reveal about the freedom He gives?

II. Love Gives Freedom to Choose

Revelation 22:17, KJV

17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

The words 'whosoever will' show that God's invitation involves a genuine choice.

How is that “Love?”

God gave His creatures the ability to choose,

- knowing that giving us freedom could make sin possible - and therefore would make the Cross necessary.
- Yet He gave that freedom because
- forced loyalty could never produce genuine love,
- and if we can’t love, we can’t be like Him (for He is love)
- And every Father delights to see Himself in His children

KEY POINT: God gave humanity the power of choice as an expression of His love.

- but also so we could express love for him
- which is to be like Him
- All despite knowing it would lead to Calvary
- This is the nature of God:
  - To risk His life for our freedom.
  - To give His life for the future of the cosmos.

III. Freedom in Eden

And they had that freedom because they were made by a loving God.

Q. Did Adam and Eve truly have freedom if disobedience brought ruin?

Genesis 2:15-17, KJV

15 And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.

16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:

17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

Q. What freedoms do you see in Eden?

- They were free to work
- They were free to obey.
- They were free to disobey.
- they were also free to COMMUNE with God.

IV. Sin Breaks Communion

Genesis 3:6, KJV

6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

The Garden of Eden was full of choice - yet they freely chose sin.

- Sin shaped humanity's future.
- Sin altered the present.
- Sin damaged humanity's communion with God.

Genesis 3:8-10, KJV

8 And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.

9 And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?

10 And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.

- The guilty parties changed their behavior.
- God did not change His behavior.

Q. Have you ever seen that? We do something wrong, it changes OUR behavior, and then we blame God as though HE changed.

This is exactly what sin still does.

- Because of the change in US, we break communion with God
- We hide ourselves from God.

V. God Calls the Hiding Sinner

Genesis 3:9 says that the LORD God "called" unto Adam.

Hebrew: "called" = qārāʾ (אָרָק), Strong's H7121 - to call out to, call unto, address, summon; it can also be used for "proclaim."

Exodus 34:5-7, KJV

> 5 And the LORD descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD.
>
> 6 And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth,
>
> 7 Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.

The word translated "proclaimed" in Exodus 34:5-6 is the same Hebrew verb: qārāʾ.

KEY POINT: God's call to Adam came from the One whose character unites mercy and justice.

Q. What has been your own experience with shame and seeking to hide from God after you have sinned?