

THE FIRST CONSEQUENCES OF SIN: MAN'S TRAGIC FALL FROM PERFECTION

GENESIS 03:07–13

Introduction

There was a time when there was no evil — no sin whatsoever — upon earth, a time when the whole world was perfect, clothed in perfection. But the day came when sin entered the world. This we saw in Gen 3:1-6. When sin first entered the world, catastrophic consequences began immediately to take place. This passage covers *The First Consequences of Sin: Man's Tragic Fall from Perfection* (Gen 3:7-13). Note how sin affected Adam and Eve's image of themselves. Sin crushed and devastated their self-image. All five of these consequences are tendencies or traits of a low self-image.

- I. The sense of being naked — of being imperfect and corruptible, short of God's glory and righteousness (v. 7).
- II. The attempt to cover sin (v. 7).
- III. The running away and hiding from God (v. 8).
- IV. The alienation from God and the breaking of God's heart (v. 9).
- V. The disturbed relationships and the severe divisions caused by sin (vv. 10-13).

I. *Genesis 03: 07 Results of Sin: Being Imperfect, Corruptible*

There is the sense of being naked — of being imperfect and corruptible, short of God's glory and righteousness. As soon as Adam and Eve sinned, their eyes were opened and they immediately knew something: they were stark naked. What does this mean? It probably means two things.

1. The clothing of perfection and innocence was stripped away. Note the statement: their eyes "were opened and they knew that they were naked" (v. 7). This could not mean their physical eyes, for the eyes of their body had been opened since their creation. It must mean, therefore, the eyes of their heart and mind, of their conscience. Before their sin, Adam and Eve were *morally* perfect and innocent, sinless and righteous. But when they sinned, a radical change took place within their hearts and minds. They immediately knew that something was wrong, tragically wrong — something terrible had happened. They no longer felt perfect or innocent, sinless or righteous. Within their hearts and minds they sensed guilt and shame, and they knew — beyond all question — they had done wrong. They knew *both good and evil*, for they had eaten *the fruit of evil*. They had turned away from God, disobeyed His Word and rebelled against Him. The consequence of sin had taken effect: sin had stripped them naked. They were now...
 - imperfect, not perfect
 - guilty of rebelling against God, not innocent
-

- sinful, not sinless
- unrighteous, not righteous

The radical change within their hearts and minds was traumatic. Their hearts and minds had never known anything but perfection. But now their sin had changed all that.

=> They had perfect peace, but sin made them feel disturbance.

=> They had perfect security, but sin made them feel insecure.

=> They had perfect comfort, but sin made them feel restless.

=> They had perfect goodness, but sin made them feel bad and evil.

=> They had perfect joy, but sin made them feel sad.

=> They had perfect love, but sin made them feel rejected.

=> They had perfect strength, but sin made them feel weak.

=> They had perfect control, discipline, and obedience; but sin made them feel guilt and shame.

Adam and Eve stood there, having just sinned, stripped of all the perfection and innocence of their being. They knew — sensed and felt within their minds and hearts — that they were naked. The clothing of their perfection and innocence was now stripped away.

Thought 1. Every human being — every thoughtful and honest person — senses and knows that he is imperfect, that he often comes short of what he should be and do. This is what the Bible calls *sin or unrighteousness*. We just fail to do the right thing and often do the wrong thing. This sense and knowledge of sin — of unrighteousness, of being short — entered the world through Adam. But there is glorious news: God has counteracted the sin of Adam. God has provided a way for us to be saved from sin and death. How? Through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Rom 5:12 *Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned.*

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

1 Pet 2:24 *He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.*

1 Pet 3:18 *For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit.*

2. The clothing of God's glory and righteousness was stripped away. Remember, Adam had been created in the image and likeness of God. Scripture tells us that “God is light” (1 Jn. 1:5) and that “[God] covers Himself with light as with a garment” (Psa 104:2). God's glory is so brilliant and full of so much splendour and light that it has stricken a terrifying fear in men when they have witnessed it. An example is

the shepherds at the birth of Christ (Lk. 2:9-10; see Isa 6:1f). Remember also the transfiguration of Christ: the glory of God changed the whole countenance of Christ. His face shone like the sun and His clothes became as white as light itself (Mt. 17:2f).

Just imagine what the “image and likeness of God” is like in His glory, in the brilliance and splendour of the light of His presence. The point is this: Adam and Eve had been created in the “image of likeness of God.” This was bound to include — at least to some degree — some of the glory and righteousness of God's being. In their perfect bodies and within their perfect environment (the Garden of Eden) some of God's glory and righteousness must have dwelt within and shone out of their bodies. The image and likeness of God — some of His glory and righteousness — must have covered and clothed Adam and Eve in their perfect state of being.

But note what happened when they sinned: they immediately became naked. They lost the covering of God's glory and righteousness. They had turned away from God, rejected His way of life, the way of perfection, glory and righteousness. Apparently, sin caused a radical change within their bodies and countenance, a change so radical that the glory, light and righteousness of God was stripped away from them. Their bodies were radically changed...

- from perfection to imperfection
- from incorruption to corruption
- from glory to dishonour
- from power to weakness
- from spiritual to natural bodies (see 1 Cor 15:42-44)

Thought 1. Scripture declares two significant facts about our spiritual nakedness, about our having lost God's glory.

1) It is sin that causes us to come short of God's glory.

Rom 3:23 *For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*

2) Believers shall receive a perfect body when Christ returns. The glory of God will once again return and *be manifested* in the bodies of believers.

2 Cor 5:2 *Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling.*

1 Cor 15:42-44 *So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.*

1 Cor 15:49 *And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven.*

Phi 3:20 *But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Saviour from there, the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Phil 3:20-21 But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Saviour from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

II. *Genesis 03: 07 Attempt to Cover Sin and Shame*

There is the attempt to cover one's sin and shame. This is always true of the person who sins: he tries to hide and cover his sin to keep others from finding out. Why? Because of shame. He is ashamed of his sin and failure, so he does not want people to know about it. This was true of Adam and Eve. Immediately, when they partook of the forbidden fruit, they felt shame and guilt. Before, they felt no shame, none whatsoever. But now, they felt deep, intense shame. Remember, we see and experience so much sin and shame that we become hardened and immune to both. But not Adam and Eve. They had never seen nor experienced wrong-doing. This was the first sin and shame ever seen or experienced by man. The shame they felt must have been the most intense and terrifying shame imaginable. This is what made them cover themselves with aprons made from fig leaves. They were trying to cover the shame and guilt they were feeling.

Thought 1. Everyone needs to ask himself the same questions Job asked hundreds of years after Adam and Eve:

Job 31:33 “[Have] I concealed my sin as people do, by hiding my guilt in my heart?”

Remember this: Adam and Eve had lost the covering of God's glory, light and righteousness. They were feeling naked and unclothed. They felt what we feel when we are naked and unclothed and ready to go out and move about in public: the instinctive move to reach for clothing and to dress ourselves.

But note this: why did they cover only the sexual organs? There are at least two reasons.

First, it was the only part of the body that leaves could reasonably cover. A person's movement would be greatly hindered if leaves were wrapped around his legs, shoulders and arms, and over his head and face. To cover these body parts would not make much sense — not with aprons of leaves.

Second, the great Lutheran expositor H.C. Leupold is probably right in what he says: Adam and Eve covered that part of the body from which human nature comes. They covered the reproductive organs. Why? Because they instinctively felt that human life was now contaminated by sin. It was from that part of the body that fallen mankind was now to be born. Therefore, Adam and Eve were instinctively led to cover that which best represents the fallen, corrupted nature of man. (H.C. Leupold. *Genesis*, Vol. 1, p. 154).

Thought 1. Some may argue against the inner, instinctive sense of nakedness and sin. For example, there have been tribes of natives in the jungles of the world who wear no clothing whatsoever and feel no shame. Similarly, there are many people in technological cultures who walk about in the presence of their spouses or sexual

partners who feel no shame. There are even nudist colonies scattered around the world, people who live together and wear no clothes, and they sense no shame.

Why do these have no instinctive sense of shame? Because we can adjust and condition ourselves to accept nudity. As human beings, we are creatures of conditioning. We can harden our sensitivity and consciences against sin and shame. Remember, Adam and Eve had not had time to condition themselves against anything. They had just committed the very first sin upon earth. They felt immediate and intense shame. Consequently, they tried to do what we do when we sin: they tried to cover and hide their sin. They instinctively — because of a convicting conscience — tried to cover their nakedness.

***Rom 5:12** Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned.*

***Eph 5:12** For it is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret.*

***Psa 19:12** Who can discern his errors? Forgive my hidden faults.*

***Psa 28:3** Do not drag me away with the wicked, with those who do evil, who speak cordially with their neighbours but harbour malice in their hearts.*

***Isa 30:1** “Woe to the obstinate children,” declares the Lord, “to those who carry out plans that are not mine, forming an alliance, but not by my Spirit, heaping sin upon sin.*

Thought 2. James Montgomery Boice has an excellent discussion on how we go about trying to cover and conceal our sin. His discussion is based upon C.S. Lewis' discussion in Lewis' *The Problem of Pain* (pp. 47-48). Boice says the following: (James Montgomery Boice. *Genesis*, Vol. 1, pp. 147-148)

- 1) We try to conceal our shame and sin by “looking on the outside of things rather than on what is within.” Just as Adam and Eve, we dress ourselves up to cover our sin, who we really are. We dress up as much as possible to attract attention instead of rejection. We also compare ourselves to others and their goodness or sinfulness so that we will feel that our failures are not so bad after all. We are as good and no worse than anyone else.
- 2) We try to conceal our shame and sin by “focusing on corporate sin rather than our wrongdoing.” Boice admits there are corporate or social sins and guilt. But the institutions of society, government and business are formed and operated by us. They are, therefore, sinful — short of what they should be — because of our sin and shortcomings. Society and its institutions are merely extensions of ourselves.
- 3) We try to conceal our shame and sin by “assuming that time conceals sin.” This is seen when we refer to sins that we committed a long time ago. The sins fade in our memory and we refer back to them, not remembering the terrible hurt and pain they caused. They cut the heart of God, who is eternal and who always knows about our terrible sins and depraved nature. In addition, our sins often hurt

others far more deeply than we can imagine. Yet, too often, we refer to our past sins, sometimes even jokingly. We think that time has taken care of our sins and diminished our guilt and shame. But not so — not in the eyes of God. Christ and Christ alone can take care of sin.

- 4) We try to conceal sin by “thinking that there is safety in numbers.” If everyone does it, then I can do it. It must not be so bad a thing. God certainly will not be too harsh with me when everyone else is doing it. He would not reject me — not in the final analysis — not for doing something everyone else is doing.

III. *Genesis 03:08 Sin and Alienation from God*

There is the running away and hiding from God. Note two significant facts in this point.

1. It was apparently the habit of God to appear to Adam and Eve and share with them in fellowship and communion. Remember: fellowship was one of the primary reasons God had created man (see notes, Gen 2:15; 2:16-17). Therefore, God “walking in the garden in the cool of the day” is to be expected. This was His habit, His custom, to come to Adam and Eve and fellowship with them. Does this mean that God appeared to them in bodily form? Several things can be said in seeking the answer to this question.

=> This seems to be the picture painted by verse 8.

=> God — apparently in the person of Jesus Christ — did appear to men throughout the Old Testament (see *Angel of the Lord*, Gen 16:7). This could easily be the way God appeared to Adam and Eve and fellowshiped with them. In the future — when the new heavens and earth are created — Scripture emphatically declares that all believers will have face to face fellowship with God. Why would God have done any less for Adam in his perfect world? Adam and Eve were created perfect and placed in a perfect world. Consequently, they must have had face to face contact with God.

The comments of H.C. Leupold — because of his great scholarship — are helpful at this point:

*Yahweh God is represented as “walking about in the Garden.” The almost casual way in which this is remarked indicates that this did not occur for the first time just then.... That God had repeatedly done this is quite feasible.... There is extreme likelihood that the Almighty assumed some form analogous to the human form which was made in His image. Nor is there anything far-fetched [to say that]... our first parents had freely met with and conversed with their heavenly Father (H.C. Leupold. *Genesis*, Vol. 1, p. 155)*

2. Adam and Eve ran away and hid themselves from God. What an abrupt change! They had often heard God walking about and calling out to them in the garden. Their hearts had always leaped with joy, excitement and great expectation when they heard the sound of His strong, yet tender and welcoming voice. They had always run to meet Him, just as a child runs to meet his father who has been away for a while.

But not now, not this time. Something terrible had happened since God's last visit. Adam and Eve...

- had turned away from God
- had disobeyed God
- had rebelled against God
- had decided to do what they wanted instead of what God wanted
- had chosen to follow self and Satan instead of following God

The result had been catastrophic: their whole being — both inwardly and outwardly, both spirit and body — had been marred and corrupted. They were stripped naked: no longer perfect and innocent. They no longer possessed the glow of God's glory, light and righteousness. They were now separated, cut off, alienated from God. This is the reason Adam and Eve fled and tried to hide from God. They did not want...

- to face God
- to face the fact of their sin
- to give an account for their behaviour
- to suffer the judgment and punishment

Very simply stated, they did not want to face the consequences of their sin. God had made it clear: if you partake of the forbidden fruit, *you shall die*. No doubt, God had explained exactly what He meant by *death*, just as He has to explain death (that it means separation not annihilation) to us in the Holy Scriptures. Adam and Eve knew exactly what lay ahead. It was this — the judgment and punishment of death — that made them flee and hide from God.

Thought 1. Man still tries to run away from God, to hide from Him. He tries to run and hide...

- by staying away from church
- by refusing to sit under the preaching of God's Word
- by never seeking God
- by never reading and studying the Bible and by never praying
- by refusing to allow loved ones and neighbours to talk about God
- by denying the existence of God
- by ignoring God
- by neglecting God
- by pushing thoughts about God out of his mind
- by denying there is such a thing as sin, guilt or conscience
- by stressing the physical world of science, technology, philosophy and psychology and minimizing or denying the spiritual world

On and on the list could go. People try to hide behind everything imaginable to keep from facing God. But no person — not a single person — can hide from God. Everyone of us will have to face God — someday, someplace — we will all have to stand face to face with Him. No person can hide from Him. He sees us, no matter where we are and what we are doing, good or bad.

***Psa 139:7-12** Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast. If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me," even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you.*

***Prov 15:3** The eyes of the Lord are everywhere, keeping watch on the wicked and the good.*

***Jer 23:24** "Can anyone hide in secret places so that I cannot see him?" declares the Lord. "Do not I fill heaven and earth?" declares the Lord.*

***Mat 25:32-34, 41** "All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world.... Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.'"*

***Rom 14:12** So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God.*

***2 Cor 5:10** For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.*

***Rev 20:12** And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books.*

IV. Genesis 03:09 Alienation from God and the Need for Reconciliation

There is the alienation (separation) from God and the breaking of God's heart. Adam's sin separated (alienated) man from God and broke God's heart. The separation is seen in Adam running away and hiding from God's voice, and the broken heart of God is seen in His seeking after Adam (v. 9). Note that Adam is not seeking after God, but God is seeking after Adam.

Note God's question: "Adam, where are you?" This is a startling question, for God knew exactly where Adam was. God knows everything. What, then, is God doing?

1. This is the call of the *seeking Saviour*. God's heart had been broken by Adam's sin. In His infinite knowledge...

- God saw all the ages, centuries, decades, years and days of sin and shame that lay ahead for fallen man: acts of lying, stealing, cheating, killing, wars, maiming, immorality — all the broken homes and lives — all the pain and hurt and suffering that would be borne by men, women and children down through the days and centuries of history.
- God saw the great price He would have to pay to complete His purpose upon earth. God saw that He would have to give His Son to pay the penalty for man's sin.

As stated, God's heart was broken — broken because He saw the terrible sin of man and the great price He, as God, would have to pay to save man from sin. God is love — His very nature is love — therefore, God set out to demonstrate His love. God went after Adam, went seeking after him: "Adam, where are you?" This is the call of God as the seeking Saviour.

Mat 22:3 He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come.

Luke 15:4 "Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Does he not leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it?"

Luke 19:10 "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

Rev 3:20 Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.

Thought 2. Arthur W. Pink says, "This was not the voice of the policeman, but the call of a yearning love. Dark as is the background here, it only serves more clearly to reveal the riches of God's grace. Highly favoured as our first parents were, blessed with everything the heart could desire, only a single restriction placed upon their liberty in order to test their loyalty and fidelity to their Maker — how fearful then their fall, how terrible their sin! What wonder if God had consigned them to 'everlasting chains under darkness,' as He did the angels when they sinned? What wonder if His wrath had instantly consumed them? Such would have been no undue severity. It would simply have been bare justice. It was all they deserved. But no. In His infinite condescension and abundant mercy, God deigned to be the Seeker, and came down to Eden crying, *Where art thou?*" (Arthur Pink. *Gleanings in Genesis*, p. 41).

2. This is the call of *godly conviction*. God knew exactly where Adam was. The question, "Adam, where are you?" was not for God's information; it was to stir Adam to think about where he was. He was running away and hiding from God. God was calling out to Adam in order to arouse conviction within him. Adam needed to think about what he was doing: he was running away and hiding from the only Person...
- who could reconcile and help him

- who could correct, rectify and salvage the situation
- who could give Him guidance and direction, peace and security, love and joy, hope and life upon this earth
- who could save and restore him to his former position of perfection, glory and righteousness
- who could tell him how to escape the judgment of death that was to soon fall upon and snatch him from this world

Remember: Adam had lost his being of perfection, glory and righteousness. There was no longer a glow within his heart nor shining in his body. He had been stripped naked of perfection, glory and righteousness. Remember also that Adam had lived in a perfect world. The only way he could have known what death meant was for God to explain the meaning to him. This is, apparently, what God did. Adam knew that he was to die.

Adam needed to think about these things; he needed to sense conviction, sense his need for God, sense his need to be reconciled to God. Adam needed to seek after God, not run away from Him.

Psa 38:4 My guilt has overwhelmed me like a burden too heavy to bear.

Psa 51:3 For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.

John 16:8 "When he comes he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment."

Acts 16:28-31 But Paul shouted, "Don't harm yourself! We are all here!" The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. He then brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved — you and your household."

3. This is the call of *God's justice*. Adam's sin was a terrible sin against God. In fact, Adam's sin was the same terrible sin that we commit against God. Adam did the same terrible thing that we do when we sin:

=> turned away from God

=> disobeyed God

=> rebelled against God

He refused to live for God, refused to do what God said. He rebelled against God, committed the most violent act a person can ever commit: that of rebellion.

When God created Adam, He told Adam the penalty of sin: the penalty was death. Therefore, God's call to Adam was a summons to judgment. Adam was to appear before the court of God and face the sentence of death. He had to bear the judgment for his rebellion and insurrection against God.

Thought 1. A person may try to run away and hide from God. He may deny, ignore and neglect God. But the day is coming when God will call him and everyone else before His court of justice. And every person — all who ran away and tried to hide from God — will be judged...

- judged because they turned away from God
- judged because they disobeyed God
- judged because they rebelled against God

Mat 25:31-32 *“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.”*

2 Th 1:7-8 *And give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.*

Heb 9:27 *Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment.*

2 Pet 2:9 *If this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment.*

2 Pet 3:7 *By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.*

Jude 1:14-15 *Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men: “See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones to judge everyone, and to convict all the ungodly of all the ungodly acts they have done in the ungodly way, and of all the harsh words ungodly sinners have spoken against him.”*

Rev 20:12-13 *And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done.*

Jer 16: 16-17 *“But now I will send for many fishermen,” declares the LORD, “and they will catch them. After that I will send for many hunters, and they will hunt them down on every mountain and hill and from the crevices of the rocks. My eyes are on all their ways; they are not hidden from me, nor is their sin concealed from my eyes.”*

V. Genesis 03:10–13 Disturbed Relationships and Divisions

There is the disturbed relationships and the severe divisions caused by sin. Note two significant facts.

1. Sin disturbs a man's relationship with God, and sin causes a division between him and God. This has already been seen when Adam ran away and hid from God.

The perfect relationship he had known with God no longer existed. He had shared and fellowshiped face to face with God, but not now. Adam now feared God (v. 10). Note why he feared God: because he was naked. Adam was...

- no longer perfect and innocent
- no longer full of God's glory and righteousness
- no longer like God
- no longer in the image and likeness of God

Adam was now totally different from God. A wall of disturbed feelings and division separated Adam from God. Adam was the sinner, and God was the perfect and holy God, the glorious and righteous God. Adam was now naked, stripped of God-likeness. If he faced God, he would have to bear the penalty and judgment for sin, for having disturbed the relationship between himself and God. He would be judged and condemned for sin, for causing the great division — the great alienation and separation — between himself and God. This is the reason Adam feared God.

Simply stated, he was naked before God, alienated and separated from God. He had disturbed the relationship between himself and God, created a great gulf — a terrifying division — between man and God. And Adam was to be judged for his terrible sin.

Thought 1. Sin has caused a great gulf — a terrifying division — between us and God. Our relationship with God has been so disturbed by sin that we are doomed, doomed unless we cast ourselves totally upon God and commit all we are and have to follow God. Sin separates us from God.

Mat 15:8 *'These people honour me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.'*

Eph 4:17-19 *So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more.*

Psa 66:18 *If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened.*

Isa 59:2 *But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.*

Isa 64:7 *No one calls on your name or strives to lay hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us and made us waste away because of our sins.*

2. Sin disturbs man's relationship with others and causes severe division (v. 11-13). God asked Adam two questions: Who told you that you were naked? Have you disobeyed me; have you eaten the forbidden fruit? Note three facts.

- a. Adam blamed Eve (v. 12). In essence, he said: “The woman gave me the fruit. I did not eat it until she enticed me to eat it. I would have never touched it if she had not enticed me.”

Thought 1. This is the way of sin, blaming others and trying to escape as much guilt as possible. Whatever happens to us — no matter the circumstances — we often lay the major blame at the feet of...

- husband
- wife
- parent
- in-laws
- employer
- employees
- government
- economy
- conditions
- situations or circumstances

- b. Adam blamed God (v. 12). Note how insidious this is: “The woman *you* gave to be with me, she enticed me to eat the forbidden fruit” (v. 12). Emphasize the word “*you*” and the fact is clearly seen. This is the depth of sin: blaming God for our failure, shortcoming, circumstances, sickness, disease, death — for whatever evil and bad thing happens to us. Yet, this is exactly what Adam did and what we sometimes do. We often ask why God let such a terrible thing happen to us, as though God caused the temptation or tragedy. But note: God did not tempt Adam, nor does God tempt us and cause bad things to happen to us. It was Adam's sin and it is our own sin that causes corruption and death in the world.

Adam desired and craved the forbidden fruit. He knew exactly what he was doing. Scripture is clear about this: he was not deceived by anyone (1 Tim 2:14). He and he alone made the choice to eat the forbidden fruit.

James 1:13-15 *When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.*

James 4:1-3 *What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.*

- c. Eve blamed the serpent, the devil. She simply said, “The serpent deceived me” (v. 13). Note: this was the truth, but Eve still chose — made the decision — to eat the forbidden fruit.

Note this also: Eve did not accept blame for her sin any more than Adam did. She blamed someone else, the devil. By so doing, she plummeted to the depth of sin that Adam had fallen into: she indirectly charged God with being the cause of the sin. She was saying that God could have kept the devil from tempting her, that it was He, God, who had allowed the devil to enter the Garden and entice her.

Thought 1. Note how progressive sin is — how sin just grows and grows once it has been committed:

=> Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit.

=> Adam blamed Eve, and Eve blamed the devil.

=> Then, Adam and Eve both blamed God.

Note also how the relationships between all the parties were tragically affected.

=> Adam and Eve's love and oneness of spirit were greatly disturbed.

=> Love and oneness of spirit with God was greatly disturbed.

They were both fallen from their perfect state. They were now blaming each other, criticizing and accusing each other. What a terrible and devastating tragedy sin is!

Rom 2:1 *You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge the other, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things.*

Job 9:20 *Even if I were innocent, my mouth would condemn me; if I were blameless, it would pronounce me guilty.*

Prov 20:6 *Many claim to have unfailing love, but a faithful man who can find?*

Prov 30:12 *Those who are pure in their own eyes and yet are not cleansed of their filth.*

Jer 2:35 *You say, 'I am innocent; he is not angry with me.' But I will pass judgment on you because you say, 'I have not sinned.'*

Thought 2. We must confess and repent of our sins. God has provided salvation — eternal life — for us, but we must be honest and quit blaming others. We must do just what Scripture says: repent and confess our sins.

Mat 3:2 *And saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."*

Luke 13:3 *"I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish."*

Acts 2:38 *Peter replied, "Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."*

Acts 3:19 *Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.*

Acts 8:22 *Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord. Perhaps he will forgive you for having such a thought in your heart.*

Acts 17:30 *In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent.*

1 John 1:9 *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.*

2 Chr 7:14 *If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.*

Isa 55:7 *Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon.*

Ezek 18:21 *“But if a wicked man turns away from all the sins he has committed and keeps all my decrees and does what is just and right, he will surely live; he will not die. ■*