

The Wednesday Word, Dec. 15, 2010: Jesus, Our Hiding Place

How do we, with confidence, come before the all-holy God, and stand in His presence? This is the great question for both the unsaved and saved alike. The unsaved person, under the conviction of the Holy Spirit, knows that his sin has separated him from God (Isa 59:2). Likewise, the believer, through the ministry of the Word and the Spirit, is conscious that his best efforts are flawed and that his very righteousness is like a filthy rag (Isa 64:6). How then can either of them come before God and receive a welcome?

No doubt, when he sinned, this was Adam's question. Notice how he answers his own inquiry by attempting to put fig leaves together for a hasty and futile covering. Somehow he knew that, because of sin, what he really needed was a hiding place, a covering that left him unexposed to judgment. But his fig leaves were inadequate---and he knew it. Sensing their inadequacy, he rushed into the bushes to hide when God came near. But even then, concealed in the bushes, he knew there was no hiding place. (It's interesting to note that man's impulse, because of sin, is to hide from God---even as believers we often make this ancient mistake).

But sin is no barrier to grace. Although man is the hider, God is the seeker and in grace He came to seek and to save that which was lost (Luke 19:10). In grace, the Lord called Adam and began to tell of the coming deliverer, the Seed of the Woman. In Him, men would find a better covering than fig leaves and a much better hiding place than bushes. In grace the Lord took an innocent animal and killed it in order to cover His erring children and to point them to He who was to come. In that day, God revealed Himself as the God who hates and justly punishes sin, yet who, by grace, takes the sinner's side against Satan, the sinner's enemy (Gen 3:15). Because of the promise of the seed of the woman, the true "hiding place", Adam could now discard his make shift concealment and know, by faith, that with God's new covering he could stand before the Almighty without fear or shame.

We too should hear the good news as Adam did----- from the lips of God Himself. When God say it that settles it! We believe, not because the truth feels right, but because God has spoken (Ps 32:4; Ps 138:2)! This is the foundation of our faith.

Adam's fall gave God the opportunity to demonstrate His character of abounding grace towards us. We deserve nothing; yet there is nothing God will not do for us. Calvary proves that. Through Christ alone He gives us the highest place in heaven and the nearest position to the throne (Eph 2:6). In Christ alone we are found before God. By one sacrifice He has perfected us and brought us back to God forever (Heb 10:14). It is high time, therefore, to abandon all other hiding places and be clothed in Christ alone.

Here is an amazing Hymn that beautifully illustrates this point.

“Hail, sovereign love that first began
The scheme to rescue fallen man!
Hail, matchless, free, eternal grace,
That gave my soul a hiding-place!

Against the God who rules the sky
I fought, with hand uplifted high;
Despised the mention of His grace,
Too proud to seek a hiding-place!

Enwrapped in thick Egyptian night,
And fond of darkness more than light,
Madly I ran the sinful race,
Secure, without a hiding-place!

But thus th'Eternal counsel ran:

“Almighty Love, arrest that man!”
I felt the arrows of distress,
And found I had no hiding place!

Indignant Justice stood in view,
To Sinai's fiery mount I flew;
But Justice cried, with frowning face,
“This mountain is no hiding-place!”

Ere long, a heav'nly voice I heard,
And Mercy's angel form appeared,
Who led me on, with gentle pace
To Jesus as my hiding-place.

On Him almighty vengeance fell,
That must have sunk a world to hell;
He bore it for the chosen race,
And thus became their Hiding-place.

Should storms of sev'n-fold vengeance roll,
And shake this earth from pole to pole,
No flaming bolt could daunt my face,
For Jesus is my hiding place.

A few more rolling suns, at most,
Will land me safe on Canaan's coast.
Where I shall sing the song of grace,
To Jesus Christ, my hiding-place!

And that's the Gospel Truth