The Results of the Fall – BD18-02

We are considering the work of Satan, and this morning we are going to look at the results of man’s fall into sin. Now I don’t know why you’re this morning, but I trust that you’re hear in order to learn what God thinks. And if you’re going to learn what God thinks, then you’re going to have to learn Bible doctrine. That is the thing in which this church majors in every activity in which it is engaged in one way or another. It is the pastor’s responsibility to study the Word of God, to find out what it says, and to share it with the flock—that is feeding God’s people. In the process of doing this, his heart is blessed, and he finds himself in state of considerable enthusiasm over what God has given, and he stands up before the congregation and he tends to have the feeling that the congregation shares his enthusiasm and blessing for what God has brought into his heart through a study of the Word.

However, the old sin nature lies within each believer, coiled like a snake, ready and waiting for an opportunity to strike. So there are certain types, a pastor learns, who are in the congregation who are preoccupied with not simply learning what God has to say to them, but they’re preoccupied with trying to figure out who he has in mind with a particular line of instruction and a particular line of application. There won’t be anybody here this morning, as always, who will be the target of what we have to say. But the Word of God does have a strange way of being pertinent and current. It has a strange way of coming up just when a certain situation to which it is applicable exists maybe within the congregation, which of course is what you would expect if God the Holy Spirit is directing in the preparation of the Word of God.

If what is taught is legitimate, and (in the passage) if it is in the genuine exposition of the Word, and if the application is in keeping with that exposition with that interpretation, then it would behoove the believer to receive this as something that God the Holy Spirit is bringing. But the old sin nature tends to come up with a defense. One of the favorite defenses is, “Oh, I don’t object to what you say. It’s not what you say. It’s how you say it.” This means, “You’ve said it in such a way that you’ve stripped me psychologically naked, and I see myself for the real thing that I am, and that makes me uncomfortable. And I would prefer to be able to listen to the Word of God and not be exposed in such an uncomfortable light to myself.” I know exactly what you mean when you say, “It’s not what you say. It’s how you say it.” And I’ve had that type for many years.

Usually, I can assure you, I pay little attention to other people’s business, or to their operating. As a matter of fact, I couldn’t care less. So there won’t be any conscious application. You may sit back at ease. If you hear anything that sounds like you, take it from God the Holy Spirit.

Those of you who are visitors, of course, will be most at ease here this morning because you know that nobody knows you so you won’t be hung up on the speaker. You will be able to receive anything that strikes your heart as coming from God the Holy Spirit.

One of our Academy parents called me the other day and said, “Can I come right over and get a couple of tapes on the marriage series. Our pastor, here in one of the Lutheran churches in town, wants the tapes and we’re going to use it Sunday morning in one of our ladies classes in starting a series.” Now I know that all those ladies are going to feel absolutely at ease because they know I’m not talking about them. They’re going to get mad maybe at what they hear, and get uncomfortable. So the best way is to listen to the tapes and you won’t feel that anybody is talking about you.

And if someone offers you an explanation of what we have in mind behind the sermon, or who we have in mind, I suggest you cut him down. I suggest that you don’t offer any information to him if he inquires either. You’d be surprised how people are eager to get to me after the service. People come up to me and say, “Was that so-and-so you were talking about?” That’s the bolder and open type. I like them better. But I won’t tell them anyhow, even if I did have anybody in mind, which I don’t. But if I did, I wouldn’t tell them. But some people just come right up.

Alright, we are here to learn the Word of God and I trust that you will approach it in that way. We are considering Satan, the enemy of our souls, and his demons. Satan fell from his place of honor in the third heaven in his rebellion against God through negative volition. Satan, through deceit, led Eve into sin by implanting false ideas in her mind, which was the only way he could get to her. The only sin she could commit in the Garden of Eden was the sin of going negative toward what God had expressed as his will.

Adam, when he discovered what his wife had done, knowingly, willfully, and deliberately followed her into sin. For this reason, he is the transmitter of the sin nature. Adam and Eve died spiritually instantly when they ate of that fruit, and they each received an old sin nature which was now under Satan’s control. The first thing that came from that old sin nature under Satan’s inspiration was an act of human good in the form of fig leaf loincloths that they wove for themselves in order to cover their nakedness. This was an act of legalism. It was an attempt to meet the sin problem and to appease God.

Satan wants to be like God, so immediately he moved these two people into a relationship of trying to create some kind of perfect environment. Socialism is an attempt to get people to be related to one another on a peaceful basis in order to create a perfect environment.

Now the scene in Eden is set. We are ready now for the appearance and the entrance of Jehovah Elohim who is the pre-incarnate Lord Jesus Christ. In Genesis 3, beginning at verse 8, we have the appearance of God in the garden. “And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day.” Adam and Eve heard Jehovah Elohim in the garden later the same day on which they had sinned. It was in the cool of the day which is the evening when the breezes blow and the sun was setting. It was probably the usual time of day when God met with them to instruct them in His Word. This is when they had their Bible classes.

Adam and Eve on this occasion, however, hid from God behind the trees. Immediately their spiritual disorientation was evident that they thought that they could hide from the omniscience of God behind the trees. This did show that their fellowship with God was gone, and the reason for this was that their human spirits were dead. They had no basis of contact as of this point with God. And they couldn’t approach God. All they had now was rationalism, and they can’t find God through rationalism. They had empiricism of their senses, and they can’t find God through your senses, so they were helpless. When God appeared on the scene, they didn’t want anything to do with Him.

Something had obviously gone wrong on the inside of them. The Bible says that the natural man is called a “soulish” man (“psuchikos”). This is because he has a dead human spirit. All he has now is a soul (1 Corinthians 2:14), so he’s called a “soulish” man. These two people were now “soulish” beings.

So let’s review for a moment here exactly what their status was. Something had happened. They had a body. This body had within it an immaterial being. It had a soul and it had a spirit. By the act of sin, the spirit was dead. The soul continued to live—the ego, the real person. The soul had a mind. Up to now their mind had been on divine viewpoint. Now their mind had shifted to human viewpoint. The mind had in it self-awareness. They had been up to now preoccupied with Jehovah Elohim. Now they were totally preoccupied with themselves. The mind had conscience. Up to now their conscience had been on the absolute standards of righteousness which God had given them. Now they were on the relative standards of their human viewpoint. They had will. Their will was now negative toward God where it had been completely positive to Him. They also had emotion. Their emotion no longer appreciated God, and consequently they no longer loved God. This was immediately evident when He came into the garden and they wanted nothing to do with Him.

The reason this condition has developed was because a new factor had been introduced into the human being. Into the nature of man comes a sin nature which we call the old sin nature because it comes from the old Adam. The old sin nature is a distorter of the soul. It warps and it twists, and it is driven by a pattern of lusts. The word “lusts” has a bad connotation to us. It comes from the Greek word which means simply intense desire. It can be intense desire for good things or it can be intense desire for bad things. So the word lusts in itself does not mean that it’s only bad things that it desires, for the sin nature desires many good things in the form of human good. But it is the force which drives and motivates the sin nature. In each of us this morning there is a pattern of desires which arises from our old sin nature, all of which God condemns.

So here’s the condition of these two people on this day on which they sinned, at the close of the day when God comes into the garden. Since the old sin nature has come into the human race, nobody has escaped being born with it. Genesis 5:3 tells us that Adam reproduced in his own image and consequently passed on this sin nature to all of his posterity. Genesis 5:3 says, “And Adam lived 130 years and begot a son in his own likeness after his image and called his name Seth.” So this child is born and the father passes on this old sin nature to him. Romans 3:10-12 tells us the same thing as well as Psalm 58:3. Since this time only one man has been born without a sin nature and that was the Lord Jesus Christ. He escaped it because He did not have a human father. For this reason, Hebrews 4:15 tells us, “For we have not a high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tested like as we, yet without sin (that is without a sin nature.” His virgin birth protected Him from the sin nature.

Here is what happened. This is what they received. Just to review, the old sin nature can be viewed in a diagram in the shape of a diamond. It is important to understand what follows now in human history in Satan’s relationship and manipulation of human beings through the demon host as we’re going to look at on these Sunday mornings. It is important to understand what has happened within the being of man that gives Satan his contact point, the sin nature.

As you read through the Bible you’ll discover, that out of unregenerate man there obviously come evils. The Bible makes it clear that from the nature of man there springs sins. So we say that the sin nature has an area of weakness and it produces sins. Mark 7:21 says, “For within out of the heart of man (referring to the old sin nature) proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, theft, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, and evil eye, blasphemy, foolish. All these things come from within and defile the man.” Where do they come from within the man? Right here, they come from the old sin nature.

But there is another thing we discover as we read through Scripture. We find that the Bible also indicates that man is productive of good things. So, we call this human good. Man has a righteousness and the Bible recognizes that he does. In Isaiah 64:6, we’re told, “But we are all as an unclean thing and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.” God recognizes that there is human righteousness—human good. The Lord told the disciples that unless their righteousness exceed that of the Pharisees they would be doomed. They had a righteousness in the form of human good.

So as we read through the Scriptures we discover a strange thing about this old sin nature. It not only produces sinful things, but it produces things that are good. The things of human good, are they sin? No, these are not sin. There is no moral issue in human good. These are simply good things that people do. But God rejects this just as he rejects sins. Sins have been dealt with by being borne on the cross of Jesus Christ, and human good was rejected at the cross, and it will yet be judged.

There is something else about this old sin nature. That is that it has trends. Our old sin natures are not all the same. We tend to have a trend toward one direction or another, generally in two directions. One is toward legalism, or asceticism, and we put on a good front. You may compare this to your personality. All of us have a temperament which the old sin nature expresses, but we don’t show our temperament. When we deal with people, most of us put on a good front. On the other hand, some people don’t mind putting on a wicked image. That’s how their old sin nature expresses itself, through the tendency toward license, or lasciviousness. God rejects everything that comes from the old sin nature, both good and bad. He considers it incorrigible (Jeremiah 13:23).

So, some people have an old sin nature which has a trend toward evil, and they act wild and mean and sinful. They’re the criminals, the drunks, and the violent people. On the other hand, some people have a tendency toward a good image, so they’re the beautiful people, the sociable, and the generous people. But both of them, in God’s eyes, have nothing that is good. 1 Samuel 16:7 reminds us that man looks on the outward but man looks on the inward. When God looks on the inward, that’s what he sees.

When He comes into the garden, He’s looking at these two people that He made. They have just sinned, and into their lives has come this quality of the old sin nature, and this is what God sees. Unless you look at it and see this from God’s point of view, what follows will not make much sense.

I grant you that you can educate the old sin nature. You can train this thing to behave itself. Of course, that’s part of what morality does. The point of morality is to impose certain restrictions upon it. But never forget that the old sin nature produces human good. And God calls our human good dead works in Hebrews 6:1. God condemns anything that comes from the old sin nature, good or bad (Romans 8:8, 1 Corinthians 3:13-15, Isaiah 64:6). There are other terms in the Bible for the old sin nature. It is sometimes called “the old man.” We use this term because the sin nature originated with Adam (Romans 5:12, Ephesians 4:22, Colossians 3:9). Sometimes it is called “the flesh” (Romans 7:18, Ephesians 2:3, Galatians 5:16). It’s called the flesh because it resides inside of our human bodies. It’s part of the soul structure. It’s also sometimes called “the heart” (Jeremiah 17:9, Matthew 15:19, Matthew 12:34, Mark 7:21).

In the book of Romans, it is pretty regularly identified by the word “sin” in the singular—not sins, but sin. When the book of Romans uses the word “sin,” it’s referring to the old sin nature. Now the death of the Lord Jesus Christ has borne all of the sin of the old sin nature, that it inspires. So as we saw many months ago, sin is no longer an issue. The wall that has divided man from God has been removed. 2 Peter 2:24 tells us that He bore our sins in his own body, and so the sin problem has been paid and removed. Human good, however, has not been judged. There is a time coming when your human good will be judged. The issue will be dealt with for the Christian at the Judgment Seat of Christ. For the unsaved person it will be at the Great White Throne judgment. The issue is not only between good and evil, but between good and good—God’s good and Satan’s good. People are doing things that are good in order to go to heaven. That’s why it’s important to understand how the old sin nature works, because people are being deceived that they’re on their way to heaven because they’re doing good works. They give money to the church. They do deeds of kindness. They’re church members.

Luke 18:9-12 identifies this as a false hope. Jesus speaks the parable about the two men, the Publican and the Pharisee. He lists all the things that he does. He says, “I’m not an extortionist, I’m not unjust, I’m not an adulterer, I’m not a tax collector, I fast twice a week, and I give tithes of all I possess. And the Pharisee considered this human good acceptable to God for his sins.

Now was there anything with what the Pharisee was claiming as good. Not in the world. Those were good things, but they stemmed from his old sin nature and God rejected them. They didn’t mean a thing. Titus 3:5 says, “Not be our works of righteousness but by His mercy He has saved us.” Salvation, therefore, is accepting the divine good of Jesus Christ in place of your own. That’s what Ephesians 2:8-9 means. Galatians 3:26 says that we’re saved by grace. It’s accepting His divine good.

Someday the unbelievers are going to have their human good paraded before them. Since the issue of the cross is settled, nobody will ever be faced with any single sin—saved or unsaved. The only thing that they will face will be their good (2 Corinthians 5:21). The cross has settled the sin issue. Revelation 20:12-15 tell us about a Great White Throne judgment to take place at the end of the thousand-year reign of Christ upon the earth. In that passage, we read that all those who are unbelievers stand before God. “I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened. And another book was opened which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works.”

Now this passage is generally misconstrued by people to thinking that what God is doing is opening up a book in which all of your evil works and sins are listed. But obviously, if Jesus Christ has performed a complete work of salvation on the cross, then all sin has been paid for, and God cannot face you with a single sin even if He wanted to. His Son has provided a perfect salvation. So there is no record kept of your sins. God does not expose your sins to the world. God does not expose your sin. He covers it. He removes it, and it’s done for. Nobody is seeing it in heaven, nor will they ever in eternity.

But these people are going to stand before God. These are the people who have once rejected the cross. These are the people who maybe, like yourself, have come up, and God says, “I’ve got some divine good to bring you into heaven.” And you said, “Forget it, God. I’ve got something just as good. Here are all my good works.” And you lay them out and you pile them up. And now God says, “Alright, let’s judge your good works. Let’s evaluate what you’ve done.”

And the book is open and there you are. You look it over and you say, “Yeah, that’s a good record. That’s an accurate record. I see all those things I did, every year. I see you’ve got a good record of what I did.” And so they weigh up all of your righteousnesses. There’s nothing wrong with them. But when it matches against the infinite demand of the perfection of God: Do you know what the glory of God is? It’s that we fall short of the essence of God. Now, my dear friend, how are you going to stand before God and meet the essence of God? The essence of God says that God is sovereign, He’s got absolute kingly control, He is absolute perfect righteousness, there is no evil, no wrongdoing, He is absolute justice, He’s absolutely fair, He’s love, He’s eternal life, He’s omniscient, He’s omnipotent, He’s omnipresent, He’s immutable, and He’s absolutely true. How are you going to meet that with your human good? You can’t. You’re dead.

And so, God has no alternative but to say, “I’m sorry. Your human was not enough. You’re condemned to the lake of fire and brimstone.” Remember, everybody who is in Hades at this moment, waiting for the transfer into hell, made this choice. God gives everybody who has ever lived an opportunity to come to consciousness of Himself, and an opportunity of salvation. Everybody who is waiting to be moved into hell, and who will enter hell, is doing it because they said, “I’ll take my human good over God’s divine good.”

Well, the books are opened, and it’s not enough. Death and Hades, in verse 14, cast into the lake of fire (the second death). Verse 15 says, “Whosoever was not written in the book of life…” And they could not be in the book of life because their good works were not adequate. Whosoever was not found in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire. How are you going to get sufficient good? You receive that by accepting God in Jesus Christ (Romans 4:3-5).

Ah, but you’re a Christian. You say, “I’m past that. I’m not worried about that. I’m not going to play the fool and try to face God on my human good.” But you, as a Christian, are still confronted with this old sin nature, because within you, when you came into the Christian life, came this old sin nature, with your salvation. Now somebody rules. There is in your life a throne. It is your volition and your choice and your decision as to who is on the throne that runs your life. At any single moment, one or the other does so. Everybody in this room at this moment has either God the Holy Spirit on the throne of his life, or the old sin nature.

If God the Holy Spirit is on the throne of your life, you’re open, you’re receptive, you’re going positive toward the Word of God, and God is going to bless you. If you sit here, and the old sin nature, because of some unconfessed sin, is on the throne, you’re going to understand very little and you’re going to be more negative than when you walked in. While the old sin nature is on the throne, you produce human good. While God the Holy Spirit is on the throne, you provide divine good.

Someday we Christians will face what the Bible calls the Judgment Seat of Christ. 1 Corinthians 3:11-15 describes to us how our works as Christians will be taken, they will be evaluated, they will be tested by the fire of God’s judgment, and what is human good will be burned. At that point, God is going to judge the human good of believers. He didn’t judge it at the cross. He just rejected it at the cross, and He would have nothing to do with it when it came to salvation. But all the human good we crank out has yet to be judged, and it will be judged there at the Judgment Seat of Christ. All of the human good of the unbeliever will be judged at the Great White Throne, and it’s going to be condemned.

I want to warn you about something, as to what is human good and what is divine good. There’s a lot of enthusiasm and a lot of glow on the part of Christians concerning things that can be done in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ—things that churches do, things that religious organizations do that are lauded as great works of God. One of the signs that God is working is how big the pile is. The bigger the pile, the more confidence people have that God is in it. So it’s the old numbers racket that Satan has instilled into the human heart. Satan came along and he started whispering. He said, “Listen. The more floor space you have, the more chairs you have, and the more people sitting in it, the more spiritual is your operation, and the more God is blessing, and the more God is prospering you. This is the numbers racket.

This is akin to this: Did you ever have somebody come to you and say, “Oh, the Lord has certainly been good to me.” They mean that they needed a loan to buy a car, and they tricked the banker into making the loan, and they said, “Oh, the Lord has certainly been good to me.” It’s hard for me not to say, “Was He bad to you last week?” When is God ever not good to you? When is He ever productive of anything but what is good? But it is not a numbers statistical basis of evaluation.

I remind you that in the analogy of what is human good is compared to what? Hay, wood, and stubble. But what is divine good compared to? Gold, silver, and gems. Now, pound for pound, what makes the bigger pile? Hay, wood, and stubble, or gold, silver, and precious gems. And I think the analogy is with merit. The numbers racket is a satanic delusion that the bigger the pile, the more God’s blessing is there. That’s what human good does. Human good looks so impressive. It looks so numerically impressive that people think this must be of God.

Well, the believer is going to be judged. He’s going to discover that all that he created that was human good is burned, and it’s destroyed, and it’s removed. And God rewards him in eternity for only that which came through the motivation of God the Holy Spirit. I remind you again that human good is not sin. The Bible distinguishes between personal sins and these works of human righteousness, though both are rejected by God. Human good does not involve a moral issue. Is it a moral issue when you walk up to that offering box, having sat here this morning in carnality, with the old sin nature dominating your life, resistance to the will and the plan of God in your heart, sin that you have refused to confess, and you go to that offering box and you put in $100, is that an act of immorality. No. There is no moral issue involved. You just lost $100 to human good. I don’t want to discourage you this morning, but I’d like to see you get your money’s worth, so to speak.

It’s not a moral issue because you’re a church member. It’s not a moral issue because you do an act of kindness. But human good is doing it under the inspiration of the old sin nature. You do such a simple thing like give a glass of cold water to a person who needs it, and you do it under the direction of the Spirit of God, and it’s rewarded. God doesn’t forget it. Human good is from our carnal condition. Divine good is from our spiritual condition.

Now how do you handle human good in your life? Well, first of all, you try to avoid it by being filled with the Spirit. You see that known sin is confessed. You cannot sin when you are controlled by God the Holy Spirit. You have to be tempted to sin, and then you have to respond positively. It is not a sin to be tempted. It is only a sin when you respond. When you succumb, the Holy Spirit is grieved, and the old sin nature moves over and takes the throne. Thereafter, all of your non-moral acts become human good. You confess your sin, the Holy Spirit moves back on the throne, and the same non-moral act becomes divine good, and God reward you for it. The evidence of the old sin nature controlling your life is the outward sins which we perform.

Where did this idea come from? Well, immediately when Adam and Eve sinned, they moved to an act of human good. Who do you think moved them to that? This old sin nature within them was being manipulated by Satan. He said, “Here we go. We’re going to get ourselves organized with a little bit of good.” So he was the first sinner through negative volition, and he brought human good into the hearts of these people. It is a mistake to think that only what society views as evil is what originates with Satan, because Satan is trying to create a perfect environment. So there is not only this evil, but there is this conflict of good against good.

There is an interesting quote out of Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer’s systematic theology, in the book on angelology. Dr. Chafer says, “Next to the lie itself, the greatest illusion Satan imposes, reaching to all unsaved and to a large proportion of Christians, is the supposition that only such things that society considers evil could originate with the devil, if indeed there be any devil to originate anything. It is not the reason of man, but the revelation of God which points out that governments, morals, education, art, commercialism, vast enterprises and organizations, and much of religious activity are included in the Cosmos Diabolicus. That is, the system which Satan has constructed includes all the good which he can incorporate into it and be consistent in the thing he aims to accomplish. A serious question arises whether the presence of gross evil in the world is due to Satan’s intention to have it so, or whether it indicates Satan’s inability to execute all he has designed. The probability is great that Satan’s ambition has led him to undertake more than any creature could ever administer. Revelation declares that the whole cosmos system must be annihilated—not its evil alone, but all that is in it, both good and bad. God will incorporate nothing of Satan’s failure into that kingdom which He will set up in the earth.”

Now that’s a very excellent summary of a point that seems to elude people. So Satan promotes these schemes of social gospel, socialism, world peace movements, internationalism, economic assistance schemes, and humanitarian “do-goodism.” All of these unrelated to God and the movement of the spirit of God. He has great power and his greatest power is in the field of thought. So he expresses this in religion with the doctrine of demons (1 Timothy 4:1), and the only defense we Christians have against this is the doctrine of the Word of God. Satan therefore tries to bring good through politics. He has grasped control of the world from Adam. He’s trying to beat God to an international world peace organization. That’s where the United Nations comes in. That’s where the World Council of Churches comes in. That’s where all of the movements toward world organization come in.

Satan has the power of love. This is another human good. It’s a pseudo love. It’s “love everybody.” It’s a matter of sweet words. People who don’t run around feeling like they love everybody have guilt complexes. God says that love is a mental attitude. Now there are people that you can’t stand. You meet people and you talk to them a few minutes and you’ve had it. But I have to remind you that God loves them just as much as He loves you.

So God has a plan for our lives. It’s never arrived at without an understanding of the Word of God. That’s why the spiritual maturity structure is so vital to our being.

Now what’s happening here? How are we going to handle this thing? There’s a remedy for the old sin nature. For those of you who are unbelievers, the remedy is receiving Jesus Christ as your Savior. For Romans 6:11 tells us we can neutralize the old sin nature through redemption in Christ Jesus. There are three things that will keep the old sin nature off the throne of your life. The first thing is to know something. That is to know that Jesus Christ has destroyed the power of your old sin nature. Romans 6:6-7 tells us that the power of the old sin nature is broken. It can no longer control you. The second thing is that it tells you to believe something, and that is to believe that it has no power over you. Romans 6:11-13 says, “Reckon,” or accept the fact that the old sin nature has had its back broken. The third thing, in order to keep the old sin nature off the throne is to use 1 John 1:9 in the regular confession of sin.

If you are an unbeliever, the remedy is salvation through Christ. Satan gives unbelievers the idea that their human good will somehow save them. But human good is part of religion, and religion is a system of doing good things from the old sin nature in order, somehow, to gain the favor of God and thus to go to heaven. So we have multitudes in churches who are offering God the human good stemming from their old sin nature for salvation, and it will never never work. The sin nature produces good works, but these will not save. When you come into the Christian life, the sin nature comes with you, and it’s still the same old rotten thing in the Christian life as it was before. Therefore, it can never meet God’s standard.

Romans chapter 8, beginning in verse 7 says, “Because the carnal mind (that is, the mind dominated by the old sin nature) is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So that they that are in the flesh cannot please God.” They that are operating in the old sin nature cannot please God. There is no way to secure eternal life through the old sin nature. No amount of culture, education, or restraint will change the old sin nature. It will bring some controls so you can live with it, but that’s just disguising it. It’s hopeless, and it separates us from God.

1 Corinthians 2:14 says, “But the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God for they are foolishness unto him. Neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned.” You can’t disguise a pig’s nature with a lamb’s coat. But faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior makes new creatures of us on the inside so the pig nature of the old sin nature is defeated. Acts 16:31 says, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.” 1 John 5:12 says, “He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.”

So as we look back at Genesis 3 where we started this morning, this is what has happened. These people are now moved with an old sin nature. It is cranking out human good, and the scene is set for the arrival of the Lord Jesus Christ. He enters the garden. There is total silence. They hid from God. They hear Him walking. They hear Him calling, and they do not answer because the old sin nature within them now is dominating. They are spiritually dead, and they have no ground of response of the Lord. They have clothed themselves with fig leaf aprons, and they’re respectable now, aren’t they?

Are you respectable this morning because of how you came dressed? There was respectability for Adam and Eve. Why? Because they put on some clothes. You’d be surprised how many people are running around respectable because they’re stylish. They’re really respectable. The thing is, how long do you think those fig leaves are going to last? Can you imagine those fig leaves drying out, and you bump into somebody, and zap—there goes your whole costume? And you go tearing out to the woods to get some more fig leaves. And that’s just about man’s level of covering—the anxiety, the inanity of this this. And they don’t have the nerve even to answer.

Finally you have the first dramatic wonderful act of grace because it is the Lord Jesus who calls them. Verse 9 says, “And the Lord God (Jehovah Elohim) called unto Adam and said, ‘Where art thou?’” Their clothes were a covering for their old sin nature, and God rejected it. In an act of grace, He broke the silence. He approached man in his need, as Ephesians 2:8-9 tells us He does. There was no merit in those aprons, as Titus 3:5 tells us (our human righteousnesses). And the Lord God called Adam. It was Adam that He addressed because he was the responsible party.

In your translation, the word “art” (where “art” thou) is in italics. It’s not in the Hebrew. This is what’s called an elliptical expression. They dropped the verb in order to make the questions punchy. God simply says, “Adam, where thou?” What He was actually saying was (not that He didn’t know where he was), “Adam, why are you where you are, hiding behind those trees?” Of course God knew that, but He was focusing attention on the situation. This is compared to the day before, when God walked in there and they ran out to meet Him. Now He wants to know, “Now why are you hiding behind those trees today?”

Adam’s explanation, in verse 10, is, “I heard thy voice in the garden. I was afraid because I was naked.” And he makes it punchy also. There is no verb, “I naked,” and “I hid myself.” He declared that he was now in fear of God. And yet 2 Timothy 1:7 tells us that we are not called to a pattern of fear. God did not make us to be fearful. Basically, the fear within us is the fear of death. 2 Corinthians 5:8 tells us that God has removed this fear. Only regeneration removed this fear from our hearts. The moment that sin came in, man was afraid. Adam is in fear of God because he has lost his light covering and his sin is exposed. He says, “I naked,” thus reflecting his broken fellowship with God.

So God focuses the issue a little more exactly, and says, in verse 11, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree whereof I have commanded thee thou shouldst not?” God is putting the question to Adam like a judge, “Are you guilty or not guilty?” The issue was the exercise of man’s volition. Has he chosen another will besides God’s will? And Adam says, “Guilty.”

But notice how he claims guilt. Verse 12 says, “The man said, ‘the woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me the tree and I did eat.” In effect, he first blames God for giving him the woman. Many a man has done that. Then he blamed Eve for offering the fruit to him. But she didn’t shove it in his mouth. He reached out and took it from her and ate it on his own volition. He accepted the offer. The old sin nature, however, still wants to blame others for our own situation. The man and the woman are rationalizing. They’re justifying what they have done. That’s how the old sin nature does.

So people like to blame the poor preacher, who didn’t write the book in the first place, for their trouble. Yet here they are, blaming God, “… the woman you gave me…” If you don’t have the doctrine inside, you’ll have the trouble outside.

So what does Eve say? God turns to Eve and says, “Guilty or not guilty?” In verse 13, “The Lord said unto the woman, ‘What is this that thou hast done?’ The woman said, ‘The serpent beguiled me and I did eat.’” She passes the buck down to the serpent, and it can’t get any lower, and that’s where it stops. “He beguiled me.” He tricked me. That’s true. And she says, “I did eat.” This now sets the scene for the pronouncement of the divine judgment which we shall look at next time.