

# Naked and Ashamed

Genesis 3:6-8

Throughout this Lenten Season, we will be turning our attention to the curses of Genesis chapter 3. Every difficulty, every sorrow, every loss can be directly traced to Adam. There are many issues that we now have to deal with daily because of Adam's sin: tonight, we focus on shame and nakedness, but struggle and toil in our daily work, the pain of childbirth, the list goes on and on – it all comes from Adam. On Ash Wednesday, we began with the worst of all the curses – the curse of death. “You are dust, and to dust you shall return.” Those are God's words to Adam and Eve just before He makes garments for them, clothes them, and covers their nakedness.

God is merciful. God's love for Adam did not diminish when sin became the reality. God made Adam to be perfect, and Adam chose evil. And God's response is that His love for His human children would become even more evident. The promise of a Savior is immediate. Now nothing could be done to change the demands of God's Law. Justice demands that there is punishment for sin. The wages of sin is death. That does not change, even with the promise of Christ.

Adam and Eve sinned. Immediately, their nakedness is revealed to them. They were naked before, but now the Law of God is revealed

to them. This is the real problem. When the Law was not accusing them, there was no sin. If there is no speed limit, there is no risk of speeding.

Prior to the Fall, there was no sin; there was no shame. With the Fall came the full force of the Law. And Adam and Eve look at each other and feel shame. They try to cover up and hide, just like we do when we break God's Law. We always prefer that our shame stays hidden; that no one finds out; hoping that God will cover up His eyes.

God has a better plan. Adam's shame and nakedness is exposed, is revealed. He is brought low under the condemnation of the Law. I know you are asking, "How is that better?" I don't want to be brought low. I just want to cruise along under the radar.

But God's plan is better, because cruising along under the radar and avoiding contrition, avoiding repentance, avoiding confession of sin is buying into Satan's lie that you don't need what God is offering. Adam fell for Satan's lie – if you eat this fruit you don't need God anymore. You will be just like God knowing good from evil.

Satan is still lying to you, and because of Adam's sin, you need God all the more. And He knows this. This is why He immediately promised Adam that He would send His Son in the flesh, as the "seed of the woman." And He would stomp Satan's head into the ground.

This act of saving would not be without cost. Great harm would come to the Son of God. The plan was for the Son of God, the Second Adam, to do what the first Adam failed to do. Jesus would keep God's

Law perfectly. As He said in His Sermon on the Mount, “I have not come to abolish the Law, but to fulfill it.” With the Law fulfilled, it can no longer point that finger of guilt at God’s redeemed children – not even a speeding ticket.

The cost of doing this would be great. He would be beaten; He would be whipped; He would be mocked by the Pharisees, and the priests, and the soldiers. He would be nailed through His hands and His feet to the wood of the cross. As St. Paul writes, “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law by becoming a curse for us – for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree’” [Gal. 3:13]. We spoke those words a few moments ago.

He would wear a crown of thorns, and He would wear nothing else. I know that artists always depict Him with the loincloth. But He would be crucified in the shame of His nakedness. Jesus would carry the full curse of sin to the cross. Everything that was lost and spoiled by Adam, all of the burden of guilt, all of the curses that came into God’s creation were reversed by Jesus death and resurrection.

Death has no hold on you, and you have been clothed in the righteousness of Christ Himself. Amen.