

PP The Two Towers: Broken Peaces, 6

10/18/2009

Text Genesis 3:6-13

Illus **Lady Nancy Astor:** Winston, if you were my husband, I'd poison your tea
Winston Churchill: Nancy, if I were your husband, I'd drink it

Last week we saw the fall into sin and what that has done to the way we image God
The fracturing of the image of God in us greatly impacts marriage
And we saw three ways that sin has damaged and distorted the image of God in us:

PP In *our marriage roles*, how we *exercise dominion over creation and God's own dominion over us*, and how we *communicate*

There is another way that we image God as seen in Genesis and it too has been severely fractured by sin

PP It's **The Image of God in Peace**

Adam and Eve were created to enjoy peace with God and each other
God desired that they enjoy unbroken intimacy and unhindered harmony
But they disobeyed God and that peace was broken and their lives were shattered
And after they sinned, God approached them and asked them 4 questions

Have you ever wondered why God asked questions, especially these particular ones?
What we'll see is that He is the perfect Father and His questions will help this husband and wife see the extent of their need for God's help and mercy
So God drew out from our first parents what we all need to see about ourselves

PP 1-**Sin breaks peace in relationships and brings *Fear***

"But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, 'Where are you?'"

PP *The most common attempt to get rid of fear is to hide*

They were hiding from the presence of the Lord so the He called out to Adam (KJV)
Adam was the head of his marriage, he would give an accounting for their sin
"Where are you Adam?"

Not geographically, but relationally, spiritually, look where disobedience has gotten you
It was a question meant to bring Adam to brokenness and despair
Husbands and wives, where are you right now in your marriages?
Is your marriage in tatters?

I can promise you, it is ultimately because of sin, and the destroying, disrupting force of pride and selfishness

You don't often need to drill very deeply before you strike sin in struggling marriages
Trees aren't the only things we can hide behind
Careers, hobbies, anger, false intimacy, materialism, big homes, they all work, for a while
God's voice can powerfully draw us out from hiding

PP It works primarily in two ways:

PP a) To reveal the absolute holiness of God

His holiness, His perfection, His beauty that is eternally and utterly uncorrupted by sin

The Law of God is a mirror to this, a constant reminder of His perfection
But there is a second reason as well

PP b) To reveal to us our absolute need for His grace and mercy

We all have sinned, and we all are absolutely helpless to cover up it up or take it away
“Adam, do you know where you are?”
You are no longer in a place of freedom and favor and grace called naked and unashamed
You are naked, you are hiding, you are separated from Me and your wife, you are hiding
behind the very creation you were meant to rule over
And Adam responded with where he was: *“And he said, “I heard the sound of you in
the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.”*
Genesis 3:10

The presence of God creates peace or fear, comfort or terror
And for the first time in their lives, Adam and Eve experienced fear when around God
Adam said, *‘God I was afraid of you because I was naked’*

PP 2-Sin breaks peace in relationships and brings *Shame*

“He said, “Who told you that you were naked?”

This is interesting because verse 7 says: *“Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.”*

They *‘knew that they were naked’*

Nobody told them, they realized it, and God knows this and that is exactly His point
That is why this question seems so strange until you see the redemptive purpose behind it

After they *‘knew that they were naked’*, *‘they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.’*

They clothed themselves, so they weren’t naked any longer
But Adam told God that he hid from Him *‘because I was naked’*
The clothes they made veiled their nakedness with each other, they didn’t work with God
Clothed, they were naked, because fig leaves and trees can’t cover shame
That brings us to an interesting insight into clothing

Why did Adam and Eve clothe themselves?
Were their bodies suddenly ugly and embarrassing?
That answer is inadequate to explain this need to be clothed
Do you remember from two weeks ago, I offered an explanation for what it meant to be
‘naked and were not ashamed’?

It meant they were **without a failure that leads to disgrace**
Now they had failure and it extended to the very core of their beings
Sin makes us unable to enjoy the grace, favor and peace of God, and unable to give it to
other people, *especially those closest to us*
Sin creates shame, and shame always short circuits grace!

Shame is the *profound personal sense that I am inadequate*
But more than that, it is a debilitating sense that everybody else, if they get too close and
See me for who I really am, will be utterly horrified at my defects
Eating disorders, cutting, perfectionism, pathological control addicts, are each extreme
ways to cope with a pervasive, unshakeable sense of shame
Inability to talk about emotions, critical and pestering speech, chronically angry
dispositions are all more common, still deadly ways to cover up shame
When Adam and Eve sinned, they lost the awareness of peace between them and God
A gap appeared between what they were and what they ought to be

Friends, there may be no better definition of crippling, pervasive shame
A profound sense that I am not what I ought to be and I have no way in me to fix that
Adam and Eve had nothing, and there is nothing in this world, that can bridge that gap
Not money, not big houses, not 1,000 Facebook friends and certainly not fig leaf clothing

PP *So the most common attempt to get rid of shame, is by concealment*
Nakedness, being transparent, is now dangerous, and Adam and Eve needed a solution
They were trying to conceal what had really happened, the first case of hypocrisy in
humanity
They were no longer innocents, but rebels against God, so they tried to conceal the gap
between what they were, and what they ought to be by clothing themselves
But those fig leaves couldn't prevent God from seeing the stains on their souls
So God made clothes for them and in doing this He made clothing a redemptive tool in
two ways

PP a) *Clothes now remind us all that we are not what we ought to be*

When we go to the store and we buy clothes, friends, we need to remember that clothing
cannot conceal our sin, it ***confesses*** it
We should wear clothing because they literally confess that we are not what we should be
Public nudity is not a return to innocence as some claim, it's rebellion against moral truth
John Piper has said, "*God ordains clothes to witness to the glory we have lost.*"

PP b) *Clothes are meant to be a testimony that God makes us what we should be*

Their own clothing, their self-righteous efforts to conceal their sin, were inadequate
And God rejected those clothes, and then presumably killed animals to make clothes that
were adequate
Pointing to the day that He would solve their problem permanently through Christ
The blood of His Son, cleanses the stain in our souls and His resurrection secures for us
brand new clothes of righteousness that reflect the radiance of His glory
"*Who told you that you were naked Adam?*"
Nobody did, you feel it all the way to your core
It's the only one of the four questions God did not make them answer, because friends,
there is no answer found in this world for shame other than Christ

PP 3- Sin breaks peace in relationships and brings Guilt

Gary Smalley defines harmony in marriage as *'the absence of unsettled offenses between a husband and his wife'*

Offenses are sins, and they disrupt peace in marriages and in our relationships with God
"Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?"

Now men, bear up under the Word of God here

We need to see that it is not until the fourth question that God turns to the Eve

He is still addressing Adam, because He has made Adam the head and God asks him

what we would think is a silly question: ***"Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?"***

Even if he were audacious enough, Bill Engvall could tell God, *'Here's your sign'*

Because the intent of the question is not on the eating of the forbidden fruit, but on whether or not Adam would confess his sin and guilt

"Have you eaten from the tree Adam? Will you take personal responsibility for your actions? Or will you try and evade?"

This was a test for Adam and it will shortly be the same one for Eve

Adam, will you confess to your sin?

Will you be truthful, not partly, but fully?

PP *The most common attempt to get rid of guilt is by denying it and shifting the blame*

Adam, so full of guilt, has now been given an invitation by God to confess it

"The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." (12)

Did you notice what Adam did here?

His admission that he ate the fruit was placed last, minimizing his guilt, and shifting the blame away from himself

'God, it was the woman's fault because she gave it to me'

He didn't call her his ***'wife'***, that would have been too intimate a term for her

Haven't you ever noticed that we have intimate names we call our spouse and children and then other names we use when we are angry with them?

But, not only did Adam blame the ***'woman'***, infinitely worse, he blamed God

The woman ***'You'*** put here with me, God, don't you see, it's Your fault too

As Martin Luther said, *Adam is heaping sin upon sin*

We see this response to guilt again as God turns His holy eyes for the first time in this passage, to Eve: ***"Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?"***

And as He did with Adam, but more strongly, He gave her an opportunity to confess the obvious

And she too minimized and shifted the blame: ***"The serpent deceived me, and I ate."***

What God is doing is showing to them their guilt, because until we recognize how great our guilt is before God, we will not humble ourselves and we are beyond redemption

In our marriages we need to learn to discern between accidents and offenses
Between mistakes and sins

And the right, appropriate way to go to our spouses when do something that unintentionally causes them pain is to *simply say sorry*

And that is enough and it ought to be sufficient to restore peace

But when we sin against each other, saying sorry is never enough, yet it is often what we do

Sorry provides a bandaid for a potentially life-threatening issue, it isn't sufficient

We must ask for forgiveness, which requires humility and confession of sin because what that spouse did required the blood of Christ to be shed

Saying sorry often indicates that I am uncomfortable with the consequences of my actions, you are cold and distant around me and I hate disharmony because it makes me feel like I've done something wrong

Therefore 'I'm sorry' is my easy attempt to get for me what I don't have right now, peace and harmony

Except peace is only forfeited by sin and saying sorry can never atone for sin

Asking for forgiveness acknowledges that I have indeed done something wrong, first to God, and then to my spouse and that peace in both relationships has been broken

I need to confess this to God and then to my spouse, taking full responsibility for it, and asking for forgiveness from it

Adam and Eve were not so different from us

We've all broken God's commands, and we have all tried to conceal it and we have all tried to shift the blame off ourselves

Are you keenly aware of this in the moment?

And when you do realize what you have done, do you take the right steps to restore peace in your spiritual as well as married life?

Pray!

Application-The Marriage Quiz

Step 1-Take the Marriage Quiz and check your score-Rate each statement which is **least** like you #1, and **most** like you #5 and circle the appropriate number

1. I regularly talk through my anger and disappointment with my spouse rather than hold it inside and letting it fester. 1 2 3 4 5
2. I normally take full responsibility when I sin or make a mistake. 1 2 3 4 5
3. It is easy to genuinely ask for forgiveness when I have sinned against my spouse. 1 2 3 4 5
4. I regularly ask for forgiveness when I have wronged my spouse. 1 2 3 4 5
5. My relationship with God is my absolute number one priority. 1 2 3 4 5
6. I make my spouse feel that he/she is the most important person 1 2 3 4 5

in my life.

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| 7. The opinions and desires of my spouse are important to me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. I regularly extend grace to my spouse. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. I listen more than I speak when resolving conflict with my spouse. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. My spouse knows that he/she is my best friend. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Step 2-Now take it again and rate your spouse for each question and use a triangle for the appropriate number

Step 3-Talk through the results together with the goal of encouraging one another, not exposing your spouse's weaknesses