

Theme: Longing for acceptance we have fallen captive to shame and fear - which condemns us to relationships of isolation and apathy. Now our rescue can only be found in perfect integrity.

Text "And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"

Genesis 3:11

Title: Slipping into something more comfortable

I. The Importance of Acceptance

- A. 2010 \$10B spent on cosmetic surgery
- B. Imago Dei - designed by intimates for intimate relationship
"Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness," Genesis 1:26
- C. Integrity Inside and Out
The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame. Genesis 2:25
- D. God pronounced us "Good!" - accepted
"God saw all that he had made, and it was very good." Genesis 1:31

II. The Loss of Integrity

- A. Ground Zero: Adam and Eve
"He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.""
(Genesis 3:10 NIV)
 - 1. Loss of Integrity - from "very good" to "not even good enough"
 - 2. Result: Fear and Shame
 - 3. Leads to Hiding (God, Self, Others)
 - 4. Integrity "whole, not divided" "the same inside and

out.

"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of dead men's bones and everything unclean. In the same way, on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness."

Matthew 23:27 - 28

B. 3 Fold Isolation and Apathy

- 1. From others
"Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves."Genesis 3:7
- 2. From God
"Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden." Genesis 3:8
- 3. From "Self"
"The man said, "The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.'" Genesis 3:12

C. Conclusion: Finding Acceptance is too Difficult

Unable to reconcile our desire for relationship with our knowledge of our lack of integrity we find an easier, more comfortable solution - we hide in hypocrisy.

- 1. We find comfortable clothes to hide from each other ("Look at what I have and how good I look")

2. We find a comfort in nature to hide from God (“God made me this way”, “He’s not really there anyway”)
3. We find a comfortable person to hide from ourselves (“It’s really your fault anyway - clearly I am NOT the problem”)

III. The Cloaks of Hypocrisy

A. Hiding from God - Hypocritical Righteousness

“Jesus replied, **“And why do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition? For God said, ‘Honor your father and mother’ and ‘Anyone who curses his father or mother must be put to death.’ But you say that if a man says to his father or mother, ‘Whatever help you might otherwise have received from me is a gift devoted to God,’ he is not to ‘honor his father’ with it. Thus you nullify the word of God for the sake of your tradition. You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you:**

“ ‘These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men.’”” Matthew 15:3–9

1. God - Intentional perversion of God’s Law
2. Implication: I believe my own press (that I am good) and start forcing you to meet my standard.
3. “I need to be like God”
 - a. ““Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You shut the kingdom of heaven in men’s faces. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to.” Matthew 23:13

B. Hiding from others - Hypocritical Love

“Like a coating of glaze over earthenware are fervent lips with an evil heart. A malicious man disguises himself with his lips, but in his heart he harbors deceit. Though his speech is charming, do not believe him, for seven abominations fill his heart. His malice may be concealed by deception, but his wickedness will be exposed” Proverbs 26:23–26

1. Others - Feigning sincere love, while plotting terror
2. Implication: I believe my own press (that I have your best interest at heart) - and I stop looking to God for approval.

a. I use one of two excuses

#1 “He doesn’t deserve my relationship”

“He who conceals his hatred has lying lips, and whoever spreads slander is a fool.” Proverbs 10:18

On the contrary:

“An honest answer is like a kiss on the lips.” Proverbs 24:26

#2 “What if I make myself too vulnerable?”

“What a man desires is unfailing love; better to be poor than a liar.” Proverbs 19:22

On the contrary:

“He who rebukes a man will in the end gain more favor than he who has a flattering tongue.” Proverbs 28:23

C. Hiding from myself - Hypocritical Justification

“Do not say, “I’ll do to him as he has done to me; I’ll pay that man back for what he did.””

(Proverbs 24:29)

1. Myself - The wounded hero
2. Implication - I view you as the source of my problem, and God as irrelevant to the solution
3. The whole time I **REFUSE** to look honestly at myself and ask, “What do I **REALLY** deserve?”

“As water reflects a face, so a man’s heart reflects the man.” Proverbs 27:19

4. What is inside gets revealed - And we HATE it!

“Anger is cruel and fury overwhelming, but who can stand before jealousy?” Proverbs 27:4

“Haughty eyes and a proud heart, the lamp of the wicked, are sin!” Proverbs 21:4

- D. Conclusion - In order to feel comfortable I playing to my strength. I hide my heart and cover my face with mock holiness or false affection.

IV. Re-Covering Integrity

A. Look to Jesus Christ - The Only True Hero

1. The model of Integrity

“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.” John 1:14

2. The model of boldness

“Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.” Philippians 2:6–7

“looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.” Hebrews 12:2

B. Put on Jesus Christ

- a. Your only confidence from fear

“The LORD is my light and my salvation— whom shall I fear?

The LORD is the stronghold of my life— of whom shall I be afraid?” Psalms 27:1

“There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment.” I John 4:18

“ Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died— more than that, who was raised to life...i and is also interceding for us. Romans 8:33–34

- b. Your Loving Father

“having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.” Ephesians 1:5–6 NKJV

c. Your only Righteousness

“... **put on the new self**, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. **Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts**, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.”
Colossians 3:10, 12, 14

“I struggle with your struggle”

“Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ.” Ephesians 4:15

C. Communion

Slipping into something more comfortable

Genesis 3:11
May 11, 2014
Prayer
Rev 3:5

V. Applying the Word

A. Repent

1. He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.”
Proverbs 28:13

“May you be strengthened by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ - so that you may conquer and be clothed in white garments, and your name never blotted out of the book of life. May Jesus Himself confess your name before His Father and before his angels.”

B. Receive the Gospel of Grace

1. All fail in this area - embrace the conviction of the Holy Spirit, DON’T condemn yourself

And he said, “**Who told you that you were naked?** Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?””
Genesis 3:11

2. Receive the Gospel of grace - we have Christ who is not just “good enough” but “very good!”

3. Receive the perfect love and peace of God - we are no longer under judgment.

4. Receive the Integrity of Jesus

• Examine, Repent, Forgive