**Genesis 3:1-13**

I. Their disobedience resulted in a new experience of their nakedness

 A. This is the immediate consequence of their sin (see v. 7, 10, 11)

B. Prior to their sin they experienced life as being naked and without shame (2:25)

 1. An experience of being fully known (naked) and fully loved (without shame)

 2. There was nothing wrong with them, nothing to hide

 3. Children have this innocence: they experience nakedness as freedom

C. Once they sin they experience their nakedness differently

1. They experience the guilt of disobeying

2. Now that they’ve assumed the role of God in their own lives, they experience the inadequacy of who they are to be God

 3. Adults have this fear of exposure

II. The ways they try to deal with their nakedness

A. Adam and Eve

1. They cover (v. 7)

a. Imagine the inadequacy of fig leaves as a covering

b. This is the first example of image management. Covering the shame with an external presentation

2. They hide (v. 8-10)

a. Up to this point, the sound of God would fill them with excitement and joy

b. Now the sound fills them with fear

 1) So sad that they are now hiding from their father

 2) And ridiculous: as if they could hide from God!

3. They blame (v. 11-13)

 a. Adam blames both Eve and God

b. Eve blames the serpent

c. They try to shift blame, deflect attention away from their shame onto someone else

B. We do these same things today

1. We cover

a. We cover physically by trying to present an attractive image of ourselves through clothes, make up, in-shape bodies, etc. to hide what we feel inside

b. We cover through our giftedness. We find things we’re good at at an early age, and we bank on those to make up for the sense of brokenness and inadequacy we feel

c. We cover through religion (spiritual image management). We think if we can be spiritual and moral enough, maybe we can cover up the bad parts of ourselves and earn God’s favor

d. The problem is covering up is exhausting. We constantly have to keep performing to stay interesting or attractive

e. “I have an iron will, and all of my will has always been to conquer some horrible feeling of inadequacy. . . I push past one spell of it and discover myself as a special human being, and then I get to another stage and think I'm mediocre and uninteresting. . . . Again and again. My drive in life is from this horrible fear of being mediocre. And that's always pushing me, pushing me. Because even though I've become Somebody, I still have to prove I'm Somebody. My struggle has never ended and it probably never will.” –Madonna

2. We hide

 a. We don’t share our true selves with each other but hide the broken parts

 b. Over time we just get used to hiding and forget that we’re hiding

c. We hide from God (we use busyness as a way of hiding ourselves from God and not having to face our brokenness before him)

d. We don’t think we can be fully known and fully loved, so we opt for not being fully known.

 e. The problem with hiding is it leaves us alone and lonely

3. We blame

a. Rather than accept responsibility for our sin, we shift responsibility onto someone else

b. Our culture loves to blame others for problems (parents, government, etc.)

c. A softer way to blame is to play the comparison game: “Sure, I have problems, but at least I’m not as bad as . . .”

d. The problem with blaming is it leaves a trail of broken relationships and competition between each other

III. God’s solution for them

A. He clothes them with animal skins (v. 21)

1. His covering for them is so much better than their covering for themselves

 2. This is the first instance of animal sacrifice in Scripture

B. Ultimately, God clothes/covers us with the righteousness of Jesus Christ through forgiveness of our sins at the cross

1. When we see the covering God offers at the cross, we receive it by faith and we are then freed to stop trying to cover, hide, and blame

2. Accepting the righteousness we have by being clothed in Christ frees us to come out of hiding and live lives of vulnerability and authenticity.

a. We stop hiding from God and invite him in to every area of our lives, knowing that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ (Romans 8:1)

b. We stop hiding from each other and start to share our actual selves with each other (James 5:16)

 c. We can experience being fully known and fully loved

**Discussion questions**

1. Again, Sunday’s passage is a very familiar passage. What idea from the message was new to you or helped you understand the passage in a deeper way?

2. On Sunday we discussed the ways we often cover our brokenness and insecurity by finding something we’re good at from an early age and banking our identity on that. Looking back, what was that thing in your own life that you used to give you a sense of security and identity? How did that work well for you, and how did that create problems for you?

3. Consider the ways we try to make up for our sense of nakedness and shame (we cover, hide, and blame). Which of those strategies connects with you the most? Is there something God is calling you to let go of as a way of dealing with your insecurity?

4. The good news is that God has offered his Son as a covering for our sin. Practically speaking, how do we receive that covering and live in it on a daily basis?

5. On Sunday we talked about coming out of hiding and sharing our real selves with God and each other. What is your experience of confession (= acknowledging your brokenness to God and to other people)? What does that actually look like in your own life, if anything?