

Running Scared From A Holy God

Evangelistic Message

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Well, I have a message for you tonight, friends, that can explain why you are the way you are and not only that, this message tonight, friend, can change the way you are and change the direction of your very life if you will let it.

Y'all know the story of Adam and Eve, at least I know you've heard of it. God created Adam and God created Eve and God created you. Adam and Eve disobeyed God by sin and so have you, friend. In Isaiah God says of us, "All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way." That's what sin is, friends, sin is going our way when we know it isn't God's way. That's what happened to Adam and Eve, God told them not to eat of a certain tree in the garden of Eden but they went and disobeyed him anyhow. They put their will ahead of God's will. They put their desire over God's command and when they sinned, then all hell broke loose in paradise because a sinner was in God's paradise and he can't have that.

God requires perfection to get into his holy heaven. He will allow no rebels in there. When Adam sinned, his eyes were opened to his guilt. In Genesis 3 we read, "And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons." Now hear, friends, what happened when God came looking for them, "And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden." Listen, friends, man's been up a tree every since. God placed a curse upon Adam and his seed. God told him, "cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life." Then God tells Adam he shall eventually die, "and unto dust shalt thou return." But listen, friends, to what God did next, "Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."

I've seen the artist Raphael's drawing of the expulsion of Adam and Eve from paradise and it's a sight to see Adam fleeing paradise with his arm up behind him as his face is turned in shame. Adam was on the run from a holy God and he was run out of paradise and man has been on the run from God ever since, running scared from a holy God, and that's the title of my message this evening, friends, "Running Scared From A Holy God." That's our trouble today because man has a sin problem because of who he is in his natural condition. Man is born with a ruined nature and a bent toward sin.

In the book of Job, my Bible says so, it says this about man, "How much more abominable and filthy is man, which drinketh iniquity like water?" That's the condition of man today, friends, he can't get enough of sin. You wallow in that pigpen of sin like a hog in his wallow. It doesn't matter how filthy you get because your heart is already that way.

Listen, friend, I was born of a father and when I was born in the flesh, he bequeathed to me what he was in the flesh in the likeness of Adam through the natural birth, and because of this, my natural condition is nothing but enmity against God. You are not a sinner because you sin, rather you sin because you are a big sinner. It's who you are. That's why you've been running from a holy God, friend, and like Adam, men try to pass muster with God through false refuge. A man won't come clean with God, instead of coming clean with God through repentance, man instead will hide himself in a bush of religion enjoying a church, believing he can escape that holy God through church membership. There are folks hiding from God in church today, did you know that? Maybe that's where you've been hiding as well. Men won't come clean with God and admit they are guilty sinners who have broken his law, instead man will try and clothe himself in the fig leaves of a good opinion of himself and call that salvation, but a holy God comes around and men go to hide and God calls you out in your empty religious profession and he says, "Tom, where art thou? Judy, where art thou? Jim, where art thou? Kathy, where art thou?"

Put your name in there, friend. What are you hiding from God and why are you on the run from him? You won't bow to his will in your life. You want control. You want to be the one in charge. You want to sit on the throne of your life and rule there but, friend, if you want pardon from sin, then self must be dethroned and another must rule there. He must be enthroned there. Who is it? The Lord Jesus Christ.

I was on the run from God myself. Listen to my story, friends. I was a good church member but I was a lost man. I wasn't saved. I was the Sunday school teacher at a big Baptist church where each week I taught the word of God, but the trouble was I didn't know the God of the word. I had a head knowledge of God but I knew nothing of an experiential knowledge of him. I was like King Herod, I was religious and I had heard of Jesus but I never met him. I was hiding from God in a good opinion of myself and a long track record of church service. Maybe you've been doing that too, friends, but I didn't want God to take control of my life so I sewed on my apron of religion thinking that would do it, that that would get the job done, but that didn't cut the mustard with a thrice holy God. I was running scared from a holy God, hiding in my religious trees hoping he would not find me out, but there came a day in my life, friend, when I quit running from God and ran toward God for salvation from sin. I was a big sinner and I knew it and I knew I could no longer run from a holy God, I could no longer rebel against him. I came to him in repentance and surrender to him as Lord of my life and I was set free, set free.

He can set you free, friend. Jesus has the power to cancel sin and set you free. Let me tell you about this Jesus, friend. Jesus came down here so we can go up there. Jesus came

into the world doing good, healing the sick, giving sight to the blind, giving rest to the weary, yet what happened? Wicked men cried, "Away with him!" and nailed him to a cross. First, they beat him, stripped him, whipped him, they mocked him and blindfolded him and they slapped him across the face with the palm of their hands saying, "Prophecy who hit thee!" Then they spit in his face one after another. Then they led him away to a hill, a place called Calvary where they drove nails into his innocent hands and feet. Look at that blessed man on the cross, friend. He says, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." Look at that man on the cross, friend, look at that blood-stained Savior from sin on that cross, the Lord Christ. His outstretched arms nailed there beckoning you to come to him for forgiveness for sin. The cross was the place where wicked men tried to get rid of him but by his death it becomes the place where his saving power flows out. Hear me now – his saving power flows out to all who come in repentance confessing they are sinners and own him as their Savior and Lord.

Listen, friend, you can only run so far and so long from God before you can't run anymore. There's nowhere to hide from him. He found Adam hiding among the trees in paradise. Where will he find you? His word says in Numbers, "behold, ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out." Adam ate of the forbidden fruit and he thought he could hide it from God but God searched him out and found him out. You're wasting your time, friend, trying to run from God because you know you're guilty, you're stained with sin. You can't outrun God. He sees your stain of sin on you. You have a big red bull's-eye on your back and you can't get away from a holy God by running or hiding.

If you've been running from God, friend, then it's time to stop running from him and come to him for salvation from sin. Christ hung on a bloody cross as my substitute for sin. He died for me. Come to Christ, friend, and lay your sin-burden down. You can only run so far, friend, because you are running smack dab into a dead end. You don't have to run anymore, dear sinner friend, come to Christ. The Gospel is for the hungry, the weary and the thirsty. Let me ask you, friend, are you hungry for God? Are you weary of your sins? Are you thirsty for Christ? Then come to him. God's word invites poor sinners to come to Christ and believe on him, the due required is to come. He's got a pure Gospel promise to all who come, "And him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Listen to the call of the Gospel, friend, listen to the call, "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

Come to Christ, friend, and believe on him. Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me." I'm gonna sing a hymn, friend, and as I sing it, I want you to come to Christ if God has been dealing with your troubled heart. You've been running away from God so long, friend, you must be weary. It's time to come and lay that burden down. If the Spirit of God has been bringing conviction to your guilty conscience, maybe you're a sinner like me who was trying to outrun God before God saved me, listen, friend, Christ the Redeemer has power to save, Christ the Redeemer saved a sinner like me, he can save a sinner like you. You come to Christ, friend, as I sing this hymn about a sinner like me.

"I was once far away from the Savior,
And as vile as a sinner could be;
I wondered if Christ, the Redeemer,
Would save a poor sinner like me.

I wandered on in the darkness,
Not a ray of light could I see,
And the tho't filled my heart with sadness,
There's no hope for a sinner like me.

And then in that dark, lonely hour,
A voice sweetly whispered to me,
Saying Christ, the Redeemer, has power
To save a poor sinner like thee.

I then fully trusted in Jesus,
And, oh, what a joy came to me!
My heart was filled with his praises,
For saving a sinner like me.

And when life's journey is over,
And I the dear Savior shall see,
I'll praise him for ever and ever,
For saving a sinner like me."