

PRAYER & FASTING - DAY 5

COME OUT OF HIDING

DEVOTIONAL

There is something striking about the first question God asks after Adam and Eve hide in the garden:

Where are you?

God was not asking because He lacked information. Adam had sinned, realized he was naked, became afraid, and hid. God entered the garden already knowing what had happened. The question gave Adam an opportunity to step out of hiding and tell the truth about where he was - not simply geographically, but relationally.

At first, Adam does tell the truth: he was afraid, he felt exposed, and he hid. But when God asks what happened, honesty begins turning into explanation and blame. Adam points toward Eve - and even toward God: *The woman you put here with me...* Eve points toward the serpent.

We still do this. We hide. We justify. We minimize. We compare. We explain ourselves until we have almost managed to avoid looking directly at what belongs to us.

Proverbs gives us another way: **confess, renounce, and find mercy.**

Then Jesus shows us what that posture looks like. The Pharisee enters prayer carrying his spiritual resume. He fasts. He gives. He behaves correctly. But instead of examining himself before God, he compares himself to somebody else: *At least I am not like him.*

The tax collector brings no resume and no defense. He simply asks God for mercy. Jesus says that man goes home justified.

That changes the purpose of self-examination. We are not searching our hearts to produce evidence that we are good enough. We are not comparing our failures with somebody else's so ours look smaller. And we are not uncovering sin so we can sit in shame.

We are removing whatever keeps us hiding from God.

James gives us the movement: submit, resist, come near, cleanse, humble yourself. And then comes the promise: God gives more grace. He comes near. He shows favor to the humble. He lifts us up.

God's heart is not waiting on the other side of perfect behavior. He is calling into the places where we have hidden: **Where are you?**

The invitation today is simply to answer Him honestly.

Confession is not telling God something He does not know. It is choosing to stop hiding what He already sees.

DAY 5 STUDY - WHERE ARE YOU?

Read: Genesis 3:8-13; Proverbs 28:13; Luke 18:9-14; James 4:6-10

1. HIDING - Genesis 3:8-13

What caused Adam and Eve to hide? What do you notice about Adam's first answer to God? Where do you see fear, honesty, blame, or avoidance in the conversation?

When I know something in me needs God's attention, what does hiding look like for me?

2. CONFESSION - Proverbs 28:13

This verse does not stop with confession. It says the one who **confesses and renounces** finds mercy. What is the difference between admitting something and actually turning away from it?

Is there anything I have acknowledged repeatedly without actually surrendering it?

3. HUMILITY - Luke 18:9-14

Compare the two prayers. What is the Pharisee focused on? What is the tax collector focused on? How does comparison interfere with honest self-examination?

Where am I tempted to measure my spiritual condition by comparing myself with other people?

What would my prayer sound like today if I did not defend, explain, compare, or perform?

4. NEARNESS - James 4:6-10

Read the passage again and notice the movement. List what the passage asks **us** to do. Then list what it says **God** does.

Our response: Submit. Resist. Come near. Wash. Purify. Grieve. Humble ourselves.

God's response: Gives more grace. Shows favor. Comes near. Lifts us up.

What does this passage teach me about God's response to genuine humility?

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Where am I?

Where am I hiding, defending, explaining, comparing, minimizing, or avoiding?

What am I afraid will happen if I tell God the whole truth?

What would 'come near to God' look like for me today - not theoretically, but practically?

PRAAYER

Today, begin with God's question in Genesis:

Where are you?

Sit with it before answering.

Tell God where you actually are - not where you think you should be.

Ask Him to show you anything you have been hiding, defending, minimizing, blaming on someone else, or comparing away.

Confess what needs to be confessed.

Renounce what needs to be left behind.

Receive the mercy He offers.

Then come near.

Prayer prompt: God, I do not want to hide from You. Show me where I have been protecting myself from the truth, and help me trust Your heart enough to answer You honestly.

Write your own prayer:

[illegible]

MAKE ROOM FOR GOD'S HEART