



THE GOD FROM WHOM WE HIDE

Sunday's Teaching: In the first of this teaching series, we were challenged, "God Is not far from you (cf. Acts 17:28)...and the only reason He is not closer may well be because we have kept Him at arm's length. But why? Why would we do that when *in His presence is fullness of joy*"? (cf. Psalm 16). This week, we explored the reasons why men hide from God, while still this relational Creator comes looking, searching, restoring.

Week 2 of the EHP Devo/Journal offered times with the Lord which explores **how much we need God even when we are not fully aware or appreciative of our true need.**

Let's get STARTED – warm up by discussing the following questions:

- ♦ Can you remember a time when you were trying to cover up something, or hide when you had done something wrong – go ahead (!) bare your past with your spiritual companions. What happened? What prompted you to avoid responsibility?
- ♦ The dictionary suggests **SHAME** is "a painful feeling of humiliation or distress caused by the consciousness of wrong or foolish behavior." Do you think "shame" is a good (helpful) emotion, or do you consider it a bad, counterproductive experience? Has it been so in your experience?

Let's Explore in the WORD

Several of this week's devotionals explore several examples of God confronting humans (Adam and Eve, Cain who have disobeyed and chosen to sin. These choices create distance from God, typically because we move away from the Lord's presence. Let's better understand why in sin we avoid God...and what God asks for when He seeks us out.

1st – Why in sin do we avoid God?

- ✓ Read Genesis 3:7-8 How would you describe what was going on with Adam & Eve here? What are the typical ways, illustrated here, we try to hide from God?
- ✓ Read Genesis 4:5b-10 Why do you think Cain didn't listen to God and proceeded to sin? What does Cain do when confronted, something we sometimes mimic?
- ✓ Read Acts 5:1-11 Consider a NT example of "avoidance." Behind the scenes, how would you fill in the conversational "blanks" between Ananias and his wife Sapphira? What was their motivation in this dishonesty? Why do you think they would not be found out?

2nd – What God asks for when He seeks us out in our hiding

- ✓ Read Psalm 51. In this "confession" of King David (for adultery and murder), what specific repentant attitudes do we find David expressing to God?
- ✓ The prophet Isaiah urged God's people to be honest with God. In Isaiah 1:18-20, what does honesty with God look like?
- ✓ When it comes to our sin, what does John teach about maintaining closeness to the Lord. Explore answers in 1 John 1:5-2:2.

Let's Prioritize APPLICATION

God extends his grace to sinners-running-from-Him because His Son, Jesus, has fully satisfied through His death on the cross the Father's justified wrath against our sin. "He is the *propitiation* of our sins," John writes (i.e., the One who satisfies righteous wrath). Jesus' ONE SACRIFICE, once-for-all, provides the ground for ALL our forgiveness.

Still, on a regular basis, to "walk in the light," we are to admit our sins and ask for cleansing and restoration of fellowship (1 John 1:9).

Finish your group time together **THANKING GOD** for Jesus' once-for-all-time sacrifice for you...and, if needed **ASKING FOR CLEANSING** for any sinfulness that may be hindering your fellowship with Him. Take a peak at James 5:16-20.