

Principle Faith: Genesis Three

Part 7

The audio and print files for this class can be found online at <http://www.etspm.org/audio/principlefaith>

Our Purpose: ... to honor and glorify God through heart, soul, strength and mind ... in a way that demonstrates love for others and self at the same time. ... to focus on ... principles that help us understand the biblical text, our relationship to God and others

Our Goal: To examine at least the first eleven chapters of Genesis during the quarter, looking for, explaining, and applying the principles we find.

What is a principle? - a foundational truth or premise upon which we build beliefs, practices and explanations. ... a study of key ... principles in light of how they generate and strengthen faith, reflect God's nature and glory and build a case for all things spiritual. Biblical principles: reflect the existence/nature of God; indicate God's connection with the overall biblical theme; demonstrate divine providence; illustrate how tightly organized the "scheme" of redemption really is

Genesis In Context: ... how Israel fit into God's divine plan for the redemption of all mankind

3:11ff What sin does to God

1. Our usual perspective of sin, like sin itself, often focuses on me/us. Focusing too much on self, selfishness, pride, etc., got us "into sin" in the first place. But after having sinned, we frequently concern ourselves with "look what this has done to me." It is a legitimate response ... but it is not the only response.
2. We might also think what sin does to others. As noted in an earlier session, when we sin, we rob/cheat ourselves, but we also rob/cheat others and we also rob/cheat God.
3. The "prodigal" son "came to himself" (Lk 15:17) and realized that he not only sinner against himself, he sinned against his father and against his God (vs. 18).
4. It is not until we realize that sin hurts God, robs God, cheats God, devalues God, etc., will we truly and properly repent. As long as we only think of sin from the standpoint of what sin does to us, we may be sorrowful, but not sorrowful in a godly way (cf. 2 Cor 7:9-10).
5. Key principles:
 - a. God can not be "in" the presence of sin, i.e. God can not condone sin
 - b. God hates sin (Mal 2:16); false gods (Deut 12:31); idols/sacred pillars (Deut 16:22)
 - c. Proverbs 6: 16 These six things the LORD hates, Yes, seven are an abomination to Him: 17 A proud look, A lying tongue, Hands that shed innocent blood, 18 A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that are swift in running to evil, 19 A false witness who speaks lies, And one who sows discord among brethren. (cf. 3:32; 11:1, 20; 15:8; 17:15; 20:10, 23)
 - d. Ultimately, no abominable thing can be with God (Rev 21:27)
6. Key passages: 2 Chr 33:12-13 (Manasseh); Ps 32:1-5; 51:1ff (David's sin); Josh 7:1ff, esp. vs. 20 (Achan) ; Ps 116:5ff (when we are "brought low" God saves us)

3:1ff: How we attempt to cover/justify/excuse sin

1. After violating the will of God, "the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings."
2. our attempts to "cover" sin are always inadequate (fig leaves versus clothing; cf. Pr 28:13)
3. our attempts are always from our perspective, for our benefit and usually not consistent with God's will

4. our attempts to “cover” sin include:
 - a. blaming others (Adam pointed to Eve, Eve pointed to the serpent; Saul pointed to the people with him; et. al.)
 - b. claiming to be better than others (Pharisee & publican - Lk 18:11)
 - c. claiming to know what’s right (Pr 14:12; 21:2)
 - d. running from God (Jonah)
 - e. self-justification (part of the blaming process) and claiming that we obeyed (Saul and Amalekites; “Lord, Lord, have we not done ...”) or that we do not/have never sinned (1 Jn 1:8ff)
 - f. assuming purity and righteousness we really don’t have (Pr 30:12)
 - g. measuring ourselves by ourselves (2 Cor 10:12)
 - h. relying on privilege/connections (Abraham’s seed), possessions (Lk 12:15, 19; Hos 12:8), meritorious good works (Mt 7:21ff)
 - i. assuming that God/Christ will not come to judge us (2 Pet 3:4; Jer 5:12)
 - j. assuming we are “self-blessed” (Ps 49:18)
 - k. loving lies rather than truth (2 Th 2:10-11)
 - l. assuming that others will be punished, but not us (Deut 9:4ff)
5. Though Adam and Eve placed blame/made excuses, note some things they did not say:
 - a. we did not hear you
 - b. we did not know you were talking to us
 - c. we did not understand you
 - d. we did not think it applied to us
 - e. we did not think you really meant it

3:11ff Only God “covers” sin

1. After violating the will of God, “the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings ... Also for Adam and his wife the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.” (Gen 3:7, 21)
2. Man’s inability to “cover” sin is one of the cardinal scriptural principles
3. It is pointedly and decisively revealed to cause us to look for divine, not human, solutions
4. Sin is the greatest concern we face
5. Only God “covers” sin and the only way that sin is “covered” is through death/blood/sacrifice
6. The difference between fig leaves and animal skins is the difference between “see through” clothing and “not-see-through” clothing; our attempts allow God to “see through” and keep us in statue where sin still reigns; God’s solution provides for us the proper “covering” we need to “hide” our sins
7. ka-phar (kippur) - to cover, purge, make an atonement, make reconciliation, cover over with pitch; to cover over, pacify, propitiate; to cover over, atone for sin, make atonement for; to cover over, atone for sin and persons by legal rites
8. Key passages: Gen 6:14 (pitch it); 32:20 (I will appease him); Ex 29:33ff; 30:10ff (atonement & priestly service); all of Leviticus, esp. ch 16
9. translated as merciful, cleansed, forgiven, purged, pardon, pacify, reconciliation

3:11ff Only love “covers” sin

1. After violating the will of God, “the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings ... Also for Adam and his wife the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.” (Gen 3:7, 21)
2. God’s nature, character, will, etc. is clearly portrayed in Genesis 3
3. Though his initial will (cf. prior discussion and 1 Jn 2:1ff), God’s circumstantial will (also 1 Jn 2:1ff) provided a means for sin to be covered

4. God knows that we are just dust (Ps 103:14)
5. He does not deal with us (always/exclusively) according to our sins (Ps 103:10), but rather demonstrates abundant mercy to us (Ps 103:10ff; Ex 34:6ff)
6. These attributes of God clearly show the love of God, and it is only love that can cover sin
7. Key passages: Pr 10:12 - Hatred stirs up strife, But love covers all sins.; 17:9 He who covers a transgression seeks love,...; Eze 16:8 “When I passed by you again and looked upon you, indeed your time was the time of love; so I spread My wing over you and covered your nakedness. Yes, I swore an oath to you and entered into a covenant with you, and you became Mine,” says the Lord GOD.; 1Pe 4:8 And above all things have fervent love for one another, for “love will cover a multitude of sins.”

3:1ff: The role of shame/conscience

1. After violating the will of God, “the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.”
2. Nakedness [“to be exposed, laid bare”] - literally and figuratively, is never represented positively in scripture with but one exception, Gen 2:25. Every reference after that has some negative meaning, often with regard to the lack of shame/conscience of those discussed.
3. It’s figurative use can refer to spiritual nakedness, exposure (either by the sinner or by God - cf. Nah 3:5), lack of clothing due to the oppression of others, lack of resources either physically or spiritually (Job was “naked” in this sense - destitute of resources), etc.
4. “As used of Adam and Eve (Gen 3:7, 10, 11), it indicates more than sex consciousness. It depicts an awareness of the openness of their guilt to God. Their relationship with God was impaired, upsetting their relationship to each other.” (TWOT, p. 656)
5. Adam and Eve, as human beings created in the image of God (Gen 1:25ff), have faculties of soul (rational, emotional, volitional, moral, behavioral, temporal/eternal) that are shown in our conscience/consciousness of sin.
6. The Latin etymology of con (with) and science (knowledge) parallels the new testament Greek term sun (with) eideo (know/knowledge), meaning “with knowing/knowledge.” Our conscience functions, in part, based on what we know, but it must also function (behave) in concert with our emotions, will, etc., not just our sense or moral oughtness.
7. The extent to which we fail to properly regard when we are “naked” spiritually is a measure of where we stand in God’s sight.
8. Our lack of shame/conscience indicates how “far” we have fallen: Jer 6:15 Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? No! They were not at all ashamed; Nor did they know how to blush. Therefore they shall fall among those who fall; At the time I punish them, They shall be cast down,” says the LORD.; Jer 8:12 Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? No! They were not at all ashamed, Nor did they know how to blush. Therefore they shall fall among those who fall; In the time of their punishment They shall be cast down,” says the LORD.

Up and Coming Principles: chapter three - the consequences of sin; the first gospel; chapter four - children are from God; principles of proper worship; the “second” sin; God’s mercy continues; brother’s keeper; one wife, not two (God’s subtle revelation); chapter five - God’s selective history/the role of genealogies

Assignment: Read through and continue to study Genesis 3-5 for additional principles.