

Adam in Eden

By Pastor Kelly Sensenig

Three military recruiters accepted an invitation to address the senior class of a local high school. Graduation was only a few months away and the principal wanted his young men to hear the options available in the military. The assembly was to be 45 minutes in length. It was agreed that each recruiter would have 15 minutes to make his pitch and then another 20 minutes in the cafeteria to meet with interested boys. The Army recruiter went first and got so excited about his speech that he talked for over 20 minutes. The Navy recruiter, not to be outdone, stood and also spoke for 20 minutes.

The Marine Corps recruiter, realizing that his speaking time had been cut to five minutes, walked up to the podium and spent the first 60 seconds in silence. Wordlessly, he gazed over the group of high school seniors. They knew he was sizing them up. After what seemed to be an eternity, the recruiter said, "I doubt whether there are two or three of you in this room who could cut it as Marines. But if you think that you can, I want to see those three men as soon as this assembly is dismissed." He then turned on his heel and sat down. Predictably, he was mobbed by a herd of young men when he arrived in the cafeteria. The Marine Corps is always on the lookout for a few good men. But so is the Lord! As a matter of fact, God wants Christian men to stand up and be the kind of men that He created them to be. With God's help Christian men can make a difference in their world, families, and churches.

Men, I'm not going to give you some kind of psychological pep talk in order to motivate you to live for God and serve Him. Motivational talks never work in the long run. They work like sugar. Sugar pumps you up and gives you a high, but after a while, you get the low and once again become drained and defeated. What I want to do in this study is share what God's Word says about manhood and let eternal truth and the Holy Spirit stir your hearts, as men, and change your lives. After all, it's the Word and the Spirit that change the lives of God's people.

2 Corinthians 3:18 says:

“But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

Men, when are you going to change? What is it really going to take to change you? I do know this, if we are ever going to change, it will be by the Holy Spirit's conviction and power working through us. We don't stand a chance without the Spirit's ministry operating in our lives (Gal. 5:25). One thing is certain. God is looking for men who are obedient and who can be used of God in these last days of wickedness, worldliness, and weird happenings in our society. We live in days of growing apostasy, apathy toward spiritual things, and attacks on the home and historic truth that has been given to us in the Bible. So today we need to stand our ground and become the kind of men that God wants us to be in the midst of a wicked and perverse generation (Phil. 2:15).

Genesis 2:8

“And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.”

In the first garden called Eden (Gen. 2:8) we see the first man called Adam (Gen. 2:19). Adam was created by God to be a man or “male” individual (Gen. 1:27). His priority in creation (1 Tim. 2:13) reflects what God expects of a man. When studying about “Adam in Eden” we discover that God gives to every man certain responsibilities and obligations that he must fulfill. We will look at these obligations and responsibilities in the form of specific commands.

In the Garden of Eden God reveals what He wants out of a man's life. Every man should ask these two basic questions. What is God's purpose for me? What does God want me to be as a man? My prayer is that God will use this study of Adam in the Garden of Eden to help us see what God expects from our lives, as men, so we might not stray from the clear path that God wants us to walk. There is no time to waste. Christian homes are crumbling, society is worsening, the devil is stirring, and Jesus is coming again. We need to get our spiritual act together right now!

There are five commands given to every man.

1. Don't be lazy (Genesis 2:15).

“And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.”

Man's position in the garden was to “dress it” which means to serve, till, and work it. He was also commissioned to “keep it” which means that he was to watch over the garden, or look after it, and take charge of it. The garden would continue to grow (Gen. 2:5) and therefore the man was given the responsibility to keep the garden looking nice and presentable. Adam learned the importance of working and taking care of what God has entrusted to him. Adam knew that the garden was his responsibility for God Himself said to keep the garden in order. This was the work God gave Adam to do. Adam was commissioned to keep the garden looking nice and orderly. He was expected to be a worker. This was also true after the Fall.

Genesis 3:19 says: “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.”

Adam was expected to labor and toil in order to provide for Eve and the family. God specifically created the man to be a worker and today God still expects a man to be a hard worker and the provider of the family unit. Man in the Garden of Eden reminds us that he is commissioned by God to be a committed worker. He is not to be lazy.

There are two kinds of work that we must do as men.

a. Secular work

God expects us to be involved in secular work. This means that God wants the man to be the key provider of the home. This has always been true. God built into man a work ethic back in Genesis and tells the man to work and provide for his family. Young men, if you are too lazy to work, then I suggest you stop looking at the girls and thinking about which one you are going to marry. Why? It's because God wants a man to provide for his family. This is a Biblical pattern established way back in the Garden of Eden.

1 Timothy 5:8

“But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.”

God has commissioned man to be a worker from the very beginning. Provision for the family unit is one way a man fulfills this obligation. As men we can't be lazy. We must be willing and ready to provide for the family that God has given to us. Lazy men are not living according to God's design. They are actually a disgrace to God and manhood. I visited a man in prison who was trying to sell me the story that he really cared for his family. I told him that this was not the case. He was a boozing, partying man, and now an imprisoned man, who was not faithful in providing for his family.

Men, we need to remember the Garden of Eden where God has placed us and be faithful to our jobs in order to financially provide for our families. God expects a lot from the man of the household. One thing is certain. The man should be the primary provider of the family unit. This is the way it was in Genesis and the way God wants it to be today. Man was to take charge of the garden. Men, take charge of your homes and families. Be the provider and follow God's design and plan for manhood. If we would go back to Genesis our homes would function according to God's design. The early church disciplined lazy men who did not provide for their families.

2 Thessalonians 3:10-11

“For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies.”

2 Thessalonians 3:14

“And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.”

Men, you should be ashamed when you willfully refuse to provide for your family! After a thorough physical examination, a man said, "Tell me in plain language, Doc, what's really the matter with me?" "Do you want it straight?" "Yes." "Well, there isn't a thing in the world wrong with you except that you're just plain lazy!" "Okay," said the listless

patient, "now give me the medical term for it so I can tell my wife!" Men, God doesn't want you to be lazy but outgoing and ready to provide for your family. Providing for our families is a God given mandate.

b. Sacred work

God also placed Adam in the Garden of Eden to accomplish a special service that He asked him to perform, which was to keep the garden looking nice. In one sense, what God told Adam to do, actually became his sacred service rendered unto God. Adam was obedient to God and was willing to do what God asked of him. Keeping the garden looking nice actually became a service and worship that was rendered up to God. In a similar way, God takes every Christian man and places him in a particular location, or his own special garden of life, where he can use his gifts and serve the Lord. Whatever the man does as a spiritual service he should do it as unto God. In other words, he should do it to please the Lord and offer it to God as an expression of his worship.

Romans 12:1

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

Colossians 3:23

"And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men."

Adam was called upon to "dress" and "keep" the garden (Gen. 2:15). Men, what has God called you to do? And are you doing it? What garden has God placed you in? What particular church and place does He want you to serve? The message to every man today is that he must not be lazy but busy in the place and vocation where God has called him to serve. Men, what are you doing for God in your local church? Are you using your gifts for the Lord? Are you willing to step out and "dress" and "keep" the garden of the local church ministry? Are you willing to till the soil of the local church ministry? Are you willing to pull the weeds and work the soil? Every church needs men who are not afraid to serve. What particular ministry has

God called you to do? Where has God called you to serve? Wherever God places you, He wants you to serve. Don't be lazy. Don't become a church couch potato.

Romans 12:11

“Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord.”

What a terrible sight M. R. DeHaan witnessed one morning! His right eye was swollen shut, his cheek was puffed up as though he had an orange in his mouth, his upper lip was four times its normal size, and he itched all over. The reason? He had been attacked by a bunch of loafers. His beehive was full of honey, literally crowding out the bees. There were thousands of them and they clustered on the outside of the hive. They were idle because there was no room for additional honey. Having nothing to do, they just loafed at the entrance looking for trouble. DeHaan recognized the situation and hastily brought an extra section to give the bees a chance to do more work. As he removed the cover to place it on the top, pandemonium broke out. This swarm had always been gentle, so he didn't bother to wear a veil or gloves. Before he could say "scat" he was attacked, and the result- a face like a circus clown!

Why had this gentle colony become so vicious? It was because they were idle. As long as they were busy, they never bothered him; but having nothing to do, they were looking for trouble. They had become loafers. Some Christian men fall into this category. They don't know what to do with their leisure hours. Instead of keeping busy studying God's Word, spending time in prayer, visiting the sick, and witnessing to the lost, they get into trouble. And like the bees, they then attack the people who are trying to help them. Men, don't be lazy! You will only cause a heap of trouble for yourself, your family, and others.

2. Don't be disobedient (Gen. 2:16-17).

“And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”

God makes the issues clear and plain. He always does. God gave Adam a very clear command. He could eat of all the trees in the garden (superabundant provision) but he could not eat of the one tree that God had forbidden (single prohibition). Why did God test Adam in this way? Why did God give Adam a choice? It's because Adam was not created as a mechanical robot but a moral man who had freedom of choice. Adam was not a puppet on a string. God wanted to test Adam's love and loyalty for Him. God chose to create a man that would possess the freedom to either obey or disobey Him. The same is true for every man today. Things have not changed since Eden. Every man is given a choice what he is going to do with his life. Either he will obey God or disobey Him. There is no in-between ground. Men, you must make a choice. "How long halt ye between two opinions? (1 Kings 18:21).

There are two types of disobedience.

a. Disobedience toward the Gospel.

God told Adam "for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Since the days of Adam men have been dying in their sins and going to hell. This is a sad commentary on the human race. When a man dies he is separated from God spiritually (Eph. 2:1-2) and judged for his sins. We know what happened. Adam ate of the tree (Gen. 3:6) and came under God's judgment.

Hebrews 9:27 says:

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."

The fact of the matter is this. We have all eaten of the tree and been condemned by God (Rom. 3:10-12, 23; 5:12). This is why we need God's salvation or deliverance from hell's eternal judgment and damnation. God's judgment for disobedience is very real.

2 Thessalonians 1:8 records these hell-fire words:

"In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."

This type of disobedience relates to the unbeliever. A man disobeys the Gospel when he hears the Gospel message, but then refuses to respond in faith to the message of the Gospel, and embrace its claims. This description (“obey not the gospel”) intensifies the guilt of the sinner. It is damning to hear and then reject the Gospel message (John 3:36; Acts 17:30).

Calvin says:

“For if obedience is not rendered to the gospel through faith, as he teaches in the *first* and in the *last* chapters of the Epistle to the Romans, unbelief is the occasion of resistance to it.”

People disobey the Gospel message by hearing it and then rejecting its message. When the first man sinned in the Garden of Eden the entire human race was plummeted into sin (Rom. 5:12). Man therefore needs to hear and then by faith embrace the claims of the Gospel message, concerning the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, which gives eternal life to him (Rom. 6:23). If one refuses to obey this message, or fails to respond in faith to the Gospel, then there is no hope of receiving salvation and eternal life. They will be lost and damned to the fires of hell (“Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord” – 1 Thess. 1:9).

Hell is ridiculed today, but that does not mean it doesn't exist. An atheist laughed at me when I spoke to him about hell. Friend, we might as well face the fact - there is a hell. I know that it's not popular to talk about hell and judgment, when witnessing to unbelievers, but it's very necessary. I think there are many Christians today who are unwilling to confront people with the fact that they are lost and going to hell. However, no person can get saved until they first know they are lost and going to face God's judgment in hell. Jesus came to save us from the fires of hell and damnation (Luke 19:10).

Today many testimonies no longer mention hell. People talk about how God gave them a new personality and made them successful. How many testimonies have you recently heard where the person said, “I was a hell-doomed sinner going straight to hell, I was lost, and God saved me?” My friend, Christ didn't come to give us new personalities or to make us successful. He came to *deliver* us from

hell! That's not popular to say today but it is true. People don't like to hear about hell. Nevertheless, hell is a real place that people need to be delivered from, through the finished work of Christ ("And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire" - Jude 1:22).

Suppose you were asleep in a burning building and a man rushed into that building to rescue you. He awakened you, picked you up, and carried you out of that burning building. Now if you had the opportunity to stand before a group of people and tell about this man and express your appreciation in his presence, what would you thank him for? You would thank him for risking his life to save you out of a burning building. Nothing else would have mattered if he had not rescued you from a flaming death. Men, if we have obeyed the Gospel (2 Thess. 1:8) by placing our faith in Jesus Christ alone (Gal. 3:26), then we should express thankfulness to Christ for saving us from hell and eternal judgment. Our testimony should reflect this. You should tell the world that you are a Christian and what Christ has done for you.

"I'll tell the world, that I'm a Christian.
I'm not ashamed His name to bear.
I'll tell the world that I'm a Christian
I'll take Him with me anywhere."

The judgment of the lost is coming. If you want to remain on the broad road that leads to hell (Matt. 7:14) then just disobey the Gospel message, reject the claims of the Gospel, and refuse to place your faith in Jesus Christ as your only Savior (John 3:36). One thing is certain. If you disobey the Gospel and reject its claims, then you will be judged. Somebody needs to tell you the facts if you are ever going to be saved.

Matthew 25:46

"And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."

A godly minister once preached a sermon on the last judgment. On the next day some thoughtless men agreed that one of them should go to him, and, if possible, draw him into a discussion. He went accordingly, and began the conversation, saying, "I believe there is a small dispute between you and me, and I thought that I would call this

morning and try to settle it." "Ah!" said the good man, "what is it?" "Why," he replied, "you say that the punishment of the impenitent will be eternal, and I do not think it will." "Oh, if that is all," he answered, "there is no dispute between you and me. If you turn to Matt 25:46, you will find that the dispute is between you and the Lord Jesus Christ, and I would advise you to go immediately and settle it with Him."

b. Disobedience toward godliness.

This type of disobedience relates to the believer. Men, God has placed us in His garden and He wants us to remain obedient to His commands and stay on the godly path. Adam was told to not eat "of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil" (Gen. 2:15). Today God is still commanding men to not eat of certain trees in their own garden of life, where they live, work, and serve. There are certain trees and fruit that Christian men cannot partake of today, since it will cause them to backslide, and become defeated spiritually. Some trees are off limits! I know this is not a popular message in an age of relativism, existentialism, and hedonism, but it's God's message to every Christian man. The forbidden trees are clearly stated in the Scripture. Men, there are certain trees and fruit that you cannot have or consume. I will name just a few of the more prevalent ones.

1. The tree of moral sins.

The major moral sin that plagues most men today is sexual immorality and impurity. There is a great moral crisis among even Christian men today regarding sexual impurity.

Exodus 20:14 says: "Thou shalt not commit adultery."

Exodus 20:17 adds: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's."

Proverbs 5:15-19 puts it this way:

"Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well. Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad, and rivers of waters

in the streets. Let them be only thine own, and not strangers' with thee. Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth. Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; and be thou ravished always with her love.”

You don't need to be a rocket scientist to figure out what God is teaching every husband. God commands fidelity in the marriage relationship. Physical satisfaction and true love is to be expressed within the confines of the marital relationship. Anything outside the marriage bond is an intruder relationship. Adultery is a grievous sin that forms an alien bond with another partner (1 Cor. 6:16).

Ephesians 5:3 also gives this command:

“But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints.”

We live in a dirty generation today. The forbidden fruit of sexual vice, both before and during marriage, can bring a man down rather quickly. Men, I'm of the opinion that if you don't have a safeguard on your computer to guard you from pornography that you will be prone to bite into the forbidden fruit. It's smart and many times mandatory to get a protective guard on your computer these days, not only for yourself, but also for your son and entire family. If you play with fire you will be burned. I'm sounding the alarm on pornography today. This kind of material in magazines and over the Internet is defeating Christian men.

Many times we make provision for the flesh (Rom. 13:14) by setting ourselves up to sin. Therefore, we must take action to prevent us from sinning against God (Luke 15:18). God still says there are some trees that we cannot eat of in the garden. The tree marked “sexual sin” is one of them. We can't have another man's wife and young unmarried men cannot play around with sex partners. God says that this is forbidden fruit and that it will harm your spiritual life and keep you from living the kind of godly life that counts for God (Titus 2:12).

Our young men need to know this truth. We need to sound the alarm against this forbidden tree. We have many young men eating the forbidden fruit of sexual sin. This kind of sin is condemned by God everywhere in the Bible and is a terrible sin against the sacredness of

marriage (Heb. 13:4), the human body (1 Cor. 6:15-20), and God's holiness (1 Thess. 4:7). There is no getting around it. God condemns sexual sins on every level.

Consider, as an example, these questions related to sexual purity. Are we being desensitized by the present evil world? Do things that once shocked us now pass us by with little notice? Have our sexual ethics slackened? Where do our minds wander when we have no duties to perform? What are we reading? Are there books or magazines or files in our libraries that we want no one else to see? What are we renting at the local video stores? How many hours do we spend watching TV? How many adulteries did we watch last week? How many did we watch with our children?

Psalm 101:3

"I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me."

Men, we had better wake up and smell the coffee! God hates sexual sins and Jesus came to set us free from the power of sexual sins and vice (1 John 3:8). There is no reason to live in defeat when there can be glorious freedom and victory through Christ (John 8:36 – "Ye shall be free indeed").

2. The tree of material sins.

Matthew 6:19-21

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also"

Jesus is not teaching that it's wrong to have things. Rather, Jesus is teaching that it's wrong when things have us! There is a difference. We must seek to keep our lives in balance and remember that the true treasures are the eternal rewards ("treasures in heaven") that we will receive someday for living right, giving right, and doing right. If all we do is live to accumulate things, then we are governed by the principle of greed and covetousness. Many times we can allow the

material world to lead our lives and absorb our time, energies, and lives. But if we remember to effectively live for Jesus Christ and serve Him we will not be overcome and defeated by dollars, debt, and the dissatisfaction that comes when we only live for things. You know, some people live to eat, whereas others eat to live. The same is true regarding riches. We should not live for riches but only use riches to meet our basic needs in life.

1 Timothy 6:8

“And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.”

Staying focused is what Jesus is teaching. If your treasure is in heavenly reward (“treasures in heaven” - Matt. 6:20) then this is where your heart and life’s ambition will be! You won’t live for earthly riches but the eternal riches. However, if your treasure is on earthly things then this is where your heart, total affection, and life will be centered (Matt. 6:21).

Men, you cannot afford materially or spiritually to operate on the level of greed and purchase those things that you cannot afford. In a day of easy credit and credit card consumption this is good advice. You must refuse to eat of the fruit of materialism and be overcome by things. Many young men fall into the trap that says, “gain is godliness” (1 Tim. 6:5) but this is the devil’s lie and trap. The wealth and health movement of our day is saying to Christian men that it’s spiritual to be rich and if one is not having financial success, according to the world’s standards, then they are not trusting in God. This is a circulating false teaching of today. Men, what are the true riches? The Bible tells us.

1 Timothy 6:6

“But godliness with contentment is great gain.”

There you have it! Living a godly life and experiencing contentment in life are the real riches that bring meaning and purpose into your life. True godliness has nothing to do with financial gain, success, and luxuries. Godliness is linked to contentment - not riches or financial gain. The truth is this. There is no replacement for true godliness and contentment. All the money in the world could never replace the value of these Christian virtues. There are some things money cannot buy.

Money cannot buy true peace and contentment. Money cannot buy a godly life. What really gives meaning and purpose to life? What brings lasting satisfaction in life? It's not money. The Bible says that living a godly and contented life is what brings lasting enjoyment and satisfaction.

At this point something else needs to be said about the tree of materialism. Many men today want bigger cars, bigger toys, bigger hobbies, bigger vacations and the end result is more money. Jesus said, "Beware of covetousness" (Luke 12:15). We live in a day when greed has gone wild and living within your means is something of the past. For this reason, every Christian man must learn to balance out his life so the tree of materialism does not overcome him and become a stumbling block in his life. Every man must learn the secret of true Biblical contentment (Phil. 4:10-13).

Someone said:

"Contentment is understanding that if I am not satisfied with what I have, I will never be satisfied with what I want."

Let's switch gears. Some men are also discovering that they are becoming slaves to their work and jobs. Work, work, work, and more work! Sound familiar? I'm finding out that many men are being drowned in their work these days. Eventually they become bogged down, burned out, and broken down from a spiritual standpoint, as they try and keep up with the demands to earn a living and be financially secure. Hard work is very necessary but it can rob you of your spiritual life if you *live to work* instead of *work to live*. Employers are more demanding and costs continue to rise. The cry for more time, more money, and more commitment to the secular world is on the rise.

What is a man going to do? What can he do? He must refocus and rework his life or else he will go down with the ship and lose his spiritual health and vitality. New priorities must be made (Matt. 6:33) and a new dynamic relationship with God must be developed ("Enoch walked with God" - Gen. 5:22 and "Noah walked with God" - Gen. 6:9). Many men feel trapped in the demanding world of secular employment and they see no way out. But there is a way out! His name is Jesus!

John 10:10

“The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.”

Only Jesus Christ can give you newfound joy and purpose for living, when it seems that you have been drained of your strength, and have lost sight of the true meaning and existence of life. When we experience Christ’s resources and indwelling life (Phil. 1:21) we can be released from the pressures of a pagan society and find new joy, peace, and purpose. There is a wondrous release that comes from cultivating a relationship with Jesus Christ. We must love Him (1 Cor. 16:22), long for Him (Phil. 1:21), and learn from Him (Matt. 11:29), so that we can experience the God-filled way of life, in the midst of busy schedules and life’s demands.

The drive to earn more money and demands of a secular society can steal away your godly living and contentment. As a man, you must make your commitment to live for God and be content with the place, pension, and purpose that God has for your life. If you only live for accumulation and the financial world you will miss out on life’s greatest meaning and purpose.

Psalms 42:1

“As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.”

3. The tree of musical sins.

There is another tree that is controlling the lives and minds of men today. The Church is playing today what they call *holy rock* music. This is a misnomer (misapplied designation) and a nice way of saying that the Church now accepts unholy and worldly music in its ranks. Rock music in all of its forms is addictive and is controlling our young men today. Rock music takes men down other evil paths such as drugs, drink, and diabolical acts of rebellion. Many Christians today say they can take it or leave it. The problem is this. They always take it and become controlled and addicted to the rock sound of today’s pagan culture. Do young people believe that rock music is addictive? In a survey of 2,750 young people, 99.3% said “Yes!”

Dr. Allan Bloom said:

“Nothing is more singular about this generation than its addiction to music.”

He is right. Time and time again and testimony after testimony, we find that our young men are being lured into the world of secular rock music, when listening to the same sound of rebellion in their so-called Christian music.

Listen to the testimony of a 19 year-old:

“When I was twelve years of age, I purchased a tape that changed the course of my life. This tape was made by a popular Christian contemporary artist. Listening to this tape was the beginning of a pattern, or more accurately, an addiction of listening to rock music. Over a period of three years, I gradually went from contemporary Christian music to pop, light rock, and eventually, to hard rock. I would use rock music to entertain, get me excited, give me courage, and drown out my troubles. All of the things I used rock music for are also common reasons for alcohol or drug addiction, which is why I refer to it as an addiction in my life. The symptoms of my addiction were manifested in many ways: I withdrew from my family, became very rebellious, chose friends who listened to rock music, and spent hours by myself listening to rock music. ... I knew it was a bondage from which I needed to be freed. Each time I tried to break free, the next rock song I heard would pull me down again.”

This addiction begins with what they call Contemporary Christian Rock Music, which uses so-called Christian lyrics, and then incorporates the same sound of rebellion that Satan uses into the music. Of course, this is trying to join together light and darkness or righteousness and unrighteousness (2 Cor. 6:14). This is impossible to do. The fact of the matter is this. It is impossible to please God by adding sensual styles to spiritual songs! Let's take off our blindfolds and stop eating the fruit from the tree marked rock music.

Listen to one testimony from a young 24-year-old man who was delivered from the devilish sound of the so-called Christian rock music. “Years have passed since that time (the time I listened to the rock beat), and God has shown me the deadly poison of the rock beat in any type of music. It took months of daily time in God's Word to

regain the spiritual sensitivity that was lost during that season of my life. I grieve over the destruction that Satan brought to me through the rock beat. Please don't make the mistake I did by allowing this music into your life!"

There are many other trees we could mention today. However, let me ask you this. What is the tree that you have been eating from and the tree that you know God says is off limits? Men, God has limits! God sets the boundaries. You don't set the boundaries. God does! Do you know why? It's because He loves you and does not want you to live defeated, in despair, and filled with deep regrets. Don't provide excuses. Admit to God if you have been eating from some forbidden tree and then confess your sin (1 John 1:9) and forsake it (Prov. 28:13). It may be the tree of an unforgiving spirit, gossip, nicotine, sexual sin, materialism, gambling, rock music, or alcoholic drink. Whatever it might be you need to forsake it today. You need to stop partaking of the fruit that will wreck your spiritual life and also the lives of your family.

For instance, strong drink, or the alcohol of today's society, has wrecked the lives of many men and their families. To even think of imbibing alcoholic beverage becomes a decision that will set you up for disaster and misery. The Bible clearly condemns the use of wine and strong drink which is the category of all alcoholic drink that is made today.

Proverbs 20:1 says:

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise."

Why would you want to drink something which is called "raging" (that which causes both external and internal conflicts) and something we can be "deceived" by (that which causes us to go astray morally, mentally, and spiritually). Alcoholic drink deceptively leads men to the slaughter house. It brings them to the place of spiritual shipwreck. Drinking alcohol is like playing with matches while filling your car up with gasoline!

Let's talk straight today. We need more direct talk in these times of sinful compromise. Men, God is looking for your obedience. Don't let

God down. Don't eat the fruit of the forbidden trees that so many men are consuming today. 1 Samuel 15:22 says that "to obey is better than sacrifice" and 1 Samuel 15:23 adds: "For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry."

A little boy was seen one day lounging around a circus tent. If there is anything in the world tempting to a boy it is a circus, and, knowing this, a gentleman said: "Come, Johnny, let's go into the circus." "No," said the boy, "father would not like it." "But your father need not know it," said the man. "But I will know it," said the boy, "and when father comes home tonight, I could not look up into his face."

Dear friend, we should be able to look into our Father's face! He has been very good to us. No good thing has He withheld from us (Psalm 84:11). However, many times we find ourselves unable to look into His face for we have been eating the forbidden fruit. God help us to always live close to the Father, the One who is pure and holy, so that we are able to look into His face with joy and the assurance that we are living a life that is pleasing to Him.

3. Don't hide from God (Gen. 3:7-10).

"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. 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. And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself."

After the Fall we find that Adam and Eve attempted to hide themselves from God ("hid themselves from the presence of the LORD" – vs. 8). In addition, Adam along with his wife attempted to cover up their sin or spiritual nakedness before God with fig leaves ("they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons" – vs. 7). The whole scene was one of fear, cover-up, and hiding. When sin entered the human race Adam knew that he was estranged from God. "Where art thou" (vs. 9). These are sad words. Of course, God knew where Adam was but His call to Adam demonstrated that

fellowship had been broken between God and Adam. Adam knew that he was now separated from God's favor and blessing ("I heard" and "I was afraid" and "I was naked" and "I hid" – vs. 10). These are the words of a man who knows God is not pleased with his life.

Adam's physical nakedness now became shameful to him ("I was naked" – vs. 10). The shame of Adam's physical nakedness was a consequence that was connected with his sin. Adam's sin caused him to feel and sense shame regarding his open physical nakedness. In one sense, Adam's physical nakedness now became an outward visible expression of his spiritual nakedness before God. Adam was now a fallen man and the results of this fall are separation from God (Eph. 2:1-2). This has been the case of every man or human being that has been born into the world since the days of Adam (Rom. 5:12).

Something else needs to be mentioned at this point. Adam seemed to be more concerned about the consequences of his sin than with his actual sin or transgression before God. There was no mention that "I was a sinner." Instead, Adam speaks of only the fear and shame or consequences that were related to his sin ("I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself"). The truth that he was a sinner had to be dragged out of him.

There are some practical applications that can be drawn from this verse which relate to all men today – both saved and unsaved. First, we learn from Adam's experience in the garden, that every unsaved man is separated or alienated from God, and he needs to be saved and brought back into a right relationship with God.

Colossians 1:21 says:

"And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled."

Lost sinners need to admit that they have sinned against God's presence and holiness and only then will they be ready to place faith in Christ for salvation and eternal life. If they try and cover-up their sins with their fig leaves of human works they will not be saved (Eph. 2:8-9). There must be an openness and clear admission of sin before God.

The prodigal said in Luke 15:18:

“I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee.”

Again he says in Luke 15:21:

“And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.”

Every unsaved man needs to know that he is a sinner who is separated from the presence of a holy and righteous God. Sinners who do not have their sins forgiven on the basis of Christ's death must face the consequence of their sin, which is separation from God's presence. Sin puts a Grand Canyon between the sinner and a holy God. The only way an unsaved man can be restored to a right relationship with God is through faith or belief in Christ.

Acts 16:31

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.”

Belief in Jesus Christ means that you will commit your faith only to the death and resurrection of Christ to save your soul from hell. You will decide to take the salvation (Rev: 22:17) that Christ offers to you through His death (the payment for sin's penalty) and resurrection (the proof that God accepted His payment and the promise of eternal life).

Second, there is also a general application to all Christian men, when reviewing Adam's experience in the garden. We too must admit when we have sinned before God in our Christian life and confess it to Him. We do this in order to restore our fellowship and “the joy of thy salvation” (Ps 51:12) with God – not our salvation before God.

After David sinned he said in Psalm 51:4: “Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight...” Dear friend, this was a clear confession of David's guilt and adulterous sin before God. There was no beating around the bush. It did not have to be dragged out of him. I did it and I admit it. It was dirty, despicable, and detrimental to my spiritual health. Confession means “to say the same thing” which means we agree with God about the matter of our sin. In short, confession is when we “tell it like it is.”

1 John 1:9

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

Confession is for the Christian life. We must confess our sins and receive forgiveness so fellowship (not salvation) can be restored between the believer and God. We might cry about the consequence of our sin like Adam, but we need to see our sin for what it really is, and confess it before God with a broken heart like David.

Psalm 34:18 says:

“The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.”

A preacher of the early 1900s said that when he was 12 years old he killed one of the family geese by throwing a stone and hitting it squarely on the head. Figuring his parents wouldn't notice that one of the 24 birds was missing, he buried the dead fowl. But that evening his sister called him aside and said, "I saw what you did. If you don't offer to do the dishes tonight, I'll tell Mother." The next morning she gave him the same warning. All that day and the next the frightened boy felt bound to do the dishes. The following morning, however, he surprised his sister by telling her it was her turn. When she quietly reminded him of what she could do, he replied, "I've already told Mother, and she has forgiven me. Now you do the dishes. I'm free again!"

Confession is what frees us from the past. We must simply face our sin and never try to cover it up with fig leaves like Adam did. Men, when will we learn that we cannot hide from God!

“I cannot hide from God,
However I may try.
Tho' mountains cover me,
I'll not escape His eye.
I've wondered far and near,
And yet His voice I hear.
I know that I can never hide from God.

I cannot hide from Thee dear Lord,
To escape Thee so often I've tried.
No rest shall I know while here below.
Till in Christ my soul shall hide."

Third, we learn from Adam's experience that every man should keep his life clean. If we keep our lives pure we won't find ourselves trying to hide from God. If we would keep our lives clean, we would be able to look at God in His face, and remain in sweet fellowship with Him. The issue of purity for men is a big issue today. God wants us to "possess our vessel in sanctification and honour" (1 Thess. 4:4).

When we do this we don't have to fear God and hide from Him in the place where we live and reside. Of course, any sin will keep us from experiencing the wonderful fellowship we can have with God. The Bible tells us that God evidently walked through the garden in the cool of the day many times with Adam ("the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden" – vs. 8). It was there in the cool of the day that God talked with Adam and where Adam's soul had refreshing fellowship with God. Men, we need to have our own garden experiences with God and stay close to the Lord these days.

"I come to the garden alone,
While the dew is still on the roses;
And the voice I hear,
Falling on my ear,
The Son of God discloses.

He speaks, and the sound of His voice
Is so sweet the birds hush their singing;
And the melody
That He gave to me,
Within my heart is ringing.

I'd stay in the garden with Him,
Though the night around me be falling,
But He bids me go:
Through the voice of woe
His voice to me is calling.

And He walks with me, and He talks with me,
And He tells me I am His own;
And the joy we share as we tarry there,
None other has ever known.”

As men we need to stay pure, keep our lives free from enslaving sins, and stay in fellowship with God. The world is pulling us away from the coolness of the garden into the hustle and bustle of everyday living. If you miss your garden encounter with God, you will eventually find yourself trying to hide from Him. Many men try and escape God's presence but they have found that it is impossible to escape the omniscience and all-seeing eyes of God. We cannot hide from God.

Psalm 139:7-10

“Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell (sheol), behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.”

If you think you are hiding from God today as a Christian man and that God has forgotten about you, then think again. God has been with you all the time. He has been there all the time! You just have not heard Him calling your name. Why? It's because you have allowed the cry of the world to choke out His sweet and tender voice. You have allowed the things of this world to interrupt your fellowship with God. Men, God is calling us from the garden of our lives today. We need to stop and feel the breeze once again and hear His tender voice today. God still speaks to us in “a still small voice” (1 Kings 19:12).

“In a still small voice
He speaks to me.
Through His Holy Scriptures changes me.
Oh the Lord is great and mighty,
Yet He speaks with a still small voice.”

4. Don't stop being a leader (Gen. 3:9).

“And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?”

There is a reason why God called for Adam and not Eve. God called out for Adam and not Eve because the man was the spiritual head (1 Cor. 11:3 – “the head of the woman is the man”) and leader of the family unit (Eph. 5:23 – “the husband is the head of the wife”). God had entrusted Adam with spiritual leadership and when the family begins to fall apart God comes looking for the man! And men, God knows where to find you! You may think that you can hide behind your work desk or in your work truck, but God knows how to hunt you down, get your attention and say, “Adam!” How piercing those words were to Adam since he had failed his family.

Adam was responsible for the spiritual welfare of his wife and family. The Christian man needs to stay right with God so that his family can stay right with God. Every man needs to be a spiritual leader who manifests Christ’s life, fellowships with Christ, lives for Christ, speaks of Christ, and serves Christ. Men, if you will do these things then your family will not become lost to the world (2 Tim. 4:10) and the fleeting things that are passing away and which have no eternal value (1 John 2:17).

Who does God call when the family is not in church? He calls for Adam. He calls for the man. Who does God call when the children are running around with friends that are causing them to stumble? He calls for the man. Who does God call when the children are no longer having their devotions? He calls for the man. Who does God call when the family needs encouragement and when an important decision needs to be made that will impact the family’s future? He calls the man. Men, I’m not going to beat around the bush with you. I’m not going to put sugar on what I’m about to say. The bottom line is this. You need to stop floundering around, living by the apron strings of your wife, stand up like a man, and become a real spiritual leader in your home. This is not male chauvinism; it’s God’s plan for Biblical manhood.

During World War II an English battalion had a chaplain who was well-liked because he was what the men called “inoffensive.” In actuality, however, he was a moral coward. At times when he should have spoken out against evil and faithfully borne the reproach of Christ, he pretended he didn’t hear what was being said. In time he was transferred, and a new chaplain took his place. One day at the

officers' mess, the Colonel expressed himself with his usual explosive, four- letter words of profanity. The new chaplain calmly stood to his feet and said respectfully, "Pardon me, sir, but you'd expect your men to do their duty, wouldn't you? I feel that as a Christian chaplain I must tell you that your language is an offense both to God and to man." An awful silence fell over the room. No one had ever spoken to the colonel like that before. The officer was quiet for a moment and then said, "You're right--I'm sorry!" Because of that chaplain's courage, the language of the whole group improved, and he was able to have a strong witness for Christ.

Men, we need to have the same boldness and determination to do what is right today and lead our families in the path of righteousness. We can't afford to be cowards!

1 Corinthians 16:13 challenges us as men and says:
"Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong."

The word "quit" is a word that speaks of manliness and bravery. In short, you need to stand on the truth of God's Word, be brave like a man, do what is right, and be strong in the Lord's power. When you do God will bless both you and your family. We have many Christian men today who are cowards. They don't want to face the world and the battle that is raging all around them. Yes, it's easier to go with the flow instead of swimming up stream. But men, God expects us to be strong like a man, as we rely upon His power, and do what is right for our own personal lives and families. We must stand in the gap, be counted for Christ, and practice daily Christian holiness (1 Pet. 1:14-15) and commitment to the Lord (Luke 9:23). Jeremiah 10:2 also says: "Thus saith the LORD, Learn not the way of the heathen ..."

Charles Mackay wrote:

"You have no enemies, you say?
Alas, my friend, the boast is poor;
He who has mingled in the fry
Of duty, that the brave endure,
Must have made foes! If you have none,
You've hit no traitor on the hip,
You've dashed no cup from perjured lip,

You've never turned the wrong to right,
You've been a coward in the fight."

Stand up and be a man!!

5. Don't blame others (Genesis 3:12-13).

"And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat."

Adam blamed Eve for his sin ("she gave me of the tree") and Eve blamed the devil ("The serpent beguiled me"). Adam said, "You don't know what it's like to live with my wife." And then Eve turns around and says "The devil made me do it!" This is called "passing the buck." We want to push the blame for our sin and failures on others. We want to give excuses for sinning and committing trespasses against God. Men, don't you even think about doing this. First, God has given to you power ("divine power") and promises ("precious promises") to live victoriously (2 Pet. 1:3-4). Second, when you sin it's your own fault. Don't blame it on your wife, your background, your family history, your genetics, your job, your circumstance, or the devil. Blame yourself. Hit yourself with the hammer and make sure you hit yourself square on the head so it will knock some sense into you.

James 1:14

"But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed."

There is only one person to blame for your sin and that person is you! You are not half a man unless you own up to your sin! As men we must stop offering up excuses to God for our sins and lack of commitment to Him. We must meet our sin and lack of service or commitment to God head on and then seek to change our lives by God's grace and power.

A professing Christian who tried to explain away his responsibility for breaking the law received double punishment. He said to the judge, "Your Honor, as a believer in Christ I am a 'new man,' but I still have

an old nature, and it was the 'old man' that committed the crime." The judge's reply to his plea was this. "Since it was the 'old man' that broke the law, we'll sentence him to 30 days in jail. And since the 'new man' was an accomplice in the wrong, we'll give him 30 days also. I therefore sentence you to jail for 60 days!"

Men, let's stop all the excuses! God doesn't accept them. Admit when you have sinned and get right with God. Admit when you are not being the kind of leader that God wants you to be. There are two ways to gain respect. One is to act nobly. The other is this. When you fail, don't make any excuses. You need to stop the excuses and start living the Christian life before your family. "And they all with one consent began to make excuse" (Luke 14:18). We can muster up excuses for everything and try to get ourselves off the hook. But God won't accept our excuses.

Vance Havner used to say:

"An excuse is a reason stuffed with a lie."

Own up to your sin and do something about it. When God comes calling your name ("Adam ... Where art thou?") stop all the fancy talk and get down on your knees in old-fashioned, heart-felt repentance and let God do a work in your heart once again. When you do this, you can have revival, and "the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).

"Revive us again;
Fill each heart with Thy love;
May each soul be rekindled
with fire from above.
Hallelujah! Thine the glory.
Hallelujah! Amen.
Hallelujah! Thine the glory.
Revive us again."