



God's Gracious Forgiveness
September 30, 2018
Genesis 3:8-17; 20-24

“And the LORD God said, ‘The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever’” (Genesis 2:7).

God gave Adam and Eve the choice to obey or disobey God. If they obeyed God, they could eat of the tree of life and live forever. If they disobeyed God, they would no longer have access to the tree of life and they would surely die. If they chose to obey God, they would only know good forever and enjoy a happy and satisfying relationship with God and their growing family as they filled the earth and exercised their God-given roles as benevolent rulers of the creatures that would be their companions forever. Unhappily, Adam and Eve chose to disobey God and break the only law God gave them, and what God said would happen happened: they immediately experienced and knew evil firsthand, unlike God who only knows evil secondhand. They immediately suffered true moral guilt and experienced separation from each other. They felt ashamed, and later they tried to hide from God. Among other consequences, these experiences were built into their human nature. For this reason, when we sin we suffer these or similar moral consequences, unless we have made our conscience ineffective by repeatedly choosing to disobey God. Because God loves people, God forgave Adam and Eve and helped them cover themselves more effectively. And before they died, God allowed them to live hundreds of years and begin to fill the earth with their children. Still, their disobedience had a devastating effect on their family and all their descendants; therefore, God sent Jesus into the world.

1. What are some of the ways sinners try to hide themselves from God?
2. When God already knew the answers, why do you think God asked the man and woman questions?
3. Why do you think the man was afraid of God?
4. Who did the man and the woman blame for their having sinned against God? How did sin have an effect on their relationship?
5. What two types of punishment did the man and woman experience? Do people today still experience these two types of punishment?