

Life Group Notes

Sunday 7th January 2024

Speaker: Andy McCullough

Title: The Presence: Presence Lost

Passage: Genesis 3:7-24

1. From Being Seen to Being Ashamed (3:7-8).

In the Presence we were fully seen and known. Adam and Eve were naked in Eden, but completely unashamed. To be in the Presence is to be seen. Then they sewed fig leaves to hide themselves. What is your fig leaf? We are all still hiding from God and from each other. Jesus' death provides the true and final covering for humankind.

2. From Blessing to Curse (3:17-19).

The Presence was a place of blessing. When the Curse enters the world, there are new words like pain, fear, shame. Life is now hard work; sweat, thorns and thistles. Jesus was crowned with thorns, he sweated in Gethsemane, he bore the curse for us.

3. From Belonging to Dislocation (3:24, 4:16).

The Presence was our home. We are all refugees since Eden. That's why coming to Jesus feels like coming home. What we lost in a place we regain in a person.

4. From Safety to Violence (3:16, 4:8).

The Presence was Safe. Eden was the original safe space. Now there is violence in the world. Jesus was a victim of violence, by his wounds we find healing, and he offers us a way to safety.

5. From Life to Death (3:19, 24).

The Presence was a place of life. Outside the Presence, Adam and Eve start to die. Jesus conquered death, reversed the curse, so that we can know eternal life.

Suggested Questions:

1. How good are you at showing your true self (warts and all!) to other people? What are your "fig leaves" that you hide behind? What do you need to do to get better at being honest and vulnerable?
2. Are there any aspects of the "curse" that you are experiencing at the moment? How can we pray for Jesus to take these away?
3. Have you ever been a victim of violence? Would you feel able to share your story with the group?
4. Take some time to sit in the Presence of God (maybe play a song or sit in silence). Could you do something creative? Write down words that describe how you feel in the Presence of God, or draw a picture... e.g. "I feel safe. I feel peaceful..."