Be Naked and Die

*Genesis 2:25; 3:1-10*

*Genesis 2:25-3:1-10*

*25 The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.*

*1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" 2 The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, 3 but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.' " 4"You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. 5 "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." 6 When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. 7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. 8 Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. 9 But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?" 10 He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."*

Praise the Lord!

1. I know what you guys are thinking ~ Sang needs to work on the titles for sermons. He needs someone to check for his PR ~ What kind of title is this? Sang’s becoming a lamo.
2. Have you ever tried to cover yourself up? ###
3. Pastor John’s kids are always naked
The problem is when the kids even ask me to hold them when they’re naked!!

But they feel fine, no shame, no worries

Unfortunately, as we grow, we have things to hide – do you agree? – think of like when you’re on a date (we only want to show the good stuff)

1. Community is not favored b/c all kinds of flaws appear when around others (nowadays with advent of Internet and other devices, we have the luxury of doing everything from home – not seeing anyone – but the truth is,
* many people are lonely
* many people don’t have parents who can give them guidance in life
* many people are confused

It was never meant to be this way – people were to be a community helping each other, loving each other, and be in communion with God.

(Go into the verses)

25 The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

(v. 25) State of happiness – no worries about life – just happy as they are – no shame, fear of rejection, or someone looking down on them – just happy

1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"

(v. 1) “Serpent” here is talking about how Satan attacks us. He doesn’t attack like the way we think – by picking up a boulder and dropping it on us – **1. our spiritual lives are based on our heart**. Satan’s goal is not to force us (like we throw a fist and cause someone to fall in submission in UFC), but **2. tricks us so that in our hearts we think God is the bad guy**. He will make us to **3. think that what God offers us is not the best**, and that **4. we can make something better**. – Here, Satan is asking the sly question – “Did God really say?”

 2 The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, 3 but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.' "

(v. 2-3)Here, Eve is saying she understands this is what God expects from her – or she will “die”

(When we use the **term “die,”** it generally refers to us no longer being able to function as a human, dead, and having no life --- the death mentioned here is a spiritual death – or a separation from God and people.

4 "You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. 5 "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

(v. 4) The serpent lies by saying “that she will not die” – but we know what happened afterwards. The serpent continues his trickery by saying, when you eat of it, “your eyes will be opened and you will be like God.”

As we know, their **1. eyes were not opened to be like God** (if that was so, we would also be all-knowing, ever present, all-capable like God) – but rather, **2.their eyes opened in a different way – they became judgmental, looked down on others, and wanted the position of #1. (see verse 7)**

6 When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. 7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

(v. 7) They realized they were naked – but rather, I bet they were now able to see the flaws of each other. I bet they were judgmental and started to talk about **how much fat Adam had, or how Eve wasn’t the perfect hottie**. Their eyes were opened (not just bigger), but their **hearts have now become corrupt and became self-occupied and concerned about how others view them**. They now wanted to look perfect, so they covered themselves. They realized they were not perfect, but **wanted to be seen in the eyes of others as perfect**. They wanted to be #1.

(Point to the picture) – **1. divorce** (and affect on children – or us), so
**2. people don’t want to get married (but has sex anyway** – more people are hurt and broken), **3. independence** (so people struggle to make it on their own, no one to lean on, etc),
**4. Expected to be super-people**

This is where relationship between people were broken – **1. they could no longer be naked and be happy – they had to take care of themselves first and strive to do that – filling their life with worries, frustrations, need to be perfect** – this causes stress and other health problems, doesn’t it?

8 Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. 9 But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?" 10 He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."

(v. 8) Adam and Eve hid from the Lord – they could no longer be naked in front of God, their eyes were opened to see their imperfections – and they had to do whatever they could to hide it from God (**because now they wanted to be God, they want to show that they are perfect, even though underneath the coverings, they are imperfect**).

(v. 9) Even though God knew what had happened (just like when my son tries to hide from me), God came looking for Adam.

(v. 10) Adam reveals they were hiding from God because he was afraid (probably afraid that God will see through Adam’s imperfection)

The story ends that Adam and Eve leave the presence of God –

* **their relationship with God died**
* **their relationship between each other died**

Naked means to trust – If we cannot trust that God will see our imperfections and accept us as we are, we’ll never be able to come to Him just as we are

Naked means to be vulnerable – If we are still trying to protect and cover our imperfections, we’ll never be able to be naked before God. Come defenseless –accepting that we are imperfect.

**(How many of you guys like to ask for directions?)** Men generally don’t like to ask for directions – neither do I. Talk about how I thought I knew where I was going and kept going for 20 mins in the wrong direction in GA. Then I asked for directions – **maybe, guys, we need to be naked and admit we’re imperfect. – be vulnerable and swallow your pride**

**Is there anything in life you tend to cover up? What would shame you if someone were to find this out about you? Bring these matters to God and let Him know how you feel, and surrender – be naked.**

*“To Love is to be vulnerable” – CS Lewis*

The problem with people being unable to open up is because everyone needs to wear many layers – and I think the **1. layers of clothing grows as time goes by – as more individualism is awarded, and this means every individual has to work harder to hide flaws**. **2. In our small groups, we need to open up** – especially so that we may specifically pray for each of our needs and love and comfort each other. **3. What’s the best way? It starts with you – be naked. Be vulnerable** (yes, it’s a big risk), but if it permeates through the group, this will be a picture of a God-loving, people-loving church. Thus,

**We must be naked to love others – be vulnerable and trustworthy**

*The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame. (Genesis 2:25)*

**(Read together)**

**To be naked is being able to admit:
“God, I don’t have it together. Please guide me”**

**Die**

When you have something to live for, you don’t fear death

 (Think Braveheart – William Wallace had something better to live for – dying to living a good life for a cause) (he originally wanted to live a quiet life as a farmer)

Why?

Only through your self-willed death, can you love God and others. By no longer seeking your ideals and goals (your desires), you can follow God. Our GPS will lead you somewhere much better than what you could imagine or think. (The question is, do you trust your GPS?)

**We should willingly die like Jesus did**

**But most of us don’t want to die. We have many things on earth we want to accomplish or do**

* **Like satisfying parents (meeting their expectations)**
* **Getting a good job**
* **Finding a hot girl (or a good looking guy) as a mate**
* **Getting good grades**
* **Getting good title at work**
* **Making it in life (lots of money and fame)**

**But there’s a problem, we have to die to really live**

This is why **1. many church-goers feel like being a Christian is boring – they haven’t really died** – they are still living for their pleasures and hoping that by doing the religious stuff like **2. coming to church on Sundays will make them holy or blessed.** They don’t live by faith – trusting that God can do all things.

**1. Sometimes, we don’t think God is all capable**. And our belief system has become – yeah, **2. God can give me a little boost from my abilities**; and so, if I’m not so good at something, God can’t help me.

(Think of when you apply for jobs – or when you apply for college – or when you’re seeking a mate)

Do you say, “No, I’ll never be able to get that job, get into that college, or be able to hook up with someone that good”?

**If you die to yourself, you should be saying – God is able to get me that job, get me into that college, or hook up with someone that good.**

(skip)

God is all-able and can make anything happen in our lives, only if we die (if we lean on our strength, and ask God to boost our strength, it won’t work). So, don’t ever say – I can’t get that job, I can never measure up to marry that person, I’ll never succeed in my career, I’ll never be able to graduate – God has a perfect plan for you, and if it is what He wants for you, all you have to do is die.

*(exaggerate and act out the struggle)*

(**1. When I was in college, I prayed to God that He’d find me a good mate** – but I was still proud and thought God will just “boost” my strengths! (cuz I know some girls had something for me ~ but I wasn’t interested in any of them – but there was one girl that was out of my reach, I spent three years chasing after this girl – but for those three years I kept believing this is the girl for me and she’s still the hottest girl I know – **2. I left college thinking it will never work out** – **3. but God made it happen for me) – now I even have a kid borne by her**

**1. But through those times, I got to admit, I had much pride (I didn’t want to die)** – so whenever I felt rejection, I thought to myself “there were plenty of girls that like me – I could be happy with any of those girls.” (you see, **2. if I lean on my own strength and abilities**, and I could’ve ended with someone less worthy than the girl of my dreams, **the second best**) – when I went to FL after college, **3. I did end up hooking up with another girl, but I always thought about my current wife**. **Would life been happy for me if I settled with someone less than my ideal best? I broke up with her in a short time because even though she was pretty and nice, she didn’t shine like the “best” –**

**1. I recall even thinking to myself that I just need to find another “best,” someone better!!** Of course **2. there’s no one better than whom God has chosen for you**. (but I was so full of myself – I made good money at a young age, I was healthy – 145lbs! Pulled off 100 pushups in a min, I had a degree in science – there’s no girl that would resist my perfection ~ or so I thought) – **3. I got lucky b/c soon after, I felt a tug in my heart to rather repent than to boast and die to myself – then God did something miraculous.**

*(Crux of the message!)*

**I needed to die to my own abilities, experience, and knowledge and just admit to God that I don’t have it together, and that He’ll control my life. – and that’s when she called, came over – soon after engaged and married.**

God has something better in mind for you – but we have to die.

**Do you have anything you need to die in? Is it your good looks? Is it your intelligence? Is it your knowledge? Is it your spirituality?**

If you’re concerned about career, job, mate, friends, satisfying your parents, your musical or artistic abilities – **just die and be naked before God. He’ll make sure you get the best!**

**Just say “Lord, I don’t have it all together – I don’t want to live to my knowledge and experiences – take control of my life – I die and will live for you”**

**He calls us His children. If we asked our heavenly Father, who is able to do all things and loves us, wouldn’t He give us what’s best?**

What is your heart saying? Are you asking God to take control of your life? Are you coming to Him naked?

To follow Jesus is to **choose** self-execution – Even Jesus had to die to his desires to follow God’s best path, which was to die on the cross

**We need to choose self-execution**

**Do you happen to look down on people when they're imperfect?**

*(Movement story)*

* Specs are keys to engineering fields (architects, chemists, etc)
* Car dealers are not specs
* Though I admit I have gotten great deals by negotiations, maybe I should pay them a bit more or stop negotiating down.
* I still need to die -- I'm still a growing Christian -- and still need the grace of God

**Do you find yourself criticizing or looking down on some kinds of people? Repent, die, and be naked.**

*Then Jesus said to his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.” (Matthew 16:24)*

**(I know you’re asking, but Sang, if I don’t take care of myself, who will take care of me?)**

Don’t seek your own happiness, but rather serve others – and **God will provide you with all that you need** – *seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well*

*(Practical Advice)*

**Join a small group and practice dying and being naked in small groups. Humble yourself and love other members, even those you don’t know well.**

People who grasp life find death; people who grasp death find life – this is the paradox of life.

*Matthew 16:25 - For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it.*

**To die is like surrendering your driver seat**

Who’s driving your car? Let God take the wheel – He wants to take you somewhere better than you’ve imagined – let Him and die.