

Evotional

Date: 3rd February 2008 (pm).

Speaker: Neil Durling.

Message title: "Hide and seek."



Bible passage: Genesis 3:6-10, 1 Kings 19:1-5 & Jonah 1:1-5:

Too long for this page.

The message in brief:

In every episode of *Columbo*, for one hour and fifteen minutes a murderer hides and the detective seeks them out. In the Bible we find people who hide from God for long periods, sometimes their whole lives. Let's look at a few of them...

A: Adam & Eve (Gen. 3:6-10):

After eating the forbidden fruit, they are hiding in the trees - sweating, naked and feeling ashamed. God comes in "the cool of the day": Did God leave them for a while to think about their sin hoping they would come and find him? They then hear God's voice: "Where are you?"

I'm glad we don't hide from God, aren't you?

We live in a culture where sin is pleasurable and indulged in. We hide from God (often through pointing at those whose sins are "worse" than ours) and blame others for making us sin.

B: Elijah (1 Kings 19:1-5):

In fear, Elijah has run away from Jezebel. He leaves his servant and walks a day into the desert, where he sits in the sand under the shade of the broom tree, looking up at the blue sky. His stomach rumbles and his mouth grows dry. It wouldn't be a stretch to say that Elijah is suffering with depression here. He just wants to die, and rather than facing God, he tries to hide from him as a result of his illness.

I'm glad we don't hide from God aren't you?

In our culture depression is a reality for many. It also carries shame for many; a person can feel isolated because they think it is a "dirty" illness.

"Depression is a mental health disorder that can affect the way you eat and sleep, the way you feel about yourself, and the way you think about things. A depressive disorder is more than a passing mood. It is not a sign of personal weakness, and it cannot be willed or wished away. A depressive disorder involves the body, mood, and thoughts.

People who are depressed cannot "snap out of it" and get better." (About.com: Mental health)

Please notice that God deals with Elijah's depression in a practical way: An angel comes and says: "Get up & eat".

C: Jonah (Jonah 1:1-5: He hides from God because of his calling):

Jonah lays asleep on a wooden bed during a violent storm. He has gone "down": To Joppa, below deck, into the water, and then into the belly of a large fish. He doesn't want to do what God asks of him (speak God's word to the people of Nineveh) and so tries to hide from God.

I'm glad we don't hide from God aren't you?

We live in a culture where we believe some people should get "theirs". Also, many people think God doesn't have a calling on our lives. For others, money and education can get in the way of God's calling on their lives (ironically they can be used to fulfil one's calling).

Conclusion:

Do you notice that Jesus never hid from God? We want to *live like Jesus*: God is seeking us, and we should come out of hiding from him. *Columbo* seeks the murderers out for justice but God seeks us out for restoration.

Question:

Am I hiding from God?

A prayer: Father God, I thank you that you seek me out to restore me. Amen.