



new life fellowship

**Sermon Title: God and Our Bodies: The Gospel and Shame**

**Guest Speaker: Dr. Curt Thompson**

**Scripture: Genesis 3:1-9, John 9:1-5; Hebrews 12:1-2**

### **Genesis 3:1-13**

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'?"

<sup>2</sup> The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, <sup>3</sup> 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.'"

<sup>4</sup> "You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. <sup>5</sup> "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

<sup>6</sup> 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. <sup>7</sup> 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.

<sup>8</sup> 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. <sup>9</sup> But the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?"

<sup>10</sup> He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."

<sup>11</sup> And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"

<sup>12</sup> The man said, "The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it."

<sup>13</sup> Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?"

The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

### **John 9:1-5**

As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. <sup>2</sup> His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"

<sup>3</sup> "Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him. <sup>4</sup> As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. <sup>5</sup> While I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

<sup>6</sup> After saying this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes. <sup>7</sup> "Go," he told him, "wash in the Pool of Siloam" (this word means "Sent"). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing.

### **Hebrews 12:1-2**

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, <sup>2</sup> fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. (NIV)

### Sermon Summary:

This Sunday, Dr. Curt Thompson, Guest Speaker continues our new 10-week sermon series entitled God and Our Bodies. Today Dr. Thompson guides us on the topic of the Gospel and Shame, focusing on how shame shapes us.

### Sermon Questions:

1. Do you feel an invitation from Christ in today's scripture passage? Do any of the words resonate with you? If so, why?

2. Genesis 2:25 - "Adam and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame." This is who God created us to be. The beginning of the Bible shows God making beauty and goodness at every turn and creates humans to be made in his image, to be artists making beauty and goodness whether in your marriage, your business, in caring for your child. What is the next icon of beauty and goodness God is calling you to create?
3. Curt Thompson says to be meant to create means to be *differentiated* (we are intended to make things with people who are different from us), *naked* (vulnerability - I need the person different than me to protect me, assist me), and *unashamed*. The serpent isolates and wounds Eve - this is what shame does - it turns us away from ourselves, others, and pours our energy in turning away rather than from our true purpose of creating beauty and goodness in the world. How has the shame in your life created reactions that are really about trying to cover and hide from shame?
4. Reflect on the ways today that criticism of others emerges in your mind. The serpent suggests an untruth to Eve and then leaves her alone to continue following this train of thought. Curt Thompson frames criticism as a way we seek to "open" the eyes of others out of a root of shame. Notice how frequent shame colors your thinking both about yourself and others.
5. God's intention in wounding Adam (to create Eve) is to create beauty and goodness while evil wounds to devour. How have you experienced this in your life?
6. In John 9, Jesus is reenacting Genesis 2. He gave of himself and came close to the blind man to create beauty. We each have places of blindness that Jesus is seeking to heal. Invite the Holy Spirit to show you, what part of your life is "blind" (places of wounding and shame that we are trying not to notice or pay attention to) that He desires to heal? Are you open to Jesus coming close and healing you?
7. The community around the blind man erupt in condemnation instead of celebrating his healing, and ultimately push him out of the community. Jesus heals our shame and places great demands on us to become icons of beauty and goodness, but it can be costly. Sometimes our own families are the very relationships that do not want us to experience healing. How has your own family of origin impacted your sense of shame? What costs have you experienced in your healing, or what costs do you see may come if you experience healing from your shame? Do those costs feel worthwhile as you look at the beauty and goodness Jesus offers? There is no right answer to this - share with Jesus where you are.
8. Neuroscience shows us that the brain can do a lot of hard work for a really long time as long as it doesn't have to do it by itself. Isolation is a key way shame works and community is powerful in helping each of us follow Jesus. Where is your local cloud of witnesses? What is one step you can take to get connected to a cloud of witnesses? How can you reframe the difference of others in your cloud of witnesses, not as someone to stay away from but as an invitation and reminder to live as a creator of beauty and goodness?