

SERIES DISCUSSION GUIDE

EDENOLOGY
CHAD BRUEGMAN
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MESSAGE RECAP

This week in **Edenology**, we stepped through Genesis 2 and 3 and saw that God's design for relationships, both with Him and with each other, is to be fully known and fully loved. Before the fall, Adam and Eve had no concept of shame and no reason to hide who they truly were. Genesis tells us they were fully naked and without shame before each other and before God.

Then the enemy entered with lies. Adam and Eve believed those lies, sin entered the story, and shame appeared for the first time. Their eyes were opened, they suddenly felt shame, and they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves and hid from God. Instead of moving toward God, they pulled away in fear.

Since this moment in history, we have become professionals at doing the same thing, creating "fig leaves" to cover the parts of our story we feel ashamed so that no one can see who we truly are. We hide, curate, and sometimes blame-shift to protect ourselves.

When God called out to Adam in the garden, "Where are you?," He already knew the answer. The question was an invitation calling them back to a relationship, honesty, and confession, so they could experience freedom with God and with each other. The cross is God's ultimate proof that we are **fully known and fully loved**. Shame hides, but confession brings healing. God desires to restore intimacy and freedom because if we are never fully known, we can never experience being fully loved.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What's something people usually assume about you when they first meet you that isn't the full story?
2. Chad said one of the deepest human needs is to be fully known and fully loved.
 - o How does that idea resonate with you?
3. Read Genesis 2:25. Adam and Eve were "naked and felt no shame."

- What does that tell us about God’s original design for relationships?
 - What in your life would change if you were able to live with no shame?
4. Read Genesis 3:1-6. The serpent said to Eve, “Did God really say…” The enemy’s goal is to break intimacy with God, with others, and even with ourselves.
 - Where do you most often feel tempted to hide, cover up, or “fig leaf” parts of your story?
 5. Read Genesis 3:7-10. God called out to Adam, “Where are you?”
 - What invitation is God wanting to be restored? (*Fellowship with Him and with each other*)
 - Where might God be inviting you to confess, to step out of hiding and into the light?
 6. Intimacy with God and with each other is often the first casualty when shame enters the picture. You can only be as intimate in relationships as you are honest.
 - Where have you seen that play out in real life?
 - Have you ever noticed how social media or culture encourages us to hide weaknesses and highlight strengths? How does that affect the way we relate to others?
 7. Read 1 John 1:5-9.
 - What do you think the image of light communicates about God’s character?
 - According to verse 7, when we walk in the light (*by walking into the light, there is no longer deception, nothing is hidden*), what two things happen? (*Fellowship with one another and cleansing from Jesus, who purifies our sins.*)
 8. Read James 5:16. Who are we to confess our sins to? (*Each other*) What does confession with each other bring about? (*Healing*) Why do you think confession and prayer are connected to healing?

APPLICATION QUESTION (*This section is designed to invite group members to reflect on and do on their own.*)

9. Who in your life knows the real you, the good, the bad, and the ugly, and still shows up for you? If you don’t currently have someone like that, what might be a small step toward building that kind of honest and supportive relationship?

CLOSING PRAYER

Your closing prayer can include:

God, thank You that we do not have to hide from You, and that in Jesus we are fully known and fully loved. Give us the courage to honest with You and with safe people in our lives. Let confession lead us toward healing, freedom and an intimacy with You and other people. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

LEADERS

Palm Sunday Baptism will be on Sunday, March 29 after all services. Encourage people to sign up (rpc.me/baptism or westend.me/baptism) and plan to come and support them! Baptism is a great next step of obedience for someone to grow in their relationship with Jesus. You don’t have to be a member of RPC|WE to be baptized.