

## Chapter Eight

# Living Without Hiding

There is a curious thing about light.

It never argues with darkness.

It simply appears.

Darkness has no power to overcome light because darkness has no existence of its own. It is merely the absence of light.

Could it be that fear is much the same?

Perhaps fear has felt so powerful because we have mistaken its shadow for substance.

The moment love is trusted, fear begins to lose the only power it has ever possessed.

The Apostle John writes,

*“There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear.”*

Notice what he does not say.

He does not say that perfect effort casts out fear.

Nor perfect theology.

Nor perfect morality.

Love.

Only Love.

Perhaps this is why the Father has never attempted to frighten humanity into communion.

Fear may produce compliance.

It cannot produce intimacy.

Love has always desired something deeper than obedience.

Love desires friendship.

Could it be that this is why Jesus no longer called His disciples servants?

*“I have called you friends.”*

Friendship is impossible where fear remains.

Friends do not hide behind masks.

Friends are known.

Friends trust.

Friends remain together even when silence fills the room.

This was Eden.  
Not perfection.  
Presence.  
Perhaps we have misunderstood holiness.  
For many years I imagined holiness as distance from brokenness.  
Jesus seemed to imagine holiness differently.  
His holiness drew Him toward brokenness.  
Toward lepers.  
Toward grieving mothers.  
Toward frightened fishermen.  
Toward tax collectors.  
Toward those everyone else had decided were beyond hope.  
Could it be that holiness is not withdrawal from the world, but perfect love within it?  
Perhaps this is why Jesus was never anxious about becoming unclean.  
Love is not diminished by entering another's suffering.  
Love transforms suffering from within.  
I have come to believe that hiding is the oldest habit of the human soul.  
Sometimes we hide behind success.  
Sometimes behind failure.  
Sometimes behind knowledge.  
Sometimes behind religion.  
Sometimes behind busyness.  
Sometimes even behind ministry.  
Anything can become a fig leaf when it keeps us from being fully known.  
Yet the Father's invitation has never changed.  
"Come into the light."  
Not to expose us to shame.  
But to free us from it.  
There is a profound difference.  
Shame says,

---

*“If they truly knew you, they would leave.”*

Love says,

*“I already know you, and I have never left.”*

One voice produces hiding.

The other produces rest.

Perhaps this is why confession is so beautiful.

Confession is not informing God of what He does not know.

It is stepping out from behind the trees.

It is agreeing that hiding has become unnecessary.

The Father was never waiting for information.

He was waiting for trust.

Could it be that repentance itself has often been misunderstood?

The ancient word invites us to change our minds.

To see differently.

To awaken.

*Perhaps repentance begins the moment we stop believing the lie that we are unwanted.*

*Perhaps forgiveness begins the moment we trust that we have always been welcomed.*

*Everything changes when the Father's face is no longer imagined through fear.*

Prayer becomes conversation.

*Obedience becomes delight.*

*Worship becomes gratitude.*

*Service becomes generosity.*

*Faith becomes resting.*

*The Kingdom quietly grows wherever people no longer need to hide.*

*Homes become gardens.*

*Meals become communion.*

*Strangers become neighbors.*

*Enemies become people for whom Christ also died.*

The *ordinary* becomes *holy* because Love has entered it.

Perhaps Eden has never been waiting for us beyond the horizon.

---

Could it be that Eden appears wherever fear gives way to trust...

where shame gives way to belovedness...

where hiding gives way to Presence.

I have come to believe that every act of genuine love is another step through the garden.

And every step taken with the Father is already home.

I AM still here...

[<<< PREVIOUS](#) --- [NEXT >>>](#)