

Monday 27 April 2020

Gen.3,8: *“Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God.”*

Rom.8,15: *“You did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry “Abba! Father!”*

Something causes man (us) to live in hiding, to avoid the presence of God. Something causes man to perceive the presence of God as a threat and drives him to where he hopes to avoid it.

If God was not light (1Jn.1,5) and was not the light of man (Jn.1,4) and if God was not good (Lk.18,19) nor the one who told man what is good (Mi.6,8), then such hiding wouldn't be a problem. In fact, one could even say that hiding from the presence of God, avoiding God and living without any reference to God, may well be a step *toward* the light and may be *for* the good. (Although such a thing would be utterly contrary to the normal experience of hiding, which is that hiding *never* makes things better than they would be if hiding wasn't necessary!) This, I think, explains, in part at least, the efforts and the attraction of convincing us and ourselves that God is not light nor good, yes that it is better to believe He doesn't exist. Because then there is not the problem of hiding from His presence.

But God is light and the result of man's hiding from the presence of God is that he must dwell in darkness and keep the light out. The good must look like it is bad, and the bad must look like it is good. What drives him to do this? It is man's bad conscience. The greatest threat to man, therefore, because it consigns him to dwell in the dark, is the driving force of a bad conscience, the guilt of sin (whether or not that is acknowledged).

God didn't leave it at that. He made a way, by the forgiveness of the guilt of our sin, to give us a good and clear conscience which causes us to perceive from the heart the benevolence of God's presence, to live in the light. To that end He gave Christ in payment for the sins of the world, to be received through repentance and faith, and He gives the Spirit who declares to our hearts that God is our Father.