

## Choosing Happily Ever After: Authenticity

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### I. The Result of Sin = Hiding

#### A. Adam & Eve hid.

1. Genesis 3:6-8 “When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings. They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.”
2. Notice who hid—Adam & Eve not the Lord!

#### B. After the Garden

##### 1. Cain & Abel

- a) Genesis 4
  - b) Clearly there is a relationship between the Lord & people.
    - (1) They are offering sacrifices
    - (2) Cain is not surprised by the Lord’s voice.
2. By the way: Don’t tolerate sin!

### II. The truth is that our story is one of a God who loves us so much that He sent His Son to save us!

#### A. This is the key part of our story: Jesus!

##### 1. Luke 15

2. 1 John 4: 14-19 “Moreover, we have seen with our own eyes and can testify to the truth that Father God has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. Those who give thanks that Jesus is the Son of God live in God, and God lives in them. We have come into an intimate experience with God’s love, and we trust in the love he has for us. God is love! Those who are living in love are living in God, and God lives through them. By living in God, love has been brought to its full expression in us so that we may fearlessly face the day of judgment, because all that Jesus now is, so are we in this world. Love never brings fear, for fear is always related to punishment. But love’s perfection drives the fear of punishment far from our hearts. Whoever walks constantly afraid of punishment has not reached love’s perfection. Our love for others is our grateful response to the love God first demonstrated to us.” (TPT)
  - a) God sent Jesus to be the Savior of the world. Those who know this:
  - b) Give thanks
  - c) Have an intimate experience with God’s love
  - d) Trust in the Love that God has for them.

#### B. So, if you don’t feel thankful, feel connected to the Lord, trust in His love for you:

1. Don’t be dismayed. Don’t feel condemned or pick up shame.
2. But, do recognize that **there is more!** And don’t be satisfied with less!
3. A key to actually knowing the Lord is to be known by Him.

### III. Practical Steps to living authentically

#### A. Realize that most of your insecurity is in your head.

1. Maybe it started because of a negative circumstance or relationship. But, it isn’t held there by that. You are holding it there. Your insecurity feels safe because it protects you. But, that protection also imprisons you & you are the guard. The one keeping yourself imprisoned.
2. You need to be the one to let yourself out. So, the first step is taking personal responsibility for this. Then:

- B. Choose honesty. Confess. To the Lord, yourself & others. Not just your sin, but yourself. Share who you are. This means:
  - 1. Don't allow behaviors that reinforce insecurity.
  - 2. A warning: this process is & feels messy! But, it is worth it. It's how you learn & grow & blossom. So, stick with it even if at first you speak up when it doesn't matter & don't when it does or you feel awkward or misunderstood. Keep taking steps! It's part of your journey. And, as you do:
- C. Choose to love others — it stops you from being so focused on yourself & from holding yourself back from others.
  - 1. 1 John 4:7-10 “Those who are loved by God, let his love continually pour from you to one another, because God is love. Everyone who loves is fathered by God and experiences an intimate knowledge of him. The one who doesn't love has yet to know God, for God is love. The light of God's love shined within us when he sent his matchless Son into the world so that we might live through him. This is love: He loved us long before we loved him. It was his love, not ours. He proved it by sending his Son to be the pleasing sacrificial offering to take away our sins.” (TPT)
  - 2. We love because He first loved us. But, sometimes experiencing His love requires us to step out in faith & love others.
  - 3. Love is not insecure. It is not half hearted. It is not afraid.
  - 4. True love requires us receiving God's love because otherwise we don't have love to give! At least not pure, true, lasting love.
- D. And finally: Commit to the journey.
  - 1. A journey allows for imperfection because there is room for the process. It isn't about a task being accomplished.
  - 2. Perfection means to be complete. Whole, Lacking nothing. This is the result of the journey. If you measure success this way it changes things. It allows you to be authentic because you aren't accomplishing anything other than successfully completing the journey & becoming whole. This requires authenticity!

#### IV. Conclusion:

- A. True authenticity is quiet. It doesn't have to proclaim itself.
- B. It makes you a solid person who can be trusted. It isn't focused on self, it is simply comfortable with self. The fruit of it is quiet but sure. Consistent. Stable.
- C. It is an inner transformation much more than an outward one. People will see the fruit of it, but may not be able to explain what it is. It something that happens as a result of what happens inside of you & in your connection with the Lord, first. The Lord is with you & He is patiently leading & guiding you.
- D. He loves you now, just as you are & the best really is yet to come. Just keep going!