



**HeartLife**<sup>TM</sup>  
Growing heart in community

**The origin of human defensiveness**



## Introduction

Although the story of Adam and Eve is very familiar, the revelation from a behavioural perspective is not. Genesis 3 gives us insight into the origin of our human condition of defensiveness: blaming and not taking responsibility for our actions. This revelation is the foundation of why HeartLife has been developed. The Word of God, once again, has answers for us to discover.

To begin in Genesis, Adam and Eve were in the Garden, created in God's image, and in communion and relationship with Him. There were no barriers between man and God – only truth, trust and love. Man had all he needed. We pick up the story at Genesis 3...

### Genesis 3:1

<sup>1</sup> Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?'"

### Behavioural perspective

The serpent is cunning and puts doubt into the mind of Eve. We are always getting messages of doubt fired at us by the enemy. The deceiver is trying to lead us to question and doubt ourselves and God. If we entertain these thoughts we are in great danger.

### Genesis 3:2-3

<sup>2</sup> And **the woman said to the serpent**, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; <sup>3</sup> but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'"

### Behavioural perspective

Eve engages in conversation with the deceiver ... big mistake! When we engage in conversation with doubt, fear, unbelief and insecurity ... we engaged in the seed of deception.

The warning of death from God was real. Death of life literally, as well as death of spirit, love and security.



### Genesis 3:4-5

<sup>4</sup>Then the serpent said to the woman, “**You will not surely die.** <sup>5</sup> For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

### Genesis 3:6

<sup>6</sup> So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable **to make one wise**, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

### Genesis 3:7

<sup>7</sup> 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 **coverings**.

### Behavioural perspective

The serpent lies to Eve and deceives her, again. Adam and Eve were already like God! As born again believers we are ‘like God’ with the Spirit and the mind of Christ, but so often we don’t believe it. We are often striving to be what God has already made us through the blood of Jesus, His adopted sons and daughters. So just like Adam and Eve we explore alternatives, namely the world and the world’s ways.

### Behavioural perspective

This is the deception of how we believe the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil will make us wise. This is how the world works, trying to find wisdom through knowledge.

We partake of fruit that does not keep us in communion with the Father. **This separation from His love and security is where our human behaviour begins ...**

### Behavioural perspective

This was the first time man felt guilt and shame – so Adam and Eve covered themselves. When we are ‘naked’ i.e. when we have separated ourselves from the Tree of Life, our human reaction is to cover ourselves. The way we cover ourselves is with a ‘personality’ (Latin word **Persona** meaning mask or covering) that we think will hide our nakedness, shame or guilt. Other ways we ‘cover’ ourselves or masks we hide behind are over-eating, using our intellect, jobs, position, title and winning against others; or being too nice in order to gain approval from others.



### Genesis 3:8

<sup>8</sup> And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and **Adam and his wife hid themselves** from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

### Genesis 3:9

<sup>9</sup> Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, **“Where are you?”**

### Behavioural perspective

Why did Adam and Eve hide? When we know we have separated ourselves from God/Love in one way or another, our first instinct is to hide from Him to protect ourselves. We think God is going to find us and punish us, or we feel ashamed and want to hide from being accountable for our actions.

The important part of this scripture is that God did not leave the garden – in fact, He came looking for Adam and Eve. So, even in our most wretched state, God comes looking for us, offering forgiveness and grace, and offering us the opportunity to repent of our actions so we can come home with Him.

### Behavioural perspective

This verse is the key foundation of why HeartLife Indicator has been developed.

God asks Adam “Where are you”? God did not need to know where Adam was! Adam needed to know where Adam was and what he was doing. God wanted Adam to understand what state he was in; some self-awareness. God calls to us “Where are you?” all the time, but we are too busy hiding just like Adam. God wants us to see our coverings, our persona, our hiding and most of all our hearts. He wants to give us the opportunity to see truth and accept responsibility so we can be restored to Him.

The HeartLife Indicator is giving people the opportunity to see ‘where they are at’ in their heart and how that manifests in behavioural terms.



### Genesis 3:10

<sup>10</sup> So he (Adam) said, “I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was **afraid** because I was naked; and I hid myself.”

### Genesis 3:11

<sup>11</sup> And He (God) said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?”

### Genesis 3:12

<sup>12</sup> Then the man said, “The **woman** whom **You** gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.”

### Behavioural perspective

When we separate ourselves from the love of the Father and become ‘naked’ we become afraid. The opposite of love is fear. Fear produces insecurity and low self-worth which in turn produces defensiveness. Adam admits he was afraid and that is a good step, but did he take accountability for his actions?

### Behavioural perspective

The two parts to this verse are interesting. Firstly, we don’t need to be told we have done something we shouldn’t have, we already know it. Watch a 3 year old child – they know when they have been naughty. The DNA of God’s image convicts us when we are ‘naked’ but the human condition is to hide from that conviction.

Secondly, God called Adam to accountability for his actions. This was Adam’s chance to tell the truth, take responsibility for his actions and come under God’s forgiveness and grace. God gives us choice – we are free to choose the way.

### Behavioural perspective

Adam does not own-up, instead he becomes defensive and blames the woman and God. This is so typical of our human defensiveness. To seek protection and cover ourselves we blame ... blame the government, the wife, the pastor, the economy... and God!



### Genesis 3:13

<sup>13</sup> And the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent **deceived me**, and I ate.”

### Behavioural perspective

Adam does not own-up. God gave him the chance to speak truth and gain forgiveness and grace. Eve did not take the opportunity that was she offered. She was correct, the serpent did deceive her but she did not take responsibility for how she responded to that deception.

We see that many of us have been deceived, mistreated, abused, hurt and wounded – some have sinned and done wrong things – but our Father is in the garden calling out our name and saying “Where are you?”. We are being defensive: hiding, blaming and not taking responsibility for our actions, our judgments, our bitterness, anger and un-forgiveness.

### Summary

In our modern world nothing has changed when it comes to the relevance of Genesis 3 and our human condition. The HeartLife Indicator brings awareness to people’s hearts by revealing where they are being dysfunctional by covering, hiding or blaming. It helps people identify the enemy and crush the deception of defensiveness.