

Where Are We Still Hiding in Marriage

A brief companion to *Naked and Unashamed* A Covenant Journey Back to Eden

Marriage can expose the distance between the connection we long for and the ways we protect ourselves. This reflection is where the Edenward conversation begins. It helps you notice one place where fear, silence, performance, or control may be creating distance, bring it honestly before God, and choose one wise step toward truth. You do not need to have read *Naked and Unashamed* to begin here — this is the first step, whether or not you take another.

Begin with Scripture

Read Genesis 2:24–25 and Genesis 3:7–13 in context. Notice the movement from being together without shame to covering, fear, hiding, and blame. Then read Ephesians 4:25–32, paying attention to truth, anger, speech, kindness, and forgiveness. These passages invite examination; they do not require anyone to disclose something unsafe.

Notice your covering

Pause with God before discussing your spouse. Which response has recently appeared in your marriage? Mark any that fit, then choose one to examine.

- ☐ Silence I keep the peace by withholding what needs to be said.
- ☐ Performance I present a capable version of myself rather than admitting a need or limit.
- ☐ Control I manage the conversation or outcome because uncertainty feels threatening.
- ☐ Defensiveness I explain or counterattack before I can hear what my spouse is saying.
- ☐ Distance I withdraw emotionally, spiritually, or physically to avoid disappointment.

What happened just before this response appeared? What was I afraid might happen if I stayed present and truthful?

Bring the fear into the light

A protective response often has a story beneath it. Name the fear without using it to excuse harm. You may need time, support, or boundaries before a conversation with your spouse is wise.

The story I was telling myself about God, my spouse, or myself was...

What do these Scriptures actually say? Where am I adding an assumption shaped by fear or past experience?

Choose one faithful step

The goal is not a dramatic confession or an instant repair. Choose one action that is honest, respectful, and safe. You might pray before responding, acknowledge a limit, listen without preparing a rebuttal, name a need clearly, apologize for a specific wrong, or seek wise outside support.

One step I can take this week is...

If you choose to talk together, read the guidance on the next page first. Begin only when both of you have space to listen.

If a conversation is appropriate, you might begin: "I have noticed that when ____ happens, I tend to _____. I think I am protecting myself from _____. I want to understand what is happening between us. Would you be willing to talk when we both have space to listen?"

A gentle way to talk together

Each person may share only what they choose. Take turns speaking for a few minutes. The listener's first task is to understand, then to ask, "Did I hear you correctly?" Do not use this guide to demand disclosure, secure an admission, or score who has done more work. If either person needs to pause, agree when and how to revisit the conversation.

What helped me feel heard? What could help us return to this conversation with greater care?

A prayer for the return

Father, You see what I protect and what I long for. Search my heart without letting shame speak louder than Your grace. Show me where fear has shaped my response. Give me courage to tell the truth with love, humility to hear truth from another, and wisdom to take the next faithful step. Lead us toward what is good, safe, and pleasing to You. In Jesus' name, amen.

Continue the journey

This reflection is one way to begin. Naked and Unashamed offers a deeper journey through Scripture, prayer, and practical action. Visit edenward.com to watch Why I Wrote This Book, find the paperback and Kindle editions, and continue the conversation. Edenward's wider work explores how belief becomes a way of life through Exposure, Truth, Belief, Alignment, and Transformation.

Safety matters. Honesty before God does not require unsafe disclosure to another person. Where there is abuse, coercion, intimidation, retaliation, or danger, do not use a couple conversation as a substitute for specialized support. Seek qualified professional, pastoral, legal, or crisis help as appropriate. This guide is educational and devotional; it is not individualized counseling or crisis intervention.