

# FIG LEAVES AGAIN

What a beautiful autumn day! There had been lots of rain, for South Dakota and though there had been some mild frost, it had not yet turned cold. The trees were a hundred shades of turning colors and the leaves were dropping like flies. It was a perfect time for raking leaves, a perfect family time. Grandpa Dick and Grandma Lavon were working away at getting up the leaves with dubious help from grandchildren. The plan was to rake and bag but the actual result was more like rake and jump. There would be plenty of time to bag after the jumping was done, Dick thought.

Even leaves get tiresome after awhile and during one of those pleasant breaks Alden posed a serious question to Grandpa Dick. “Grandpa, when you told us about Adam and Eve making a covering for themselves with fig leaves you said that they didn’t work. Why not? It seems to me like they had a good idea”. “What a profound question! My mind is on leaves and you throw something like this at me. Well, let’s see. Do you remember what this big old Elm tree looked like back in the spring”? “Yes, well, sort of. I know that it was full and green and gave really good shade.” Dick then asked, “What if you had made yourself a very nice suit out of those leaves. Perhaps Grandma would have fixed them all together, you know how clever she can be. Then you could have worn your new suit of Elm Leaves. Perhaps you can imagine going home and putting on your Elm Leaf suit today!” “Oh Grandpa. That is silly. You know that those leaves would have all dried up by now. They don’t last very long after they are off the tree”. “Why not”, asked Grandpa? “Even I know that”, Alden laughed. “Leaves need to be connected to the tree if they are going to live. Once they are off the tree, they die”. “Good answer”, Dick responded. “The leaves get their life from the tree. It is pretty complicated but even leaves need to eat and drink. Once they leave the tree they have no way to eat and drink and so they die. One reason that fig leaves don’t work as a good covering is that they soon die because they have no life in themselves. We start off with a nice looking suit of Elm Leaves and pretty soon our new suit is looking brown and drab. That is not the worst part though. Pretty soon they start to fall off and we get big holes in our suit. That can be embarrassing, especially since we may not know the holes are there. The worst part of this is that other people know right away when our Elm Leaf suit gets holey (not Holy).” “Thanks, Grandpa. That makes more sense now”, said Alden.

“There is more, Alden. We have only scratched the surface. Wearing fig leaves is very hard work”, Grandpa Dick added. “I will explain that later, for now it is time to get back to the Elm leaves”.

All seven of them worked hard for the next hour. It was fun work and they played while they worked and occasionally Grandpa Dick would sing a silly song or two. Finally they had the leaves pretty well bagged up and they were all on the front porch teasing each other. Oh, I forgot to tell you who was there ! Well, you know about Dick, Lavon, and Alden. Of course the big boys, Chris and Jason were there. Alden’s sisters Janel and Calli were also there. They are not so big but they are both VERY hard workers and so they were invited and allowed to gather up the leaves. “Okay now”, Dick began, “I have a game we can play. When I was a little boy there was a great show on the radio called Let’s Pretend. We are going to play Let’s Pretend. Each of you are going to pick a different name, a different background, a different family, and a different life. You can tell each other who you are and then we will go to McDonald’s and be that while we get some refreshments. While at McDonald’s you can not tell anyone who you really are. You must stay in your chosen identity’. Wow, this sounded like fun and soon they were all making up new identities for themselves. I would give you all the details but it would be too too confusing! Grandma and Grandpa decided to observe. I remember that Jason decided to be a rancher named Buck Handily. Calli was a ballroom dancer named Grace. Alden decided to be a famous medical surgeon named Dr. Cutler while Chris chose to be a computer expert named Z.Z. Dump. If I remember correctly Janel chose to be a veterinarian named Miss Wheeler (the W is silent).

Off they go to McDonald’s with their new identities buzzing through their minds. At first all was giggles and bits but soon Grandpa began insisting that EVERYTHING they did, they must do in character. This meant that every time they spoke, they could not speak for themselves, they had to speak for their character. They found it very hard to be consistent with their stories because they were, after all, made up. {Note from Grandpa Dick: One reason I try NEVER to lie is because it is such HARD WORK. You have to remember everything you have said. It is like memorizing a large part in a play. This is tough stuff.} After only a short while they were all complaining that this wasn’t fun any more. It was just too hard to be someone else. Then Grandpa Dick reminded them of the fig leaves. “Remember how I said that the fig leaves didn’t work? This is one of the main reasons. It is so terribly hard to be something that you are not. You make mistakes and look bad. You forget and feel silly. As you put on these attitudes

that are really not you, it is hard to know when to start and when to stop.” “Wow, I never thought of that” Jason said. “t seemed easy at first but pretty soon I got really confused and stressed out@. All of the others agreed with Jason. While it was just a game it was okay but when Grandpa insisted that they stay in character it really became work. All of them were fully convinced that fig leaves were not a good answer.

“There is one more thing we should know”, Dick said. “What is that”, Chris asked ? “The covering God provided did one more thing that the fig leaves could never do”, Dick said. As we know, the thing that Adam and Eve had done has brought terrible consequences to the whole history of the world. Father God knew this and so had warned Adam and Eve. They chose to disobey and brought sin and death into the world. How do you suppose God felt towards them”? “I bet He was really mad. I bet He wanted to spank them”, Calli spoke up. “Yeah , yeah”, they all cried. “Think about it kids. At the very time when Adam and Eve had disobeyed. They had decided that they wanted to be their own gods instead of having Father be their God and so they had eaten from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. At that moment God so loved them that He provided Himself a covering. He sacrificed one of His creation and lovingly cleaned and softened the skin and placed it on them. At the very time when WE WOULD HAVE REJECTED THEM, Father God showed His love to them. Fig leaves do not teach us anything about the love of our Heavenly Father. Fig leaves are a quickly decaying and smelly attempt to be independent. God’s covering is a sign that He is providing a permanent and complete covering for YOU AND ME because He loves us, right after we have sinned. At the very moment that we feel that He should reject us, He brings forth His own covering. The fig leaves can not tell us anything about what Father God is like. If we wear the covering He gives us we will learn a lot about love and a lot about Father God.

Soon all of them were off looking for other adventures but somehow these ideas about covering up and the love Father has for each of us were planted in young and fertile minds.

Written under the auspices of New Life Inc., a non-profit Christian organization. If you are interested in other writings contact: R. L. Pendleton, 322 Quincy St., Rapid City, SD 57701 or contact us at our Web Page: [www.rapidnet.com/~newlife](http://www.rapidnet.com/~newlife). There are no charges for writings and there will be no request for donations.