

The Immortal Gardener and His Fallow Ground

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I am glad to be part of the family of God how about you? You know parents have a rather attractive habit of disseminating gifts to their children. What gifts has your heavenly Father bestowed upon you? What talents has God given you? What mission field has the Almighty given into your hand?

The latest mission that God has given me is to encourage this church to be a studious people. If you do not remember anything else from today's message, know this: you are made clean by the Word. Study your Bibles beloved.

Today's message is entitled, '**The Immortal Gardener and His Fallow Ground**'.

The whole natural world is designed to be an interpreter of the Way of God. How many students do we have in the congregation today? What is your favorite subject? Did you know that God's name is written in all of the natural world? When you study Mathematics you see the Creator's quantitative logic.

Yes, the Bible is littered with mathematics--even divine algebraic equations. Daniel 8:13 uses the the term "certain saint" in reference to an angel who is in charge of numbers. He is the Lord's mathematician. He performs heavenly arithmetic. He is called the "wonderful numberer" the "Palmoni" in the Hebrew. When you study Mathematics you see the Creator's quantitative logic.

When you study biology you behold a divine design. When you study the cosmos you observe law and order of the Most High.

God's glory in the heavens, the innumerable worlds in their orderly revolutions, "the balancings of the clouds" (Job 37:16), the mysteries of light and sound, of day and night—all were objects of study by the pupils of earth's first school. {CG 45.4}

Genesis 2:7,8

So at the very beginning of you notice that God planted man in a garden. Beloved, we would do well to turn aside to a garden as often as possible. There are many object lessons in gardens. Objects that the Spirit can use to teach us about life.

Genesis 3:17,18 Disobedience in the garden cursed the entire planet. So it follows that obedience to God would play a part in the restoration of the planet. God gave Adam and Eve instructions to care for soil. He allowed them to co-operate with Him in its restoration. Now the entire earth is an object lesson of true love. As in obedience to His natural laws the earth should produce its treasures, so in obedience to His moral law the hearts of the people were to reflect

the attributes of His character. And when unbelievers behold the goodly works of believers they may glorify the Father in heaven. {COL 289.2}

Question: What happens when you leave a garden unattended?

See beloved, when God created the garden it was very good. When sin entered it was not so good. Thorns/thistles/weeds appeared. So it needed a gardener. When God created man he was in the image of God. When man sinned he no longer perfectly reflected his Maker. So guess what man needed? ...a Gardener. Yes friends, gardens after the fall are a type of man and the gardening process illustrates the matchless charms of Christ and His plan of salvation. Did you know that you are a garden?

Jeremiah 4:3,4 The prophet of the Lord is warning Israel so that they will not be invaded. Aren't you glad that God warns us by His Spirit through the prophets? Warning messages are sometimes painful but they are an expression of love.

What is fallow ground? Untilled soil with potential.

The prophet Hosea, and here Jeremiah, know that God views you as a garden. But He bids you allow Him to be your Gardener.

Matthew 13:3-9

Verse 7 thorny plants defend themselves from the gardener. God does not want you to defend self. He wants you to surrender self.

Who does the sower represent? (John 15 Vine Father Husbandman)

God sows seeds in every garden; even on fallow ground. However, not every garden is willing to be cultivated. But I'm so thankful that God is an indiscriminate Gardener. You know how he sows seed all over the place? If it were me I would simply stick to the good ground.

What was the name of the garden in Genesis?

Revelation 2:7 Eden = Paradise Where is this garden? COL 282

Psalms 19:1 Heavens declare God's glory... In other words The whole natural world is designed to be an interpreter of the glory-character of God. Do you think that God's glory was/is in the garden of Paradise? So the heavens and the garden reflect God's character.

Who were the first beings to be cut off from the garden?

Ezekiel 28:13 Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God

So it was Lucifer and his angels were first cut off from the garden of God. Notice that there was a garden of God in heaven and a paradise on earth (repetition).

Genesis 2:15 "to keep it"

This is similar to the language used in Ezekiel 28:14 "anointed cherub that covereth." Lucifer covered God's throne the foundation of which was His law of love.

See the garden of Eden reflected the character of God which is summarized in His law.

God wanted them to keep the garden...

Proverbs 4:23 Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it [are] the issues of life.

SIDE-NOTE: Your heart is a garden. Don't let your children do their will simply so you're not thought of as too "strict." The world has us afraid of being strict. Do you know what strict means?

- rigorous: rigidly accurate; allowing no deviation from a standard;
 - hard-and-fast: (of rules) stringently enforced; "hard-and-fast rules"
 - nonindulgent: characterized by strictness or restraint (sounds like 2 Cor 5:14,15 to me)
 - rigid: incapable of compromise or flexibility
- Is being strict negative or positive?

What happens when you do not maintain a garden? Thorns/thistles/weeds grow.

Ezekiel 11:19,20

You'll remember in Genesis 1:11 And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, [and] the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed [is] in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.

The whole natural world is designed to be an interpreter of the Way of God.

Notice that in the natural world herbs yield seed and fruit yields fruit "after his kind." The spiritual application is that you cannot plant worldly seed expecting heavenly fruit.

The good news is that the Most High specializes in gardening. God takes the Israelites to the promised land. A land flowing with milk and honey (garden). He leads them to a type of paradise. But before he could bring them into the promised land He prepared them in a land that was not so promising. Seemed as though you couldn't plant any food there. It seemed ugly beyond hope. It seemed that no water was around. But when there was no food Jehovah sent manna the Bread of Life. When there was no water He sent water from the Rock of Ages. No matter how unkept the gardens of your home and heart are, He can bring restoration.

1 Corinthians 3:9 This chapter begins with Paul comparing witnessing to gardening (see vs 6). It also explains why your garden is not too unkept for Immortal Gardener to restore.

You're *His* garden!

Now, how does He rake the dead leaves and prune the overgrowth of thorny plants? By severing the ties between you and the world. (1 John 2:15) Love not the world... Philipians 2:5 says let this mind be in you... **Question:** How does one ascertain the mind of Christ? What was His mind like? Pure, holy, just Philipians 4:8 says think on these things.

What's on your mind?

As in the Natural, so in the Spiritual World

Psalm 119:129-136 Just as when you neglect a natural garden it develops a grotesque physical appearance, when you neglect the garden of your heart it reflects an unattractive spiritual appearance.

Christ Himself calls our attention to the growth of the vegetable world as an illustration of the agency of His Spirit in sustaining spiritual life. The sap of the vine, ascending from the root, is diffused to the branches, sustaining growth and producing blossoms and fruit. So the life-giving power of the Holy Spirit, proceeding from the Saviour, pervades the soul, renews the motives

and affections, and brings even the thoughts into obedience to the will of God, enabling the receiver to bear the precious fruit of holy deeds. {AA 284.1}

John 15:1-14. The Anointed One ties keeping His instruction with loving God and man.

Abiding in Christ means a constant receiving of His Spirit, a life of unreserved surrender to His service. The channel of communication must be open continually between man and his God. As the vine branch constantly draws the sap from the living vine, so are we to cling to Jesus, and receive from Him by faith the strength and perfection of His own character. {DA 676.2}

“My Father is the husbandman. Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He taketh away.” While the graft is outwardly united with the vine, there may be no vital connection. A profession of religion places men in the church, but the character and conduct show whether they are in connection with Christ. If they bear no fruit, they are false branches. {DA 676.5}

“And every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth [pruneth] it, that it may bring forth more fruit.” From the chosen twelve who had followed Jesus, one as a withered branch was about to be taken away; the rest were to pass under the pruning knife of bitter trial. Jesus with solemn tenderness explained the purpose of the husbandman. The pruning will cause pain, but it is the Father who applies the knife. He works with no wanton hand or indifferent heart. There are branches trailing upon the ground; these must be cut loose from the earthly supports to which their tendrils are fastening. They are to reach heavenward, and find their support in God. The husbandman prunes away the harmful growth, that the fruit may be richer and more abundant. {DA 676.6}

“Herein is My Father glorified,” said Jesus, “that ye bear much fruit.” God desires to manifest through you the holiness, the benevolence, the compassion, of His own character. Yet the Saviour does not bid the disciples labor to bear fruit. He tells them to abide in Him. “If ye abide in Me,” He says, “and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.” It is through the word that Christ abides in His followers. This is the same vital union that is represented by eating His flesh and drinking His blood. The words of Christ are spirit and life. Receiving them, you receive the life of the Vine. You live “by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” Matthew 4:4. The life of Christ in you produces the same fruits as in Him. Living in Christ, adhering to Christ, supported by Christ, drawing nourishment from Christ, you bear fruit after the similitude of Christ. {DA 677.1}

Gardening God's Way

Plant three rows of peas:

- Peace of mind
- Peace of heart
- Peace of soul

Plant four rows of squash:

- Squash gossip
- Squash indifference

- Squash grumbling
- Squash selfishness

Plant four rows of lettuce:

- Lettuce be faithful
- Lettuce be kind
- Lettuce be obedient
- Lettuce really love one another

No garden should be without turnips:

- Turnip for meetings
- Turnip for service
- Turnip to help one another

Water freely with patience and cultivate love

There is much fruit for your garden

Because you reap what you sow

To conclude our garden

We must have thyme:

- Thyme for God
- Thyme for study
- Thyme for prayer
- Thyme for each other
- Thyme for friends

Let us allow the Immortal Gardener to prune, cut, and rake every portion of our hearts so that we are prepared to enter into His paradise when He returns is my prayer, amen.