

TENDING THE GARDEN

Part II of II
from: Nuggets For The Needy

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"He hath set the world in their hearts," (Ec. 3:11) No wonder our thoughts are not like His thoughts; No wonder we are so humanistic in our spiritual thinking. Some of us think that hell is in the middle of the earth, and others that we will be flying away to some other planet, and that in heaven there are streets of gold. (The scripture speaks of "a street of gold", which street is Jesus Christ).

Romans 8:20 states:

Rom. 8:20 "For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope."

"Subjected to vanity." This is the same as saying that God placed an angel in the garden with a flaming sword to keep the way of the tree of life. Man cannot re-enter into the spiritual garden without going through the fire. Jesus Christ baptizes with the Holy Spirit and with FIRE. Fire is the agent of change, and without this change of nature the garden cannot be reentered, man cannot overcome.

Psalms 1:3 "Ye shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water..."

This speaks of the planting within, and not of that without. The greater garden is the one which God sees in the spirit and not that which we behold in the natural world as God's garden. This refers to the soul of man, God's eternal garden. The daily exercise in the soul, are the plantings of the Lord. The testings and the trials which beset us daily are the fertilizers which God gives to strengthen the tender plants. The Word of God as the main plant food must be daily given with added water of the word and the sunlight of His presence, all work together to bring forth fruit unto righteousness which is Godly character. The result of this proper application brings forth eternal life in the soul, and this soul shall not see death as Adam did. The daily exercise in the Spirit are the plantings of the Lord in the soul that will guard the soul against the bombardment of the evil so that we instead of feeding on the world's knowledge of good and evil, that we feed on the tree of life which will bring forth resurrection in the soul. Because man has fallen so far from God's standard, there are a lot of things which seem to be life, which are natural that work death. The word says:

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Proverbs 14:12 / 16:25 "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man but the end thereof is death."

There are certain things – thoughts, desires, emotions, and a will that is from the MIND OF CHRIST that is available to those who come to Jesus, because it is a coming not just to be forgiven of sins but a coming and appropriating of that which is available to make us sons of God, to bring us into that inheritance that we lost in Adam reclaiming all that we had lost in Adam, or the power and glory that he enjoyed in the garden before the fall.

The responsibility is on us to tend the garden, because He said to as many as RECEIVE HIM TO THEM gave He power to become the sons of God, and as many as are led of the Spirit are the sons of God. To receive the power or the authority is one thing, but to exercise your franchise TO BE is our responsibility. You can be brought into a relationship but if you do not exercise your authority or franchise you cannot receive.

Isaiah 61:3 "To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness that they might be called TREES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS THE PLANTING OF THE LORD THAT HE MIGHT BE GLORIFIED."

Through faith in God and submission to the Holy Spirit man will come into the Divine Nature. This we can see down through the ages, after the fall, as God dealt with man, we can see how the evil tries to destroy good, even as Cain killed his brother Abel because Abel's offering was more acceptable before God. Cain brought forth of the natural and Abel a different offering entirely, therefore man's attitude and man's soul's expression are the things that really count before God. It is not even the quantity of things that you do. You can do a whole world of works and not please God. You can give your body to be burnt or whatever else you can do in the natural, as long as your heart and your soul is not anointed in the spirit to do those things, to accomplish these things, as long as it is man's effort and for world glory then they come to nothing.

There is a little poem which says, "---Nothing is worth the making unless it makes the man." It might have referred to the man in a carnal sense, but I would rather apply it to mean the BODY OF CHRIST, the man to glorify God. This working of the soul is something which has been going on since God made man, for God's purpose for making man is to glorify God, and to be delivered from the possibility of the soul nature being taken over by the beast nature. Some of us might think that God just loves the glory, but all this is done to deliver man from the bondage of sin and corruption. Man is earth, earthy and it takes the Divine nature to deliver him from the human nature.

Looking back through the ages of the workings of God on man, through Patriarchs and Prophets; we see how many times God touched Moses' weaknesses to help Moses to be delivered from the earthy, humanness. From

looking at the historical characters of the Bible, one picture looms very clear and that is that the hand of God has been dealing against the soul nature so that it could be brought into God's Divine nature of purity. That is feeding on the TREE OF LIFE. Jesus came when the Law and the Prophets failed, though we cannot say it failed, because Enoch came through, and out of every dispensation at least one man came through into immortality as a witness and a testimony to his age. Moses overcame under the Law by the Blood of his sacrifice, later on we heard that Satan contended with the angel of God for his body.

Jesus had to come to deliver man from the Adamic nature, from the earthiness, from the soulishness. Our greatest bondage is our own soul nature. Whether we inherited it from our families or environment, or whatever other influences afflicted our souls to bring us under bondage, Jesus came to the rescue and to show us the way and to help us by sending us the Holy Spirit. This is the reason He said, *“---It is expedient for me to go for if I go not the Comforter will not come.” (John 16:7)* Jesus Christ could not indwell us while he himself was a man. He could not move in the whole church at the same time, so he had to send the Holy Spirit to indwell the church, to be Christ for all and in all; Omnipresent, Omniscient and Omnipotent.

It is this work within the garden of man's soul that will accomplish this task of ridding the soul of this earthy, carnal human nature. This is a daily task, and we have to enter into this exercise daily to make sure that we have the proper plantings: a good spirit, a good attitude, a good disposition, pure thoughts – putting away lying. The scripture says:

Ephesians 4:24 “---Putting away lying, speak every man truth to his neighbour, for we are members one of another.

4:32 “And be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.”

A thought came to me very recently that, when we hear about a brother or a sister's weakness, instead of crying out to the Lord for that one, many times it becomes a news item, and something to glory in and many times we rejoice over that one's fall, or the tribulation of your neighbour. Now that is not the Spirit of Christ. The Spirit of Christ would rather weep for such a one that that one be delivered, but there is a spirit that is going through the earth that allows man to want to exalt himself above his fellowmen and so he rejoices over his weaknesses or his downfall. That is the spirit of the antichrist. We have to look out for that spirit; that we do not manifest in a spirit which we reject. We have to look out for the things which motivate us or move us to action, whether these actions glorify God or whether they put down our brethren or cause us to do despite to God's people, or to perpetrate any action that is contrary to the perfect will of the Lord.

As we go on day after day, we are planting in the soul either good or evil, but God requires us that we plant good, and as we do so, the thorns and the

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thistles will be eradicated. Sometimes they are so deeply rooted that we will have to deliberately reject them, come against them, and do everything in our power to remove them. There is however, one thing that is absolutely necessary – we must be aware and conscious that they are there. If we close our eyes against them and pretend not to notice them, they will grow up as large trees and destroy the garden completely, and take such root in our souls that it will be difficult to get them out. Sometimes we force God to take drastic action to get these roots out of our souls so that we can live.

Tending the Garden is absolutely necessary. Sometimes we have to lay aside food, and all our daily activities so that we can tend this garden in fasting and prayer and cry to God and say, “God, I do not like what I have seen. Help me to get rid of it before it brings forth fruit unto death,” because anyone eating fruit from an unfit tree is going to be poisoned by it and hurt by it.

Revelation 8:10-11 “And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; and the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.”

The picture we see here in Revelation is that of a star falling from its position in the sky and falling upon waters which killed men. The star in symbolism means – a son of God – The waters means the word of God. If our gardens be allowed to bring forth poison, it will poison others spiritually, unto death. Our ambition should be to bring forth that which brings healing and food and health to our surroundings. The fruit of love should come out of our gardens. We should eradicate slander and debate and war as evil weeds. When we have peace, our soul-garden bears good fruits abundantly. When one operates in peace one would rather be defrauded, than fight back, and when people speak evil of you than you will have the fortitude to render them good for evil.

There was a nature in Esau which caused God to reject him. God did this on pre-knowledge, since when he was rejected, he had not yet done either good or evil. If you could look into the future and see someone commit murder, then you could actually judge him a murderer before the act. Jacob also had inherent evil which God had to help him to deal with. It took God years to deal with the evil of Jacob’s garden, but he knew that Jacob was good soil and would eventually respond. IT IS TAKING GOD SIX THOUSAND YEARS to bring us to mature sonship. The time is now at hand when the true sons will come forth. One of the reasons it is taking so long is that man is not willing to submit totally to God; we are always fighting and resisting. The word says, ‘*The Spirit warreth against the flesh and flesh wars against the Spirit.*’ (Gal. 5:17) Until the soul can be completely submitted and surrendered; and say “*Not my will Lord, but thine be done,*” until then, we will not know the joy of the Lordship of Christ. Then and only then we will attain to the knowledge that we have to lay

down the nature of the soul in order to pick up His nature. It is like when Jesus was crucified, and the centurion looked at him and said, "*Truly this is the son of God.*" (Mat. 27:54) They had to kill him to get that revelation, and some of us must go to that extreme before we can come to the knowledge that, truly this is what we need, this is the best thing for us to submit to the Lord to make Jesus Christ truly King. It is a process in which we must continue and persist to do daily, then the soul will stop its warring and find its rest in submission to the Lord. I know that many souls long to submit to the Lord, but because of the bombardments from the world, the flesh and the devil, many do not succeed.

This is the only time that the Spirit will be able to take the soul as its bride, to have complete union to bring forth the glory of God in the earth.

