****

**THE GARDEN**

**Story:** Garden of Eden

**Scriptures to study:** Genesis 2, Revelation 21:1-4

This discussion is based on the Friday Morning Men’s Fellowship study “Genesis”, available at https://leadmin.org/genesis.

Immediately following the creation story in Genesis, we read about Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.

**There were relationships in the Garden.** Adam was not alone in the garden. He had a relationship with Eve and with God. The Bible records that “Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day” (Genesis 3:8). It is clear that God spent time in the Garden with His people. The Bible also tells us that the man and woman spoke to each other—so they were created with language and the ability to communicate. We clearly see there were relationships in the beginning, and God gave man and woman the capacity to know one another and to know God. Leaders today should also value relationships.

**There was harmony in the Garden.** Genesis 2:9 says, “The Lord God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food.” The Bible also records the location of the Garden, mentioning the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers and other geographic features. This places its location at the head of the Persian Gulf, in modern day Iraq. The Bible also records that it did not rain, but rather the vegetation was fed from the ground by natural springs. Adam and Eve were immortal at this point—death had not entered the picture.

**There was work in the Garden.** Perhaps most interesting to today’s leaders in the story of the Garden of Eden is this—Adam and Eve had work to do. They didn’t just take walks among the trees, and then lie around eating grapes and watching sunsets. Genesis 2:15 says, “The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.”

God worked when He created the world. Because we are made in God’s image, we too have work and a purpose. God created work for us to do. Adam had an intrinsic call to work, and this was a part of God’s perfect creation, before the fall of mankind. This also means our labor is *good.* God blesses us with the ability to work so that we can honor Him and steward His creation. Leaders should realize that work is an important aspect of life and stewardship.



Use one of these to get the group talking about today’s topic:

* What kind of work do you most enjoy? Is it your vocation, or a hobby away from your job? How did you first become interested in it?
* Describe your “perfect day”. What would you do in the morning, afternoon and evening? Who would you spend it with?
* What do you do to relax? Do you like to spend time alone, or with someone else or a group of people? Why is this relaxing to you?



Go in-depth with these questions. Based on your available time, choose 3-4 that you believe are most thought-provoking:

* Read Genesis 2:1-2. What is notable about God resting? Did He need rest? Why do you believe this is in the Bible for us?
* Read Genesis 2:16. What was man’s purpose in the Garden? What do you believe this says about man’s work and function on the earth?
* Read Genesis 2:19-25. According to the Bible, what was God’s purpose for creating woman? How do you believe this relationship should look today?
* What does the account of Adam and Eve in the Garden tell us about God’s original intent for creation? Are there ways we can honor God’s original intent as leaders in the way we relate and work today?
* Do you believe the Garden of Eden was a physical place that existed? Why or why not? What do you read in Genesis 2 that supports your view?
* Read Genesis 2:9. There was a “tree of the knowledge of good and evil” in the Garden before man had ever sinned. Why is this significant?
* Read Revelation 21:1-4. What will God make at the end of time? How will it be different than what we know today? How does this relate to the Garden of Eden?



* Are you well-rested? If God rested, what does He want you to do with respect to rest? How would better discipline around rest affect your leadership?
* Is your work ordained by God? How do you know? Do you believe God has equipped you for any specific work that you may or may not be doing?
* What do you believe God’s intent was in the relationship between man and woman? Is this godly purpose evident in your marriage and family? Why or why not?



• Commentary on Genesis 2: <https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/mhc/Gen/Gen_002.cfm>

• What does Genesis 2 mean? <https://www.bibleref.com/Genesis/2/Genesis-chapter-2.html>

• *Study Guide for Genesis 2* by Chuck Smith: <https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/smith_chuck/StudyGuides_Genesis/Genesis.cfm>

• Precept outline and commentary on Genesis 2: <https://www.preceptaustin.org/genesis-2-commentary>

• *Genesis 1-11: Creation, Sin, and the Nature of God* by John MacArthur: <https://churchsource.com/products/genesis-1-to-11-creation-sin-and-the-nature-of-god>

• *Exalting Jesus in Genesis* by Phillip Bethancourt: <https://www.amazon.com/Exalting-Genesis-Christ-Centered-Exposition-Commentary/dp/0805496556/>

• *Genesis: A 12 Week Study* by Mitchell M. Kim: <https://www.amazon.com/Genesis-12-Week-Study-Knowing-Bible/dp/1433535017>

• *BibleProject Guides: Book of Genesis:* <https://bibleproject.com/guides/book-of-genesis/>

**More ways to apply “The Garden” to your life and leadership:**

• What work has God given you to do? Are you doing your very best with talents, gifts and resources He has entrusted to you? Take a look at your work and ask God to help you determine if you are doing the work He has given you to do.

• Take a look at your rest patterns. Are you sleeping well each night? Are you spending time resting on the weekends? Do you have a pattern of worshipping on Sunday? Look at how rest or lack thereof might be affecting your life and leadership.

• The Bible says man spent time with God in the Garden. Are you spending time daily with God through Bible study and prayer? Plan out when and where you can spent time with God each day.

• If elements of your marriage aren’t doing well, prayerfully ask your spouse to begin counseling with a Pastor or licensed Christian counselor.

• Think about attending a class or course on biblical marriage with your spouse, offered by your church or other Christian organization.

• Consider how your business or company might be a Gospel influence with your employees, customers or in your community.