

Two Gardens

Jude 17-23



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**Precious Lord, High and Holy,
Bring us to the valley of vision, where we live in the
depths but see you in the heights. Hemmed in by
mountains of sin we behold Your glory. Let us learn
this day, dear Lord,**

**That the Way down is the Way up,
That to be low is to be high,
That the broken heart is the healed heart,
That those who are repentant shall alone be rejoicing,
That to have nothing but You is to possess all,
That to bear the Cross is to wear the crown, and
That to give is to receive.**

**Dear Lord, let us find Thy Light in the midst of our
darkness, Thy life in our death, Thy joy in our
sorrow, Thy grace in our sin, Thy riches in our
poverty, and Thy glory in our valley. Bless this
message today, we pray, and be glorified in it. If there
be any who do not know You to be their Savior let the
today be the day of their salvation. Let all said and
done this day be for Your glory and honor. In Jesus'
Name we pray. Amen.**

FOCAL Read Responsively **Jude 17-23** But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; {18} How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. {19} **These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.** {20} **But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost,** {21} Keep yourselves in the love of God,

looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. {22} **And of some have compassion, making a difference: {23} And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.**^{KJV}

Years ago when a farmer harvested his wheat he always had to thresh it, separating the chaff or the waste from the wheat. The successful farmer wanted to keep as much wheat as possible, and as little chaff as possible.

Though we who belong to Jesus love to see the Church grow physically – blessed be the Name of the Lord – we do not want to do as so many local Churches have done in growth. We do not want to receive one person who does not know – intimately and personally know – the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior. It is not that we do not love the sinner. Our Jesus **came** to seek and to save that which was lost. **He said through the Prophet Ezekiel (Ezekiel 34:12, 16), “as a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day.... I will seek that which was lost..”**. This was Christ's mission when He became flesh and dwelt among us, to seek and save that which was lost (**Luke 19:10**). His Church – if it be His Church – has the same heart. We who believe want to seek and save that which is lost. We want His Church to grow, for as it grows we **snatch some from the fire** of self inflicted misery and the fire of eternal punishment. We do not want to hurt anyone's feelings, nor would we wish

KJV All Scriptures quoted are King James Version (1789) unless otherwise noted

to drive any of God's sheep from this place because of an incautious word. But Beloved, I want you to remember that wheat is separated from chaff by shaking and bruising. Though we do not want to rebuke nor bruise where the innocent are. And yet, we do not want to mislead any here. We do not want our charity to do harm to any. How horrible and loveless it is to allow anyone to come into this place unsaved and leave this place unsaved and yet justified in their own minds!

The Bible gives us a wonderful example of the born again Christian through the concept of gardening. Adam sinned, and brought spiritual death on all creation in a **garden called Eden**. Jesus Christ agreed to die for the sins of each and every one of us in a **garden called Gethsemane**. He took the cup of wrath on Himself so that we who believe on Him would never be condemned, as the Scripture saith:

John 3:36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

Are we done with gardens following **Eden and Gethsemane**? Absolutely not. The Bible tells us:

1 Corinthians 3:9 ... You are God's field, God's building.^{HCSB}

You are God's field. The Church is God's garden. Those who have believed on Jesus have been

HCSB Holman Christian Standard Version of the Holy Scripture

transplanted from the soil of sin and into the soil of faith. Once you were dead in trespasses and sins:

Ephesians 2:1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins

You who are saved **were dead**. You were dead in **trespasses** – that is, momentary lapses into things which are offensive to God. You were **dead in sins**, willful acts of disobedience to the clear directives of God's Word. But now, being made alive, transplanted into the soil of faith, you **grow up into a place that God is pleased to call home (Ephesians 2:21)**. Your roots in faith, you honor God following the Christian disciplines of prayer and application of the Holy Scripture. The flower that buds and blooms in your life is love, and its fragrance attracts others to this great Garden of God. Your love compels you to tell others about Christ, snatching them – if God so blesses – out of the flame. The Christian is continually helping others to see that the best way is in Christ, and that the only way to God is through Christ. The Christian is a planter and a waterer in this Garden of God. As the Apostle said:

1 Corinthians 3:6-7 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. {7} So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

We live in the last days – be busy, dear Christian, if you are a Christian. Tell others about Jesus. Help snatch some out of the flame – don't push them into it by bad behavior on your part! Live your life in such a way that

– when you wake up – Satan and his demons say in a trembling chorus, “**Oh no, he or she's awake**”! My prayer is that God make you fruitful and fragrant in His Garden for His glory.

May God touch your hearts with His Word.

1. The Garden of Satan

FOCAL Jude 18-20 “... there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. {19} These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit. {20} But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith

Two gardens are represented in this text. There is the garden of Satan, built up on **ungodly lusts**. Then there is the Garden of God, **building up yourselves on your most holy faith**. Let's talk about the garden of Satan first.

The garden of Satan always produces **mockers**¹, and not builders. These **mockers walk after their own ungodly lusts**. They, like Satan in the Garden of Eden, do what they do so they can draw others away from Jesus and the Word of God while justifying their own sinful lifestyle. When Satan came into the Garden of Eden he told Eve:

Genesis 3:1 "Did God really say, 'You can't eat from any tree in the garden'?" ^{HCSB}

1 G1703, ἐμπαίκτης, empaiktēs, emp-*aheek-tace'*, From G1702; a *derider*, that is, (by implication) a *false teacher*: - mocker, scoffer.

You see, Satan had already fallen from Heaven because of pride. He let sin reign in his life. He was the chief Angel, the **anointed Cherub that guarded the Throne of God (Ezekiel 28:14)**. He walked up and down before the rank and file of the angels, commanding them, directing their activities. Yet Satan for pride's sake fell into the **ungodly lust** of pride. The ungodly love to bring others to their way, for their conscience – before hardened with sin – bothers them in their ungodliness. So the father of evil Satan has taught his children to do as he did in the Garden of Eden. Enlist as many as you can into your ungodly ways. Bring others to your side, O Satan, so that what you do seems normal. **Mock, teach false doctrines**, as you did to Eve so long ago when you said:

Genesis 3:4-5 "No! You will not die," the serpent said to the woman. {5} "In fact, God knows that when you eat it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

The mockers – like Satan and the lost who follow him – do what they do so they can **walk after their own ungodly lusts**. Here is the soil of Satan's garden – selfish and self-serving sin that mocks the Almighty. “If we can mock enough and deceive enough, we can do what we do from the cover of numbers”. This is the thought of the mockers, of the deceivers, of the false teachers. They want to **walk after their ungodly lusts** unhindered and unconverted.

FOCAL Jude 19 “... These be they who separate

themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.

Those in the garden of Satan **separate² themselves**. This word **separate** literally means “**to draw lines apart from that which has been established, to cause divisions**”. This again is the sign of those who are rooted in the garden of Satan – they enlist to their way by pulling others away from God and His Church in order to serve themselves.

A Christian is a builder – a false Christian is a self seeking destroyer. A Christian points to God – a false Christian satisfies self.

This is what the next word illustrates. The unconverted are **sensual – seeking self pleasure**. Their lives are about themselves. The false teacher teaches that Christ will save you *in your sins*. It is these people who, because they are **sensual**, they want to draw more to their way of life. The Bible says that Judas Iscariot complained when the disciple Mary bathed the Lord's feet in ointment:

John 12:5-6 Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? {6} This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.

2 Present Active Participle of G592, ἀποδιορίζω, apodiorizō, *ap-od-ee-or-id'-zo*, From G575 and a compound of G1223 and G3724; to *disjoin* (by a boundary, figuratively a party): - separate.

Judas followed Jesus, but not *because he loved the Lord, but because he loved money*. He was **sensual, not having the Spirit**. In time Judas Iscariot sold the Master for thirty pieces of silver, silver he never used, and ended his life brutally through suicide.

There's a spiritual truth here, I think. The **wages of sin is death**, self death, self destruction. The Holy Spirit of God does not indwell those who are lost. Though He called them – as He calls us all – to salvation, they will not come.

The soil of the unbeliever is sin, his stem is selfishness and Satanic pride, and his flower is Spiritless, without fragrance to either God or man.

He, like a weed, seeks often to pollute the Garden of God with his evil, for as other gather to him he is justified in his ways, but not before God. The Apostle Peter wrote along these same lines when he warned:

2 Peter 3:3-4 Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers^{1b}, walking after their own lusts, {4} And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.

Peter saw the same thing happen to the local Church and to society as did Jude. In the **last days here come the**

^{1b} This is exactly the same Greek word, along with Tense, Voice, and Mood, as is seen in Jude 18 as “**mockers**” in the sentence “**there should be mockers in the last time**”

mockers, the scoffers, the false teachers attempting to infuse the Word and work of God with false doctrines. They **keep on walking after their own lusts**. Like Satan in Eden they attempt to destroy the work of God by their “**hath God really said**”? Their way is destructive, and seeks to lead others away to their own deaths.

2. The Garden of God

But you who are of the Garden of God are different.

Adrian Rogers once said “**The assurance of my salvation comes not from the fact that I *did* trust Christ but that I *am* trusting Christ for my salvation**”.

We believe and *keep on believing* because God indwells us!

The day that you, O Beloved of God, were saved, you were *transplanted* from Satan's garden and into the Garden of God. Look at our focal text:

FOCAL Jude 20 But ye, beloved, **building up yourselves on your most holy faith**

Your soil is different, for your soil is not sin but **faith**. Further your **faith** is not merely **faith** but it is **most holy faith**. Those who are saved by faith in Jesus are indwelt by the Spirit of God. Though the spirit of this age often beckons us, and though we who are Christians do

sometimes sin, we are different from those planted in Satan's garden.

Those in Satan's garden sin and keep on sinning because they enjoy it. The Christian, changed by the Spirit of God, may sin but does not enjoy it.

Those in God's Garden are exhorted to be **building up yourselves**, but not in selfishness, but to be more like Christ. Those in God's Garden, rooted in the good soil of faith, want to grow so they can do what Jesus has promised we would do. The Master said:

John 14:12 Verily, verily, I say unto you, **He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do;** because I go unto my Father.

God's Beloved plants are purposeful builders. We

2 Peter 3:18 But **grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever. Amen.**

Grow in Grace so that we can **glorify our Jesus** more. What is our stem? The text tells us:

FOCAL **Jude 17-23** But, beloved, **remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; {20} praying in the Holy Ghost ... {21} Keep³ yourselves in the love of God,**

3 Aorist Active Imperative of G5083, τηρέω, tēreō, tay-reh'-o, From τηρός

looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

Our stem is the Christian disciplines. The Christian **remembers the Word spoken of the Apostles.**

Indwelt by the Spirit of God the Christian keeps on living in His Garden His Way. We **keep ourselves in the love of God, because He works in us!**

What did Jesus say to His disciples?

John 14:15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

And again,

1 John 2:3-4 And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. {4} He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

The word “**keep**” in both Jude and John have the sense of **guarding that which is valuable**. The Christian does not modify the Word of God – the Christian *presents the Word that is presented him*. We guard Christ's Word, and present what He has said to the world. I read with

teros (a *watch*; perhaps akin to G2334); to *guard* (from *loss* or *injury*, properly by keeping *the eye* upon; and thus differing from G5442, which is properly to *prevent* escaping; and from G2892, which implies a *fortress* or full military lines of apparatus), that is, to *note* (a prophecy; figuratively to *fulfill* a command); by implication to *detain* (in custody; figuratively to *maintain*); by extension to *withhold* (for personal ends; figuratively to *keep unmarried*): - hold fast, keep (-er), (ob-, pre-, re) serve, watch.

interest an article in Christianity Today where Orthodox Jews in England were calling on the Pope to retract his words. Now I'm not Catholic, and care nothing personally for the Pope. But what the Pope spoke of was that Jews *needed to be saved by faith in Christ*. I agree with that – and you should, too. Too often the Church in the world today is not **guarding the love of God** because it has *cast the Word of Christ away*. A gospel deprived Church will have absolutely no impact on the world around it.

We who are of Christ's Garden *hear* Him, and *apply* what He has commanded. We also **pray surrendered to God**. Jude said that we **pray in the Holy Ghost**. Our prayer is Spirit filled and Spirit indwelt. We pray. **C.H. Spurgeon** once said:

“Only the prayer which comes from God can go to God. The dove will only bear a letter to the place from which it came, and so will prayer go back to Heaven if it came from Heaven. We must shoot the Lord's arrows back to Him. The desire that He writes upon our hearts will move His heart and bring down a blessing, but the desires of the flesh have no power with Him”. ⁴

We pray and **cast all our cares upon Him, for He careth for us (1 Peter 5:7)**. But there is another thing that the Christian naturally does: We also **keep ourselves in the love of God**. We avoid the sin of Israel. Israel in entering the Promised Land began to take to herself the idols and ways of that land. The Lord warns those who

⁴ From his sermon *Praying in the Holy Ghost*, #719, preached at Metropolitan Tabernacle, Newington

are His:

James 4:4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

The Christian is friendly with the worldly, but never becomes friends with the world.

Many local Churches have begun to excuse what is Biblically unsound. Some excuse adultery, some idolatry, some sexual sin, some the casting off of the teachings of God's Word. Let this sin of Israel never be found among us, dear Children. Christ loves us and gave Himself for us so that we could lift Him up before a lost and dying world as the only solution for death. We will never make a difference while we look like the world – we need to *be like Jesus*.

The world doesn't need more of the world. The world needs more of Jesus! The world doesn't need a Church wallowing in sin. The world needs an example of living *above sin* through power of God Almighty!

3. The Fragrance of God's Garden Is Compassion Making A Difference

FOCAL Jude 22-23 **And of some have compassion**⁵,

⁵ Present Active Imperative of **G1653**, ἐλεέω, eleeō, *el-eh-eh'-o*, From

making a difference: {23} And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

What is the flower of the Christian and the fruit of God's Garden? **Compassion that makes a difference.**

The weeds of Satan's garden produce selfishness, but the flower of God's Garden produces **compassion**. This word is often translated **mercy** in the New Testament. Two blind men followed Jesus crying out “**Thou Son of David, have compassion, have mercy on us**” (Matthew 9:27). Jesus responded and the blind were made able to see. A woman of Canaan, a hated Gentile, came to Jesus and said “**Have mercy, have compassion upon me, O Lord, for my daughter is vexed with a devil**” (Matthew 15:22). Though she was not of the House of Israel Jesus healed her daughter that very day. A man comes to Jesus and says “**Lord, have mercy on my son, for a demon possesses him**” (Matthew 17:15). Jesus, having compassion, rebuked the devil and cured the child. A man, lost to family and friends, was beset with a thousand demons called Legion. Jesus had compassion on that man and restored his health – and his family (Mark 5:19). Blind **Bartimaeus (Mark 10:46)** sat by the side of the road begging till he heard Jesus pass by. He cried out “**Lord, give me sight**”. The Lord had compassion on him, and Bartimaeus, *casting off his old way of life, followed Jesus in the way (Mark 10:52)*. Ten lepers, hearing that Jesus was coming, cried out “**Master, have mercy, have compassion on**

G1656; to *compassionate* (by word or deed, specifically by divine grace): - have compassion (pity on), have (obtain, receive, shew) mercy (on).

us” (Luke 17:13). All ten were healed, though only one returned to thank Jesus for that healing.

Jesus Christ had compassion that made a difference, and so do those in the Garden of God.

Dear Christian, you were once blind but now you see because Christ had compassion on you. You were not God's Chosen Israel, and yet, like the Canaanite woman, in compassion and mercy God saved you. Some of you parents have wept and cried for mercy for your loved ones, and Christ, hearing your prayers, has redeemed your children. You had a loved one possessed of a demon, consumed by alcohol or drugs, and Christ, with loving compassion, reached out to meet their cry. Perhaps your life, like the life of the man possessed of Legion, was riddled with sin. Perhaps the blindness of sin had reduced you, like Bartimaeus, to begging for mercy – yet Jesus answered the call. Some of you, like the nine lepers, have received great blessing at the hand of the Saviour, yet even now forget the compassion that saved you. Dear children of God, if you are His, **have compassion that makes a difference**. As C.H. Spurgeon said:

“The ungodly are mocking, speaking great swelling words, and walking after their ungodly lusts. ... The ungodly are showing the venom of their hearts by mourning and complaining, while the righteous are ... praying in the Holy Ghost. The ungodly man bears wormwood in his mouth while the Christian's lips drop with the virgin honey of devotion. As the spider

is said to find poison in the very flowers from which the bees suck honey, so do the wicked abuse to sin the selfsame mercies which the godly use to the glory of God. “

The time is short, dear believer. Work for Christ while you can. And if you do not know Jesus Christ as Savior – if He is not with you – today is a great day to meet Him, dear One. For whosoever calls upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved.



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