

8 Ways the Kingdom Connects Us to Garden of Eden

When Jesus came as the last Adam (1 Cor. 15:45), He announced the Good News of the kingdom of God (Mark 1:14). What is the kingdom of God? The rule of God emanates from the throne of God in heaven. Hence, the kingdom of God rules over all creation (Ps. 22:28. 24:1. 103:19).

When Jesus announced that the kingdom of God was at hand (Matt. 4:17), He declared that restoring the created order under His rule as it was in the Garden of Eden (before the fall) was now inaugurated.

We see themes relating to the work of restoration to Eden throughout Scripture (Isa. 11:6-9, 51:3, 65:17-25; Ezek. 36:34-36; Rom. 8:19-21; Rev. 21:1-5).

In light of this, we see that the gospel of the kingdom of God is related to the reconciliation of the world, not merely to individual sinners (2 Cor. 5:19).

Breaking news, Spirit-filled stories. Subscribe to Charisma on YouTube now!

8 Ways the Kingdom of God Connects Us to the Edenic State

1. **Through work.** God's first act after creating Adam was to put him in a garden to work and keep it (Gen. 2:15). Even before Adam had a family, he worked unto the Lord. Hence, using our abilities to work is not merely to provide for our family but is an act of worship, since we are reflecting Yahweh, who worked for the six days of creation.

Paul the apostle commands the church to work and to be a blessing to others (Eph. 4:28, 1 Thess. 4:11). Paul even

declares that if a man does not work, he should not eat (2 Thess. 3:10). Thus, Christians are called to work and plant the garden of the Lord as part of our Christian witness that the kingdom of God is at hand.

2. Through God's provision. God planted humanity in a lush garden with enough to sustain it even before Adam worked. Humans did nothing to earn what we were born into, yet God provided everything we needed for sustenance through His grace. Continuing to receive divine provision is one way the church manifests the kingdom of God to the rest of the world.

3. Through holy matrimony. God joined one man and one woman to be "one flesh" as the foundation of civilization (Gen. 2:21-24). Before there was human government, there was marriage. Thus, His kingdom influence started with biblical marriage. Also, the fact that God made binary gender to represent His nature implies that it takes both male and female to transmit the image of God to the next generation (Gen. 1:27). Hence, two men and two women cannot fully transmit the image of God to the next generation.

The main reason Satan distorted biblical marriage with alternative forms of family as well as through the proliferation of pornography and divorce was to prevent the complete image of God from being transmitted to the next generation. Consequently, when Christians live faithfully together in holy matrimony and raise their children in the Lord, they plant the garden of the Lord and manifest His kingdom in the world.

4. Through defining reality. God brought the animals of the earth to Adam so he could name them (Gen. 2:19-20). As God's vice-regent, it was up to Adam to name and define reality. Thus, whoever defines a thing can categorize and frame the perspective of that entity. This is why there is an ideological push to reframe biblical symbols such as the rainbow and to redefine biblical concepts such as marriage,

gender, human sexuality and social justice (Gen. 9:13).

The Rainbow: The Rainbow symbolizes God's promise to Noah that He would never again destroy the earth with a flood (Gen. 9:13-17). Today, the rainbow is widely recognized as a symbol of the LGBTQ+ community, representing diversity and inclusion.

Get your FREE CHARISMA NEWSLETTERS today! Stay up to date with current issues, Holy Spirit news, Christian teachings, Charisma videos & more!

Marriage: Historically, marriage has been defined as a union between one man and one woman. Many societies now recognize same-sex marriages and broader definitions of partnerships and unions.

Gender: Gender was traditionally understood as strictly male or female, based on biological sex. The concept of gender has expanded to include a spectrum of identities beyond the binary male and female, such as nonbinary, pansexual and genderfluid.

Woke: The connotation of the traditional meaning had to do with a conversion experience in which a person's eyes were opened, and they were turned from darkness to light, which is why the term "awakening" was used to describe masses of people coming to Christ (Acts 26:18). Now "woke" has been hijacked to describe people who ascribe to the far left ideology. The church is called to function as cultural creatives who define reality for society in a way that aligns with the kingdom of God.

5. Through cultivation. Adam was called to cultivate the garden of the Lord and subdue the rest of the earth (Gen. 1:28). Similarly, believers are called to plant systems and create art that reflects the beauty of the Lord as depicted in the Garden of Eden for human flourishing.

6. Through multiplication. As God created the world with the ability for every living thing to multiply (Gen. 1), the

Ephesians 4:11 ministry gifts were called to equip people who can multiply biological families, churches and businesses, so the seeds of the garden of the Lord will eventually fill all things (Eph. 4:10-12).

7. Through stewardship. As God called Adam to steward the created order, God has called the church to nurture people capable of managing their families, churches and businesses and to produce Christ-followers capable of stewarding leadership in society for the glory of God.

8. The “tree-centric” world on the eighth day. The tree of life was in the center of the Garden of Eden (Gen. 2:9). Christ’s death, burial and Resurrection created a “tree-centric” world since the cross (tree) of Christ became the tree of life that brought healing and reconciliation back to the created order (1 Pet. 2:24). Since Jesus rose on the eighth day, this also represented new beginnings regarding the process of the renewal of all things.

As Christ-followers live cross-shaped lives, they will be His agents of healing who plant the garden of the Lord as an oasis of hope amid broken cities.

Join Charisma Magazine Online to follow everything the Holy Spirit is doing around the world!

Dr. Joseph Mattera is an internationally known author, consultant and theologian whose mission is to influence leaders who influence culture. He is the founding pastor of Resurrection Church and leads several organizations, including the U.S. Coalition of Apostolic Leaders and Christ Covenant Coalition.

).