

I - Prince of Paradox

Meditations on Christ from the Gospel of John
03/14/2010 - Jim Johnson

A paradox is something that seems to be contradictory, or unbelievable, or absurd but that may actually in fact be true. Christ is a paradox. His life's journey is a paradox and this is never more evident than in His journey to the cross. One such paradox involves a garden.



It all started in a _____ - John 18:1

Jesus sought out a Garden known as Gethsemane just after he finished the Last Supper. John is the only one of the Gospel authors to identify Gethsemane as a garden.

The Bible is a book about gardens.

A1. It was in a garden that man was tempted to turn his back on _____ . - Gen 3:1

A2. It was in a garden that God was tempted to turn His back on _____ - Matt 26:36-40

Once Jesus entered Gethsemane in John 18, He also entered into a time of intense testing. Though He was fully God, He was also fully human and He was anxious about the suffering that was near. He asked the Father to remove it from Him if possible. The salvation of mankind hung in the balance.

B1. In that garden, man _____ to sin –Gen 3:6-7

Adam and Eve took the bait, and therefore gave birth to sin. They introduced the vicious malignant cancer of sin into their own lives and their descendents. Rom 5:12 tells us that through one man, sin entered the world – and yet the sentence ends with – *“because all sinned.”* This is to say that when Adam sinned, the effects of his sin were passed down through the race. Just as we inherit genetic deficiencies from our ancestors, we also inherit this spiritual deficiency. Adam's sin alone is enough to condemn us to death. And yet we all have had our own individual sins experiences, which remind us that we are just as guilty as Adam ever was.

B2. It was in a garden that Christ chose to _____ for man's sin - John 19:41

Within the boundaries of Golgotha lay a third garden and it was there, in the midst of the garden that Christ Jesus breathed His last labored breath. Was this an accident or did God plant a message there for us? Romans 5:18 tells us that Adam's transgression in the Garden of Eden resulted in the condemnation of all men, but in this other garden, Christ, through a single act of righteousness, brought salvation and justification to all men.

C1. It was in a garden that man _____ His relationship with God. - Gen 3:22-24
Man had sinned and, God had pronounced judgment and part of that judgment in Gen. 3:22-24. Adam and Eve were ejected from the garden and away from the presence of God. They had rebelled and broken the sweet and uncomplicated relationship they once had with the Father. They and their descendents would have infrequent contact with the Father in the future – and it would always be strained by sin.

C2. It was in a garden that Christ _____ fellowship with God. – Jn. 19:41-42
Not only did the crucifixion take place in a garden, the tomb in which He was laid was also in that same garden. When God finally raised Christ from His garden grave He restored the relationship between man and God. Eph 2:4-6 teaches us that when God raised Jesus from the dead, he also spiritually seated us with Him in the heavenly places. The broken relationship between man and God was repaired, restored and significantly enhanced because Christ was raised from the dead in that garden.

D1. The _____ of the first man was as a gardener. - Gen 2:15
It was Adam's job, to cultivate and keep his garden home. He had an easy job in that the Garden of Eden was more of a self managing garden blessed by God and it yielding its fruit with very, very little labor. It wasn't until Adam had sinned, that gardening became a chore. (Gen 3:17-19) The garden didn't fall apart, until the gardener fell apart.

D2. Jesus was once _____ as a gardener. - John 20:15
Mary Magdalene was searching for the missing body of the crucified Christ in the garden where Christ was buried. She encountered another person and did not recognize that it was Jesus. According to John 20:15, she mistook Him as the gardener. He really was a gardener, not of that garden, but He was the one who took the Garden of Eden and everything that had died in it, and He brought it back to life again. One day He will fully restore the actual Garden. (Rev 22:1-3)

Jesus cleaned up the _____ that Adam left in the garden

FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

Use this section in your personal or family devotions to better apply the truth.

1. How do you feel about inheriting the guilt of Adam's sin?
2. What other contrasts and comparisons can you draw between the Garden of Eden and the gardens of the NT?
3. Is there any valid reason why you should refuse the gift of Christ's salvation?

