

Questions

1. We're made to be dependent upon God. Is that what marks you?
2. Prayer is a primary expression of our dependence upon God. What is your prayer life like? What do you tend to *not* pray about? Why do you not pray about those things? What might that reveal about how you are or are not living dependently upon God in those things?
3. Philippians 4:5b-6 says, "The Lord is near. Don't worry about anything..." Based on these verses, what might anxiety/worry express about our functional view of God? Based on these verses, what truth is Paul saying we need to remind ourselves of when we're worried/anxious?
4. Read Josh 1:9; Ps 23:4; Matt 28:18-20; Heb. 13:5. Discuss these passages and promises of God regarding His presence, and how they can be an encouragement in your daily life.
5. Read John 14:3 and 1 Peter 3:18. Discuss the Biblical idea, the purpose of the gospel isn't to ultimately bring you to a place but to a Person.
6. Read 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19; Eph 2:21-22. Believers, individually and corporately, are identified as the temple of the living God. Read 1 Peter 2:9. Believers are identified as a royal priesthood. So, discuss how we can, individually and corporately, "work and watch over" the spiritual temples in and around us as God's priests?

Need prayer? Someone will be up front by the piano to pray with you after the 1st & 2nd services.

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BEGINNINGS

Genesis 1-11

The God of Relationship

Genesis 2:4-17

Stuart McCray, Associate Pastor

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In Genesis 2:4-17 Moses gives us 3 blessings of God's pursuit of relationship with humanity, so we would rightly relate to Him.

God, The Potter of Man (vv.4-7)

Genesis 1-2:3 it was a wide-angle lens of creation, but starting here in verse 4, the camera zooms in on God's special relationship with humanity.

One significant clue is in the change of God's name. Previously, Moses only referred to God generically. But, starting in verse 4. Moses primarily refers to God as, "the LORD God."

All caps "LORD" represents the Hebrew word Yahweh, which is the personal relational covenant name of God.

God's Presence with Man (vv.8-14)

At this point, Moses has described the earth having three parts: 1) The earth as a whole, 2) Eden, and 3) the garden, which is in the east of Eden; that's where Yahweh places man.

The garden is not so much about the trees, and rivers, and ore; it is the place Yahweh created for His presence to be among His people. The great provision of the garden is God's presence.

Two Implications of God's Presence

1. God's Presence for Right Now

Ps. 16:11; Ps 23:4; Phil. 4:5-6

2. God's Presence for Eternity

The Promised Land pointed back to the garden. And the garden, and the Promised Land in that it was a kinda garden of Eden, points forward to the New Jerusalem that John spoke of in Revelation. (Rev. 22:1-5)

God's Purpose for Man (vv.15-17)

When the verbs "work" and "watch over" (v.15) are found in combination elsewhere in the Torah, they *only* describe the duties of the Priests in the tabernacle and temple after it (e.g., Num. 18:5-7). So, the man is a kind of priest, working and watching this kind of garden-temple, where God's presence was among His people.

"The inference of God's commands in Genesis 2:16-17 is that God alone knows what is good for human beings and God alone knows what is not good for them. To enjoy the "good" we must trust God and obey him. If we disobey, we will have to decide for ourselves what is good and what is not good. While to modern men and women such as prospect may seem desirable, to Moses it is the worst fate that could have befallen humanity." – John Sailhamer

There are at least seven connections between the garden and the Promised Land and Israel's later sanctuaries:

- 1. Cherubim/Entrances:** the gates to the garden and the later sanctuaries both faced east and were guarded by cherubim. (Gen. 3:24; Ex. 25:18; 26:31; 1 Kings 8:6-7)
- 2. Materials:** Gold and onyx, abundant in the garden, is what the temple was paneled with; additionally, the high priest's garments were adorned with onyx stones, symbolizing the tribes of Israel. (Gen. 2:11-12; Exod. 25:7, 11, 17, 31; 1 Kin. 6:20-22; 1 Chron. 29:2)
- 3. Priests:** The call to "work and watch over" given to Adam is exactly echoed in the service of Israel's priests. (Gen. 2:15; Num. 3:7-8; 8:26; 18:5-7)
- 4. Purpose:** The Garden of Eden was the meeting place between God and man, and so it was with the tabernacle/temple. (Gen. 3:8; Lev. 26:11-12; Deut. 23:14; 1 Kin. 8:10-13; 2 Chron. 7:1-3)
- 5. Rivers:** Just as Eden's river flowed outward with life for the world, in Ezekiel's vision of the new temple, he described a river flowing out from it to cleanse and give life to the world. (Gen. 2:10-14; Eze. 47)
- 6. The Tree of Life:** The tree of life in the garden seems to be symbolized in the seven-stemmed lampstand within the temple. (Gen. 2:9; Ex. 25:31, 33-36)
- 7. Topography:** The garden and the Promised land are described in similar terms, and the temple was decorated with vegetation imagery to look like the garden. (Gen. 1:11-12; 2:8-9; Ex. 33:3; 1 Kin. 6:29, 32, 35; 7:20, 22, 24-26, 42)