

Key Verse:

- Malachi 4:6

6. His preaching will turn the hearts of fathers to their children, and the hearts of children to their fathers. Otherwise I will come and strike the land with a curse.”

Title: THE MODERN GARDEN

Point One: The Enemy’s First Attack Was Against the Father’s Heart

- Genesis 2:15–17

15. The Lord God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to tend and watch over it. **16.** But the Lord God warned him, “You may freely eat the fruit of every tree in the garden— **17.** except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If you eat its fruit, you are sure to die.”

Genesis 3:1–5

3. The serpent was the shrewdest of all the wild animals the Lord God had made. One day he asked the woman, “Did God really say you must not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden?”

2. “Of course we may eat fruit from the trees in the garden,” the woman replied. **3.** “It’s only the fruit from the tree in the middle of the garden that we are not allowed to eat. God said, ‘You must not eat it or even touch it; if you do, you will die.’”

4. “You won’t die!” the serpent replied to the woman. 5. “God knows that your eyes will be opened as soon as you eat it, and you will be like God, knowing both good and evil.”

Genesis 3:7–10

7. At that moment their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. So they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves. 8. When the cool evening breezes were blowing, the man and his wife heard the Lord God walking about in the garden. So they hid from the Lord God among the trees. 9. Then the Lord God called to the man, “Where are you?” 10. He replied, “I heard you walking in the garden, so I hid. I was afraid because I was naked.”

Point Two: The Modern Garden Is Full of Voices

- Romans 12:2

2. Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

Point Three: Fathers Are Called to Form Their Children

- Deuteronomy 6:4–9

4. “Listen, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. 5 And you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all

your strength. **6.** And you must commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commands that I am giving you today. **7.** Repeat them again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up. **8.** Tie them to your hands and wear them on your forehead as reminders. **9.** Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”

Psalm 78:1–7

1. O my people, listen to my instructions.

Open your ears to what I am saying,

2. for I will speak to you in a parable.

I will teach you hidden lessons from our past—

3. stories we have heard and known,

stories our ancestors handed down to us.

4. We will not hide these truths from our children;

we will tell the next generation

about the glorious deeds of the Lord,

about his power and his mighty wonders.

5. For he issued his laws to Jacob;

he gave his instructions to Israel.

He commanded our ancestors

to teach them to their children,

6. so the next generation might know them—

even the children not yet born—

and they in turn will teach their own children.

7. So each generation should set its hope anew on God,
not forgetting his glorious miracles
and obeying his commands.

Ephesians 6:4

4. Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger by the way you treat them. Rather, bring them up with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord.

Point Four: Men Must Teach Men

- Titus 2:1-2

2. Teach the older men to exercise self-control, to be worthy of respect, and to live wisely. They must have sound faith and be filled with love and patience.

- Titus 2:6-8

6. In the same way, encourage the young men to live wisely. 7. And you yourself must be an example to them by doing good works of every kind. Let everything you do reflect the integrity and seriousness of your teaching. 8. Teach the truth so that your teaching can't be criticized. Then those who oppose us will be ashamed and have nothing bad to say about us.

1 Corinthians 16:13–14

13. Be on guard. Stand firm in the faith. Be courageous.[a] Be strong. **14.** And do everything with love.

Point Five: God Restores the Father's House

Back to our key text - full circle

- Malachi 4:6

6. His preaching will turn the hearts of fathers to their children, and the hearts of children to their fathers. Otherwise I will come and strike the land with a curse.”

Psalm 68:5–6

5. Father to the fatherless, defender of widows—
 this is God, whose dwelling is holy.
6. God places the lonely in families;
 he sets the prisoners free and gives them joy.
But he makes the rebellious live in a sun-scorched land.