

Intro.

- A. To 4 ruddy fishermen, Jesus spoke about *becoming fishermen of men*, **Mt. 4:18-21**
- B. When disciples questioned & argues over who was greatest in the kingdom, Jesus took a little child as an object lesson, **Mt. 18:1-6** **Lk. 13:7**
 - 1. A fig tree was used to teach about *productivity* ^; lilies illustrated God’s providential care, **Mt. 6:28**
 - 2. Today, I want us to visit 4 gardens in the Bible to remember some important truths.

Discuss.**I. EDEN – To live luxuriously (lit., delight, pleasure, thus it is called, the pleasure garden).**

- A. Civilization began in the “fertile crescent” where the Tigris & Euphrates rivers flow (modern Iraq).
 - 1. “*Pleasantness*” was an appropriate name as God made it very good, delightful.
 - 2. At first, there were no thorns, thistles, diseases, death or decay! --- Sound like your kind of place?
- B. The trees were beautiful & practical: good for food & shade. Some even had miraculous power.
 - 1. Fruit from one tree would bring about the *knowledge of good & evil*; another gave *eternal life*.
 - 2. **Gn. 2:17** - Adam and Eve were not to eat of the *knowledge tree*; if they did they would die.
 - 3. Because they ignored God’s directions, they were expelled from the garden & kept from the *tree of life*, of which they could have eaten & lived forever in sin **Gn. 3:22** & separated from God.

II. GETHSEMANE – (lit., an oil press; olive vat)

- A. This is where Jesus often went with His disciples **Jn. 18:1f**, w. side of Mt. of Olives, e. of Jeru. walls
 - 1. Just beyond Kidron, where numerous olive groves were found.
 - 2. In A.D. 70, Gen. Titus ordered cutting of timber as the Romans prepared to destroy Jerusalem. (8 today)
- B. 2 “gardens of Gethsemane” side by side, one supervised by Franciscans, the other by Russian Orthodox n
 - 1. Exactly where Jesus prayed is not known, but the general area is obvious.
 - 2. Jesus was there during a quiet time, the harvest season long past (fall).
- C. The *blood sweat* **Lk. 22:44** wasn’t because of the heat of the p.m, it was cold that fatal night **Jn. 18:18, 24**
 - 1. In **Mt. 26:38** we learn of His mental anguish, agony *even to death*, & He hoped & prayed for escape.
 - 2. His plea for deliverance is in human terms **Heb. 5:7**, but it was unequivocally qualified in **Mt. 26:39**
 - 3. This 2nd garden we know as *the garden of prayer*. (We might nickname it *the garden of surrender!*)

III. THE GARDEN TOMB –

- A. Within 24 hrs. of His arrest in Gethsemane, Jesus’ corpse was placed in another garden, **Jn. 19:41**
- B. This *garden of hope* was where several significant events to place early on Resurrection morning.
 - 1. 3 godly women, Mary, Salome & Mary Magdalene, arrived about dawn to complete the embalming,
 - 2. Jesus told Mary Magdalene to *Go to my brothers...* “*I am ascending to my Father & your Father, and my God, and your God.*” **Mk. 16:1; Jn. 20:17**
 - 3. Peter & John ran to see the empty grave, **Jn. 20:2-9**.
- C. The garden tomb gives us hope still today, **1 Cor. 15:4-22**

IV. PARADISE -- (lit., an orchard of pleasure & ...)

- A. 4th garden = *paradise of God* (**Rev. 2:7**) = a figurative description of heaven, God’s pleasure garden.
 - 1. Remember, Eden is described in the LXX as *Paradise*, **Gen. 2:8**
 - 2. Translators choose the word used by Jesus in describing heaven (c. **Rev. 2:7**)
- B. As Milton so well noted, heaven is pictured as a *restored Garden of Eden*.
 - 1. The *tree of life*, on both sides of a *river of water of life, clear as crystal* is in the restored garden, producing 12 fruits monthly, year round. **Rev. 22:1-2**
 - 2. The curse place on the original Eden (c. **Gen. 3:17-19**) will be gone forever.
 - 3. In *the Paradise of God*, there *shall be no curse anymore*, **Rev. 22:3**

Concl.

- A. In visit these 4 gardens, we have been moved to remember...1) about respecting God’s instructions, His grace & His mercy...2) surrender to God’s will...3) about hope of the resurrection, &... 4) about wonderful Heaven will be!!!
- B. The beauty you have seen in these 4 gardens may have caused you to desire salvation today more than ever.