

"God's Garden"

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"My Father is the Husbandman." [John 15:1] This is what Jesus said, and we learned last week that we are His garden, or as the Apostle Paul tells us, "Ye are God's husbandry," [1 Cor. 3:9] or "tilled land." We have been learning lately about the good seed,—the Word of God,—which He puts into our hearts, that we may bring forth just the blossoms and fruit that He loves to see, in His garden.

But if you have a garden you know that the sowing of the seed is not all that needs to be done in it. You must watch and water it; and besides this you will find springing up some plants that you have not sown, and that you do not want there. These you must pull up, because they are weeds that are not only useless themselves, but they will prevent the good seed from growing properly, and perhaps crowd it out altogether.

Now see how much care the Lord takes of His garden, how carefully and tenderly He watches over us, His "tilled land." He says, "I the Lord do keep it, I will water it every moment, lest any hurt it I will keep it night and day." [Isa. 27:3]

"Lest any hurt it"! Who is it that is trying to hurt the Lord's garden, and how can he do this? Oh, you know already, it is His great enemy, Satan. He wants to destroy all the Lord's beautiful plants, and change His garden into a waste wilderness, bringing forth nothing but thorns and weeds and poisonous plants.

And see how artfully he is working to do this. Jesus teaches us about it in one of His parables. He says that "the kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man that sowed good seed in his field," but his enemy came and sowed tares and went his way. "But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst thou not sow good seed in thy field? From whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this." [Matt. 13:24-28]

God in the beginning sowed only good seed in His field,—in this earth, and in the hearts of His children Adam and Eve. The earth brought forth only what was "pleasant to the sight and good for food." [Gen. 2:9] And only love and all its pleasant and beautiful fruits appeared in the lives of God's children. But now, alas, the earth brings forth thorns and thistles, and many things not pleasant to the sight nor good for food, but things that will bring death instead of life. And there are hatred and quarrelling, and other deadly weeds, growing up where only love should be.

From whence hath the Lord's land these tares? The words of Jesus give us the answer, "An enemy hath done this." How he did it, and is still doing it, we will learn next week, and also how the words of Jesus will be at last fulfilled, "Every plant that My heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up." [Matt. 15:13]