



The Caller

A Weekly Newsletter of the Elizabethtown church of Christ
 Vol. XXXXV February 3, 2019 No. 4

Confidence Corner John F. Board

In this week's *Confidence Corner* we want to examine a few facts regarding the Garden of Eden. I believe that an examination of a few of these facts will help to refute the false teaching that heaven will eventually be on

the earth. Though many might claim that the principles regarding the Garden of Eden and other quite plain principles of Scripture are too simplistic to refute the heaven on earth concept, I believe the fact that they are so simple and understandable make them a devastating refutation to the complex and confusing attempts to make heaven's location a rejuvenated earth.

The first observation that is transparent from the biblical text, but somehow missed by many is that *Not all the world was Eden*. It's important to establish that Eden was, rather than the entire earthly creation, only a tiny part of it. Genesis reveals this in several ways.

Eden was actually a tiny plot on Earth. The location of Eden is designated by geographical markers (Gen 2:8-14). Eden is described with four water sources: This description alone tells us quite clearly the earth was not Eden. There are other indicators.

In Genesis 1:26-27 God made humankind in His image, his representatives in this new domain. Notice that verse 28 says that the *earth* needed filling. This does not refer to Eden. Eden has not even appeared yet in the Genesis story. Its first mention comes in Genesis 2:8.

Also, the garden of Eden is said to be *in the east*. The directional word informs us that there were other parts of the earth. God "planted" this garden. We know from Genesis 1 that the dry land (called "earth") already existed. It had to in order for God to plant a garden in it to the east.

Lastly, Eden and Earth must be distinct since, after the fall, Adam and Eve are expelled from it and have to live elsewhere. Unless you believe that they were sent into outer space, you must acknowledge Eden and Earth as distinct.

Though mankind was to make the rest of earth like Eden, it is obvious that the rest of Scripture indicates that after the fall of mankind, such a task was impossible. The earth could not be made into what God originally portioned off as that perfect paradise.

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Imitators Of God

by Gene Taylor

Christianity is not some type of unattainable ideal. It is an ideal but one which is both attainable and practical. Christians are described as "dear children" and are urged to imitate their Father. The verses, Ephesians 5:2-13, address this subject.

Walk In Love (Ephesians 5:2)

One's "walk" is their manner of life. Christians should be characterized as loving individuals. The standard for the Christian's love is Christ (John 13:34-35).

Reject Moral Impurity (Ephesians 5:3-5)

Similar warnings are found in Galatians 5:19-21 and 1 Corinthians 6:9-11. In the moral quagmire of our time, Christians must stand up for the morality of God. For to reject God's standard is to reject God. Immoral acts should "not even be named" among Christians (v. 3).

Guard Against False Teaching (Ephesians 5:6-7)

Every New Testament writer warns of false teachers (cf. Matt. 7:15; 2 Pet. 2:1; 1 John 4:1). The only possible solution to the problem of false teaching is the word of God, the Truth (John 8:32; 17:17). The only way to be imitators of God is to know and obey the Truth. Sadly, that is not always the case even among those who claim to be God's people (Gal. 4:16). Only obedience to the Truth of the gospel will purify one's soul (1 Pet. 1:22).

Be Light In A World Of Darkness (Ephesians 5:8-3)

God draws a clear line between good and evil, light and darkness, His children and the children of the devil (Col. 1:13; 1 Pet. 2:9). Because He has delivered Christians from Satan's darkness, they must live with Him in light, their lives showing His light (Matt. 5:14). To be like God, one must walk in the light (John 8:12; 1 John 1:5-7).

Those who belong to God must "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness" (v. 11). If they are children of God, they belong to the light (1 Thess. 5:5-6) and their lives should reflect it.

(Edited from original article due to space limitations.)

Mitchell's
 Weekly
 Manna
 Mitchell Lockhart

Sunday's Sermons:

A.M. — *What A Day!*
 Matthew 25:31-46

P.M. — *Self Improvement*
 Ephesians 4:25-32

WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO EAT?

If you are like me, you enjoy eating! I used to tease and say my favorite sport was eating. Though I have put on a few more pounds that I would like, I would hope that my body does not depict that my favorite sport is eating. Brenna is an excellent cook and for the last six months or so Kayleigh has begun cooking as well. The meals she has made are delicious as well.

Then there is the problem of all the new eating establishments that continue to pop up in Elizabethtown. We try not to go out to eat more than a few times a week, but sometimes with our schedules we exceed our set limit. Now with choices like Culvers and Boom Bazz Pizza the temptation to pop in and get frozen custard is always there. We have even eaten at the relatively new Italian place downtown (I can hardly say it let alone spell it).

But now thanks to Will Bybee we have a new weakness! Will kept telling us about 1 2 3 Chinese and we finally tried it (funny story...I called Will to ask him something about the place and he was on his way home from 1 2 3 Chinese when he answered my call...I guess he does practice what he preaches). Well needless to say the Board family agrees with Mr. Bybee.

I wrote all of the above to point out that as much as I enjoy physical food, my hope is that I desire spiritual food even more! Jesus invites us to find peace in hungering and thirsting after righteousness. Such will only come through Bible study and prayer. Peter says that as newborn babes we should desire the sincere milk of the word. We are to study/give diligence to show ourselves approved unto God. So we all need to ask ourselves, "Do we desire spiritual food as we should?"

It is interesting that the love of "eating" God's word can at first be found to be so enjoyable and then because of the responsibility such knowledge of Scripture places upon the individual, the knowledge can turn into a burden. Consider Jeremiah's words in Jeremiah 15. In verse 16 he notes, "Thy words were found and I did eat them and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart for I am called by thy name oh LORD God of Hosts." Yet He then almost accuses the LORD of deceiving him. He had become isolated from others because of the stand he had taken based upon the message of God. It is true that sometimes a love of Scripture, and the stand taken based upon this love of Scripture, can cause one to be isolated.

So again another question we must ask ourselves is "Do we only love Scripture and desire to feed upon it when the results are good things?" Jeremiah had no known coverts from his holding to the truth of God's message! He struggled yet remained a faithful servant of God.

May we all love God's word and desire to feed upon it even more than we do physical food... even in those times when the truth it reveals causes us to be hated by those in opposition to it.

*John F. Board
Elizabethtown, KY*