

**The Planting of the Lord – The First Local Church  
(The Garden of the Lord)**

**1Cor. 3:5-8; Isa.61:3; Gen. 2:8**

*“The planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified.”*

**By Peter Yeoman**

There is no specific example in scripture that gives a real picture of a church planting situation. Details are few.

When reading Paul’s letter to the Corinthians, and how he describes them as God’s building, God’s field etc., I noticed that one or two translations referred to it as ‘God’s Garden’. My thoughts immediately went to Eden and suddenly realised that that this indeed was the first local church and it was established by God Himself.

There were obviously lessons to learn from this and here is what I have gleaned so far:

**1. Gen. 2:8 It should be a place of God’s Purpose**

*“The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed.”*

Knowing the purpose of God for a location is vital.

**2. Gen.2:9 It should be a place of God’s Provision**

*“And out of the ground the Lord God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food”*

Gifts, ministries and divine ability abound from heavens store.

*“And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.” (2Cor.9:8)*

**3. Gen. 2:10a It should be a place of God’s Refreshing**

*“A river went out of Eden to water the garden.”*

The river of God needs to be flowing in the house before it flows outside.

**4. Gen. 2:10b It should be a place of God’s Equipping and Sending**

*“...And from there it parted and became four riverheads. 11 The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one which skirts the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. 12 And the gold of that land is good. Bdellium and the onyx stone are there. 13 The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one which goes around the whole land of Cush. 14 The name of the third river is Hiddekel; it is the one which goes toward the east of Assyria. The fourth river is the Euphrates.”*

That which had its source in the garden became a means of blessing outside.

**5. Gen.2:15 It should be a place of Caring and Nurturing**

*“Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it.”*

In order for the garden to be a source of providence it had to be maintained.

Even that which is created in perfection needs to be nurtured in order to produce more fruit.

**6. Gen. 2:16-17 It should be a place of Instruction and Learning Obedience**

*“And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; 17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”*

Laying down the foundation of the ‘First Principles of the oracles of God’ (Heb.5:12)

**7. Gen.2:18-20 It should be a place of Fellowship**

*“And the Lord God said, “It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.”*

It is not good for man to be alone - Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together.

**8. Gen.3:1 It should be place where we will expect an attack from the Enemy**

*“Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said...”*

Who would have thought that Satan would attack something that God Himself planted? The top priority of the enemy is to destroy fellowship. That is why God hates division more than any other thing else.

**9. Gen.3:8 It should be a place of Divine Communion and the presence of the Lord**

*“And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day”*

The garden that God planted was the place he frequented. Whatever that looked like we can know that it was a delight to know of His immediate presence, *“I sat down in his shade with great delight, And his fruit was sweet to my taste.”* (Song of Solomon)

**10. Gen.3:9 It will be a place of God’s faithfulness**

*“Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, “Where are you?”*

There is a rather unfortunate term that is used these days. We say when we have had an extra-special time in God’s presence, ‘God turned up!’ The fact is that God will always be there because He has promised to be there.

In the garden God was faithful but it was Adam who failed – “If we are faithless, He remains faithful”

**11. Gen.3:8b-9 ;14-19 It should be a place of Prophetic Revelation and Promised Redemption**

*“...And Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, “Where are you?””*

It is not unusual for the presence of the Lord to be followed by His voice. In church life we can call it the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

The NT church was perceived by Paul as being a place where Holy Spirit communication was normal. In other words, it should be expected. The voice of the Lord among His people should always be welcome.

**12. Gen.3:21 It should be a place of Redemption and Covering**

*“Also for Adam and his wife the Lord God made tunics of skin, and clothed them”*

Here was the first sacrifice for sin through the provision of tunics of skin.

Here was the first example of love covering a multitude of sins.

Here was the grace of God.

**13. Gen.3:22-23 It should be a place of Correction, Compassion and Protection**

*“Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever”*

It was the grace of God that placed an angel at the entrance to the garden.

It was the grace of God manifesting the fact that living forever in sin was not an option with God but removing them from the tree of life was an act of love. God had another tree of life in mind.

Love is not emotion – Love is compassion.

Love is not doing what is nice – Love is doing what is right.

Love is not temporary – Love is longsuffering