

Getting Back to Where We Started

Introduction: Getting lost in the woods can make for a long journey in getting back to where you started. This morning I want to make a comparison between the garden of Eden in Genesis 2 and the new Jerusalem in Revelation 21, 22 and notice how it has been and is a long journey to get back to our beginning.

I. The Way Things Were in the Beginning

- A. Genesis 2:7-9, 15-17.
- B. God provided his creation with a secure home.
- C. In that home there was responsibility.
- D. There were also prohibitions and consequences.
- E. There was no knowledge of evil.

II. The Way Things Are in the New Dwelling Place

- A. Revelation 21:1-5; 21:10-14; 21:22-27; and 22:1-5.
- B. It's like Eden in so many ways good ways.
- C. Notice some of the contrasts:
 1. In Eden they didn't know how horrible evil was. In the heavenly Jerusalem people know how horrible evil is.
 2. In Eden they didn't know how deserving of praise God is. In heavenly Jerusalem people know God's greatness and praiseworthiness.
 3. In Eden deception happens by poor human choice. In heavenly Jerusalem deception is destroyed by a patient God.

III. God Has Been Tirelessly Patient to Return Us to Our Beginnings

- A. What things would you list that would disappear if evil was gone?
- B. We have become so accustomed to living in a world of evil that it's difficult to imagine living in a world without evil as being a good thing.
- C. Our patient God nudges us in the direction of an existence of no evil yet we often resist Him.

Conclusion: Ephesians 2:1-10. Life without evil is possible because of God, not us. The privilege of living in the new Jerusalem will mean we, by God's mercy and grace, have come full circle. With patience, God led us back to a world without evil. The difference: (1) this time we know the horror of evil; (2) this time we understand the praiseworthiness of God.