

Chapter Six

The Kingdom Within

If Eden was the place where humanity walked with God...

Then where is Eden now?

For many years I imagined it as something behind us.

A beautiful beginning that humanity tragically forfeited.

Then I imagined it as something waiting beyond death.

A distant destination we would someday inherit.

But what if both assumptions miss something astonishing?

What if Eden has always been pointing toward something greater?

Jesus spoke about the Kingdom more than any other subject.

People expected Him to describe a political revolution.

Others expected heavenly geography.

Instead, He quietly said,

“The Kingdom of God is within you.”

What an astonishing declaration.

Not merely among you.

Not merely near you.

Within you.

Perhaps the Garden was never intended to remain a geographical place.

Perhaps it was always preparing humanity for a deeper dwelling.

The Father’s Presence would no longer be encountered in one sacred location.

His dwelling would become His people.

Could this explain the beautiful progression woven throughout Scripture?

The Garden.

The Tabernacle.

The Temple.

The Christ.

The Church.

The human heart.

Each movement brings the Presence closer.
Each chapter of redemption removes another veil.
Each covenant whispers,
“I desire to dwell with you.”
This has always been the Father’s dream.
Not visitors.
Family.
Not servants.
Children.
Not fearful worshipers standing at a distance.
Beloved sons and daughters learning to live in communion.
I have come to believe that this changes how we understand spiritual life.
For many of us, Christianity became primarily about going somewhere after death.
Jesus seemed far more interested in teaching us how to live before death.
He spoke of seeds.
Birds.
Lilies.
Children.
Vineyards.
Banquets.
Bread.
Light.
Living water.
Everything He touched became an invitation to awaken.
Perhaps eternal life is not merely endless duration.
Could it be that eternal life is participation in the very life of God?
A quality of life.
A communion that begins now.
This does not diminish heaven.

It allows heaven to begin doing what Jesus taught us to pray for.

“Your Kingdom come.

Your will be done.

On earth as it is in heaven.”

Notice where the prayer begins.

Not after death.

Today.

Here.

Now.

Perhaps this is why Presence changes everything.

Presence cannot be manufactured.

It cannot be forced.

It cannot be earned.

Presence is received.

When we become still enough to recognize the Father’s nearness, something within us begins remembering.

Not new information.

Ancient belonging.

The soul recognizes what the mind has forgotten.

This is why silence becomes sacred.

Why forgiveness becomes freedom.

Why compassion heals both the giver and the receiver.

Why grace feels strangely familiar.

We are not learning a foreign language.

We are remembering our native tongue.

Love.

Perhaps this explains why the Apostle Paul could say,

“In Him we live and move and have our being.”

Not someday.

Now.

The Kingdom is not an escape from the world.

It is learning to see the world through the eyes of communion.

The *ordinary* becomes *holy*.

The *stranger* becomes *neighbor*.

The *wounded* become *teachers*.

Meals become *sacraments*.

Tears become *prayers*.

Every *sunrise* becomes another *invitation* to begin again.

Perhaps this is what Eden always intended.

Not that humanity would forever remain in one garden.

But that the whole earth would become filled with people who carry the Presence wherever they go.

Every act of kindness plants another tree.

Every word of mercy waters another garden.

Every life surrendered to Love becomes another place where heaven touches earth.

Could it be...

This is what Jesus meant when He said,

"The Kingdom of God is within you."

And if that is true...

Then perhaps Eden has been growing quietly inside us all along.

I AM still here...

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