

7 | RESPONSIBILITY



Your garden

God values the care of the earth from the beginning of creation. He has entrusted her to humans. God is the owner; you and I are the stewards; we each get a share. God the Father not only gives us a piece of land, but in doing so, He also commissions us to care for it, develop it, multiply it and protect it. Just as identity and DNA go hand in hand, so do authority and responsibility go hand in hand.

In this lesson, we call 'your garden' the area for which you are responsible.

You may lord over 'your garden' and serve with your talents and gifts in 'the garden' of your fellow man, business, school and church. So do not dominate or abuse power, but with all the power and all the possibilities that are within you to take care of 'your garden'.

Tribes

We see that all eleven tribes of Israel were given a piece of land. They were given land to care for, develop it, make it fruitful and protect it.

Moses gave the people important rules of conduct: the ten commandments and many other rules. These included the principle of blessing and cursing: if you live within the rules, blessing comes into your life, if you don't and break the rules, punishment follows and in some instances you are cursed.

Jesus

In the New Testament, we see how Jesus fulfills this law, but He does not follow man-made rules. Jesus made everything very simple. He actually reduced the law to the following: Love your neighbor as I have loved you. We read that Moses gave the law and Jesus came with grace and truth, or as another translation says, 'love and devotion'.

Jesus not only loved Himself in a healthy way, but He was willing to die for His friends and for us. This new commandment was no longer just about yourself, but rather about that other person.

Jesus' **inner I Am** was very confident in who He was, namely, the Son of God. No one could harm Him more than the Father allowed. He was willing to give His life for you so that you could come back to the Father and receive again the identity God intended for you. Jesus' outer I Am was completely in harmony with the Father and His **inner I Am. Thus, God wants to bring your outer I Am into harmony with your inner I Am.**

Two trees

Adam and Eve chose their values for themselves. They ate from the forbidden tree: the tree of knowledge of good and evil. This stood in their garden, the place over which they had been given responsibility.

Their **outer I am** was driven by that knowledge after eating. You saw problems arising; the competition between Cain or Abel and how, through jealousy, death eventually made its appearance. If you allow in 'your garden' the knowledge of good and evil, death will follow.

"Whatever you do in your life, the outcome of the work in your garden is determined by the choice you make. Which tree do you eat from?"

Jesus chose to eat from the tree of life. Jesus' **inner I Am** was fed exclusively by the Father who spoke to Jesus' Spirit through His Spirit. This created a healthy **inner I Am** focused on the nature of God the Father. His nature is giving, not taking.

Jesus' garden is the Kingdom of God within which He has authority. Where He is recognized as King comes blessing and multiplication. When He is your King, there is a union with His words. This brings life to the garden He entrusts to you. There comes peace that begins deep in the inner I am. From this comes fruit. This fruit will also multiply itself in your garden.

EXERCISE:

-Describe the areas over which you have been given responsibility by God.

In which areas have you used that responsibility well? Describe results of the areas where you have taken responsibility.

-What areas over which you have authority have you not taken proper responsibility?

Describe the consequences of your inaction or failure to take responsibility.

-Take time to examine your life to find out if in your life you are "eating" from the tree of knowledge of good and evil or eating from the tree of life. How do you see that? In what ways do you see fruit in your life from one tree or the other? Are there parts where you would like to see other fruit? Ask God's forgiveness about this and ask Him for a strategy to do things differently.



PRINCIPLE 7

God gives you authority, but also the responsibility to use that authority to bring others to spiritual maturity, and to grow and multiply your garden.

