

FLORENCE BOULEVARD CHURCH OF CHRIST

Elders

Steve Clark
Ken Vanhorn
Mark Willingham
Jake VanDyke

Deacons

Greg Allen
Justin Beckman
Kevin Clemons
Jeffrey Cox
Mike Davidson
Kyle Dickson
Gregg Elrod
Nate Fulmer
AJ Gooch
Jamey Medley
Ronnie Putnam
Dave Schmidt
Mark Vanhorn
Don Williams

Minister

Austin Johnson

Youth Minister
John Birdwell

Secretary Sonya Cox

Fathers, "Keep the Garden"

Brant Hansen, an author, radio host, and podcaster said, "We men are at our best when we are keepers of the garden. 'This means we are protectors and defenders and cultivators.' We are at our best when we champion the weak and vulnerable. We are at our best when we use whatever strength we have to safeguard the innocent and provide a place for people to thrive. This is the job Adam was given: keeper of the garden." I think Hansen is on to something.

God's job description for Adam in the garden was simple—work the ground and keep it. Genesis 2:15 says, "God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it." To understand God's instruction to Adam, let's examine in depth what He said. "Work" is from the Hebrew abad meaning to work, cultivate, or serve. Within this word is the literal understanding of working such as tilling the ground for produce and productivity of plant life (Genesis 2:5, 15; 3:23; 4:2, 12). It could also mean working the ground to serve a greater purpose—similar to a servant serving the greater purpose of their superior (Genesis 14:4; 15:13, 14; 25:23; 27:29; 27:40; 29:15, 20, 25, 27, 30; 30:26, 29; 31:6 41; 49:15). "Keep" comes from the Hebrew shamar meaning to keep, watch, or preserve. In Genesis we see the meaning of shepherding over a literal flock, people group, and food store (Genesis 2:15; 4:9; 30:31; 41:35), guarding for protection like the cherubim guarding Eden and God protecting Jacob, "keeping the way of the Lord" (18:19; 26:5), and finally "watch out for" in reference to keeping something from doing something they shouldn't (Genesis 24:6; 31:24, 29). So what does all this mean?

In the culture of the Scriptures, the vast majority of men were keepers of a garden. If not a literal garden, then they were keepers of something that needed to be kept; i.e. herds of animals, plants, homes, communities of people, children, etc. Almost ingrained into the minds of men was the concept of "keeping." When God used this word to describe Adam's work, He established a model of Biblical manhood and fatherhood that needs to stand the test of time. Since fathers were cultural "keepers" in Bible times, it's possible that they were inherently better fathers than those of us who have grown up in more modern times. The core of their nature was sacrificial work, protection, and preservation. These are God's core principles for fatherhood.

In 21st century America, boys grow up playing video games, chasing girls, and being idolized for their youth and vitality. So it's possible that the concepts of recreation, pleasure, and immaturity have been ingrained into their minds from a young age. How does this showcase itself in fathers of today? Fathers are viewed by our culture as jokesters and cut-ups that really don't do much more than break the ice in the room as the mother takes control in serious times. Overall, if the father doesn't find pleasure in some area of parenting then he avoids it as best he can. Is this fatherhood as God designed it?

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2502 FLORENCE BOULEVARD

www.florenceblvd.org

PHONE (256) 766-3617 email: office@florenceblvd.org FAX (256) 766-3546

Worship: Sunday 9:00 am & 5:00 pm; Bible Class 10:15 am

Wednesday: 6:30 pm

FOR THE RECORD

Sunday AM: 287 / On Line Views: 97 Sunday School: 230 / On Line Views: 104 Sunday PM: 236 / On Line Views: 111 Wednesday: 901 / On Line Views: 77

Budget: \$13,300 Contribution: \$15,985

JUNE MISSIONARY OF THE MONTH

Wayne Barrier (Burma)
PO Box 93
Cloverdale, AL 35633

Big thanks to everyone who had a hand in making VBS 2022 a success! Walking with Children through the adventures with God would not have been possible without people planning, organizing, decorating, greeting, leading, teaching, or supporting. So thank you!

Will these concepts and mentalities "keep the garden" alive and thriving? The answer is no!

Fathers, hear me out. Better yet, hear God today. When God placed the first man in the perfect place and gave a job description for how he was to operate, it was perfect. I am here to suggest that we can extrapolate principle from God's perfect job description to Adam in Eden for our fathering today. So, men, "Keep the Garden!" Commit yourselves to watch over your flock (Genesis 2:15; 30:31), not as some brooding hand of discipline, but as a guard would protect a prized piece of valuable the property (Genesis 3;24; 28:15, 20). Preserve the teachings of the Lord in your own life so you can pass them on to your children (Genesis 18:19). Give cautionary guidance to those whom you watch over as their future depends on it (Genesis 24:6; 31:24, 29). Commit yourselves to this work full-time (Genesis 2:15), and in doing so, you will honor the ultimate Father in heaven (Genesis 14:4; 15:13, 14; 25:23; 27:29; 27:40; 29:15 20 25 27 30 30:26 29 31:6 41; 49:15).

Austin Johnson

THANK YOU

We thank the sweet lady and her handsome sidekick for the delivery of the sweet cookies. We love and appreciate our church family and miss everyone so much.

Tommy & Martha Smith

WEDNESDAY NIGHT SUMMER SERIES:

June 22nd: Chris Miller (Hatton)

The Bible & The Silence of the Scriptures; "There Is Nothing In The Bible About (this)!"

June 29th: Rodney Livingston (Leoma)

The Oneness of The Church Jesus Built;

"Isn't One Church Just As Good As Another?"

UPCOMING EVENTS

Men's Breakfast, this Tuesday, 6:30am.

4th Week & 5th Week at Maywood. Register online.

Church Wide Retreat, September 30th-October 2nd

Maywood Christian Camp. Cost is \$18 per person per night.

There are Camper/RV hookups on site.

Please sign the sign-up sheet on table in the foyer.

52 WEEK BIBLE READING PLAN

Week 24

Sunday (Epistles) Ephesians 1-3

Monday (The Law) Lev. 1-3

Tuesday (History) 1 Kings 10-13

Wednesday (Psalms) Psalm 69-71

Thursday (Poetry) Proverbs 4

Friday (Prophecy) Ezekial 1-6

Saturday (Gospels) Luke 11-12