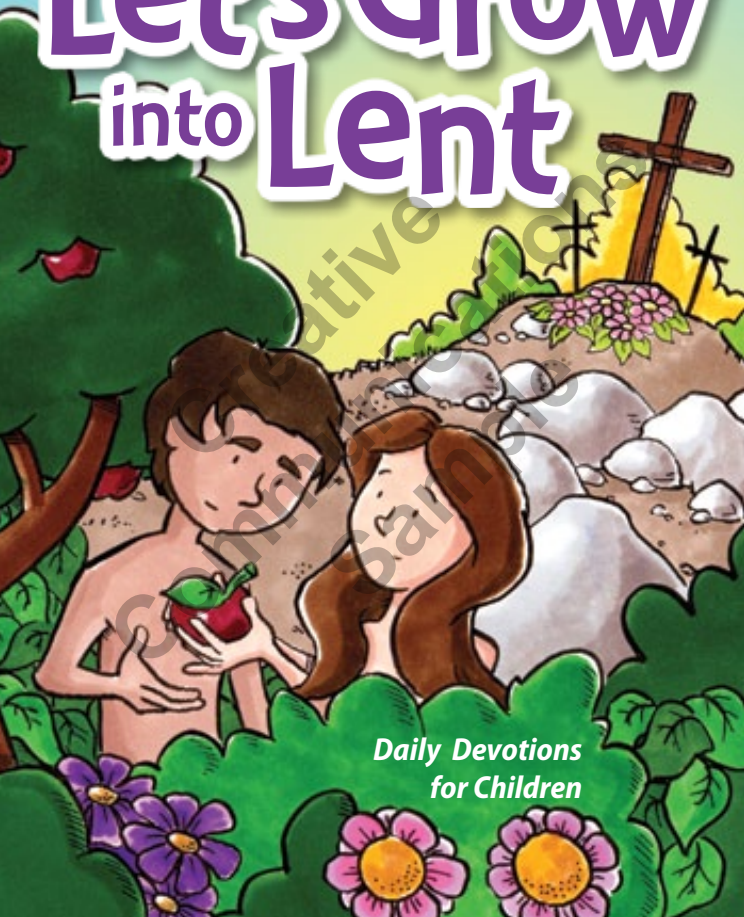


Let's Grow into Lent



*Daily Devotions
for Children*

God Planted a Garden

Ash Wednesday • Genesis 2:4-8

What an awesome time to be alive! At the beginning of Creation, God looked at the bare earth. He saw what it would become. He was like a gardener who sees freshly tilled dirt and can picture a beautiful flower garden, an apple orchard, or a plot of vegetables.

A mist rose up from the land to water the garden. It was fresh and new. You can imagine God picturing and planning where the trees would go, seeing each bush and vine—even the tiniest blossoms.

Then, when the garden was planted, he made sure Adam and Eve were there. They would take care of the garden and everything in it, plants and all living creatures. And, in turn, the plants and creatures would be a blessing for the people.

It was truly good.

Creator God, thank you for making a perfect place for us.



Created for Work

Thursday • Genesis 2:9-15

God put people in the Garden of Eden to work it and keep it.

We are created for work. Even when the Garden of Eden was new and perfect in every way, Adam and Eve had work to do. They were supposed to care for the garden in such a way that all people and animals and plants in the future, would be able to live in it. That's a huge responsibility.

Today, God blesses others through our work. And, he blesses us. We don't have Eden any more. We do have the earth and all the people, animals, and plants in it. Things have changed, to be sure, but God still wants us to work and not to be lazy.

Whether we are farmers who work in the soil, or students who work in books, God has put us in a certain place at a certain time. We do God's will when we work for him by working with others.

Dear God, thank you for making ways for me to serve you through work.



Trouble in the Garden

Friday • Genesis 3:1-6



“Did God actually say that?”

Sometimes when we hear someone talk about God or what the Bible says, we might ask that question.

“Did God actually say that?”

It’s okay to ask questions. We have the answer book, the Bible! So, when we wonder, we can ask and then go find the answer.

When the devil asked Eve, in the Garden of Eden, he was testing her and trying to get her to doubt God. She could have asked God himself, because they took walks together in the garden. But, she didn’t. She trusted the devil.

Sometimes the devil tests us. How can we pass that test? By looking up the answer! It’s an open book test. We don’t have to trust our memory or do what seems good enough. We can open the Bible and find out.

Heavenly Father, help me trust you more by looking to you for the answers to my questions.

Dust to Dust

Saturday • Genesis 3:17-19

When a gardener sees signs of spring, she can't wait to get into her garden. As soon as the soil is warm enough, she goes outside and looks it over. She sees a lot of plain old dirt from the previous year. Then, when it's the right time, she tills the garden to prepare it for new plants and seeds. The new garden is planned and carefully planted. Summer brings plants, flowers, weeds, and a bountiful garden. A few months later, fall winds blow and the plants start to die. The gardener watches them wilt and rot. Then she cleans up the garden, so it looks like it did in the spring: a bunch of dirt.

When God created Eden, it was perfect. Sin came, like weeds, and messed up that garden and all of Creation. When Jesus returns, he promises to take us back to paradise, returning to a perfect garden in heaven.

God in heaven, I look forward to seeing what a perfect world is really like, in heaven.



Too Many Weeds

First Sunday in Lent • Genesis 6:12-18

A gardener who wants to turn a very weedy patch into a nice garden has some work to do. There might be pests like harmful insects or rodents who live there. Some of the plants might even carry disease that would be bad for his future garden. Something drastic needs to be done.

He can cut brush, move stones, and pull weeds by hand. He may have to use a sharp, strong shovel to turn over grass and sod. If there are many dead plants and weeds, he may burn the garden carefully.

After all that is done, he can start again. The soil may need some extra care and nutrients, but he will help it produce something good again. That's what God did when he flooded the earth and made a fresh start for his promised people.

Dear God, you are more powerful than the worst sins. Thank you for saving us.



A Dove and a Branch

Monday • Genesis 8:6-11

One of the longest seasons for a gardener is winter. In states where they get lots of cold and snow, the winter can feel very long. Record-breaking winters leave the gardener staring out his window just like Noah, looking for a sign of life.



“Will spring ever come?” the gardener sighs.

Noah and his family must have been relieved when the dove came back carrying an olive leaf. That silvery green leaf meant that the waters were going down. It would be a while before they could leave the ark, but this was a good sign. It showed that God had new life for his people.

Many years later, Jesus went to a garden with olive trees. He was surrounded by those silvery leaves as he prayed. He prayed about the next day, when he would die for his people, to give them new life forever.

Dear Jesus, thank you for the promise of new life through your sacrifice.

Is This the Gardener?

Easter Sunday • John 20:11-18

Mary thought he was the gardener. That's an understandable mistake. After all, she had seen Jesus' body placed in the ground. But like a spring flower shooting to life from a buried seed, Jesus had risen to life once more.



Mary was seeing the Gardener after all. She truly saw our risen Savior; he plants the seed of everlasting life in each one of us.

We have learned that God is a gardener in so many ways, but especially because he plants that seed of faith in each of us. He nurtures us and weeds around us. He feeds and nourishes us through his Word. He shines his love into our lives. A plant receives everything it needs from our gardener God. We do, too.

Jesus lives! He brings new life to me.

*Help me keep growing for
you, Jesus. Hallelujah!*



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