

## Four Rivers of Garden of Grace By Larry Colbert

“The Garden of Grace”

[Sunday, July 8, 2012, Garden of Grace, OKC]

A place, A people, A purpose, A time

“It all began in the Garden,” said the Holy Spirit on Sunday, June 10, 2012, during Garden of Grace Community COGIC’s service.

One of the first terms He used in reference to Garden of Grace was “Diamond in the rough,” which is someone (or something) that has hidden exceptional characteristics and/or future potential, but currently lacks the final touches that would make them (or it) truly stand out from the crowd—to become the beacon of light. (Gen 2:10–14) A Place—Where something happens.

□ God placed Garden of Grace in this specific place.

—A garden is a designated place of fruitfulness, the place of growth, the place of life.

—Life can change without growing, but life doesn’t grow without changing

—God showed Abraham a specific geographic place that was his. Abraham did not choose his own place.

—God chooses a place. In the promised land, each family inherited a specific place. In Nehemiah's time, each family re-building the wall re-built a specific place.

—Each of us was saved in a specific place, became members of a specific church, or several, etc.

—Garden of Grace Community COGIC is strategically placed in a high traffic position that reaches all across OKC

—A well-placed light will attract the attention of those in need, those God has been calling to a place of hope and refuge

—Garden of Grace can be that beacon of light.

—Enemies attack the garden to destroy the seed, bind the seed, hamper the growth, injure the fruit

—From without: weeds, insects, animals, drought, other people

—From within: willfulness/disobedience, despite, slothfulness

A People—The Recipients Of God's Love. □ God has placed in Garden of Grace a specific people.

—God created the garden for Adam; all of His creation was to prepare a home for Adam

—God placed Adam in the garden to keep it; God's destiny for Adam was in the garden.

—God visited Adam, in the cool of the evening, in the garden

—The garden was a place of relationship and communion with God

—The garden was a place where God could be found

—God is a preparer. He prepares a place for a prepared people: i.e., Abraham's inheritance, Joseph in Egypt (Noah, Abraham, Rahab, David, Ruth, Jesus).

The place may be there waiting for your arrival.

Thou preparst a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: (Ps. 23:5)

—As Abraham and Isaac went up one side of the mountain, a ram was being prepared on the other side. When Israel gathered on one side of the Jordan, God had opened Rahab's heart in Jericho. Where was Elder Banks when Garden of Grace was birth? A person intersects with a place. As we obediently move by the Holy Spirit's direction, He moves us to our next place of destiny.

—When I recommitted my life in 1983, the Holy Spirit immediately began to show me what sin was. He placed me in a church, put me in position to teach His word (again).

—Enemies attack the garden

—There are weeds, tares, in the kingdom. People, seemingly well meaning, enter with good ideas, but are used to attack what God has given you or intends to give you.

A Purpose—Why God placed the Garden of Grace here.

□ Grace grows out of the Garden of Grace. And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.

The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; And the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx stone. And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia. And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates.—

Genesis 2:10–14—One river flowed into Garden of Grace Community COGIC, four rivers flowed out.

Characteristics of the four rivers

1. Increase, overflowing
2. Gold indicates treasure
3. Bursting forth from its foundations
4. Active, vehement, rapid
5. Fruitfulness; sweet water—River

There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High.

—Psalm 46:4 Stream as defined in Strongs: a small river, it is said properly to signify a channel, a watercourse, so called from the idea of dividing; the root also means flowing, fluctuating, bubbling up; the river of God watering the city with the blessing of God.

The word here means to flow and is used of a sweet odor pervading the air; whatever flows down plentifully. Streams [1.24.12, Prayer Journal entry]: cyber, radio, tv, natural (road); traffic streams, make their own way, carve out a path, can wear away rock, change the landscape, revive dormant seed, produce life that follows it's path like a regiment of guards Streams [3.12.12, Prayer Journal entry]: can be created, nurtured, developed, discovered, improved, widened, lengthened, connected —Christ was buried in a garden; a seed planted, resurrected and fruitful; Jesus died, was resurrected, produced exponentially. One seed is planted; one plant grows; many fruit is produced; each fruit produces seeds exponentially.

The garden produces naturally supernaturally.

—Grace is natural in the garden. In the OT grace is defined as charm, favour, grace, elegance, acceptance. In the NT grace is good will, loving-kindness, favour.—God's grace flows into Garden of Grace. "This river may be an emblem of the everlasting love of God, that pure river of water of life, which springs from the throne of God, and of the Lamb, from divine sovereignty, and not from the faith, love, and obedience of man; that river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God, and which water the garden, the church, revive its plants, and make it fruitful and delightful; the four heads or branches of which are eternal election of God, particular redemption by Christ, regeneration and sanctification by the Spirit, and eternal life and happiness, as the free gift of God through Christ"; see Psalm 46:4. [Gill's]—A Garden Grows.



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A Time—A Beacon Of Grace Flowing From Garden Of Grace

□ “Diamond in the rough.” The phrase is metaphorical and relates to the fact that naturally occurring diamonds are quite ordinary at first glance, and that their true beauty as jewels is only realized through the cutting and polishing process.

One Grace river flowed into Garden of Grace, four Grace rivers flowed out of Garden of Grace.

1. Redemption by Christ
2. Regeneration—keeps, strengthens,
3. Sanctification by the Spirit—increases them in Christian faith, knowledge, affection
4. Eternal life and happiness—exercise Christian virtues