

REFLECTIONS

August 17, 2008

**"I tell you the truth, today you will be with me
in paradise."**

Luke 23:43

In Search of Paradise

Let's set the scene. The Garden was the most perfect place to live that the world has ever known. God made it just for man. Set in the backdrop of a deep blue sky, breathtaking sunrises, elegant sunsets, and heavenly evening stars, the Garden was decorated with majestic mountains, still blue waters, and an array of multicolored flowers amidst green groundcover that grew toward the heavens. Trees abounded with fruit, ripe for the picking. The weather was perfect—not too hot, not too cold. And though it never rained, streams came up from the ground and kept the Garden watered and green.¹

Adam lived in the Garden with his beautiful God given bride. The only responsibility for them was to care for the Garden and to rule over its inhabitants. They knew no pain. They had never experienced it—no discomfort of any kind. Now, isn't that the place we are looking for every day—a place where trouble is unknown, beauty is breathtaking, and peace is secure. The Garden of Eden was blessed with extraordinary happiness, delight, and bliss. Now that sounds like paradise to me.

Disobedience stripped mankind of the Garden and we have been in search of paradise ever since. It's the search for paradise when game hunters take long weekends into remote countryside, or fishermen wade with fly rods in hand into rushing streams, or golfers stroll the freshly mown fairways, or gardeners work the soil for plants to grow abundantly. We are in search of paradise when we walk the beaches and listen to the winds blow. We are in search of paradise when we sit in stillness to hear the patter of a gentle rain.

In his humanity, Jesus sought the peace of paradise too—a place for him to draw near to his Father as He faced the trials of this world. Gethsemane was the closest He could find. But it was not paradise.

The pursuit of paradise really comes down to just one thing; and it's really not so hard to find. Even the thief on the cross found it when he accepted Jesus for who He is. That's really all there is to it.

When we accept Christ into our lives, earthly troubles will not end. But when our lives are through here, we are assured that paradise will be waiting.

"You are the light of the world,"

Richard +

www.reflectingthesavior.org.

¹ Genesis 2:5-6