

Message Five

The Secret of Living the Christian Life to Be an Overcomer— Taking the Way of Eating and Enjoying Christ as the Tree of Life

Scripture Reading: Gen. 2:9; Rev. 2:7; John 6:57, 63; Jer. 15:16; Psa. 119:15; Ezek. 3:1-4

- I. The secret of living the Christian life to be an overcomer is for us to take the way of eating and enjoying Christ as the tree of life; God does not intend for us to do anything for Him; His only desire is to give Himself to us as food for our enjoyment; only those who take the way of enjoying Christ as the tree of life will see their life and work remaining in the New Jerusalem—Gen. 2:9; Rev. 2:7.**
- II. We can eat the Lord Jesus as our spiritual food for our enjoyment, receiving Him as the Spirit who gives life through eating His words of spirit and life by means of all prayer and by musing upon His words—John 6:57, 63; Jer. 15:16 and footnote; Eph. 6:17-18; Psa. 119:15 and footnote; Matt. 4:4; Psa. 119:103:**
 - A. When we eat the Lord Jesus by eating His words of spirit and life, we live *because of* Him (John 6:57, 63); we live not *by* Christ but *because of* Christ as our energizing element and supplying factor; we live Christ in His resurrection, and we live Christ by eating Him (Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:19-21a).
 - B. As we eat the Lord Jesus by eating His words, we need to have proper spiritual digestion—Ezek. 3:1-4; Jer. 15:16; Rev. 10:9-10:
 1. If we have good digestion, there will be a thoroughfare for the food to get into every part of our inward being; by eating we have digesting, by digesting we have assimilation, and by assimilation we get the practical nourishment of the riches of Christ into our being—Eph. 3:8, 16-17a.
 2. Indigestion means that there is no way for the Lord as the spiritual food to get through into our inward parts; when there is no free course for the food to get into our inward parts, we will have indigestion—Heb. 3:12, 15; 4:2.
 3. We need to keep our whole being, with all our inward parts, open to the Lord so that the spiritual food will have a thoroughfare within us; if we do this, we will have proper digestion and assimilation, we will absorb Christ as spiritual nourishment, and Christ will become our constituent for the expression of God—Eph. 3:16-17a; Col. 3:4, 10-11.
- III. We can eat Him by doing the will of the Father to satisfy the hungry and thirsty ones and by glorifying the Father on earth in living the life of a God-man for the glory of the processed Triune God—Matt. 24:45-47; Phil. 1:19-21a:**
 - A. “I have food to eat that you do not know about...My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work”—John 4:32, 34.
 - B. “I have glorified You on earth, finishing the work which You have given Me to do” (John 17:4); to glorify God is to express God in all things (cf. Col. 1:9-11).
 - C. In His human living the Lord ate butter (the richest grace) and honey (the sweetest love), which gave Him the power to always choose the Father’s will—Isa. 7:14-15, ASV 1901.
 - D. We are those who are learning Christ as “the reality is in Jesus”; *the reality is in Jesus* refers to the actual condition of the life of the Lord Jesus as recorded in the four Gospels, a life in which He glorified the Father on earth to set up a pattern for His believers—Eph. 4:20-21:
 1. Jesus lived a life in which He did everything in God, with God, and for God in order to glorify God; God was in His living, and He was one with God; in resurrection He became the life-giving Spirit so that He might enter into us to be our life; we learn from Him (Matt. 11:29) according to His example, not by our natural life but by Him as our life in resurrection (Col. 3:4; 1 Pet. 2:21).

2. The Lord Jesus never did anything out of Himself (John 5:19); He did not do His own work (4:34; 17:4), He did not speak His own word (14:10, 24), He did not do His own will (5:30), and He did not seek His own glory (7:18).
 3. To learn Christ is simply to be molded into the pattern of Christ, that is, to be conformed to the image of Christ; He Himself as the indwelling Spirit, the law of the Spirit of life, with all the riches of His life, reproduces Himself in us—Rom. 8:2, 28-29.
- E. Isaiah 43:7 says, “Everyone who is called by My name, / Whom I have created, formed, and even made for My glory”; the highest service we can render to God is to express His glory—2 Cor. 3:18; Rom. 9:23.
- F. First Corinthians 6:20 says, “You have been bought with a price. So then glorify God in your body”; this is to allow God, who dwells in us (1 John 4:13), to occupy and saturate our body and express Himself through our body as His temple (1 Cor. 6:19); 1 Corinthians 10:31 says, “Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”

IV. We can eat Him by contacting the proper people—Lev. 11:1-3, 9, 13, 21:

- A. To eat is to contact things outside of us and to receive them into us, with the result that they eventually become our inner constitution; in Leviticus 11 all the animals signify different kinds of people, and eating signifies our contacting of people (Acts 10:9b-14, 27-29); for God’s people to live a holy life as required by the holy God, they must be careful about the kind of people they contact (Lev. 11:46-47; 1 Cor. 15:33; 2 Cor. 6:14-18; 2 Tim. 2:22).
- B. Animals that divide the hoof and chew the cud (Lev. 11:3; cf. vv. 4-8, 26-28) signify persons who have discernment in their activities (Phil. 1:9-10) and who receive the word of God with much reconsideration (Psa. 119:15).
- C. Aquatic animals that have fins and scales signify persons who can move and act freely in the world and at the same time resist its influence (fins helping fish to move, to act, in water according to their wishes, and scales protecting and keeping those fish that live in the sea from being salted)—Lev. 11:9.
- D. Birds that have wings for flying and that eat seeds of life as their food supply signify persons who can live and move in a life that is away from and above the world and who take things of life as their life supply—v. 13.
- E. Insects that have wings and have legs above their feet for leaping on the ground signify persons who can live and move in a life that is above the world and who can keep themselves from the world—vv. 21-22.

V. We can eat Him by feasting on Him in the meetings on the ground of oneness:

- A. The children of Israel could enjoy the produce of the good land in two ways: the common, private way was to enjoy it as a common portion at any time, in any place, and with anyone (Deut. 12:15); the special, corporate way was to enjoy the top portion, the firstfruits and the firstlings, with all the Israelites at the appointed feasts and in the unique place chosen by God (vv. 5-7, 17-18).
- B. Likewise, the enjoyment of Christ by the New Testament believers is of two aspects: the common, private aspect of enjoying Christ at any time and at any place, and the special, corporate aspect of enjoying the top portion of Christ in the meetings of the proper church life on the unique ground of oneness, the place chosen by God.

VI. God’s intention for man was to give Himself as the tree of life to man for him to enjoy; to see that God wants us to enjoy Him and that He does not want us to do anything for Him is to see that the Christian life is a matter of enjoying Christ as the tree of life; if our concept is changed so that we see these two points, it will be easy for us to live a life of enjoying God.