

# THE VISION OF THE LORD'S RECOVERY AND ITS APPLICATION

## Message Three

(Thursday—Afternoon Session)

### The Vision of the Tree of Life and the Way of Life

Scripture Reading: Gen. 2:9; Rev. 2:7; 22:14; John 1:4; 14:6a; 10:10b; 6:35, 57, 63

#### **I. In Genesis 2 we see two choices before man—the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil:**

- A. The two trees show that in this universe there are two wills, two sources, and two possibilities for man to choose with his free will—cf. Deut. 30:19-20.
- B. The tree of life signifies the Triune God embodied in Christ as life to man in the form of food—Gen. 2:9; Rev. 2:7; John 1:4; 14:6a; 10:10b; 6:35, 57, 63:
  - 1. The tree of life, the tree of God, the God-tree, is the center of the universe.
  - 2. The Old Testament begins with the tree of life (Gen. 2:9), and the New Testament ends with the tree of life (Rev. 22:2, 14); thus, the thought of God being man's life runs through the entire divine revelation.
  - 3. God's placing man in front of the tree of life indicates that God wanted man to receive Him as man's life by eating Him organically and assimilating Him metabolically, that God might become the very constituent of man's being—John 1:4; 14:6a; 10:10b; 6:35, 57, 63.
- C. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil signifies Satan as the source of death to man—Heb. 2:14:
  - 1. It also signifies all things apart from God, for anything that is not God Himself, including good things and even scriptural things and religious things, can be utilized by Satan, the subtle one, to bring death to man—John 5:39-40; 2 Cor. 3:6b.
  - 2. Good and evil are not signified by two trees but by one tree, the second tree; thus, seeking good other than God belongs to Satan.
  - 3. The genuine good is God Himself; hence, gaining God equals gaining the genuine good—Matt. 19:17a; Mark 10:17-18; Psa. 16:2.
- D. The tree of life causes man to be dependent on God (John 15:5), but the tree of knowledge causes man to rebel against God and be independent from Him (cf. Gen. 3:5):
  - 1. Eating indicates dependence; that God is our food, signified by the tree of life, means that we must depend on God continually.
  - 2. The tree of knowledge indicates independence; in the eyes of God, man's first sin and the greatest sin is independence.
- E. The two trees issue in two lines, two ways—the way of life and the way of death—that run through the entire Bible and end in the book of Revelation:
  - 1. Death begins with the tree of knowledge (Gen. 2:17) and ends with the lake of fire (Rev. 20:10, 14).
  - 2. Life begins with the tree of life and ends in the New Jerusalem, the city of the water of life—22:1-2.

#### **II. We must stay on the way of life, the line of life, in the maintenance of life by enjoying Christ as the tree of life in the flow of life for God's**

**building in life by our growth in life—John 10:10b; Rev. 22:1-2; Eph. 4:16; 2:21-22:**

- A. We stay on the way of life by living and serving according to the principle of life, not according to the principle of right and wrong:
  - 1. We must live and act according to the inner sense of life in our spirit, the leading of life, not according to right and wrong—Rom. 8:6; 2 Cor. 2:13.
  - 2. The standard for Christian living is the indwelling Christ within us; it is not a question of what is right or wrong but of whether or not the divine life within us agrees with something—Matt. 17:3, 5, 8; cf. Mal. 2:15-16.
- B. We stay on the way of life by loving the Lord to the uttermost, drawing others to run after Him—Mark 12:30; S. S. 1:4a:
  - 1. To enjoy Christ as the tree of life, we must tell Him all the time, “Lord Jesus, I love You”; if we have a burning love toward the Lord Jesus, giving Him the first place in all things, we will enjoy all that He is—Rev. 2:4-5, 7.
  - 2. To enjoy Christ as the tree of life, we must betroth people to Him, bringing them into the genuine appreciation, love, and enjoyment of the precious person of the Lord Jesus—2 Cor. 11:2-3.
- C. We stay on the way of life by eating Jesus through pray-reading the word and ministering the word as the Spirit into others by the exercise of our spirit—John 6:57, 63; Jer. 15:16; Matt. 4:4; 24:45; 1 Cor. 2:4-5, 13:
  - 1. We must enjoy Him in the Word early in the morning to have a new start of each day and receive His word with much and careful consideration—Psa. 119:15, 147-148; cf. Lev. 11:3.
  - 2. We must speak Christ to all kinds of people daily in season and out of season (Acts 5:42; 8:4; 2 Tim. 4:2) and desperately endeavor to build up a habit of speaking in any meeting (1 Cor. 14:26, 4-5, 12, 31).
- D. We stay on the way of life by enjoying the Triune God as the law of the Spirit of life with its divine capacity—Rom. 8:2; Jer. 32:39:
  - 1. In the garden of Eden with the two trees, we see life, good, and evil; we are a miniature garden of Eden with the law of the Spirit of life in our spirit, the law of good in our natural, independent mind, and the law of evil in our flesh—Rom. 7:23; 8:2, 16.
  - 2. We must “switch on” the law of the Spirit of life by walking according to the spirit and setting our mind on the spirit for the dispensing of the Triune God as life to our tripartite being—vv. 2, 4, 6, 10-11.
- E. We stay on the way of life by abiding in Christ as the tree of life in the flow of life under His headship and according to His divine nature—Rev. 22:1-2:
  - 1. Since Christ is a vine tree and is also life, He is the tree of life, and we have been grafted into Him to be His branches—John 15:1, 5; 14:6a.
  - 2. We must abide in Him, taking Him as our dwelling place and allowing Him to grow in us by our dealing with the Lord to be poor in spirit and pure in heart—John 15:5; Psa. 90:1; Matt. 5:3, 8; 1 John 1:7, 9.
- F. We stay on the way of life by being careful about the people whom we contact and being separated unto God from every kind of spiritual death—wild death, mild death, and subtle death—Lev. 5:2; 11:1-30; Num. 6:6-7.

G. We stay on the way of life by living in resurrection, in the reality of the church as the Body of Christ, signified by the golden lampstand, a tree of resurrection life—Eph. 1:22-23; Exo. 25:31-40; Rev. 1:11-12.