

**Outline of
the Messages for the Full-time Training
in the Spring Term of 2013**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
THE TRIUNE GOD TO BE LIFE TO THE TRIPARTITE MAN**

Message Three

The Vision and Experience of the Tree of Life

Scripture Reading: Gen. 2:9, 16-17; John 1:4; 15:1, 4-5; Rev. 22:1-2, 14

- I. According to the divine revelation in the Scriptures, there are two trees, two sources, two ways, two principles, and two consummations:**
- A. The tree of life signifies the Triune God as life to man in man's relationship with Him; the tree of the knowledge of good and evil signifies Satan, the devil, the evil one, as death to man in man's fall before God—Gen. 2:9, 17; Psa. 36:9a.
 - B. The tree of life is the source of men who seek God as life for their supply and enjoyment; the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is the source of men who follow Satan as their poison unto death and eternal perdition—John 1:4; 8:44; 15:1.
 - C. The first way is the way of life, the constricted way, for men to seek God, to gain God, and to enjoy God in His eternal life as the supply; the second way is the way of death and of good and evil, the broad way, for men to follow Satan to be his children—Matt. 7:13-14; Acts 9:2; 1 John 3:10a.
 - D. The first principle is the principle of life—the principle of dependence on God; the second principle is the principle of death and of good and evil—the principle of independence from God—Gen. 4:3-4; Jer. 17:5-7; John 15:5.
 - E. The two consummations are the final outcome of the two trees, the two sources, the two ways, and the two principles:
 - 1. The consummation of God's way of life is a city of water of life, the New Jerusalem—Rev. 21:2, 9-11; 22:1-2.
 - 2. The consummation of the way of death and of good and evil is a lake of fire—19:20; 20:10, 14-15.
- II. We need a vision to see that the Bible presents to us a picture of God in Christ as the tree of life to be our food—Gen. 2:9; Rev. 22:14:**
- A. The tree of life signifies the Triune God in Christ to dispense Himself into His chosen people as life in the form of food—Gen. 2:9.
 - B. In the Bible the tree of life always signifies Christ as the embodiment of all the riches of God for our food—Col. 2:9; Gen. 2:9; Rev. 22:2, 14, 19.
 - C. In Revelation 2:7 the tree of life signifies the crucified and resurrected Christ, who today is in the church, the consummation of which will be the New Jerusalem, in which the crucified and resurrected Christ will be the tree of life for the nourishment of all God's redeemed people for eternity—1 Pet. 2:24; John 11:25; Rev. 22:2, 14.
 - D. The tree of life is the center of the universe—Gen. 2:9; Rev. 22:1-2:
 - 1. According to the purpose of God, the earth is the center of the universe, the garden of Eden is the center of the earth, and the tree of life is the center of the garden of Eden; hence, the universe is centered on the tree of life.

2. Nothing is more central and crucial to both God and man than the tree of life—Gen. 3:22; Rev. 22:14.
- E. The Gospel of John reveals that Christ is the fulfillment of the figure of the tree of life; if we put together John 1:4 and 15:5, we will realize that Christ, who Himself is life and also a vine tree, is the tree of life.
- F. The enjoyment of the tree of life will be the eternal portion of all God's redeemed; the tree of life fulfills for eternity what God intended for man from the beginning—Gen. 1:26; 2:9; Rev. 22:1-2.

III. The believers in Christ have access to the tree of life—v. 14:

- A. As a fallen man, Adam was separated from the life of God and was not permitted to contact God as the tree of life—Gen. 3:1-6, 11-13, 22-24.
- B. Through the redemption of Christ, the way by which man could touch the tree of life, which is God Himself in Christ as life to man, has been opened again—Heb. 10:19-20; Rev. 22:14:
 1. Through Christ's redemption, which fulfilled all the requirements of God's glory, holiness, and righteousness, the way to the tree of life was opened again to the believers—Gen. 3:22-24; Heb. 10:19-20.
 2. Those who wash their robes in the redeeming blood of Christ have the right to enjoy the tree of life as their eternal portion in the holy city, the Paradise of God, in eternity—Rev. 22:14.

IV. In God's economy we are not only the eaters of the tree of life, enjoying the continually fresh fruits; we are also parts, branches, of this tree, abiding in Christ, the tree of life, to enjoy the life-juice—v. 2; John 15:5:

- A. The Bible reveals that the relationship God desires to have with man is that He and man become one—1 Cor. 6:17:
 1. God desires that the divine life and the human life be joined to become one life—1 John 5:11-12; 1 Cor. 1:30; 6:17.
 2. This oneness is an organic union, a union in life—a grafted life—John 15:4-5; 1 Cor. 6:17.
- B. Christ as the tree of life is the embodiment of God as life to us, and we are united to Him organically—Col. 2:9; John 15:1, 4-5; 1 Cor. 6:17:
 1. We not only eat Christ as the tree of life; we are united to Him—v. 17.
 2. The tree of life is for the dispensing of the divine life into us; as we, the branches, abide in the vine, we receive the dispensing of life from the tree of life and live as parts of the tree of life—Rom. 8:11.

V. If we live as parts of the tree of life, we will care not for good and evil but for life, and we will discern matters not according to right and wrong but according to life and death—Gen. 2:9, 16-17; 2 Cor. 11:3:

- A. The Gospel of John emphasizes the fact that the tree of life is versus the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and that we should care not for good or evil but for life—4:10-14, 20-21, 23-24; 8:3-11; 9:1-3; 11:20-27.
- B. The best way to discern a matter—the secret of discernment—is to discern according to life or death; we must learn to discern, to differentiate, matters by life and death, rejecting any speaking that deprives us of the enjoyment of Christ as our life supply but receiving the genuine ministry of the Lord, which always strengthens us in the enjoyment of Christ as our life supply—Rom. 8:6; 2 Cor. 11:3.