

**Outline of
the Messages for the Full-time Training
in the Spring Term of 2022**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
CHAPTERS FIVE THROUGH EIGHT OF ROMANS—
THE KERNEL OF THE BIBLE**

Message One

The Line of Life and the Line of Death in Chapters 5 through 8 of Romans

Scripture Reading: Rom. 5:10, 12, 14, 17-18, 21; 6:4, 9, 16, 21-23; 7:5, 10, 13, 24; 8:2, 6, 10-11, 38-39

I. Chapters 5 through 8 of Romans can be called the kernel of the Bible because two key words are mentioned repeatedly in these chapters—*life* (5:10, 17-18, 21; 6:4, 22-23; 7:10; 8:2, 6, 10-11, 38-39) and *death* (5:12, 14, 17, 21; 6:9, 16, 21, 23; 7:5, 10, 13, 24; 8:2, 6, 38):

- A. The tree of life and the tree of knowledge (the tree of death) issue in two lines—the line of life and the line of death—that run through the entire Bible and end in the book of Revelation; life begins with the tree of life (Gen. 2:9) and ends with the New Jerusalem as the city of water of life with the tree of life (Rev. 22:1-2), the light of life (21:23; 22:5), and the glory of life (21:10-11, 23); death begins with the tree of knowledge (Gen. 2:17) and ends with the lake of fire (Rev. 20:10, 14).
- B. The tree of life causes man to be dependent on God (John 15:5), whereas the tree of knowledge causes man to rebel against God and be independent from Him (cf. Gen. 3:5).
- C. Christ Himself is the life of God, the eternal life (John 14:6a; 11:25; 1 John 1:2); He came that we may have life and may have it abundantly (John 10:10b); He died a life-releasing death and entered into a life-dispensing resurrection (12:24; Luke 12:49-50) to become the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45b) as the law of the Spirit of life (Rom. 8:2), giving life to our spirit, our mind, and our mortal bodies so that we might be swallowed up by life in order to be people of life for the city of life (vv. 10, 6, 11; 2 Cor. 5:4).
- D. The tree of life signifies the Triune God embodied in Christ as life to man in the form of food—Gen. 2:9; John 1:4; 10:10b; 14:6a; 1 Cor. 15:45b; John 6:35, 57:
 - 1. God's placing man in front of the tree of life indicates that God wanted man to receive Him as his life by eating Him organically and assimilating Him metabolically so that God might become the very constituent of man's being—cf. 5:39-40; 2 Cor. 3:6.
 - 2. The tree of life grows along the two sides of the river of water of life, indicating that it is a vine; since Christ is a vine tree and is also life, He is the tree of life—Rev. 2:7; 22:1-2; John 15:1; 14:6a.
 - 3. Christ was processed through incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection so that man might have life and live by eating Him—10:10b; 6:51, 57, 63; cf. Isa. 7:14-15.

II. The Lord's recovery is the recovery of eating the Lord Jesus as the tree of life, our spiritual food, for the building up of the organic Body of Christ; we can eat the Lord as the tree of life, our spiritual food, in the following ways:

- A. We can eat Him by eating His words:
 - 1. "Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out through the mouth of God"—Matt. 4:4.
 - 2. "How sweet are Your words to my taste! / Sweeter than honey to my mouth!"—Psa. 119:103.

3. "Then He said to me, Son of man, eat what you find; eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel. So I opened my mouth, and He gave me that scroll to eat. And He said to me, Son of man, feed your stomach and fill your inward parts with this scroll that I am giving you. And I ate it, and it was like honey in my mouth in its sweetness. Then He said to me, Son of man, go to the house of Israel and speak with My words to them"—Ezek. 3:1-4.
 4. "Your words were found and I ate them, / And Your word became to me / The gladness and joy of my heart, / For I am called by Your name, / O Jehovah, God of hosts"—Jer. 15:16.
 5. "He who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me...It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life"—John 6:57, 63.
 6. "Receive...the sword of the Spirit, which Spirit is the word of God, by means of all prayer and petition"—Eph. 6:17-18a.
 7. "I will muse upon Your precepts / And regard Your ways"—Psa. 119:15 and footnote 1.
- B. 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—Matt. 24:45-47:
1. "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work"—John 4:34.
 2. "I have glorified You on earth, finishing the work which You have given Me to do"—17:4; cf. Col. 1:9-11.
- C. We can eat Him by contacting the proper people—Lev. 11:1-3, 9, 13, 21:
1. 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.
 2. In Leviticus 11 all the animals signify different kinds of people, and eating signifies our contacting of people—cf. Acts 10:9b-14, 27-29.
 3. 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—cf. Lev. 11:46-47; 1 Cor. 15:33; 2 Cor. 6:14-18; 2 Tim. 2:22.
 4. 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).
 5. 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 the fish and keeping those fish that live in the sea from being salted)—Lev. 11:9.
 6. 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.
 7. 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.
- D. We can eat Him by feasting on Him in the meetings on the unique ground of oneness:
1. The children of Israel could enjoy the produce of the 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).
 2. 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.

III. 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 must 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 must 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.
 3. To believe in the Lord is to receive Him as life, and to love the Lord is to enjoy Him as life, to enjoy the very person whom we have received; faith is given to us by God so that by it we may receive Christ as our life; love issues out of such a wonderful faith and enables us to live out all the riches of the Triune God in Christ as our life—2 Pet. 1:1; Heb. 12:1-2a; 2 Cor. 4:13; Gal. 5:6; John 1:12-13; 21:15-17; Col. 3:4.
 4. The very life that we received when we believed in the Lord Jesus is a person, and the only way to apply and enjoy this person is by loving Him with the first love; since the Lord Jesus as our life is a person, we need a new contact with Him to enjoy His present presence at this very moment and day by day—John 11:25; 14:5-6; 1 Tim. 1:14; John 14:21, 23; 2 Cor. 5:14-15; Rev. 2:4-7; Col. 1:18b.
 5. When we love Him, He will manifest Himself to us, and He and the Father will come to us and make Their abode with us (John 14:21, 23); thus, we need to pray prayers such as: “Lord, show me Your love and constrain me with Your love that I may love You and live to You”; “Lord, keep me loving You all the time”; we must continually tell the Lord, “Lord Jesus, I love You; Lord, keep me in Your love! Attract me with Yourself! Keep me all the time in Your loving presence” (cf. S. S. 1:2-4).
 6. In the book of Romans, after Paul shows us the working of God's righteousness reckoned to us, the saturating of His holiness worked into us, and the glorifying of His glory shining forth into us and through us, he brings us into the love of God, which is the heart of God—Gen. 2:8-9; 3:24; Heb. 10:19-20; Rev. 22:14; Rom. 4:22-24; 6:19, 22; 8:18-19, 21; 1 Cor. 1:30; Rom. 5:5; 8:30-39; 1 John 4:16-18.
 7. God first loved us in that He infused us with Himself as love and generated within us the love with which we love Him and all the brothers (vv. 8, 16, 19-21); thus, God's love for us becomes our love for Him and our love for all the brothers.
 8. Based upon this, we can sing and pray—“I love my Lord, but with no love of mine, / For I have none to give; / I love Thee, Lord, but all the love is Thine, / For by Thy love I live” (*Hymns*, #546, stanza 1); “Something every heart is loving: / If not Jesus, none can rest; / Lord, my heart to Thee is given; / Take it, for it loves Thee best” (*Hymns*, #547, stanza 1).