

**Outline of
the Messages for the Full-time Training
in the Spring Term of 2016**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
THE TREE OF LIFE**

Message One

The Vision of the Tree of Life

Scripture Reading: Gen. 2:9; John 1:1, 4, 29; 11:25; 15:1; Rev. 2:7; 22:2, 14, 19

- I. We need a vision to see that the Bible presents us a picture of God in Christ as the tree of life to be our food; this is why the tree of life is mentioned both at the beginning and end of the Bible—Gen. 2:9; Rev. 22:2, 14.**
- II. “Jehovah God caused to grow...the tree of life in the middle of the garden”—Gen. 2:9:**
 - A. God’s purpose in the creation of man in His image and according to His likeness was that man would receive Him as life and express Him in all His attributes—1:26-27; 2:9.
 - B. The tree of life signifies the Triune God in Christ to dispense Himself into His chosen people as life in the form of food—v. 9.
 - C. The tree of life is the center of the universe:
 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—3:22; Rev. 22:14.
 - D. The way to fulfill God’s purpose is the tree of life—Gen. 1:26; 2:9:
 1. The two aspects of God’s purpose—God’s expression and God’s representation—both depend on the tree of life—1:26.
 2. God’s economy and God’s building are carried out by the tree of life—Eph. 3:9-11; 2:21-22; 4:16.
 - E. Man was not given the divine life when he was created; rather, he was given a free will to choose that life, signified by the tree of life—Gen. 2:7-9, 16-17.
 - F. The New Testament reveals that Christ is the fulfillment of the figure of the tree of life:
 1. John 1:4, speaking of Christ, says, “In Him was life”; this refers to the life signified by the tree of life in Genesis 2.
 2. The life displayed in Genesis 2 was the life incarnated in Christ—John 1:1, 14; 1 John 5:11-12.
 3. If we put together John 1:4 and 15:1, we will realize that Christ, who Himself is life and also a vine tree, is the tree of life.

4. All the aspects of the all-inclusive Christ revealed in the Gospel of John are the outcome of the tree of life—1:17; 8:12; 10:9, 11.

III. “To him who overcomes, to him I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God”—Rev. 2:7:

- A. In Greek the word for *tree* in Revelation 2:7, as in 1 Peter 2:24, means “wood”; it is not the usual word for *tree*—cf. Acts 5:30; 10:39; 13:29-30; Gal. 3:13.
- 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; 3:22, 24; Rev. 22:2, 14, 19); in Revelation 2:7 the tree of life signifies the crucified (implied in the tree as a piece of wood—1 Pet. 2:24) and resurrected (implied in the life of God—John 11:25) Christ.
- C. Today Christ 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—Rev. 22:14, 19.

IV. “On this side and on that side of the river was the tree of life, producing twelve fruits, yielding its fruit each month”—v. 2:

- A. The tree of life in Revelation 22 contains the many elements of the Lamb:
 1. The tree of life in Genesis 2 refers to Jehovah God, but the tree of life in Revelation 22 refers to God and the Lamb—vv. 1-2.
 2. In Genesis 2 God has not yet become flesh, been crucified, and resurrected to become the life-giving Spirit; in Revelation 22 God had already passed through the process of incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection—John 1:14, 29; 7:39.
 3. Economically, God at the end of the Bible is different from God at the beginning of the Bible—Gen. 1:1; Rev. 22:17:
 - a. At the beginning, in Genesis 1, He is Jehovah God, but in Revelation 22 He is God and the Lamb.
 - b. The elements within God in the garden of Eden are different from the elements within Him as the redeeming God today; therefore, the tree of life in Revelation 22 contains not only the elements of God but also the elements of the Lamb—vv. 1-2.
- B. The tree of life fulfills for eternity what God intended from the beginning—Gen. 2:9; Rev. 22:2, 14, 19:
 1. Today the enjoyment of Christ as the tree of life is the believers’ common portion—John 6:35, 57.
 2. In the millennial kingdom the enjoyment of Christ as the tree of life will be a dispensational reward to the overcoming believers—Rev. 2:7.
 3. In the new heaven and new earth for eternity, the enjoyment of Christ as the tree of life will be the eternal portion of all God’s redeemed—22:14, 19:
 - a. The fruits of the tree of life will be the food for God’s redeemed in eternity; these fruits will be continually fresh, being produced every month—v. 2.
 - b. The fact that the tree of life bears twelve fruits means that the fruit of the tree of life is rich and sufficient for the carrying out of God’s eternal administration.