

THE TRUTH AND EXPERIENCE OF GOD'S SALVATION

Lesson Two

THE TREE OF LIFE

Burden to Impart:

Although man was created outwardly with God's image to express Him, he still needed one thing more in order to express God in full: he inwardly needed God's life. So God immediately placed man in front of the tree of life. To eat of the tree of life was man's first and man's greatest need. If he did not eat of the tree of life he would be an empty vessel (shell), with God's image, but not God's life or reality. If man did not have God Himself as his life and reality, he could never express God in full or fulfill His purpose.

Memory Verse: "And out of the ground the Lord God made every tree to grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden" (Genesis 2:9a).

Facts to Teach:

1. The Bible's first chapter shows us that God began His work with the creation of the universe and ended with the creation of man. So then, what God wants and needs is man, man with God's image and likeness, so that the invisible God may be expressed.
2. The Bible's second chapter then shows us what man needs: the tree of life. God needs man for His expression; man needs the tree of life to be his content.
3. The first thing that God did with man after creating him was to put him in the garden of Eden, which means "pleasure." Man was created with the capacity to enjoy and appreciate God's creation, so everything God made was "pleasant" and "good."
4. The "tree of life was also in the midst of the garden." In the very center of the garden was the tree of life. By thus placing man in front of the tree of life God was telling him two things:
 - a) God, the very one who brought man into existence, desired for man to eat of the tree of life, and
 - b) Man needed to eat of the tree of life if he was to fulfill the purpose of his creation, to express God.
5. What is the tree of life? It is hard to say exactly what it is. We have seen a "peach" tree, with its peaches. But we have never seen a "life" tree with its fruit. However, it is easy to understand what it signifies. The tree of life would give man "life." This means that although God created man with a human life for his existence, he still needed something more: the tree of life: Man needed more than human existence in order to fulfill God's purpose, he needed LIFE, eternal life, the uncreated life of his God and Creator. This life is God Himself, and this life is Christ, for the Lord Jesus told us that He is the life (John 11:25; 14:6) and that He came to give us this life (John 10:10b). This life is altogether rich, enjoyable, and "good" for man, and enables him to fulfill God's eternal purpose.