

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. **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 of who follow Satan as their poison unto death and eternal perdition. **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. **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. **E.** The two consummations are the final outcome of the two trees, the two sources, the two ways, and the two principles. /The consummation of God's way of life is a city of water of life, the New Jerusalem. /The consummation of the way of death and of good and evil is a lake of fire.]]

II. God's intention was not to have a Job in the line of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; they were devoid of the divine revelation and of the experience of the divine life:

A. The logic of Job and his friends was according to the line of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; they were devoid of the divine revelation and of the experience of the divine life.

B. Job, like his friends, was halted in the knowledge of right and wrong, not knowing God's economy. /Neither Job nor his friends were in the line of the tree of life as God ordained man to be. /Their concept concerning man's relationship with God was built on good and evil, right and wrong, absolutely according to the principle of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and absolutely according to the human, ethical concept of fallen man. **C.** Job and his friends were in the realm of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; God was trying to rescue them from that realm and put them into the realm of the tree of life. **D.** God's purpose in dealing with Job was to turn him from the way of good and evil to the way of life so that he might gain God to the fullest extent.

III. We need a vision of the tree of life: **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. **B.** The tree of life is the center of the universe. /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. /Nothing is more central and crucial to both God and man than the tree of life. **C.** The New Testament reveals that Christ is the fulfillment of the figure of the tree of life. **D.** All the aspects of the all-inclusive Christ revealed in the Gospel of John are the outcome of the tree of life. **E.** The enjoyment of the tree of life will be the eternal portion of all of God's redeemed. /The tree of life fulfills for eternity what God intended for man from the beginning. /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.]]

IV. The two trees in Genesis 2:9—the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil—represent two principles of living: **A.** The two trees show that a Christian can live according to two different principles—the principle of right and wrong or the principle of life. **B.** Job and his friends pursued something in the realm of ethics, but we, the believers in Christ, should pursue something in the realm of God. **C.** Being a Christian is not a matter of the principle of right and wrong, the principle of good and evil, but is a matter of life. /When we received the Lord Jesus and gained a new life, we obtained another principle of living—the principle of life; if we do not know this principle, we will set the principle of life aside and follow the principle of right and wrong. /In our practical living we may not be in the line of the tree of life but in the line of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. /In our daily living we should not be in the realm of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil but in the realm of the life-giving Spirit. /In order to live according to the principle of the tree of life, we need to follow the inner sense of life. /The sense of life on the negative side is the feeling of death. /The sense of life on the positive side is the feeling of life and peace, with a consciousness of strength, satisfaction, rest, brightness, and comfort. /When we live according to the principle 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.

V. Every genuine believer in Christ is a miniature garden of Eden, with God as the tree of life in his spirit and Satan as the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in his flesh: **A.** We are a miniature garden of Eden because the triangular situation involving God, man, and Satan is now within us. /Before man fall, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and the tree of life were outside of man. /Through the fall the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is in us, and through regeneration the tree of life is now in us. /Our spirit is mingled with the Triune God, and our body, which has become the flesh, is mixed with the sinful element of Satan; this makes the Christian a miniature garden of Eden. **B.** As those who were represented by Adam in genesis 2, we have the tree of life in our spirit and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in our flesh. /Whenever we contact the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, we become dead; whenever we contact the tree of life, we gain life. /If we stand on the side of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and contact Satan, we will live out the life of Satan, the devil, and the result will be death. /If we stand on the side of the tree of life and contact God, we will live out God, and the result will be life. **C.** Romans 8:5-6 shows a miniature garden of Eden, with the flesh and death on one side, the spirit and life on the other side, and the mind in the middle. /We learn from Romans 8 that we need to turn our being to the living One who dwells in our spirit and stay one with Him. /When we set our mind on the spirit, we have life, peace, light, comfort, and strength; our thirst is quenched, and our hunger is satisfied. /When we set our mind on the spirit, our mind is full of life and peace. /We have peace because there is no discord between our outward behavior and our inner being. /When we speak with our mind set on the spirit, life is embodied in our words because we are one spirit with the Lord.

CP1: If you put your mind on the spirit, there is peace beyond understanding, and you can walk on the way of life and go forward

OL1: According to the divine revelation in the Scriptures, there are two trees, two sources, two ways, two principles, and two consummations. Gen. 2:9 And out of the ground Jehovah God caused to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, as well as the tree of life in the middle of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. 17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, of it you shall not eat; for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die. The tree of life ends in the city of water, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil must end in the lake of fire. All the evil things in Revelation 22 are involved with the lake of fire. Thus, the two ends are the city of water and the lake of fire. Between the two sources and the two ends are two lines, which become two ways. The first tree signifies God only as life, with no implications of other elements...The second tree signifies Satan as death, with the implications of knowledge, good, and evil. Whereas God is simple, Satan is very complicated. According to the divine revelation, knowledge is Satan, good is Satan, and evil is Satan. Today the world is in an age that worships knowledge. Before eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Adam and Eve were ignorant, not knowing, so they had no sin. After they ate of the tree of knowledge, their eyes were opened, and they became knowledgeable. That was sin. We all consider that to commit sin is sin, but we may not consider that knowing sin is sin.

The genuine good is God Himself; hence, gaining God equals gaining the genuine good. When the rich young ruler came to the Lord Jesus and called Him, "Good Teacher," the Lord Jesus said, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good except One—God" (Mark 10:17-18). If besides God we gain any other good, that is terrible. If we touch the good things outside of God, this means that we touch Satan.

The first principle is the principle of life, according to which all men in the way of life keep their contact with God, and by which they seek God, gain God, possess God, and enjoy God, step by step, until they reach the fullest extent. The second principle is the principle of death and of good and evil, in which all men in the way of death follow Satan either consciously or unconsciously, and through which they reject God and His way of life to be Satan's companions unto death and eternal perdition. The two ends are the two destinations of the two ways men take in their relationship with God. The New Jerusalem, as the best and most glorious end of God's way of life, is a dynamic incentive for us to seek God until we gain Him to the fullest extent according to His love and grace; and the lake of fire, as the worst and most miserable end of Satan's way of death and of good and evil, should be a solemn warning to the men who follow Satan in his way against God's economy, to turn from his way of death to God's way of life that they may escape Satan's eternal judgment and eternal perdition, according to God's righteousness and justice.

Application: New ones and Youth/College students

You must not think that eating from the tree of knowledge of good and evil is a small thing, or that a little bit is okay. Eating from the tree of knowledge of good and evil will set you back in

the Christian race in the wrong direction.

God's intention in dealing with you is to adjust you from the principle of good and evil according to ethics to the principle of life according to God, which is his logic (way of thinking) about your relationship with God. Instead of following common sense or culture, open your mind and set your mind on the spirit. Life is dispensed from the spirit to the mind, and you will be led by the Spirit of God. Rom.8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace. 14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

A Brother's Testimony: When I decided to take the exam for the master's program and was studying, I was frustrated because my studies were not going well. I was worried that I would not pass the entrance exam, so I often prayed, "Lord Jesus, I have been so absorbed in club activity for three years that I have not studied much, so it is difficult for me to study for the entrance exam. However, since I haven't been looking for a job, if I don't pass the entrance exam, it will be very hard. If I pass, I will be able to manage, so please let me pass the exam". (At that time, there were almost no mid-career hires, so if you couldn't pass the graduate school, you had to spend a year job-hopping or wasting time taking exams. There was no one to do such a thing.) No matter how many times I prayed in this way, I had no peace. One day, after praying, the Lord said to me, "Do you love me or do you love the blessings I give you?" I immediately replied, "Don't be so rigid, I will love you as long as you let me pass, just let me pass". We had this conversation three times. And each time, I was filled with anxiety inside. Then I realized that I could not change the Lord, and finally I put my mind on the spirit and prayed, "Lord, I repent. Forgive me for the impurity of my heart. Whether I pass or not, I will love you." After praying this way, I was immediately filled with the peace of God that surpassed human understanding. At the same time, I had the feeling that the Lord was leading me to higher education. Then, contrary to the expectations of most people around me, I passed the exam. I could learn a lot because I was desperate for graduate school. ① You need to have a pure heart toward the Lord Jesus, so you need to love the Lord Himself, not His blessings outside. ② When your mind is set on the spirit, there is peace that is beyond human understanding. In this sense of life, we have the Lord's leading and blessing, and we can move on. ③ If you set your mind on the flesh and pray, there will be no peace, only the sense of death, such as impatience and anxiety, etc., and there is no leading nor blessing. ④ I realized that the center of the universe is the tree of life and I cannot change this divine plan ordained by God. Prayer: Oh Lord Jesus, God's intention in dealing with me is to adjust my thinking from the principle of good and evil according to ethics to the principle of life according to God. Instead of following common sense or culture, I set my mind on the spirit and I desire to be led by the Spirit of God. If I set my mind on the flesh and eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, there is no peace, only the sense of death, such as impatience, anxiety, etc. There is no leading nor blessing. I set my mind on the spirit and come to the tree of life, the center of the universe, and eat from Christ. Amen!

CP2: Tree of life is the center of the universe. Renew consecration and walk and go on in the line of tree of life in the business life.

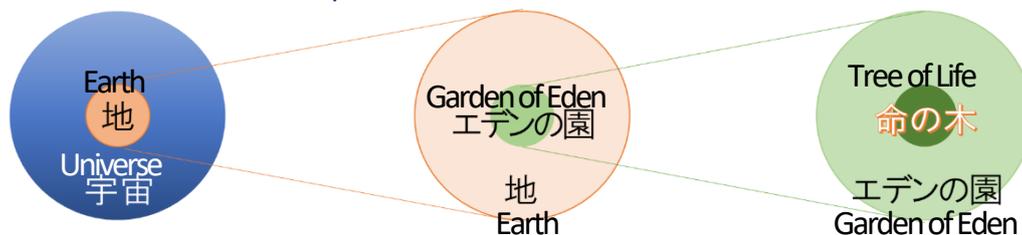
OL1: God's intention was not to have a Job in the line of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil but a Job in the line of the tree of life: **OL2:** We need a vision of the tree of life. **John 11:25** Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life...6:48 I am the bread of life. Adam ate the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This tree was thus sown into Adam and grew within him, and it has been growing in all of Adam's descendants. At Job's time the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was only two thousand years old, but now it is six thousand years old. Today the entire human race is a race constituted according to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. ...As long as this tree is growing among the human race, there will be no peace.

Before we were regenerated, we were in the line of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. When we were regenerated, Christ planted Himself into us as the tree of life. ...In our married life, for example, we may be in the line of the tree of knowledge, and by the way we talk with our spouse we may not only grow this tree but also water it and fertilize it. What, then, should we do? We need to remember Paul's word in Galatians 2:20—"It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me"—and turn from the tree of knowledge to the tree of life.

Job, like his friends, was halted in the knowledge of right and wrong, not knowing God's economy, not realizing in an adequate way the purpose of God's creating of man. He and his friends were devoid of the divine revelation and of the experience of the divine life. He had no idea that God had no intention to increase his perfection, uprightness, righteousness, and integrity. Rather, God's intention was to strip all these human virtues which he had as his contentment, that he could seek and gain only God Himself. Neither his friends nor he were in the line of the tree of life as God ordained man to be.

For instance, we need to be one spirit with the Lord in our speaking. Before I speak for the Lord, I pray one simple prayer: "Lord, be one spirit with me that I may be one spirit with You. Lord, speak in my speaking and make my speaking Your speaking." This is to live in the dispensing of the eternal economy of God. When we live and speak in this way, we enjoy the divine dispensing, and Christ increases within us. Christ grows in us and we grow in Christ. Suppose there is a problem between you and your spouse. You should not do anything, for whatever you do will be in the realm of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. You should simply pray-read Galatians 2:20.... Do not care for the problem or your anger—just care for Christ living in you. The tree of life is the center of the universe.

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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.... Nothing is more central and crucial to both God and man than the tree of life.

Application to the business person/graduate students

The tree of life, according to God's Economy, is the center of the center of the center of the universe (see diagram below). You must set the tree of life the center of your business life, your research life, and your family life. **Testimony of a brother:** After graduate school, I did five years of full-time service and started working before I turned 30. Before I started, I prayed like this, "I will work with the spirit of full time service. I had planned to serve full time all my life, but under the Lord's guidance, I become a businessperson. However, I will work with the spirit of full-time service. My main business is to walk the path of life, Christ and the church. My business is a side business. If I fail in my main business, even if my side business is blessed, my life is a failure. Please don't let my life be a failure. I will now renew my consecration. Renew my mind day by day in my business life. Make me one of the overcomers".

Once I started the actual work, I had the following problems, which gave me an opportunity to renew my logic (thinking).

- ① Since everyone around me was ambitious, they thought I was odd and considered me as someone who lacked ambition and unmotivated. It was true that I lacked a sense of responsibility and common sense as a member of society that I had to contribute to the company since I was receiving salary. I needed to repent on this point.
- ② I was amazed at the old, inefficient, and nonessential Japanese way of building relationships over drinks in the evening. I hypothesized that if I became a manager in the future, I would have a significant advantage over other companies simply by changing this point. When I became a manager, I tried this out and found that it had an excellent effect in motivating my employees. In fact, most of them were exhausted by the frequent drinking sessions.
- ③ Due to traditional influences, Japanese society clearly has discriminatory notions toward female employees. However, they claim that they do not have such a notion (for example, the statement of the former president of the Tokyo Olympics Organizing Committee). When I chose my direct subordinates, I chose them in the order of their ability, and as a result, all seven department heads were female. A business life based on consecration was filled with practical opportunities to renew my mind. When considering who to be the leaders, I put my mind to the spirit and was saved from the Japanese cultural logic (way of thinking) to think logically and successfully. I think the function of the sisters is also extremely important in the practice of the church life.

CP3: Train yourself to always put your mind on the spirit, and enjoy Christ as the tree of life and stay in the way of life

OL1: The two trees in Genesis 2:9—the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil—represent two principles of living. **OL2:** Every genuine believer in Christ is a miniature garden of Eden, with God as the tree of life in his spirit and Satan as the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in his flesh. Rom. 8:5 For those who are according to the flesh mind the things of the flesh; but those who are according to the spirit, the things of the Spirit. 6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.

Man is tripartite: he has a spirit, soul, and body. The spirit is our innermost part, the body is our outermost part, and the soul, the main part of our being, stands between them. As a result of the fall, Satan as the tree of knowledge came into man's flesh. As a result of our believing in Christ, God as the tree of life came into our spirit. Therefore, the two trees that were once in the garden outside of man are now within us, one in our flesh and the other in our spirit. If we read Romans 7 carefully, we will see that Paul said in his flesh nothing good dwells, only sin. Sin is actually the evil nature of Satan. To say that sin dwells in our flesh means that Satan, the evil one, is in our flesh. Romans 8:16, a verse which proves that God is in us, says that the Spirit of God witnesses with our spirit.

In Genesis 2 the two trees were objective; in Romans 8 they are subjective. We should never say that these two trees are no longer with us.... When we turn to Him and set our mind on Him, we have life, peace, light, comfort, strength, and all we need.

In order to set our being on the mingled spirit, we need to pray. How easily we are distracted from the divine Spirit in our spirit! Our mind is so quickly drawn to other things. Hence, in prayer you need not be occupied with your needs [such as love or patience]. Instead, pray to keep in touch with the living One in your spirit.

Application to the serving ones

The following is OL III of #1 of the 2021 International Chinese-speaking Conference "The Intrinsic and Organic Building Up of the Church as the Body of Christ." **III.** We must continuously exercise our spirit and turn our heart to the Lord in order to stay on the way of life in the reality of the intrinsic essence of the church for its organic existence: **A.** We must walk in the way of life to live by the tree of life according to the spirit, not in the way of death to live by the tree of the knowledge of right and wrong according to the self. **B.** We stay on the way of life by loving the Lord to the uttermost; to believe in the Lord is to receive Him as life; to love the Lord is to enjoy Him as life. **C.** The love between us and the Lord depends on our thoughts: **①** In 2 Corinthians 11:2 Paul says that he betrothed us to one husband to present us as a pure virgin to Christ with a proper love toward Him in order to enjoy Him; then in verse 3 Paul tells us that it is possible for our thoughts to be corrupted from the simplicity and the purity

toward Christ. 2 Cor. 11:2 for I betrothed you to one husband to present you as a pure virgin to Christ. 3 But I fear lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your thoughts would be corrupted from the simplicity and the purity toward Christ. **②** The following symptoms of problems with man's thoughts are all hindrances to the enjoyment of Christ as life: **a.** The first symptom of problems with man's thoughts is having hardened thoughts. **b.** The second symptom of problems with man's thoughts is being blinded by Satan. **c.** The third symptom of problems with man's thoughts is rebellion. 10:4 For the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly but powerful before God for the overthrowing of strongholds, 5 As we overthrow reasonings and every high thing rising up against the knowledge of God, and take captive every thought unto the obedience of Christ. **d.** The fourth symptom of problems with man's thoughts is corruption. **③** We should pray, "O Lord, search my thoughts, and rescue my thoughts so that they can focus solely and entirely on You." **④** To enjoy Christ as the intrinsic essence of the church, we must have a burning love toward Him by giving Him the first place in all things. **D.** May we continuously receive the merciful compassions of our God so that we may remain on the way of life, the line of life, and 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; this is for us to remain in the intrinsic essence of the church for its organic existence.

If your mind is hardened, you will not be able to open it to the spirit. When putting mind on the flesh as the default setting, we habitually set our mind on the flesh. So you should push yourself a little, force yourself to train your spirit, and return to your spirit. The more you train your spirit, the more you set your mind on your spirit, the more you will be able to do it. When you set your mind on the flesh, you start thinking badly of your spouse or service partner. For example, when you were serving, you became competitive, setting your mind on the flesh, and you felt that you had to oppose them because you did not want to be ridiculed. The more I think about it, the more these thoughts come to you. At this time, call upon the name of the Lord and pray, "Lord Jesus, Lord Jesus, Lord Jesus, I close my mind on the flesh and open to the spirit. I do not consider the feeling of mind setting on the flesh."

May Christ, the true doctor, heal the sickness of your mind, hardness, darkness, rebellion, and corruption!

Prayer: Oh Lord Jesus, there is God as the tree of life in my spirit, and there is Satan as the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in my flesh. If I set my mind on my spirit, I have everything I need: life, peace, light, comfort, and strength. But I habitually set my mind on the flesh. This is because there are diseases of hardness, darkness, rebellion, and corruption in my mind. May the Lord, the true doctor, heal the diseases of my mind. Train myself to set my mind on the spirit every day, even if it takes a little effort.