

Three Trees

Sunday Sermon 19/12/2010 at Life Church P.N.:

Today I want to share about:

- The Xmas tree
- The Tree of Knowledge of Good & Evil
- The Tree of Life

Some Christians don't approve of Christmas trees, they think it relates to the god Thor, but this is how I think it is.

The origin of the Christmas tree is obscured by uncertainties because of oral histories of pre-literate European cultures. For example, according to Christian lore, the Christmas tree is associated with **St Boniface** and the German town of **Geismar**. Sometime in St Boniface's lifetime (c. 672-754) he cut down the tree of the heathen god Thor on which they were sacrificing a child, this act was to disprove the legitimacy of the Norse gods. Later St. Boniface saw a fir tree growing in the stump of the old oak. Taking this as a sign of the Christian faith, he said "...let Christ be at the centre of your households..." using the fir tree as a symbol of Christianity.^[3]

- The tradition of the Christmas tree as it is today known is fairly young.
- It was established by **Martin Luther** as a Protestant counterpart to the Catholic Nativity scene. Luther established the Christmas tree as a symbol of the **Tree of Life** in the **Garden of Eden**.^[4]

Xmas Tree:

However, as much as the Xmas tree is beautiful and we put it up every year; perhaps in contrast to the tree of knowledge and the tree of life, it represents the material world. This is the world which dominates our life and feeds our natural desires. So many live this way with little if any spiritual life. They eat from that kind of tree as their food.

Now I want to talk about two trees.

Years ago there was a song about, "Between two trees".

(The spaces show the short pause in the music)

Between two trees there lies a story true
A story true that I will tell to you
'Twas there that I first fell in love with Sue
Her hair was gold, her eyes were oh, so blue

Between two trees we kissed as lovers do
As lovers do who know their love is true
We carved a heart, a heart deep in each tree
One heart for you and one heart for me

And then we wed we wed between two trees
Between two trees we vowed 'til eternity
The trees looked down looked down as if to say
God bless your love on this your wedding day

Between two trees the years have swiftly flown
Have swiftly flown and I am all alone

But I have my book, my book of memories
Of the one who sleeps, she sleeps between two trees

Between two trees we kissed as lovers do
As lovers do who know their love is true
We carved a heart, a heart deep in each tree
One heart for you and one heart for me

###... written by *Charlie McKinnon* ...### Sung by *Harry Hibbs*

But more important than this love story, between the two trees of Eden also there lies a story true!
An eternal story that affects all humankind. Read Genesis 2: 9, 16-17; 3: 1-24

These are more than literal the trees, they're not trees with magical powers.

The important story tells of mankind's long exodus from paradise, and the means of his return.

God intended human kind to live by the tree of life not by the tree of knowledge of good & evil; this tree of life was barred, forbidden, guarded by an angel and the flaming sword that turned every way. Disobedience robbed man of this life of God.

God wanted us to live in the state of purity and innocence, to live by our intuition. Our moral knowledge was to come from the inner fountain of pure life.

Knowledge that comes from the tree of life is different from knowledge that comes from the tree of

knowledge. There are two Bible words for "Know" *oida* = *by observation or acquisition*; or "know" *ginosko* = *inner intuition*. Heb 8:11 *"And they shall not teach every one his fellow or everyone his brother, saying, 'Know (oida) the Lord,' for all shall know (ginosko) me, from the least of them to the greatest."* The 1st is the tree of knowledge, the 2nd the tree of life.

God wants us to be people of the spirit, to feed on life like Jesus did.

Eden was the scene of God's special presence. Eden was Elohim's garden, that where we are to live spiritually.

When man ate of the tree of knowledge of good & evil he had to gain his morality; his knowledge of good and evil, independent of God.

When we no longer draw from the fruit of life from God's tree of life, our morality takes on a lower plane, we decide what is good and what is evil. This is a tragic state that has brought untold tragedy and sorrow to our world. We were never meant for the stress that eventually brings death. God said, *"The day you eat of it you will die."* Die to the life of God in the soul then die physically.

The longer the human race goes on the more evil is magnified. Good & evil is smudged and muddied.

Paradise is lost, mankind were driven from the garden, how sad. Separated from that life walk with God.

Of course man tries his own way back to the tree of life; all in vain. The occult, sexual distortions, pagan sacrifices, the occult, trying to find true happiness without God, etc. Even Lot thought he saw it as he looked toward Sodom & Gomorrah, he said, "it's the garden of the Lord". Gen. 13: 10.

But listen to the good news, the tree of life has not been cut down; God has just put guards on it. So he has planned a way back to paradise!

What is the way? We have been deceived, poisoned by the Words of Satan., *"Eat of the tree you won't die, you eyes will be opened, and you'll be like God."*

How can we gain the paradise that was lost? Our state is hopeless.

God's plan of redemption began at the beginning. An innocent lamb was slain; its skins made a covering for Adam. This was a sign of hope that looked on to Jesus. What a plan -- Jesus came; he was the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

Jesus is the only one who can walk through the flaming sword to take of the tree of life; because he is the sinless one.

The flaming sword for Jesus was hanging on the dreadful cross of Calvary on our behalf. Jesus on the Cross is the only way back to paradise. He said to the thief hanging beside him, *"today you shall be with me in paradise"* This offer is for to you today if we surrender our will to Him.

The Cross is the way to the tree of life, it is no longer guarded! The way of salvation is now open. The problem of good and evil was solved at Calvary. Jesus is now become the Tree of Life.

The tree of life has become our cure - it's fruit heals us, becomes our source of life and will be throughout eternity.

Now our words can be the fruit of that tree that heals. What's a tree of life person like? Their faces shine, their wisdom comes from a different source; they have different values and a different world view.

But you can't eat of the tree of life in our fallen state, we have to embrace it at the cross (tree) of Jesus. Peter called it the tree; *1 Peter 2: 24 "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."*

Eden's curse has been borne by Jesus. "In Adam all die, in Christ all will come alive."

Revelation 22: 14 *"Blessed are those who practise His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life."*

Coming to the tree of life is through surrendering our will to His will. Exchanging our will for His is the reversal of the fall. That's why the Bible says, *"by the disobedience of one (Adam) sin entered the world, by the obedience of one (Jesus) we are made righteous."*

Outside are the immoral, those who feed off the tree of knowledge of good and evil; those who chose their own idea of morality; their own distortion of good and evil.

Rev. 2:7 *"To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God."*

We can know something of this now, it's the tree of eternal life that Jesus said he would give us who believe.

Rev 22: 1 ¶ *And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb.*

2 In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

3 *And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him.*

4 *They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads.*

5 *There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever".*

Have you embraced the "tree of life", are you feeding on it. You can't have both trees.

Here is a "tree of life" song

It's taken from: Isa 62:4 "You shall no longer be called Forsaken, Nor shall your land any more be called Desolate; But you shall be called Hephzibah, and your land Beulah; For the LORD delights in you, And your land shall be married."

BEULAH LAND (This is Eden - paradise regained)

Far away the noise of strife upon my ear is falling,
Then I know the sins of earth beset on every hand.
Doubt and fear and things of earth in vain to me are calling,
None of these shall move me from Beulah Land.

Refrain

I'm living on the mountain, underneath a cloudless sky.

Praise God!

I'm drinking at the fountain that never shall run dry.
O yes! I'm feasting on the manna from a bountiful supply,
For I am dwelling in Beulah Land.

Far below the storm of doubt upon the world is beating,
Sons of men in battle long the enemy withstand.
Safe am I within the castle of God's Word retreating.
Nothing then can reach me, 'tis Beulah Land.

Refrain

I'm living on the mountain, underneath a cloudless sky.

Praise God!

I'm drinking at the fountain that never shall run dry.
O yes! I'm feasting on the manna from a bountiful supply,
For I am dwelling in Beulah Land.

Let the stormy breezes blow, their cry cannot alarm me;
I am safely sheltered here, protected by God's hand.
Here the sun is always shining, here there's naught can harm me.
I am safe forever in Beulah Land.

Refrain

I'm living on the mountain, underneath a cloudless sky.

Praise God!

I'm drinking at the fountain that never shall run dry.
O yes! I'm feasting on the manna from a bountiful supply,
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