

TAKING THE WAY OF ENJOYING CHRIST AS THE TREE OF LIFE , Week 5**The Secret of Living the Christian Life to Be an Overcomer—
Taking the Way of Eating and Enjoying Christ as the Tree of Life**

Scripture Reading: Gen. 2:9; Rev. 2:7; John 6:57, 63; Jer. 15:16; Psa. 119:15; Ezek. 3:1-4

Genesis 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.
Revelation 2:7	He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.
John 6:57	As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me.
John 6:63	It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.
Jeremiah 15:16	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.
Psalms 119:15	I will muse upon Your precepts / And regard Your ways.
Ezekiel 3:1	Then He said to me, Son of man, eat what you find; eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel.
Ezekiel 3:2	So I opened my mouth, and He gave me that scroll to eat.
Ezekiel 3:3	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.
Ezekiel 3:4	Then He said to me, Son of man, go to the house of Israel and speak with My words to them.

Day 1

Genesis 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.
Jeremiah 15:16	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.

- I. The secret of living the Christian life to be an overcomer is for us to **take the way of eating and enjoying Christ as the tree of life**; God does not intend for us to do anything for Him; His only desire is to give Himself to us as food for our enjoyment; only those who take the way of enjoying Christ as the tree of life will see their life and work remaining in the New Jerusalem—Gen. 2:9; Rev. 2:7.
- II. We can eat the Lord Jesus as our spiritual food for our enjoyment, receiving Him as the Spirit who gives life through eating His words of spirit and life by means of **all prayer and by musing upon His words**—John 6:57, 63; Jer. 15:16 and footnote; Eph. 6:17-18; Psa. 119:15 and footnote; Matt. 4:4; Psa. 119:103:
 - A. When we eat the Lord Jesus by eating His words of spirit and life, **we live because of Him** (John 6:57, 63); we live not by Christ but because of Christ as our energizing element and supplying factor; we live Christ in His resurrection, and **we live Christ by eating Him** (Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:19-21a).

We all have to learn to **eat and drink the Lord by exercising the proper organ to take Him in**. The proper organ is our spirit. Our wonderful Lord, the tree of life, the Word become flesh, the God-man, died to pave the way and to prepare the place. Through His death He has done away with all the negative things, and we are cleansed. In His resurrection He has also become a life-giving Spirit. **If we are going to contact this Spirit, we have to exercise our spirit**. “God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit” (John 4:24). We should not merely exercise our mind to understand, to learn, and to study, but we should **exercise our spirit to contact Him, to drink Him, and to eat Him**. By His blood our conscience has been purged, so our spirit is cleansed and free from any kind of condemnation. We have the peace to contact Him. The more we open ourselves to the Lord from our spirit, the more we have the peace and the sense that He is one with us. We can contact Him as the life-giving Spirit within us and enjoy the Lord. (*The Tree of Life, chapter 9*)

Day 2

Ezekiel 3:1-4 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.

- B. As we eat the Lord Jesus by eating His words, we need to have **proper spiritual digestion**— Ezek. 3:1-4; Jer. 15:16; Rev. 10:9-10:
1. If we have good digestion, there will be a thoroughfare for the food to get into every part of our inward being; by **eating** we have **digesting**, by digesting we have **assimilation**, and by assimilation we get the **practical nourishment** of the riches of Christ into our being— Eph. 3:8, 16-17a.
 2. **Indigestion** means that there is **no way** for the Lord as the spiritual food to get through into our inward parts; when there is no free course for the food to get into our inward parts, we will have indigestion—Heb. 3:12, 15; 4:2.
 3. We need to keep our whole being, with all our inward parts, **open to the Lord** so that the spiritual food will have a thoroughfare within us; if we do this, we will have proper digestion and assimilation, we will **absorb Christ as spiritual nourishment**, and Christ will become our constituent for the expression of God—Eph. 3:16-17a; Col. 3:4, 10-11.

The Lord Jesus is **real, living, and practical**. When you call, “Lord Jesus,” He gets into you and fills you up. While you are calling “Lord Jesus,” this practical and living Jesus will touch your natural being. But many of you would say, “No, Lord. Don’t touch me here. Stay where You are. You are my guest, and You must stay in the living room. Don’t get into my private bedroom. That’s for me, not for You.” This means **indigestion**. There is no way for the Lord as the spiritual food to get through in you. There is **no free course** for the food to get into your inward parts, so you have indigestion.

Today’s Christianity has many teachings, but we do not need these doctrinal teachings. **We need to eat the Lord and enjoy the Lord**. Suppose I invited you to a dinner, and instead of allowing you to eat and enjoy the food, I taught you about the food. This would be terrible. We do not need the teaching; we need the **real nourishment**. We need the riches of Christ to get into our being. We can get the riches of Christ into our being simply by **calling on Him**—“O Lord Jesus.” But after calling on Him, the Lord works and moves within us to touch us in our inward being. (*The Living and Practical Way to Enjoy Christ, chapter 6*)

Day 3

John 4:34	Jesus said to them, My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work.
John 17:4	I have glorified You on earth, finishing the work which You have given Me to do.
Ephesians 4:20-21	But you did not so learn Christ, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him as the reality is in Jesus.

III. 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 for the glory of the processed Triune God—Matt. 24:45-47; Phil. 1:19-21a:

- A. “I have food to eat that you do not know about...[My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work](#)”—John 4:32, 34.
- B. “I have glorified You on earth, finishing the work which You have given Me to do” (John 17:4); [to glorify God is to express God in all things](#) (cf. Col. 1:9-11).
- C. In His human living the Lord ate butter (the [richest grace](#)) and honey (the [sweetest love](#)), which gave Him the power to [always choose the Father’s will](#)—Isa. 7:14-15, ASV 1901.
- D. We are those who are learning Christ as “the reality is in Jesus”; the reality is in Jesus refers to the actual condition of the life of the Lord Jesus as recorded in the four Gospels, a [life in which He glorified the Father on earth to set up a pattern for His believers](#)—Eph. 4:20-21:
 1. Jesus lived a life in which He did everything [in God, with God, and for God](#) in order to glorify God; God was in His living, and He was one with God; in resurrection He became the life-giving Spirit so that He might enter into us to be our life; we learn from Him (Matt. 11:29) according to His example, not by our natural life but by Him as our life in resurrection (Col. 3:4; 1 Pet. 2:21).
 2. The Lord Jesus [never did anything out of Himself](#) (John 5:19); He did not do His own work (4:34; 17:4), He did not speak His own word (14:10, 24), He did not do His own will (5:30), and He did not seek His own glory (7:18).
 3. To learn Christ is simply to be [molded into the pattern of Christ](#), that is, to be conformed to the image of Christ; He Himself as the indwelling Spirit, the law of the Spirit of life, with all the riches of His life, reproduces Himself in us—Rom. 8:2, 28-29.
- E. Isaiah 43:7 says, “Everyone who is called by My name, / Whom I have created, formed, and even made for My glory”; the [highest service we can render to God is to express His glory](#)—2 Cor. 3:18; Rom. 9:23.
- F. First Corinthians 6:20 says, “You have been bought with a price. So then glorify God in your body”; this is to allow God, who dwells in us (1 John 4:13), to [occupy and saturate our body and express Himself through our body as His temple](#) (1 Cor. 6:19); 1 Corinthians 10:31 says, “Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”

In His thirty-three and a half years on earth, the Lord Jesus [formed the mold, the pattern, to which all those who believe in Him are to be conformed](#). According to the record of the four Gospels, the life of the Lord Jesus was a life of truth. Truth is the shining of light. Light is the source, and truth is its expression. As Hebrews 1:3 says, the Lord Jesus is the effulgence of God’s glory. This means that [He is the shining of God who is light](#). Because in every aspect of the Lord’s living on earth there was the shining of light, His life was a life of truth, a life of the shining of God Himself. [That life of truth was the very expression of God](#). For this reason Paul says that [we learn Christ as the truth is in Jesus](#). In other words, we learn Christ according to the mold of the life of Jesus. The mold of the life of Jesus is the truth.

After Christ established this mold, He passed through death and resurrection, and in resurrection He became the life-giving Spirit. As such a Spirit, He comes into us to be our life. When we believed in Him and were baptized, God put us into Him as the mold, just as dough is placed into a mold. By being put into the mold we learned the mold. This means that [by being put into Christ, we learn Christ](#). On the one hand, God put us into Christ; on the other hand, Christ has come into us to be our life. Now we may live by Him according to the mold in which we have been placed by God. (Life-Study of Ephesians, chapter 47)

Day 4

Philippians 1:9	And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in full knowledge and all discernment,
Leviticus 11:3	Whatever has a divided hoof, that is, has its hoof split in two, and chews the cud among the beasts, that you may eat.

IV. We can eat Him by **contacting the proper people**—Lev. 11:1-3, 9, 13, 21:

- A. 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; in Leviticus 11 all the animals signify different kinds of people, and **eating** signifies **our contacting of people** (Acts 10:9b-14, 27-29); 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** (Lev. 11:46-47; 1 Cor. 15:33; 2 Cor. 6:14-18; 2 Tim. 2:22).
- B. 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).

Let us use as an illustration the difference between going to a theater and going to a church meeting. To go to a theater is to do something earthly, but to go to a church meeting is to do something heavenly. However, to a person, even a Christian, who does not have divided hooves there is little difference between going to a theater and going to a church meeting. Such a person **lacks discernment** in his activities. In his activities he does not have the discerning ability. **We should be careful** in contacting this kind of person, for contact with him **may defile us**. We need to have divided hooves, the ability and strength to discern what is of God and what is not of God, what we should do and what we should not do.

Chewing the cud signifies **receiving the word of God with much consideration and reconsideration**. Just as a cow chews its cud, we should consider and reconsider the word of God. We may do this while we pray-read early in the morning. As we are pray-reading, we may consider and reconsider the word. This is to chew the cud to receive nourishment by reconsidering what we receive from God's word.

In verses 2 and 3 we see God's wisdom. The two phrases "divides the hoof" and "chews the cud" are very meaningful. On the one hand, we need to chew the cud, eating the word of God by chewing it again and again. On the other hand, we need to have a **walk that is full of discernment**. However, many people today do not have divided hooves, and they do not chew the cud. They never even touch the word of God. We should not contact those who do not have divided hooves or chew the cud. We need to avoid such people, lest they affect us and influence us. (*Life-Study of Leviticus, chapter 36*)

Day 5

2 Corinthians 6:14	Do not become dissimilarly yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership do righteousness and lawlessness have? Or what fellowship does light have with darkness?
2 Corinthians 6:17	Therefore "come out from their midst and be separated, says the Lord, and do not touch what is unclean; and I will welcome you."
2 Timothy 4:22	The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.

- C. **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 and keeping those fish that live in the sea from being salted)—Lev. 11:9.
- D. **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.
- E. **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.

In the Bible, the sea signifies the fallen, corrupted world. The whole world today is a vast sea, and many of those living in this sea do not have fins or scales. They cannot move freely in the world and at the same time resist its influence. As **believers in Christ**, we should have fins and scales and therefore be able to **act freely in the sea of the world without being salted by it**.

We Christians should be like **birds** that have wings and that feed on the seeds of life. This means that we should live and move in a life that is **away from and above the world** and that **we should take the things of life as our supply of life**. Moreover, when we contact others, even other believers, we need to discern whether they are clean birds, like sparrows, which feed on seeds, or unclean birds, like hawks, which like to **live on the things of death**. If we have contact with unclean birds, we shall be influenced by their taste and eventually that will turn us into an unclean bird. For this reason, we must be **careful in contacting those who feed on the things of death**.

Insects having wings and having jointed 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**. If we are the kind of persons signified by these insects, we shall have wings for flying away from anything worldly, sinful, or fleshly. We shall be able to soar above the world. We also shall have jointed legs with which to jump up from the world. This means that **we are able to leave the world at any time**, either by flying or by jumping. We Christians are those who can jump and fly. However, those without wings and jointed legs cannot leave the world at all. They can only stand on the earth and remain in the world. (*Life-Study of Leviticus, chapter 36*)

Day 6

Deuteronomy 12:5-7

But to the place which Jehovah your God will choose out of all your tribes to put His name, to His habitation, shall you seek, and there shall you go. And there you shall bring your burnt offerings and your sacrifices and your tithes and the heave offering of your hand and your vows and your freewill offerings and the firstborn of your herd and of your flock; And there you shall eat before Jehovah your God, and you and your households shall rejoice in all your undertakings, in which Jehovah your God has blessed you.

V. We can eat Him by **feasting on Him in the meetings on the ground of oneness**:

- A. The children of Israel could enjoy the produce of the good 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).
- B. 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.

VI. God's intention for man was to give Himself as the tree of life to man for him to enjoy; to see that God wants us to enjoy Him and that He does not want us to do anything for Him is to see that the **Christian life is a matter of enjoying Christ as the tree of life**; if our concept is changed so that we see these two points, it will be easy for us to live a life of enjoying God.

Now we can see that there is no other way to overcome. **The unique way is eating.** **We need to eat Jesus.** Eating is the unique matter in the whole Bible. The Bible starts with the eating of the tree of life, and it ends with the same thing. In the New Jerusalem in the last chapter of the Bible, out of the throne of God flows a river, and on either side of the river grows the tree of life, producing fruits every month to supply the need of all the people of the New Jerusalem.

Revelation 22:14 says, "*Blessed are those who wash their robes that they may have right to the tree of life and may enter by the gates into the city.*" **Our eternal right is to eat the tree of life.** Many Christians are happy that their robes have been washed, but they do not realize that the washing of the robes is for eating the tree of life. This is our eternal portion and enjoyment. (*Enjoying the Riches of Christ for the Building Up of the Church as the Body of Christ, chapter 17*)