

Maintaining Your Lighthouse



The first couple was given a mission

- "Increase and multiply"
 - God wants His people to increase, not just physically, but spiritually, and thereby to be in authority
 - Family was where this was to happen
- They were given authority and dominion and told to subdue
- They could not do this in their own power

God provided trees for food, both physical and spiritual

- And God said, "See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every **tree** whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food" (Genesis 1:29)
- And out of the ground the Lord God made every **tree** grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The **tree** of life was also in the midst of the garden, and the **tree** of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:9)
- And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "Of every **tree** of the garden you may freely eat; but of the **tree** of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die" (Genesis 2:16-17)

What they ate was critical to their ability to obey God’s call

- They were told to eat freely (liberally) from all the trees in the garden except the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil
- They were to eat liberally of the Tree of Life
- Their authority over the enemy depended on the degree to which they ate of the Tree of Life

God gave them free choice

- They had to choose of their own volition what they would consume
- God gave them the choice to be united with Him in divine life (Tree of Life)
- God wanted to further establish them in sonship-- living spirits, enabled, empowered, enriched in every facet of life

The enemy tactic was to prevent their eating from the right tree

- He questioned God’s motives and encouraged self to take over
- They took their minds off the Tree of Life by concentrating on the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil
- Ultimately they were separated them from the Tree of Life

The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil

- "good for food, pleasant to the eyes, and desirable to make one wise"
- Contrasts good and evil, not life and death
- "There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death" Proverbs 16:25



Result of the Fall

- Adam and Eve hid among the very trees given to them for life
- Drew their security from things rather than God
- They lost access to the Tree of Life



Humanity became "self" centered

- "Self is God's greatest enemy" Watchman Nee
- Self is "passivity toward God, a slackness or slowness in responding toward Him, a lack of dependence upon Him, a desire to go our own way and handle our own lives, move in our own wisdom and strength, speak out of our own thoughts" Jane Hansen
- In every sin, self is at work

Self feeds from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil

- Like Eve, we judge what looks good or seems good
- Good in contrast with evil is confused with life
- Self cannot eat of the Tree of Life



Jesus, the second Adam, did what the first one failed to do

- Knew that to do the Father's will, He must live by the Father's life, not His own
- "The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do" John 5:19
- He knew that the Father was His only source of life and fulfillment
- He restored access to the Tree of Life

We have been called to the restoration of the family

- So that God's original plan for marriage and family is established
- So that the Body might be restored
- So that the Gospel can be preached in every nation and tongue
- So that the Lord can return for a bride without spot or wrinkle

The Tree of Life must be our source



- Our growth as a couple is based in His life
- We must rely on Him, not each other or things, for life and fulfillment
- Our victory over the enemy depends on the degree to which we eat of the Tree of Life

When people or things are our source, we are eating from the wrong tree



- "good for food, pleasant to the eyes, and desirable to make one wise"
- Fear of loss or lack
- Burn out
- People or things control our joy and peace

God is our source. Others in our lives are resources

Dr David Reeves

- God gave us our need for relationship
- We tend to relate to others based not on what they need, but on what we need
- We cannot expect another human being to be our source
- Only our dependence on God's life in us can keep us from self

God designed marriage and family to mature us

- God desires mature sons and daughters
- Relationship brings issues to the surface
 - We can choose to deal with them from the Tree of Life--God-centered change
 - Or from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil--self-centered change
- The strength of a nation is the strength of the families

The Tree of Life is our source for life and strength

- To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God (Rev. 2:7)
- 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 (Rev. 22:2)
- We will be a part of the healing of the nations to the degree that we partake of the fruit of the Tree of Life

We must determine from what tree we are eating

- Can people or things steal our joy and peace?
- Do we fear losing something? Job security? Relationship? Finances? Position? Honor? Recognition?
- Are we burned out? Exhausted? Frustrated?
- Do we make decisions based on what seems good compared to bad?

Partaking of the Tree of Life

- You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose mind is stayed on You (Isa. 26:3)
- For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace (Rom. 8:6)
- But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control (Gal. 5:22-23)
- And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful (Col. 3:15)

Our reactions will help us determine from which tree we are eating

- Am I at peace, or am I worried?
- Am I trusting the Lord, or striving to make something happen?
- Am I content, or do I fear I will lose something important to me?
- Am I drawing strength from Jesus, or am I exhausted and frustrated?

Adjustment is easy

- Let go of all that we are clinging to and turn to Jesus alone
- Seek His will, not ours
- Seek His plans, not ours
- Rest in His love for us and trust that He will not let us down
- Praise and worship Him with a grateful heart

God has called us to be lighthouses

- Lighthouses are created to shine in darkness and storms
- Lighthouses are built to resist the storm and help others
- We must strengthen our lighthouses now so we can stand firm in the storm
- We must abide in the Tree of Life so we can be a light to others

We are to lead others to the Tree of Life

- Point them to Jesus, not self
- Teach them to rely on Him, not us
- Teach them to rely on Him, not people or things
- Help them achieve permanent, God-centered change



Lighthouses do not hide from the storm

- Now is the time to prepare
- We must choose life over death, not good over evil
- We do not seek to protect ourselves, but seek out those who are lost in the darkness
- Our lives will reflect Him to the degree that we are sustained by His life
 - We must learn to abide in the Tree of Life
