

Lessons from the Two Trees

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If you were in the Church in the mid-seventies and onward, Mr. Armstrong began to talk at Feasts and at Ministerial Conferences and Refresher Programs and also on the telecast back then, he began to talk about the two trees. And he talked for all of those years about the two trees.

And I remember many in the Church, you know if you were at one of the big Feast sites and Mr. Armstrong would get settled in his desk and take out the Bible and say, "Let's turn to Genesis chapter 3 and some people would roll their eyes and say, "Here we go again!"

And somebody asked him at a ministerial conference once, "Mr. Armstrong, why do you keep preaching about the two trees?" And he says, as only he could do, he looked out and his jowls began to shake and he pointed his finger. He says, "I'll stop preaching about the two trees when you start getting the two trees."

And he preached about the two trees until he died. And so there's a message there obviously. That he didn't think anybody—I don't say anybody—but most people didn't understand the message of the two trees. And he also said, pointed out ministers at ministerial conferences, also at the Feast, he says, "I don't think half of you are converted." And subsequent events kind of led some credence to what he had to say.

And I'm convinced that even today in these latter days, especially as we get closer to the end time that many of us do not understand the message, the example of the two trees. So what we're going to do today is revisit the story, the true story of Adam of Eve to see what we can learn. So the title, if you want to put a title on it, is *The Lessons from the Two Trees*.

Now what we're going to do in the beginning before we get to the lessons is we're going to overview the events in chronological order so we can understand in detail what actually happened and what actually went on. So let's turn to Genesis 2 first because we have to begin with Adam's creation. And in verse 7 of Genesis 2, the first thing that happened—we're not going to talk about the previous creation or re-creation—but we're going to investigate Adam and then the creation of Eve and then what actually happened. Genesis 2 and verse 7:

Genesis 2:7. *And the [Eternal] formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living [being, as we would say, a living human or a living person]. (KJV)*

And then what God did is He planted a garden for the man. Verse 8 of Genesis 2:

Genesis 2:8. *And the [Eternal] planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. (KJV)*

Created a man, created an environment for the man, a beautiful environment, a perfect environment, and then put the man in that environment.

Now there were three categories of trees in that garden. Let's understand there were three. Genesis 2 and verse 9:

Genesis 2:9. *And out of the ground made the [Eternal] God to grow [This is the first one.] every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; (KJV)*

So there were trees there whose fruit provided all the nourishment, the sustenance that the man would need. They were good for food and not only that, they were pleasant to look at. That was the first.

Second:

Genesis 2:9. *... the tree of life also in the midst [The King James says. The Hebrew means middle. In the middle] of the garden, (KJV)*

So the second category of tree—there was only one—was the Tree of Life. And it was indeed in the middle of the garden. As we're going to see, it was very pleasant to look at.

Three:

Genesis 2:9. *[Then there was] the tree of knowledge of good and evil. (KJV)*

It, too, was pleasant to look at as were all the other trees.

Now, it's pure speculation. We know it says that the Tree of Life was in the middle of the garden. Maybe the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil was right beside it. It doesn't really say. You can't actually come away with that in this last phrase. Or it could be that the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil was somewhere else in the garden. We just don't know. It's possible.

Now then what happened is God commanded the man—the woman was not yet created—he commanded the man as to what should and should not be eaten. Very simple: created man, created the garden, created the trees that were those three categories of trees. And He directly, God directly instructed the man what should be eaten and what should not be eaten.

Let's go to Genesis 2 now, verse 16 and 17.

Genesis 2:16. *And the [Eternal] God commanded the man, saying, (KJV)*

Number One:

Genesis 2:16b. *Of every tree of the garden [you may] freely eat: (KJV)*

Verse 17, Point Two:

Genesis 2:17. *But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, [you shall] not eat it: (KJV)*

Because He says, "The day that you eat that, you're going to die."

So what God said to the man is, "Look, I've created you. I have given you this garden, this beautiful garden. I've populated this garden with trees that are beautiful and that will sustain you and all you have to do is walk up and pull some fruit down and eat it." And obviously the garden was created fully mature. The trees were mature and they had fruit on the limbs.

And He says, "You may freely eat of every tree in the garden except one. I'm just withholding one tree from you. You can't eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil." Now apparently that tree, it had to be different. It had to look different as well as the Tree of Life. They had to look different than the other trees so there wouldn't be any confusion. They were readily identifiable—visually identifiable. And He said, "This one, I don't want you to eat, but you can have free access to every other tree in the garden."

As I said, the instruction was to Adam because Eve was not yet created.

So after this, after Adam was created, the garden was created, the instruction was given, then God created the woman. Genesis 2, we're going to read verses 21 through 25.

Genesis 2:21. *And the [Eternal] caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; (KJV)*

We know the story.

Genesis 2:22. *And the rib, which the [Eternal] God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. (KJV)*

Indicating that at the actual creation of the woman, Adam might not have been there. He wasn't necessarily present when that happened. But He brought her, after she was created, to the man and introduced her to the man.

Verse 23:

Genesis 2:23. *And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of [the] Man. 24) Therefore [a man] shall leave his father and his mother,*

cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. 25) And they both were naked, the man and his wife, and [yet they weren't] ashamed. (KJV)

It was just normal. It was just natural.

Now there is no record here of God ever directly instructing the woman as to what should be eaten and what should not be eaten. The Bible is silent on that subject. The implication is that God never actually instructed the woman.

Let's go on to the next step. Next what happened was that God allowed Satan to speak to the woman.

Now my strong suspicion is that this was very much like Job, the Book of Job and the account of Job. Satan's walking up and down in front of the throne of God as he did with Job and God may have brought it up like he did with Job. "Have you considered these two people, these human beings that I've created? Aren't they beautiful?" And maybe began a discussion like that. Or maybe perhaps Satan brought the discussion up. "Oh, I see You've done this." But nevertheless the subject came up.

And God played Satan like used ukulele. God just took Satan and led him down the path just like He did with Job. And God undoubtedly said, "You can speak to the woman. I will allow you to speak to her," but He set limits. And obviously, one of the limits was don't harm her, as He did initially with Job.

Now Satan then comes down to the woman with the goal of discrediting God and sowing doubt and discord. That was his goal. He wanted to destroy God's plan. Now we know God was using him for His plan. Satan thought otherwise.

Now let's go to chapter 3 and verse 1. It says:

Genesis 3:1. Now the serpent (KJV)

Now if you look at the Hebrew word, there's a literal meaning and a figurative meaning. And a literal meaning, one of the meanings is a snake. But a figurative meaning of that Hebrew word means an enemy. And indeed, this was true.

Genesis 3:1. [So the serpent, an enemy,] was more subtle (KJV)

The Hebrew word for "subtle" means shrewd or crafty.

Genesis 3:1. ... was more [shrewd or crafty] than any beast of the field which the God had made. And he said unto the woman, (KJV)

Now notice, it says, "He said unto the woman." That implies that the man wasn't there. Because if Adam was there, you would think it would say, "he said unto them" or "to Adam and Eve," but "he said unto the woman." So my strong suspicion is that Adam was not there.

Genesis 3:1. ... He says, Yea, God [has] said, [You can't] eat of every tree of the garden? (KJV)

And notice what happens.

Genesis 3:2. And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: 3) But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God [has] said, [You] shall not eat it, neither shall [you] touch it, lest [you] die. (KJV)

Now at this point it's very clear Eve knew about God's command and yet there is no indication that God spoke directly to her. So the conclusion we can draw—and someday we'll find out; we'll be able to ask directly—but the conclusion that you can draw from that is that Eve knew of the command through Adam. And they got off by themselves and Adam said, "God made this garden. God created this for us. And look at the fruit and everything's pleasant to eat, but He said don't eat of this tree. But this Tree of Life we can eat. But we can't eat of this other one." There's no record that God talked directly to Eve. So we can assume, as I said, it was relayed to her by Adam.

Now look at verse 4.

Genesis 3:4. And the serpent said unto the woman, (NKJ)

Implying, again, that the man wasn't there.

Genesis 3:4b. [You] shall not surely die: (KJV)

Now he is contradicting God. Now for the first time, a human being is presented with something that is not true, that is a lie. And that is 180° opposite of what God had said previously. Now we're going to see that this pattern has come down through history to this day.

Genesis 3:5. For God knows that in the day [you] eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and [you] shall be as gods, (KJV)

Or some people have said, "You shall be god."

Genesis 3:5b. knowing good and evil. (KJV)

"You'll know good and evil." In other words, "you're going to have knowledge that you've never had before. You're going to have your mind opened up to examine things and understand things that you can't understand right now."

Genesis 3:6. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food [Yes, it was.], and that it was pleasant (KJV)

The Hebrew word for "pleasant" means "a desire." It was desirable.

Genesis 3:6b. *[desirable] to the eyes and a tree to be desired to make one wise, (KJV)*

The Revised English Bible says, "It is a tree desired for the knowledge it could give." Special knowledge it could give.

Then when she saw all that—it was pleasant to look at and if she ate it she would know knowledge that she did not have before—

Genesis 3:6 continued. *she took of the fruit thereof, and ate, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he ate [also]. (KJV)*

So undoubtedly Satan when he came across to Eve was very smooth, very soft. "Hey, I'm your friend. I'm looking out for you. But I got to tell you, you're being deceived. And here is the truth." You know very appealing in that way.

And so she took the fruit thereof and she ate and also gave it unto Adam. And it says, "she gave also unto her husband with her." Now, that doesn't necessarily mean that Adam was with her when Satan said what he said. She could have eaten of the fruit and then taken the fruit to Adam. Or she could have not eaten of the fruit at that moment and walked into Adam's presence, told Adam what happened, then she ate and then gave it to Adam. One of these days we'll find out. That sequence of events is not totally clear. It's not really relevant to the story.

The point is that they were given a choice. They were given a choice of what to do. Were they going to obey God? Or were they going to obey Satan? In other words, obey somebody other than God. (And we're going to see that that somebody other than God can come in a multiple of forms.) But they had this choice. They were at a crossroads. They could walk down the path of total submission and obedience to God or they could walk down the path of deciding for themselves right from wrong. And it was appealing because look at the knowledge you can receive; look at this new wisdom you can have.

Now let's stop here and consider what happened. God spoke directly to the man, but probably not to the woman. Again, this is speculation, but the Scriptures seem to indicate that. God spoke to the man about what to eat and what not to eat, but didn't speak directly to the woman. Satan—again, a bit of speculation—but the indication is Satan spoke to the woman and the man was not present.

Now what happened then is something that we're going to develop some lessons about this, but the fact is they didn't think; they didn't analyze; they didn't discuss; they just ate. They just did it. They didn't think. They didn't analyze. They didn't discuss. They just acted on selfish desire. They didn't do any mental processing. They saw it was good. It was appealing and they ate. Doesn't look like there was a great length of time between the time Satan talked to them and the first bite was taken. It happened very quickly. In the end they did what was pleasing to them.

Let's go to 1 John 2 and verse 16. If you have a marker, just keep it there in Genesis. But we know the Scripture 1 John 2 and verse 16, but this verse applies directly to the situation, the events in the Garden of Eden. 1 John 2 and verse 16, John tells us:

1 John 2:16. For all that is in the world, (KJV)

Now that means anything other than God. All that's in the world! And we understand this is not God's world. This is Satan's world. When it says the "world" that means all that has nothing to do with God, that is not part of God's way, God's plan, God's Law.

1 John 2:16. For all that is in the world [anything other than God],

Now notice this. First:

1 John 2:16b. the lust of the flesh, (KJV)

Now what does the Genesis account say? The lust of the flesh—it was good for food.

It was desirable to look at—the lust of the eyes—pleasant to the eyes.

So that fruit fulfilled those two qualifications—lust of the flesh and lust of the eyes.

The third and the pride of life—well, what were they told? It was desirable to make you wise. That's pride. "I will now know more than others. I will now know more than I knew before." And so there's a certain amount of pride in that.

So the fruit of that Tree fulfilled all three of these—lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.

Now we understand that Mr. Armstrong taught many, many times that Scripture is dual. There's a physical application. There's a spiritual application. Stuart talked about that in his sermonette. Scripture is dual. We have to keep that in mind.

Now physically, the apple was very appealing. It was very appealing on several different levels, physically. But spiritually, it was also appealing to the carnal mind because the concept of choosing for oneself was also pleasant. "I get to choose. I get to make decisions. I get to decide what's good and bad." That's very appealing to the carnal mind.

The concept of submitting to the carnal mind is abhorrent. The carnal mind is not subject to the laws of God neither indeed can be. The carnal mind does not want to submit. The carnal mind wants to exalt the self and make decisions for the self. And in this case, decide what is good and what is bad for the self.

And in that sense, it was emotionally and spiritually appealing to those two. Therefore, they chose to decide for themselves what was good and what was bad.

Now let's go back to Genesis chapter 3 and see that the minute they took of that fruit everything changed. Everything changed! And we're going to see that when we embark on sin or a course of sin after knowing the truth, everything changes also. Genesis 3 verse 7.

Genesis 3:7. *And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed [some] fig leaves together, (KJV)*

The King James says "aprons". That just means things to wrap around your midsection.

Genesis 3:8. *And they heard the voice of the [Eternal] in the garden in the cool of the day: (KJV)*

The word "cool of the day," it's a phrase meaning when the wind comes, the breeze, the cool breeze comes. And so undoubtedly it was a pleasant time of day, nice cool breeze. There was fruit hanging from the trees. There was every reason to be happy, but they weren't. They weren't happy and their behavior changed.

Genesis 3:8b. *and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the [Eternal among] the trees of the garden. (KJV)*

They'd never done that before. They were just open. They were naked, both of them, right in front of God. No big deal. And God was there, present in the garden. There was a beginning of a relationship. And then after this, everything changed. They went and they hid themselves.

Genesis 3:9. *And the [Eternal] God called unto Adam, and [He says], Where [are you]? 10) And he said, I heard [Your] voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. (KJV)*

Now where did that come from? Where did that attitude come from? Where did the attitude of wanting to hide from God and run away from God come from? Where did that happen?

Verse 11:

Genesis 3:11. *And he said, Who told [you] that [you were] naked? (NKJ)*

And, of course, God knew that immediately. And He said:

Genesis 3:11b. *[Have you] eaten of the tree, [that] I commanded [you] that [you shouldn't] eat? (NKJ)*

God knew what happened.

Genesis 3:12. *And the man said, (KJV)*

Now notice this!

Genesis 3:12b. *The woman whom [You gave] me, she gave me the tree, (KJV)*

So what Adam was doing here was, by extension, blaming God! "You gave me this woman. You're the one that gave her to me." So by extension, he's saying, "It's your fault. It's not my fault."

And then in verse 13:

Genesis 3:13. *And the LORD unto the woman, What is this [you've] done? And the woman said, (KJV)*

Guess what she said? "Oh, I'm so sorry." No. She said"

Genesis 3:13b. *[This] serpent [this serpent over here, he] beguiled me, (KJV)*

The King James says. The word "beguiled" in the Hebrew means to deceive.

Genesis 3:13 continued. *[He deceived] me, and I [ate it]. (KJV)*

So the man blamed God. The woman blamed Satan. And neither one of them took responsibility for what they did! Neither one of them! And that is part and parcel of human nature to this very day. People do not want to take responsibility for their own actions. That's a sermon in itself and working on one down the road. But that is one of the key points of human nature is not taking responsibility and blaming others.

Now this pattern has continued down through history. This pattern of walking away from God, hiding from God, disobeying God, and then blaming everybody else for the consequences is a pattern that started in that garden and is absolutely present today.

We have to look no further than remember Israel wanted a king. We won't turn there, but 2 Samuel 8. And when Samuel was old and his sons weren't following God. And then the people got upset and they came and said, "Make us a king to judge us like all the other nations!" That's what they wanted. And Samuel was really upset about it and he went to God about it. And God said, "They haven't rejected you. They've rejected ME!" In other words, "They're walking away from Me!" Just like Adam and Eve hid in the garden, the people of ancient Israel walked away from God.

There was a distance there because they were sinning. And God said, "They haven't rejected you. They've rejected Me that I would not reign over them!" And they did not want to submit to God. They wanted to choose for themselves who

was going to rule over them. They wanted to choose what kind of government they had, would have.

And it's true to this very day. And modern Israel today is deciding for itself what is right and what is wrong. And we are suffering as a result. Israel today, modern Israel today, is deciding that homosexuality is acceptable. "It's an alternate lifestyle. It's just as valid as a non-homosexual lifestyle."

Modern nations are deciding that adultery is okay. "That's alright. It's not a reason for divorce anymore. It's not a crime or anything like that." People deciding the United States, modern Israel, is deciding today that pre-marital sex is, in fact, not wrong, it's desirable. "You've got to try it out before you get hitched." Or something like that. Or "you just don't worry about getting hitched and just cohabit together. "Pre-marital sex is fine."

Deciding that wives should not submit to their husbands! Can you imagine today if you took a survey of the average woman in the United States, "Would you submit to your husband? Should you submit to your husband?" People would laugh at you!

Look how far we've come deciding for ourselves what is right and what is wrong!

Deciding that "situation ethics" applies! Situation ethics means in different situations different laws apply. There are no absolutes like in the Ten Commandments. "Sometimes it's okay to kill." My Presbyterian minister told me that as I was going into the military. Yes, it's justifiable. It's okay. There's justifiable murder. Or sometimes it's okay to lie depending on the circumstances. Or it's okay to commit adultery depending on the circumstances." That's situation ethics. Men decide for themselves what is right and what is wrong.

Deciding that drugs are an alternative lifestyle! "Drugs are okay. A little marijuana never hurt anybody. Heroin every once in a while's okay. Have a little meth. Crank your head around. Open your eyes. LSD! That's alright! People decide. If that's what they want to do, that's okay."

Deciding to throw God and the Bible out of the classroom! "Oh, we can't have that! We've got to be totally neutral here. We've got to be totally secular here. We can't have God—we don't even know if God exists anymore! So why should we put that in the classroom?"

Deciding to become a secular nation and people not based on religion. Not based on a Creator. Not based on immutable laws, but just based on man's way of doing things. Based on the Constitution, a human document. Or based on what Congress says, human writings. Or based on what the local city says is right and wrong, based on their view of right and wrong.

Deciding that using God's name in vain is cool. You can't go on television; you can't walk down the street. In five minutes you will hear God's name used in vain. And people do it just blatantly, deciding for themselves that the Commandments don't apply.

Deciding that materialism is an idol, making materialism an idol. The guy that wins at the end of the day is the guy that has the most toys. That's rank materialism—putting material things in front of God, putting physical things in front of spiritual matters.

Deciding that power, making power an idol. Many people today—politicians, corporate leaders—power is the thing. Control of people is the thing and that is their idol.

Deciding that personal vanity is their idol. People get their bodies completely made over. I won't go into the details, but you know what I'm talking about. Head to toe! Get their bodies made over for personal vanity. That is their god.

And so what happened in the Garden of Eden was just the tip of the iceberg. It has continued down generation after generation, millennia after millennia until we have it just in our face today. And all of this is just a continuation of the incident of the Two Trees.

So given that, let's ask ourselves: "What are the lessons we need to learn from this?" God doesn't do anything randomly. God doesn't just throw something in the Bible just on a whim. There's a reason for it.

First Point:

We're going to have Seven Lessons. We have to understand this. We have to start at the beginning.

1. The Two Trees, the examples of the Two Trees, are there for examples for us today!

We can't lose sight of that fact. This is not some quaint story for young children or naïve adults. Yet the world would think so. "It's just a quaint—it's just a fairytale. Anybody who believes that Adam and Eve literally lived are just naïve. They're not in the modern world!" Yet two hundred years ago in this country people believed it—solidly believed it. Shows you how far we've come.

And this is not some fable a doddering old man became fixated upon, as some people accused Mr. Armstrong of doing. "Oh, he's getting old and he just kind of goes back to the same old story. He's losing it a little bit." And I don't believe that for one minute! I believe there was a purpose in it! And I believe he was absolutely right. "I'll stop preaching it when you start getting it!" And we don't get it even to this day. The Two Trees are there for our examples today.

Let's go to 1 Corinthians 10 and verse 11. I'll read it out of the New King James. Very familiar Scripture! Now let understand, the Old Testament they had. The New Testament had not been written yet. 1 Corinthians 10 verse 11 out of the New King James:

1 Corinthians 10:11. Now all these things happened to them (NKJ)

Now the context is referring to Old Testament Israel, but in general it refers to all of the writings that were available at that time, which we call the Old Testament.

1 Corinthians 10:1. *Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our (NKJ)*

Meaning in that day not long after Christ died.

1 Corinthians 10:1b. *our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages have come. (NKJ)*

And here a little less than 2,000 years later, the end of the age is a lot closer for us than it was for them! So this means it's doubly important because these are examples for us as we approach the end of the age. And the account of Adam and Eve is there for our learning. Not just some bedtime story.

This is why we need to study the Bible daily. Every day we must study the Bible because we know—we don't turn there—2 Timothy 2 and verse 16. "All Scripture is" what? The NIV says, "It is God-breathed and is profitable for instruction or training in righteousness."

And so this example that we're covering today is breathed from God. It is true and it is there for our learning. It is there for our instruction. So let's make sure we understand that. In these end times we need to learn more than ever from the example of Adam and Eve, because, as I said, it is continued and amplified down through the centuries.

So the First Point:

I. The Two Trees are here for our example today!

The Second Point that we have to understand is:

II. God has allowed each and every one of us a choice.

He has given each and every one of us the opportunity to choose. We have a fork in the road just like Adam and Eve had a fork in the road. We have a fork in the road every minute of every day.

Let's go to Deuteronomy 30 and look at verse 19. Moses, at the end of his life, looking out over into the Promised Land—he wasn't allowed to go there—he was giving instruction to the nation of Israel as they would go into the Promised Land. And notice what he said. This is very important! Deuteronomy 30 and verse 19, he says:

Deuteronomy 30:19. *I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, (KJV)*

He says, "You watch out. I am setting this date as a record because of what I'm going to say to you." He says:

Deuteronomy 30:19b. *that I have set before you [through God] (KJV)*

"I have set before you." And this applies to us today.

Deuteronomy 30:19b. *I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: (KJV)*

He says, "You have the option of going either way." But he says, "Therefore, do you want life or do you want death? Do you want to be blessed or do you want to be cursed?"

Deuteronomy 30:19 continued: *therefore choose life, that both [you] and [your] seed [after you] may live: (KJV)*

Stuart was talking about the Commandment to honor your father and mother. And there were blessings associated with that. And Moses is saying here, "I'm setting before you two lifestyles," as we would say today. "Following God or following your own nose. Following God who tells us how we should live or you decide for yourself. It's a choice. And it's set before you this day. But if you choose life, you and your seed will live. Not only physically—blessings physically—but also eternally blessed with life."

Now if we choose Satan's way—which is our own way—guess what happens? We are cursed.

Notice what happened to Adam and Eve. Let's go back to Genesis 3 now and verse 17. Notice Adam's curse based on the decision that he made. Genesis 3 and verse 17:

Genesis 3:17. *And unto Adam he said, Because [you have listened] unto the voice of [your] wife, and [have] eaten of the tree, which I commanded [you], saying, [You shall] not eat of it: cursed is the ground for [your] sake; (KJV)*

Now prior to that remember in the garden the trees were there and the fruit was hanging. All he had to do was walk up and pluck the fruit. He didn't have to work for that. The implication being that if he had made the right choice, human beings would not have to spend as many hours as human beings spend in providing food for themselves. It would be right there.

He says:

Genesis 3:17b. *in sorrow [shall you] eat of it all the days of [your] life; (KJV)*

In sorrow, why? Because he was now in Satan's world! This was Satan's world. This wasn't His world. And you're going to suffer as a result. He said, "You're

going to eat this fruit of your own labor and you're going to be sorrowful for all the days of your life."

Genesis 3:18. *Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to [you]; (KJV)*

They hadn't existed at that point!

Genesis 3:18b. *and [you shall] eat the herb of the field; 19) In the sweat of [your] face [you shall] eat bread, (KJV)*

Indicating that that much sweat was not necessary in God's world. You didn't have to get behind a mule or an ox and a plow and just wear yourself out. And you're dead at age forty or forty-five or fifty. Wouldn't have had to have been that way!

He says:

Genesis 3:19. *In the sweat of [your] face [you shall] eat bread, till [you] return unto the ground; for out of it [you were] taken: for dust [you are], and unto [the] dust [you're going to] return. (KJV)*

So from that point on, man's whole life is spent in labor and toil. And you look at 80% of the world today, Africa, South America, China, and the prime focus of most people is where they're going to get their next meal, where they're going to find food, how they're going to survive the winter. And it didn't need to be that way!

And it's my personal belief—this is just speculation on my part—but at that moment, that's when God created mosquitoes. Ha ha! That's when God created insects that bite. Because all of a sudden, He just withdrew the blessings and now man had to struggle and had to fight. Whereas before, he wouldn't have done so, wouldn't have had to do so.

Now notice Eve's curse. Genesis 3 and verse 16, He said:

Genesis 3:16: *Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply [your] sorrow (KJV)*

Again, why? Because she was in Satan's world and God knew how it would evolve down through the millennia. He would understand. He knew. He planned it. He knew what human nature run amuck would lead to. He knew what Satan's influence over thousands of years in the human mind would lead to.

He says:

Genesis 3:16b. *I will greatly multiply [your] sorrow and [your] conception; in sorrow [you shall] bring forth children; (KJV)*

Because the children were coming up in Satan's world and they were going to be influenced by Satan and by the world. And when we do the Blessing of Little

Children—we had one last Sabbath and then we had one at the Feast—moms and dads know that they're bringing their children up into a horrible world. And they try to do everything they can to shelter their children from the realities of this world. That's the sorrow that God's talking about.

And He says:

Genesis 3:16 continued. *and [your] desire shall be to [your] husband, (KJV)*

Not to God, but to your husband because they had rejected God. They didn't want to follow God. So her desire rather than be to God was to her husband.

Genesis 3:16 continued. *and he shall rule over [you]. (KJV)*

Now the same is true today as with them and with ancient Israel. Because you remember Joshua at the end of his days—we read Moses' instruction at the end of his days—remember Joshua said to the people before he would die, he says, "Choose you this day whom you will serve." You know, "Choose whether you want to serve the gods that these people worship in the Promised Land. If you want to follow them and take wives and follow their gods, you choose. Or whether you're going to follow God Almighty," he says, "you choose. But as for me and my house, we're going to serve God."

And we have a choice just like Adam and Eve had a choice. And several times a day if you think back into your life—and it's true in my life—several times a day, we face those Two Trees. Every day we face those Two Trees. Am I going to follow God or am I going to do what I want to do? Am I going to watch the TV or am I going to study? Am I going to tell a little lie to maybe advance my career a little bit? Or am I going to tell the truth? Every day we come up to those crossroads. Those are the same crossroads they have and we have choices to make. Which way will it be? Will it be God's way? Or will it be our way?

And Adam and Eve are a testament to the end result of making the wrong choices. Their end is a testament to that. So let's not forget that. God allows all of us to choose. And the example of Adam and Eve is what happens when you make a bad choice, you make the wrong choice. And they made a choice that shut out the Tree of Life for all but the firstfruits.

The Third Point, this is something that they completely blew. And this is something that we need to understand today.

III. We must think things through to their end result.

We have a choice to make. We must think it through to the ultimate end. I have to make a decision here. What is the ultimate end of it? And we have to go through the steps and see what the ultimate end is. Adam and Eve did not do that.

They were presented with a choice. Now think of this. God, their Creator, I mean Adam knew God created him. And God said, "You can eat of everything except this one tree. Just don't eat this one tree."

And then this being, this other being, comes that wasn't there in the beginning, didn't create Adam. This other being says, "Oh, no. It's okay to eat this tree. God's not being fair with you. He's not being honest with you. He doesn't want your mind opened." And so Adam had this choice.

Now let's stop and analyze this just for a second. When I said earlier, "They didn't think. They didn't analyze." Now when Satan came to Eve and said what he said, and then she came to Adam. Hopefully—maybe she had eaten it, maybe she hadn't. But before she ate, she should have thought or the two of them together should have thought.

Why didn't they stop and say, "Okay, we know God created Adam. We know God created me, Eve, out of his rib. And He told us not to do this. And then, this other being, this snake or this enemy or this Leviathan has said, 'Well, no.' he told us something different."

So why didn't they go back to God and ask? Why didn't they go back to God and say, "Look, God, we're getting two different opinions here." They at least could have gone and said to God, "God, tell us what to do. What's happening here? What's going on?" They didn't even do that. They never sought any counsel. They never sought God's opinion. They had new information now with this being here. Why didn't they go to God and ask?

Because human nature doesn't want to do that! They just acted on their selfish desire.

Now ask yourself, how many times have we done that? I've done it quite a few times!

You come up with a situation and you could stop and think and analyze. Okay, well, what does the Scripture say about this? What does God say about this? Or give me some time to pray about this. No, but my mind or my body wants this. And so, instead of stopping and analyzing and thinking it through, we just do it! And we've all been there and we've all done that. And that's exactly what Adam and Eve did.

Therefore, we must, especially as we get closer to the end time, see the end result of any action we take. Where is this action going to lead? Where is this decision going to take me? We can't just look at this little situation through soda straws. We have to be able to have God's vision and look down the road and see the consequences of the decisions that we make every day of our lives.

Proverbs 29 and verse 18, let's turn there. Proverbs 29 and verse 18, we're just going to read the beginning of verse 18. This verse generally we apply to the Kingdom and having a vision of the Kingdom, but I think that's only half the story

for this verse. We don't generally apply it to what we're talking about today. Proverbs 29 and verse 18, it says:

Proverbs 29:18. Where there is no vision, the people perish: (KJV)

And generally and I've applied it in the past talking about the Kingdom. We have to have our mind on the Kingdom and our vision on the Kingdom, which is absolutely true. But also we have to have the vision of where our decisions are going to lead us. Where does this decision take me down the road? Not just today, but in the future. It's equally applicable to the vision of the consequences of the decisions we make today.

And if we do not see the end result of our decisions, we will perish. Just like Adam and Eve perished physically. They could have had eternal life, but they perished physically because they didn't think through the consequences of the decisions that they made. They just reacted. They didn't consult with God. They just reacted. And look where it led them!

And so as we are in the end days—I don't think there's any question about that—unlike Adam and Eve we must be able to foresee the end result of the decisions we make and the result of everything we think, of everything we do, of every action we take. We must be able to look down the road and see where that takes us. If it takes us closer to God, that's one thing. If it takes us away from God, then shame on us. But look down the road! See what the end result is. Adam and Eve didn't do that and it's a pregnant lesson for us today.

That leads us now to the Fourth Lesson we can learn.

VI. Not asking for or seeking God's counsel or seeking God's will will lead us to disaster.

If we don't seek God's will, if we don't seek God's counsel, if we don't seek wise counsel, we are heading for a train wreck. And I think we've all been there and we've all done that! Sometimes we just knee jerk reaction, made a decision, didn't think it through, didn't seek counsel, didn't go into the Bible, didn't fast or study or pray about it. And we had a train wreck down the road.

What did Christ say—we won't turn there—but in Matthew 7 verse 7, He says, "Ask and it shall be given to you. Seek, and you shall find. Knock and the door will be opened to you." And when we get down on our knees and ask God for wisdom, we're asking, we're seeking.

Now Adam and Eve didn't do that. They didn't pray to God. They didn't go to God. They didn't seek His counsel. They just reacted based on physical lust, physical desire, and physical pleasure.

We're in Proverbs 29. Let's go to Proverbs 12 and verse 15. We all need to recognize this and obey this and follow this wisdom. Proverbs 12 and verse 15:

Proverbs 12:15. The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: (KJV)

They thought they were right. "Hey, it's pleasant. It's going to give us wisdom. Let's eat right now!"

Proverbs 12:15b. *but he that [listens] unto counsel is wise. (KJV)*

Somebody should have said, one of the two of them should have said, "Whoa! Let's pull the reins up here. Let's stop before we go jumping into this thing! Now remember God's the Creator. Who is this other guy? What credibility does he have? We know God created us. Why don't we go ask Him? Let's see what He says?" And that didn't happen. Just didn't happen!

And the same attitude is here today among God's people in the Laodicean Era of God's Church. Revelation 3 and verse 17, we know it by heart. What does God say about us today? He says, "The Laodicean Era says, 'I am rich. I am increased with goods.'" But what? "I have need of nothing! I don't need anybody to tell me what to do. I don't need to seek counsel. I don't need to look into God's Word. I'm going to do what I want to do." That's the attitude!

Now look at Luke chapter 12. Christ understood this. And it applies more today than it did when Christ uttered these words. Luke 12 verses 45 through 47, Christ is talking primarily about us today.

Luke 12:45. *But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord [delays] his coming; (NKJ)*

And boy, when I came in the Church in the early to mid-sixties, everybody just knew it was 1972. They'd stake their life on it! And here we are today. My Lord has delayed His coming, if you pinned it on 1972.

He says, "If he says this in his heart." Not even openly, but in his heart.

Luke 12:45b. *My lord [delays] his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, (NKJ)*

In other words, treat people in an unchristian manner, being carnal.

Luke 12:45 continued. *and to eat and drink, and to be [with the] drunken; (NKJ)*

You don't have to just eat and drink yourself. You can just be with them. And "the drunken" can not only include physically—people who drink too much and party too much—but what does Revelation say? The nations are drunk with the wine of the Beast. And it's basically saying, "Go back into the world." Eat and drink and to be drunken—to go back into the world. And guess what God says, Christ says?

Luke 12:46. *The lord of that servant will come in a day when he [looks] not for him, and an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him [asunder], and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers. (NKJ)*

It was as though they never believed the Truth!

Luke 12:47. *And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and [did not prepare] himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. (KJV)*

So this Fourth Point: We have to seek God's will.

And one thing you learn after being in the Church for decades and decades and decades. You learn finally! Thickheaded, slow learners that we are and I am probably the worst! It took me twenty-five years to finally get it through my head that my will doesn't account for anything! My will is totally irrelevant and unimportant. What I need to do is seek God's will. I need to put my will aside and make it so far down the list that I don't even think about my will. I want to do what God wants me to do. I know then it will lead to success.

But if I try to insert my will into the equation, I will get off track and go somewhere where I shouldn't be. And we need to understand that. When we do God's will, God is behind us and God hears us and answers our prayers, as many Scriptures say. But if we do not seek God's will, then we're on our own. We don't have God's backing. We don't have God's blessing. And we are on our own. We're out there swinging in the wind.

And I've been there and you've been there. And as the days get closer to the end, we don't want to do that anymore. We can't! We must seek God's will.

Adam and Eve are a testament to the fact that human nature does not want to seek God's will, human nature wants to do what it wants to do. And that comes from Satan. So let's understand this Fourth Point. In everything we must seek God's will and not our own will. That is a key error that Adam and Eve made.

The Fifth Point:

V. God does not intervene to stop a bad decision.

God does not intervene to stop a bad decision. When they were ready to take the bite of the apple, God could have walked in on the situation. He could have walked up to Satan and walked up to Eve and walked up to Adam and said, "Maybe we should have a talk before you decide." But He didn't do that. He didn't do that.

And there's a message there. If we decide to go our own way, if we decide to make our choices, God is not going to stop that. God's not going to intervene to stop a bad decision. Look at Proverbs chapter 1. We're going to read verses 30 and 31. This is the very beginning of Proverbs and it's an indictment against going our own way. Proverbs 1 verse 30, notice what God is saying through Solomon—very first sentence!

Proverbs 1:30. *They would [have] none of my counsel: (KJV)*

That applies directly to Adam and Eve! "They didn't want My counsel. They didn't ask for My counsel. They didn't seek My counsel."

Proverbs 1:30b. they despised all my reproof. (KJV)

And look at the Bible is filled with admonitions on how to live life and the United States is just going opposite to today. Canada is going opposite. The UK is going opposite.

"Therefore," verse 31 the big "Therefore"—because they would have none of My counsel."

Proverbs 1:31. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, (KJV)

God says, "I'm going to let you make the bad decision. I'm going to let you suffer as a result of bad decisions. You're going to be cursed. You're not going to be blessed."

He goes on to say:

Proverbs 1:31b. and be filled with their own devices. (KJV)

The King James says. That's translated seven times in the Hebrew. This is the only time it's translated "devices." Every other time it says "counsel."

"Therefore"—I'm reading verse 31 again:

Proverbs 1:31. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own [counsel]. (KJV)

"Not My counsel, their counsel!"

So let's understand that God is not going to intervene. Now I learned this lesson in the first year I was in the Church.

I worked in a retail business, in the stereo business in Detroit. And I watched—this time of the year the sun goes down early there also—and I watched every Sabbath and got out of the building before sundown. But this one preparation day, I don't know what happened. I got tied up or I wasn't thinking clearly. And all of a sudden I looked at my watch and then I looked out the window and it was like three or four minutes before sundown. And it just hit me like a thunderbolt! Man, I dropped everything. And I ran out to my car. It was parked on a side street. And I looked out to the west and the sun was just above the horizon. I didn't break the Sabbath, but it was awfully close! And I just plopped in the car and heaved this sigh of relief. And I thought, "Wow!"

But then the thought occurred to me because in the back of my mind I thought that if I broke the Sabbath, a lightning bolt would come out of the sky and just

fry me to a cinder. And we all had that fear, especially when you first come into the Church.

And I thought, "What would have happened if I was five minutes late instead of five minutes early?" And the thought occurred, the light bulb went on, and the realization occurred, "Nothing would have happened." God wouldn't have stopped it. God wouldn't have fried you. And if you want to be late next Sabbath, He'll let you. And if you want to be ten minutes late the Sabbath after that, He'll let you. And if you want to work half the Sabbath, He will let you.

God will not intervene to stop a bad decision. And that scared me even worse! Because you knew God would just watch you go into the ditch and He would not intervene and stop us from doing that if we choose to do that! Now if we appeal to God and ask for help, yes, He will intervene. But if we're, as they say today, hell-bent on going to the grave, then God will allow us to do that.

If we allow ourselves to pursue sin, look what happens. We separate ourselves from God. We won't turn there, Isaiah 59 verses 1 and 2. We know the Scripture. "God's hand is not shortened that it cannot save. His ear isn't too heavy for Him to hear." But what? "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God that He will hide His face from you" as Adam hid from God. He will hide His face from you and He won't hear! And that's the scary part! As I sat in that car, is I knew then that I could go off on a tangent and no lightning bolt's going to come down from the sky. God would allow it to happen, if those are the choices that I made.

Look at Galatians 6 and verse 7, a very important Scripture. Paul is saying, "Don't be deceived. Don't play games with yourself. Don't play games with God's Word. Don't play 'Church'." Galatians 6 and verse 7:

Galatians 6:7. Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man [or a woman sows], that shall he also reap. (KJV)

It was true with Adam and Eve. It is true today. Adam and Eve are a testament to the fact that God allows us to choose and He allows us to suffer the consequences of our bad decisions. So therefore, we should choose life!

The Sixth Point, this is probably the big one!

VI. We cannot put another being before God—any other being before God!

That's one of the Ten Commandments. We can't put anything before God. Adam and Eve did just that. Their Creator was right there and they put another being, who wasn't their Creator, who wasn't part of the creation process, they put him in front of their Creator. That's the big lesson from Adam and Eve! We cannot do that today especially as we get closer to the end.

If we put anything in front of God, that's idolatry. We cannot do that. But we do that today in the greater Church of God. We do it.

Some people put what a man says in front of what God says. Some people follow a human leader before they follow God's Word. I know people who study the writings of humans more than they study the Bible and they only study the Bible as it appears in a booklet that they read. Now who comes first—the writings of the human or the writings of God? And yet, I know people today. I know names. They study the Bible out of a booklet. And if that isn't idolatry in that sense, I don't know what is.

They must follow a man. Some people follow a man because they don't trust God to lead them. They don't trust God to take care of them in a Place of Safety. They don't trust God to lead them in the right direction. They look to a man, to follow a man.

And some people today in the greater Church put themselves before God—their wishes, their desires—even though it contradicts what's in the Scripture.

And some today in the greater Church selectively obey some Scriptures while ignoring others so that they can do what they want. I've seen that! I've seen it in leadership. I've seen it within the Brethren. They selectively ignore certain Scriptures so they can do what they've already decided they're going to do.

Look at Revelation 21 and verse 8. We cannot ignore these Scriptures! This is the bottom line. Revelation 21 and verse 8, second to last chapter of the Bible, notice what we're told.

Revelation 21:8. But the fearful, (KJV)

That word has two meanings: fearful, but it also can mean "timid"—those who hold back.

Revelation 21:8b. [the] unbelieving, and the abominable, (KJV)

Zodhiates' says, "polluted with crimes" is the meaning of this word.

Revelation 21:8 continued. and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, (KJV)

You know what the Greek word, the root word for "sorcerers" is? It's *pharmakon*. That's where we get our modern English word "pharmacy." "Sorcerers" and it means a drug, or a spell-giving potion.

Some people are on drugs. I'm not saying for legitimate reasons like somebody's on insulin or something. But people take marijuana and they take who knows what else in their system to feel good.

He says, "Sorcerers are not going to inherit the Kingdom of God." Notice this and this is the most important thing!

Revelation 22:8 continued. idolaters, (KJV)

Anybody who puts anything in front of God is not going to be in the Kingdom of God! We have to learn that. And that is the prime lesson from Adam and Eve. They put another being in front of God and followed that other being and followed their own lusts. Therefore, they're putting themselves in front of God. And if we do that, we will not be in the Kingdom of God.

And it goes on to say:

Revelation 22:8 continued. and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which [burns] with fire and brimstone: which is the second death. (KJV)

The message here is we have to put God first in everything we do. Everything we do! And as we get older and more mature in the Church, God expects us to do that more and more in big things and in little things.

Seventh and Last Point:

VII. Today too many in the greater Church are deciding for themselves what is right and what is wrong.

That is absolutely true in the greater Church of God. All of God's people all over the world, they're deciding for themselves what is right and what is wrong. Let's go to Isaiah 58 and verse 11, a prophecy for today, a prophecy that covers the ministry, it covers church members. Isaiah 56 and verse 11, it says:

Isaiah 56:11. [Yes], they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand: (KJV)

Why?

Isaiah 56:11b. they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter. (KJV)

Selfishness! Hirelings! This applies to the ministry, but it also applies to everybody.

"They all look to their own way." And we've quoted Revelation 3 and verse 17 before. "I have need of nothing!" And there is a certain attitude among certain people that "Nobody's going to tell me what to do including God and His Word. I'm going to do what I think is right. I'm going to do that. And if you don't like it, tough." And that is a scary attitude to be in! It's a scary place to be.

Many today are compromising with the Sabbath. Doing things they ought not to do on the Sabbath.

Many have one foot into the world. Go to Church, go to Sabbath, Holy Days and all of that, but during the week they do things that are very worldly and very carnal.

Many self-righteously judge others and condemn others. Not looking at themselves, but throwing rocks at others. Many apply the Scriptures to everybody but themselves! Quick to point out other people's problems, but don't apply it to themselves.

Many, frankly, have thrown tithing out of the window.

Let's just use tithing as an example. How would we like to come up in the resurrection? Let's say we just threw tithing out of the window. We die. We come up in the resurrection. We open our eyes, the very first time and we are expecting to be in the air, rising up to meet Christ. But instead, we're standing on the ground and we're physical and the thing before us is this giant lake of fire. And we're standing there very confused because we thought we were going to be rising in the air with Jesus Christ to meet Jesus Christ.

And we look and say, "God, what's happening? "Why is this Lake of Fire here? What did I do? How did I disappoint you? Look what I've done. I've done this for you. I've done that for you," as the Scriptures say in Matthew 25—the sheep and the goats. "I've done all of this." And Christ, said, "No, you robbed me. You forgot to tithe." Malachi 3 and verse 8 says it very plainly. God says, "You have robbed me." And they say, "How did we rob you?" "Well, you've robbed me in tithes and offerings."

This is just one example. It could be applied to many others, but if we just think that we can decide for ourselves that "I can tithe or not tithe. That's my decision." Well, it is your decision, but that's not what God says. So we have to be very, very careful because in 1 Corinthians 6, let's look at verse 9 and 10. Again, another admonition and this is again is the bottom line like we read in Revelation 21. 1 Corinthians 6 verses 9 and 10, Paul is getting down to where the rubber meets the road so to speak. And he's saying, 1 Corinthians 6 verse 9, he says;

1 Corinthians 6:9. *Know [you] not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? (KJV)*

He says, "Don't you know that?" I mean is God playing games? Does God just wink at sin? He says:

1 Corinthians 6:9b. *[Don't be] deceived: [he says,] fornicators [those who have sexual intercourse outside of marriage], idolaters, nor adulterers, [those who are] effeminate, or abusers of themselves with mankind [homosexuals], (KJV)*

And there are Christian churches that say "Homosexuality is okay." They're ordaining ministers. They're ordaining bishops. They're ordaining their own priests that are homosexuals. They totally just decide for themselves what they're going to obey and not obey.

1 Corinthians 6:10. *Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. (KJV)*

Very plain! Very, very, very plain!

Too many, in the greater Churches of God today, compromise with God's Word. Too many are deciding for themselves what is right and what is wrong. And as the end approaches, we all need to tighten up on our commandment keeping. We really need to do that in every facet! We need to tighten up our commandment keeping, get closer to God, seek God's will in everything we do and not our own will.

So let's conclude. Let's try to wrap this up. What have we learned about the Two Trees?

We've learned that they're examples for us today. It applies directly to us today. It's not a fable. It's not a little fairytale. It applies to us today and God had a reason for putting that in the Bible.

God allows every one of us to choose. Every day we come to the fork in the road and we make choices if we're going to follow God or follow our own desires.

We have to think things through. When we're presented with decisions and choices, we have to think things through to the end result. We have to see where it leads. Does it lead to death? Or does it lead to life?

If we don't ask—if we don't seek God's will—we're heading for a disaster. And I've watched people just headlong they're going to do what they're going to do. And you know they're two trains coming and they're going to have a collision. It's just a matter of when how far down the track it's going to occur, heading for a disaster.

And understand that God is not going to intervene and stop us from making bad decisions because we learn—hopefully learn—that through a bad decision and through the suffering that we shouldn't do that again. We shouldn't do that again. And hopefully we learn and not repeat those sins and those mistakes before.

And the big lesson is we can't put anything in front of God. We have to seek God's will in everything we do. We have to make every thought a godly thought, every word a godly word, every deed a godly deed. That's what God wants of us and he's giving us the time to prove ourselves in that sense.

And then we have to realize, being in the Laodicean Era, that in the greater Church of God today there is a tendency of people to decide for themselves. Not decide based on God's Word, but just do what they're going to do. And that is exactly what Adam and Eve did and nothing has changed in that regard. And we can't let that happen to us! We just can't as we get closer and closer to the end time.

Now let's understand, Adam and Eve didn't have God's holy spirit. They will come up in the one hundred year period and they will have their chance. They will have their time.

We have God's holy spirit. We have that power that they did not have. Now God was with them in the garden, but He wasn't inside them. God is inside us. Christ is living in us. We have to allow Christ and the Father to live in us and motivate our thoughts and our actions.

But Adam and Eve show us what raw human nature is all about. If God isn't there, we decide for ourselves; we follow our own lusts of the eyes and the flesh and the pride of life.

So let's understand that every day we face the Two Trees. Every day we face the Two Trees. We're standing in front of those Two Trees every day. And let's understand that every day we choose in big things and in little things. And let's understand that through the power of God's spirit, if we exercise the power of God's spirit, then we can make the right choice, if we yield ourselves to God, if we put God first.

And as we near the end of Satan's rule on this earth, let's remember how important it is to choose the Tree of Life.