

CHRISTIANS ON CAMPUS

Friday Night Fellowship: The Tree of Life

How to Feast on the Tree of Life Through the Word

I. The Lord being the Spirit and the Word

- A. **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.
- B. **John 3:6** That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.
- C. **1 Cor. 15:45** So also it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living soul"; the last Adam *became* a life-giving Spirit.
- D. **2 Tim. 3:16** All Scripture is God-breathed and profitable for teaching, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness

II. Exercising our Spirit to Touch the Word

- A. **2 Cor. 3:6** Who has also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant, *ministers* not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.
- B. **2 Cor. 3:17** And the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

III. The written Word becoming the Living Word

- A. **Gal. 2:20** I am crucified with Christ; and *it is* no longer I *who* live, but *it is* Christ *who* lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the *faith* of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.
- B. **2 Cor. 3:6** Who has also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant, *ministers* not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

Group Study Excerpts

The Lord Being the Spirit and the Word

Christ by His death and resurrection became a life-giving Spirit. As food to us, as a feast to us, Christ is the life-giving Spirit. Our food is the Spirit.

The Spirit is abstract like the air, but the Word is concrete. In John 6:63 the Lord also said, "The words which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life." In our concept we always consider that the Word of God involves knowledge and teachings in letters. But the Lord told us that His words are spirit. The word of the Lord is spirit. Second Timothy 3:16 says that "all Scripture is God-breathed." This indicates that the Scripture, the Word of God, is the breath of God. Hence His Word is spirit, *pneuma*, or breath.

We should not consider the Scripture to be merely in letters. The Scripture is the breath of life. The words spoken by the Lord are spirit because the Lord Himself is the Spirit. Thus, whatever is breathed out of Him must be spirit. We have to change our concept. The word does not equal

knowledge but spirit. The words the Lord speaks to us are spirit, not knowledge, and all Scripture is the breath of God. The Lord Himself is in the Word, and He Himself is even called the Word. In the beginning was the Word, the Word was God (John 1:1), and God is Spirit (4:24). The Lord is the Word, and the Word is the Spirit.

A newspaper is composed of material in black and white, in letter only. When we read the newspaper, we must exercise our eyes to read and our mind to understand. But we cannot and should not deal with the Word of God in this way. The Word of God needs our eyes to read, but it is not for our eyes to read. It needs our mind to understand, but it is not for our mind to understand. The eyes are the members of the physical body, and the mind is the main part of the soul. But the Word is for our spirit to receive and digest. After we read and understand the Word, we have to exercise our spirit to take the Word. The Word is not for our eyes to read nor for our mind to understand but for our spirit to feed on. If we do not exercise our spirit while reading the Word, the Bible is the tree of knowledge to us and not the tree of life. The same Bible may be a book of knowledge to one person or a book of life to another person. Whether it is a book of knowledge or a book of life depends on what organ we use to deal with this book.

We have to deal with every verse of the Bible in this way. We read it by our eyes, understand it spontaneously by our mind, and deal with it by exercising the spirit to translate or transfer the written word into the living Word, which is Christ Himself. Never pray in a way to ask the Lord to help you do something. That is the wrong way. Instead, always take Him as the fulfillment of His word. Suppose you read John 15:12, which says that we have to love one another. Do not pray, "Lord, I have to love my brother. But, Lord, You know I am weak. Lord, help me to love." After this prayer you will make up your mind to love the brothers, and you will be exposed and see the failure. You have to expect nothing but failure. You may be successful for a short time, but eventually, you will fail. Even if you were successful, that would not mean anything, nor would it be worth anything.

When we read this word—"love one another"—we have to take the word to the Lord by exercising our spirit to pray, "Lord, You are the love to love my brother. I just open to You. Lord, come in to fill me with Yourself as the love to love my brother. You are the loving life." We will eventually change our prayer into praise. "Lord, praise You. You are not only my life but also my love." Thus, to love our brother is not a burden but a feast. It is not a suffering but an enjoyment. We enjoy the Lord when He is loving our brother through us. There is no need for us to make up our mind to love others. We just need to enjoy the Lord, and the Lord will love others through us. We will love so much, yet we will love unconsciously.

We have to change our way of reading this book. Always remember that we have to read with our eyes, understand with our mind, and receive and feed on the Word with our spirit by praying. Then day by day we will be nourished. Day by day the living Word will be made one with the written word, and day by day whenever we receive something of the written word, it will become the Spirit. It is the Word before us, but it will become the Spirit within us. When it becomes the Spirit, it becomes life. The words the Lord speaks to us are spirit and life. When the Word becomes the Spirit, it is life, and when it becomes life, it is the life supply, the food, that nourishes us.