



The Tenth Sunday after Trinity.

The Collect.

LET thy merciful ears, O Lord, be open to the prayers of thy humble servants; and, that they may obtain their petitions, make them to ask such things as shall please thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

8 And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. 9 And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. 10 And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. (Gen 2:8-10)

Usually, when we discuss types of Christ presented in the Old Testament, the subject is a man of God whose life experiences parallel, in some significant ways, the life of Christ. But there are other types that are reflected in significant phenomena of the Creation of God. One such significant phenomena is the Tree of Life which God planted in the midst of the wonderful Garden God planted eastward in Eden. Is it not wonderful how good things seem to originate in the East – the birth of Christ, the rising of the Sun, and that wonderful star of the evening and morning! ***For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be*** (Matt 24:27) The Garden of Paradise had its start in the East also. That Garden was a garden protected and enclosed. The Bride and spouse of Christ is also

such a Garden in our day. *A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.* (Song 4:12) Man could not forego his own sinful curiosity in avoiding the one sin against which the Lord had warned him. Adam forsook the love of His Creator in opting for the fruit of the **WRONG** Tree.

8 And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. 9 And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. The Lord created all things of great joy and benefit to the man that He had created, and He did so with the gossamer fabric of His immeasurable **LOVE**! We often only hear of the **TREE** in the midst of the Garden but there were, in fact, **TWO TREES** of note in the midst of the Garden. Those are **FRUIT-BEARING** Trees.

TREE OF LIFE: The fruit of the One Tree (the Tree of Life) is life, joy, and presence with God. From this Tree descends the families of all who love and honor the Lord Jesus Christ, for the Tree is a type of Christ. It was not destroyed with Adam's Fall, but was taken away from the access of man until the moment of God's own time of proper restoration. Man must be taught of the immense and eternal worth of the Tree of Life before he may have access to partake of that Tree and its fruits. How different would our present existence be had Adam chosen to eat of the Tree of Life (Christ) instead of the other Tree that represented Satan. Because Adam chose to know sin, he would be required to pay the full balance of sin. His life would change from a dweller in Paradise to a tiller of the soil. The earth would no longer be lush and green in abundance. Every edible plant would require Adam's care and labor to produce food. It is amazing, is it not, that Adam ignored that better Tree for that other adjacent Tree from which emanated the discordant voice of Satan? In disobeying God, Adam chose to exercise his own "Free Will" instead of obeying the will of God. We must remember that we cannot even 'will' to do good; but our free wills offer ample occasion to do bad. No matter how strong our resolve (in our human wills) to be righteous, **we sin in the next breath** – so free will can never afford a transport across those murky Jordan Waters that loom at the end of this life.

Christ is like that Tree in so many particulars that the typical qualities cannot be overlooked. The roots of a tree are deep and strong to find water and to anchor the tree. Christ is the root system and anchor for our souls. *Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.* (Heb 6:19-20) The water of life must be channeled to the living. These roots never fail of the Tree of Life. It seems that the thought never crossed Adam's mind to eat of that Tree of Blessing. His free Will could not comprehend, or appreciate, the benefit and meaning. The Free Will of Adam led, instead, in the direction of the Tree of Pride and Sin – Adam chose to listen to Satan over the Voice of His Maker! There are three men characterized by the Two Trees – the Man ON the Tree of Life (the Lord Jesus Christ), the man BEHIND the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil (Satan), and the man before the **wrong** Tree – Adam. Had Adam's WILL not led him to go to the unwholesome Tree, to stop before the Tree, and to then partake of its fruits, the narrative of our lives would have been starkly different, wouldn't it. Imagine a world with no disease, death, sorrow, want, or sin! Those are the benefits of which Adam deprived us and all of his issue by his WILLFUL sin!

But God has kept the Tree of Life for our benefit. He sent it among us to redeem us. It will surely be present in the Paradise of God, and we shall Behold Him! *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.* (Rev 2:7) Have you craved that Water of Life which is the Person of Christ. Would you have the pure River of God as a benefit? That Tree of Life which was on earth is now in Heaven. Christ who came down among us is now risen to the Right Hand of the Father. He was the promised Emmanuel! Shall we continue in self-will to follow after the cursed tree, or shall we be drawn by the Holy Ghost to that Tree of Life whose Door is that tree upon which our Lord suffered?

THE TREE OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL: What do you suppose possessed our ancient Mother Eve to arise and walk in the direction of the wrong tree? Did her imagination and curiosity get the better part of her? Was it the voice of the Holy Ghost that whispered to her, or was it some other? Was it her own desire to know more than she ought that caused her to arise? Was the condition of her heart far different from those hearts of the men who scorned the labors of Noah in building the Ark? *And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.* (Gen 6:5) Perhaps the heart of Eve had known NO SIN prior to her partaking of the fruit, but the inclination to sin was being born in an unhealthy desire. She arose, she went to the tree, she stopped before the tree, she listened to the voice of Satan at the tree, and engaged him in dialogue, and finally, she was beguiled (seduced or deluded). What DREW her? Was it an outside influence, or was it the free will of Eve that drew her to the tree? I aver that it was Eve's free will. A will that is free and apart from the will of God is a wild will. Was she forced by another will, or that corrupt will that is in mankind? God would not have created man, I believe, without a free will for to do so would have robbed the man of liberty, but that liberty that is true is the liberty belonging to a man or woman whose self-will has been surrendered to that *Mind which was in Christ Jesus.*