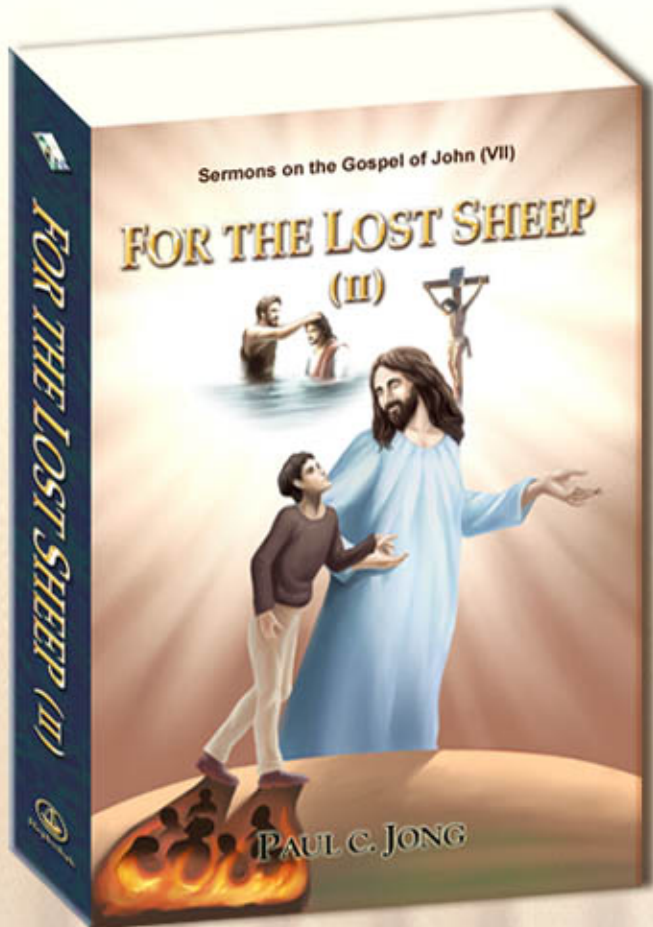




The New Life Mission



Sermons on the Gospel of John (VII)

FOR THE LOST SHEEP (II)



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The Work God Wants to Accomplish to Man

The work God wants to do is to make us into His children by making us born again through the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

People are first born as God's creations, but if we believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that Jesus gave and receive the remission of sins, we are born again as the children of God. This means that, after the Lord came and remitted all our sins, we who were blind could now obtain our sight. People are born as men of the flesh and are born again if they believe in their hearts in Jesus Christ's gospel of the water and the Spirit just as a larva becomes a cicada. And if they receive the remission of sins such that they are white as snow, they become the righteous who are the children of God.

In our everyday lives, we can come across water larvae becoming dragonflies, larvae on the ground becoming cicadas, and maggots becoming flies. There is likewise a way for people to be born again after being born on this earth. People become God's people by faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.



Sermons on the Gospel of John (VII)

FOR THE LOST SHEEP (II)

PAUL C. JONG

Hephzibah Publishing House

A Ministry of THE NEW LIFE MISSION
SEOUL, KOREA

Sermons on the Gospel of John (VII)
FOR THE LOST SHEEP (II)

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Preface



The Lord Jesus is God who saved you and me from all of our sins. We are saved from all of our sins by believing in Him because He is God. He created us because He is God, and because He is your and my God of salvation, all the things He did were of the Truth: He came to this earth in the flesh of man, was baptized, died on the Cross, was resurrected from the dead, ascended to Heaven, and afterwards said He would come again. He said, *“I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:6)*. That means that because the Lord Jesus is God, only He can lead you and me to the Kingdom of Heaven. Only God is really the Truth. Only God saved you and me from all sins, made us into His children, can send us to the Kingdom of Heaven, and can let us live in His Kingdom. That is what the Lord is saying.



Because we have been saved by believing in Jesus Christ, we shouldn't forget that He is the true God who has saved you and me from all our sins. We should never forget that God has saved us through the gospel of the water and the Spirit and thus made us into His children. Do you understand? If you do not have complete faith in this Truth, you will not be able to maintain your faith to the end. You may clearly believe in the last days that Jesus Christ is your Savior, but if you don't have faith that He is the same as God the Father but instead have weak faith that doesn't know the Truth, it is inevitable that you will fall because of your weaknesses every time Satan shakes you. You and I have been saved by faith because the Almighty God saved us through His almighty power and unfathomable love that are revealed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. We have been saved just by believing in this Truth in our hearts. If there is one thing needed in our salvation in addition to what the Lord has done for us, it is only that we have to believe. Is that true or not?

Jesus who saved you and me is the Almighty God with the same power as God the Father; I can't describe how perfect He is as God. He is truly the Master of life and the Savior who saved you and me from all sins and gave us new life. All that He has said is of the Truth. Our faith becomes firm when we believe in our hearts that God the Father and Jesus who has the same power became your and my Savior, saved us from sin, and made us into the people of God. And even if you are weak, you will not faint at the last day as long as your faith is firm. Because Jesus is God who has the same power as the Father and He saved you and me from all sins, and because you and I believe in Him and His power even though we are insufficient, we can stand firm against Satan and drive him back and carry out the will of the Lord by standing firm before Him to the end.

My fellow believers, do you understand what I am saying? It is extremely important. ☒



SERMON

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Contents



In Order to Make Us Know That the Lord Has Already Washed Away All Our Sins!

< John 13:1-17 >

“Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end. And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, to betray Him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. After that, He poured water into a basin and

began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded. Then He came to Simon Peter. And Peter said to Him, ‘Lord, are You washing my feet?’ Jesus answered and said to him, ‘What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this.’ Peter said to Him, ‘You shall never wash my feet!’ Jesus answered him, ‘If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.’ Simon Peter said to Him, ‘Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!’ Jesus said to him, ‘He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you.’ For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, ‘You are not all clean.’ So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, ‘Do you know what I have done to you? You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have



given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.”

Why Did Jesus Wash Peter’s Feet?

As you know well, Peter is the closest disciple of Jesus who made the clear confession of faith that he believed in the Lord as his Savior, the Son of God, and the King of kings, as he said, *“You are the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16)*. In the Words of today’s Scripture passage, Jesus said, *“What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this” (John 13:7)* while He was washing Peter’s feet. Here, we must contemplate why Jesus washed Peter’s feet and also why He said such things and look into the deep meaning of this.

Jesus already knew that Peter would deny Jesus three times in the future and commit sin against the Lord. Therefore, Jesus was washing Peter’s feet to free him from all the iniquities and sins that he would commit in the future. That is, the Lord washed Peter’s feet in order to teach Peter that He took even all the sins Peter would commit continually in the future. The Lord did this because it would be difficult to maintain the relationship between Peter and the Lord after the Lord ascends to Heaven if even the slightest sin remained in him. The Lord probably wanted to teach him this because he did not know the heart of Jesus who was washing Peter now. The Lord intended to teach the disciples through the real life experience because He already knew their hearts and that the disciples would commit sin. The Lord washed their feet beforehand because He did not want to leave anything uneasy in His relationship with all the disciples including Peter.

Dear fellow believers, it’s because we cannot share true fellowship with the holy Lord if there is



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anything uneasy in our relationship with the Lord because we who try to live the life as a disciple of Jesus commit sin before the presence of the Lord. It's because the fellowship with the Lord becomes distant when we have sin in our hearts. Therefore, the Lord washed the disciples' feet and taught them through such a real life experience in order to show them that the Lord has already cleansed all the sins of the disciples by the baptism He received. Jesus is the holy Creator and the Son of God the Father who came to this world in human flesh. Jesus is the Creator of all things, our God, and the Savior of you and me. Today, I want us to think deeply about the Word of Jesus, our Savior, who said, *"What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this"* (John 13:7).

If you have the faith of believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, you probably understand the Word of the Gospel of John chapter 13 very well. This account occurred before Jesus being crucified on the Cross after receiving the baptism. That Word

is a very important teaching to His disciples who were with Him as well as us who are living in this era. That is, through the Passover Supper, Jesus showed all the disciples what kind of faith they must have in order to resolve all the sins they commit throughout all their lives. Now, at the Passover Supper, after having the bread and the wine with the disciples, Jesus wanted to wash the feet of the disciples. Spiritually, the Lord did this to tell us, "Do not be deceived by the Devil. I already took all your sins upon Myself at the Jordan River by the baptism I received from John the Baptist." Therefore, Jesus said in the Gospel of John chapter 13, *"What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this"* (John 13:7).

Why Did Jesus Say This?

In today's Scripture passage, Gospel of John chapter 13 verse 1 records, *"When Jesus knew that*



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Away All Our Sins!

His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.” As this Word records, Jesus already knew that the time had come for Him to be crucified and ascend to God the Father. And He wanted to have the last supper with the disciples before dying on the Cross because He so loved His own disciples who would remain in the world. Therefore, it is written, “Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded. Then He came to Simon Peter. And Peter said to Him, ‘Lord, are You washing my feet?’ Jesus answered and said to him, ‘What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this’” (John 13:3-7).

However, at that time, Peter could not understand the Lord’s profound will as to why Jesus wanted to wash his feet. Peter did not understand that the Lord washed his feet beforehand because the Lord was concerned that he would commit sin in the future and would become a sinner who would not be able to come before the presence of God. By washing Peter’s feet, the Lord showed that He already cleansed all the sins that he would commit in the future. Jesus washed the feet of Peter and the other disciples before returning to the Kingdom of God because they could not but return to the state of sinners if He did not do this. Peter and the other disciples were able to understand such intentions of Jesus only after Jesus was resurrected from death. They were able to understand later the profound will of the Lord that said, “I have blotted out all your sins. I have blotted out even the sins you will commit in the future.” Also, Jesus did this so that they would not be lost to Satan the Devil due to their sins.



14 In Order to Make Us Know That the Lord Has Already Washed Away All Our Sins!

The Scriptures state that the intention of Jesus washing the feet of Peter like this was the truth of the water basin in the Tabernacle (Exodus 30:17-21). The priests were able to go before the presence of God to offer up the sacrifice by washing their hands and feet cleanly every day with the water from the bronze basin. God had established the law of salvation hidden in the secret of washing away the filth with the water of the bronze basin. Even in the New Testament era, it was God's intention to wash all the filth and all the sins of the disciples of Jesus and make them clean in the New Testament era like the water of the bronze basin of the Old Testament.

Like this "method of cleansing sins" in the Old Testament, our Lord gave the remission of all the sins of all sinners by cleansing their sins and receiving judgment by the baptism He received from John the Baptist and the blood of the Cross. Anyone who has received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit would know what important element of the cleansing of sins Jesus

is speaking of in today's Scripture passage. Before dying on the Cross after receiving the baptism according to the promise of the Old Testament, while having the Passover Supper, Jesus washed Peter's feet to teach the disciples that He cleansed even their personal sins perfectly at once.

The Lord was saying, "You do not know why I am washing your feet now. However, you will come to know in the future. You will come to know why I washed your feet if you realize the reason I received the baptism at the Jordan River." We will be free from sins eternally only if we know that Jesus saved us from all our personal sins by the account of washing Peter's feet. In order to be free from sins eternally, we must know that Jesus blotted out all the sins of us sinners through the baptism at the Jordan River and we must also understand the Lord's Word, saying, "It is finished" when He was crucified on the Cross. We must understand by the gospel of the water and the Spirit that the Lord carried away all the sins of this world once and for all. The Lord blotted



out all our sins once and for all by receiving the baptism from John the Baptist and carrying all our sins to the Cross and shedding His precious blood.

Dear fellow believers, examine carefully whether you have sin or not after believing in Jesus, and whether you now believe in Jesus correctly or not. If you have believed in Jesus correctly, you would not have sin by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Wouldn't you?

Jesus is God who created all things. God who watches over all things knew so well how Satan the Devil would deceive us the disciples of Jesus in the future. It is the deception of the Devil to make us not know that Jesus has resolved the problem of all our sins. Therefore, the disciples of Jesus had to know clearly that the Lord is their Savior who has taken all their sins without fail.

However, look at Peter's resolve in today's Scripture passage as he said, "*Lord, are You washing my feet?*" Peter had tremendous faith toward Jesus. He was a man of faith as he professed, "*You are the*

Christ, the Son of the living God." He actually confessed, "Lord, You are my God, my Savior, and the Son of God the Father." However, our Lord knew that even Peter who had such strong faith would commit sin in this world due to the weakness of the flesh after Jesus' death on the Cross, resurrection, and ascension to Heaven. Therefore, our Lord wanted to tell him that He resolved even all those sins. In other words, because the Devil would falsely assert that they are sinners whenever the disciples of Jesus commit sin and question why they do not have sin when they commit sin, the Lord washed the feet of the disciples in order to protect them from the Devil's attack. Like this, Jesus washed the feet of the disciples for the benefit of the disciples. Jesus took all their sins and all the sins of this world upon Himself already by receiving the baptism at the Jordan River just once from John the Baptist. Jesus wanted to make us all understand this fact.

Not only the disciples of Jesus but also you and I who live in this era now must know such Truth and



reconfirm it and not be ensnared by Satan. You can become the servants of God only if you have sure faith of receiving the salvation from all sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. If you were attacked by Satan because of not having such faith, you would not be able to become the servants of God who truly are apart from sin. Only the born-again who have received salvation from sins perfectly and are apart from sin can become the preachers of God's gospel. Only the saints have such qualification.

However, you are a slave of your flesh now, not a servant of God, if you do not have faith that is apart from sin at all. You can become the people of the Lord who do not have even a single sin only by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Although you have shortcomings even after receiving the remission of sins, you can give thanks to God always while living out your faith by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. In order to make us understand all the Truth of salvation, our Lord

said before washing Peter's feet, "*What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this.*"

Have you received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit? Have you believed with the correct understanding of the Truth that Jesus blotted out all your sins by receiving the baptism from John the Baptist and shedding His precious blood of the Cross? To you who have boldly answered, "Yes," I want to ask you again: "If we have received the remission of all the sins by believing in the Truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, can we become sinners again due to the sins we commit after receiving salvation?" No, we cannot become sinners again. You cannot become sinners again if you believe that the Lord has blotted out all your sins by His baptism and the blood of the Cross. Those who have become the righteous once by believing in the Lord's gospel of the water and the Spirit cannot become sinners again. If you are still distressed due to the sins you have

committed again after receiving the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, you must return to the Jordan River and believe that your sins have been passed over to the head of Jesus through the baptism He received in order to take all the sins of the world upon Himself for our salvation. There, you must ruminate the fact that Jesus took away all your sins once and for all by the baptism He received from John the Baptist and reconfirm that Jesus is your true Savior. Only then, your heart can dwell in the Truth. If you truly believe in Jesus as your Savior, you must know and believe that all your sins have passed over to the body of Jesus by the baptism He received from John the Baptist. No matter what situation you are in, you would never forget that you have become a child of God if you believed in the baptism, the death, and the resurrection of Jesus.

Dear fellow believers, we have become the righteous eternally and unchangingly by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit because the

Lord had done the righteous work that took the sins of the world upon Himself and paid off all those sins by shedding His blood. You and I and all the sinners of the world were able to receive salvation by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Are you still a real sinner even though you believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit? No, you are not. Are you really a righteous person? Yes, you are. Believe in the righteousness of the Lord. And give thanks to the Lord. Of course we commit sin even after receiving the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit because the flesh is weak, but Jesus took and shed blood for even those sins. We cannot but commit sin always. That is why Jesus took all the sins of the entire world once and for all by receiving the baptism from John the Baptist.

Why are we called the righteous instead of a sinner when we still commit such sins? It's because the Lord took away and shed blood on the Cross for even all the sins we commit due to our weakness



after receiving the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Because Jesus took even the sins all the people will commit until they die by His baptism, the sins have been blotted out and we become the righteous if we believe in the righteousness of Jesus. Jesus spoke of this by the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The disciples of Jesus probably could not practice discipleship of Jesus if the Lord ascended to Heaven without speaking of this Truth clearly.

The Implication of the Water Basin Recorded in the Old Testament Was Fulfilled in the New Testament

At the time, when Jesus wanted to wash his feet, Peter refused, saying, “How can you wash my feet. You shall never do this.” However, Jesus said, “If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me. Therefore, I must wash your feet. Only then, you can

become my true disciple and the things I have done for you will be perfect and not in vain.” That Jesus washed the feet of the disciples means that Jesus washed all the sins the disciples had committed and the sins they would commit from then on while living in this world. And after Jesus resurrected and ascended to the Kingdom of the Father after receiving the baptism from John the Baptist and dying on the Cross, the remaining eleven disciples including Peter actually continued to commit sin due to the weakness of their flesh. This is the same for us who have received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The Lord already took even all the sins we commit due to our weakness through His baptism. Therefore, we can become perfect and preach the perfect gospel of the water and the Spirit only when we have the faith of believing in this genuine gospel. The Lord washed Peter’s feet in order to make us understand precisely that He already took all our sins upon Himself.



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Away All Our Sins!

As I have said briefly moments ago, the work of the Lord washing Peter's feet was the fulfillment of the Word of the water basin recorded in the Old Testament. In the Old Testament, the priests put water in the bronze basin and washed the filth of their hands and feet whenever they entered the holy place. Similarly, Jesus saved the disciples from the sins they would commit in the future by washing their feet beforehand. Aaron of the Old Testament was able to go before the presence of God by washing his hands and feet with the water of the bronze basin. Like this, the water basin of the Old Testament manifested the righteousness of God that all the iniquities of the priests had already been cleansed and received judgment by the sacrificial offering. Because God had washed all the sins of sinners by the water, the Israelites at that time were able to go before the presence of God by the faith of believing in this. We probably could not have been able to go before the presence of the Lord confidently if not for the Word of God contained in this bronze

basin and the Word of the Lord that fulfilled this Word in the New Testament by the Word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. We must give thanks for the law of salvation that the Lord gave us through the sacrificial system, which consists of the laying on of hands and the vicarious judgment of the sacrificial animal.

Dear fellow believers, the Lord was able to suffer the penalty of the Cross because He received the baptism of the Jordan River before we were born to this world, and we were also able to receive the remission of sins by believing in this Truth. Jesus washed Peter's feet before dying on the Cross in order to solidify the faith of believing in the baptism Jesus received from John the Baptist. Peter could not understand the heart of Jesus at that time, but he was able to understand the reason clearly when he met the Lord of resurrection later.

When Peter who loved Jesus refused and said, "*You shall never wash my feet,*" Jesus said, "*If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.*" And



Simon Peter said to Him, *“Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!”* At this, the Lord said, *“He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean,”* and put an end to the argument.

Jesus Knew That Peter, the Closest disciple of Jesus, Would Deny Jesus Three Times in the Court of Pilate

As you also know well, Peter the closest disciple of Jesus was the person who denied Jesus three times in the court of Pilate. Jesus washed the feet of Peter beforehand for such sins of Peter. Peter said, “I will lay down my life for Your sake,” but the Lord told him beforehand what sin Peter would commit as He said, *“The rooster shall not crow till you have denied Me three times”* (John 13:38). Then, Peter said strongly, “Such a thing will never happen. I will not fall no matter what happens. I will not leave You, Lord, unless death separates You, Lord, and me.

However, what eventually happened? After a short while, Peter denied Jesus three times just as Jesus said and he even cursed Him. Our Lord took even all such sins of Peter through the baptism He received at the Jordan River and He was reminding Peter of this Truth one more time by washing his feet.

This fact is recorded in the Gospel of Matthew chapter 26 verses 69 to 75. It is recorded, *“Now Peter sat outside in the courtyard. And a servant girl came to him, saying, ‘You also were with Jesus of Galilee.’ But he denied it before them all, saying, ‘I do not know what you are saying.’ And when he had gone out to the gateway, another girl saw him and said to those who were there, ‘This fellow also was with Jesus of Nazareth.’ But again he denied with an oath, ‘I do not know the Man!’ And a little later those who stood by came up and said to Peter, ‘Surely you also are one of them, for your speech betrays you.’ Then he began to curse and swear, saying, ‘I do not know the Man!’ Immediately a rooster crowed. And Peter remembered the word of Jesus who had said to*



him, 'Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.' So he went out and wept bitterly" (Matthew 26:69-75).

At that time, there was one little girl who was doing chores in the court of Pilate. That servant girl told Peter, "You also were with Jesus of Galilee. You are His follower." We can see that he denied two times, saying, "No, I am not. I am definitely not one of them. I do not know Him," and then denied Jesus and cursed Him on the third time.

Dear fellow believers, the disciples of Jesus were weak fleshly like this. Jesus knew all too well what kind of sins His disciples who had followed Him for three years would commit in the future. It means that the Lord already knew the weaknesses of humans. Therefore, Jesus said, *"If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me."* When Jesus said, *"What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this,"* He was telling the disciples to know that He Himself took all the sins of humankind by receiving the baptism from John the Baptist. Through

this, Peter later came to understand Jesus truthfully, followed truthfully, and came to remain as a disciple who believed that Jesus really is his God, the Savior, and the Shepherd. Peter whose faith was so strong when Jesus was alive and well in this world cursed the Lord when he was at the court of Pilate. We do not know what Peter said as he cursed Jesus, but the word "curse" is an extreme expression in any case. Peter himself did not know that he would be in such desperate situation and deny Jesus with cursing words, but Jesus knew well even such weakness of Peter. Therefore, the Lord washed Peter's feet and said, *"What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this."* The Lord was saying that He already took upon Himself and cleansed even all such sins of Peter, the disciples of Jesus, and us who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit now, by the baptism He received. Although Peter believed in Jesus as the Savior, he denied Jesus out of momentary fear of death. This is the very weakness of flesh that every human being has. We must know



properly that the Lord knew all such weakness of humans already and blotted out even the sins we commit due to weakness by washing their feet.

Jesus washed the feet of the disciples during this time of the Passover Feast in order to plant in the hearts of the disciples the Truth that declares, “I took even all the sins you will commit in the future by receiving the baptism and I received even the judgment you should receive in the future. I have become your perfect Savior. I am your God and the true Savior who has saved you from the sins of the world.” We who live in this era when sin is prevalent in the world must know and believe in this Truth in order to receive the true salvation and enter the Kingdom of Heaven by believing in it. We were able to become the true disciples of Jesus by such faith. We who have become the true disciples who follow Jesus by believing in the true remission of sins that manifested by the gospel of the water and the Spirit will continue to keep this faith firm in the future as well.

We Are the People Who Commit Sin Always

As weak humans, we commit many sins while living in this world. That is the same even after receiving the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Of course we should not commit sin intentionally, but when we are put into such desperate and life-threatening situation while following the Lord’s will, we consequently lie even without knowing it and also come to commit sin as we are ensnared by the desires of the flesh. Humans are beings who commit sins like this due to the weakness and shortcoming of the flesh. It’s not that we deny the truth that “Jesus is my Savior,” but that lies cannot but come out of our mouth when the situation becomes so desperate. We commit sin without having anything to do with the Lord’s will when we follow the desires of the flesh. It’s because sin starts from the desires of the flesh. However, thankfully, our Lord who knows the weaknesses of



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our flesh so well has saved us from all these sins by the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Therefore, the Lord wanted the disciples to ruminate the gospel of the water and the Spirit by washing the feet of Peter and the disciples. Jesus became our true Savior even until the last moment. He became the perfect Savior who blotted out all the sins of sinners until the end.

At that time, when Peter denied Jesus once, twice, and three times in the court of Pilate, Jesus looked at Peter. When Peter's eyes met the eyes of Jesus, Peter's heart was startled and he was so shameful in his conscience as he remembered what Jesus told him. How terrible and shameful Peter must have felt about himself who swore that he would never deny Jesus. However, Jesus already knew this also. That is why Jesus said before all this happened, *"If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me."* In other words, He wanted to tell Peter and the disciples beforehand, "I knew you would commit even greater sins in the future, and therefore washed your feet because I did not want you to fall and become a

sinner again. I have received the judgment for even these sins and became your perfect Savior. I have become your God and I have become your perfect Savior. Believe in the baptism I have received from John the Baptist for you eternally. Although you are weak, I have received the baptism from John the Baptist because I love you. Therefore, my work of blotting out your sins is eternal. The salvation of My love for you is unchanging for eternity."

This Truth is hidden in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Dear fellow believers, do you understand? Jesus said this to the disciples because believing in this gospel of the water and the Spirit is the very important faith that we must absolutely have.

It is recorded in today's Scripture passage, *"Simon Peter said to Him, 'Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!' Jesus said to him, 'He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you'" (John 13:9-10).*



Now, dear fellow believers, we have received the remission of the original sins that we were born with from our mother's womb and even all the sins we commit after believing in Jesus by the baptism Jesus Christ received from John the Baptist. We do not have any sin remaining in us at all. Jesus Christ said that He took upon Himself even the sins we commit after receiving the remission of sins. And it was necessary for Jesus to tell the disciples clearly before dying on the Cross, saying, "I took all those sins upon Myself. I have washed them all away. I took all the sins you will commit in the future upon Myself by the baptism I received from John the Baptist. I have washed them all." Therefore, the Lord washed their feet because it was necessary to plant the confirmation of faith in them.

Of course, that does not mean it is okay for us to commit sin intentionally all the time due to the weakness of the flesh. The important thing is to know that our Lord received the baptism from John the Baptist in order to blot out all the sins of the world

from the sinners and that the Lord has saved perfectly those who believe in this Truth and made them the righteous. It means that all the people, whether sinners or the righteous, must be freed from the guilty conscience for the sins they commit by believing in this Word that the Lord has cleansed at once all the sins they commit in this world by the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Do you know and believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit? Jesus did not just wash our head and body, but he has washed even our legs, too. It means that the Lord already took upon Himself even all the sins we commit after receiving salvation from sin by the gospel of the water and the Spirit. John the Baptist pointed to the Lord and said, "*Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!*" (*John 1:29*) Through this Word, John tells us that Jesus took all the sins of sinners by the baptism He received from John the Baptist and received all the penalties for those sins on the Cross. We must believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit in our



heart; we must believe that all the sins were transferred over to Jesus Christ once and for all when He received the baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River. Also, we must believe that the Lord took even all the sins we commit like Peter whenever human weaknesses manifest while living in this world by ruminating the baptism He received from John the Baptist.

You and I must make the confession of faith, saying, “Lord, thank You. Lord, as You washed the feet of Peter because You knew Peter would do such shameful things, You washed away all my sins by receiving the baptism from John the Baptist because You knew I would be like this.” You cannot say that you have truly received the remission of sins if you cannot understand this. Jesus already knew the sins Peter would commit and Jesus received the baptism from John the Baptist in order to blot out even those grave sins. Although you have received salvation by believing in Jesus, you cannot but be a sinner if you cannot become a true disciple of Jesus and cannot

receive the eternal salvation due to the sins you will commit in the future. A person who has received the remission of sins will go to the right hand of the throne of God the Father by the faith of believing in the account of Bethlehem, of the Jordan River, of the Cross, and Jesus’ resurrection. We can give glory, praise, and thanks to God only by such faith.

In the last chapter of the Gospel of John, we can see that the resurrected Jesus went to the Sea of Galilee looking for Peter. Jesus met Peter and asked him, “*Do you love Me more than these?*” At this, Peter said to Him, “*Yes, Lord; You know that I love You,*” and the Lord said to him, “*Feed My lambs.*” Peter’s such firm faith of Jesus was possible because he believed absolutely in the truth of Jesus washing his feet. Peter’s faith became firm because he understood and believed in the meaning of our Lord washing his feet.



“Yes, Lord; You Know That I Love You” (John 21:16)

Let’s look at the Word from the Gospel of John chapter 21 verse 15. The resurrected Jesus appeared to the disciples and spoke to them. It is written, *“So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?’ He said to Him, ‘Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.’ He said to him, ‘Feed My lambs’” (John 21:15).*

As you can see in this Scripture passage, you can see that Jesus Christ entrusted His sheep to Peter as He said, *“Feed My lambs.”* This was possible because Peter was His disciple who received salvation perfectly from sins, a perfectly righteous person, and also God’s perfect servant of faith. Jesus could not have entrusted His people to Peter if he became a sinner again and eternally after committing sin due to the weakness of the flesh. However, when Jesus asked *“Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me*

more than these,” Peter confessed his faith, saying, *“Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.”* Peter was finally able to understand the meaning of the Lord washing his feet just before He was crucified on the Cross.

Dear fellow believers, let’s listen carefully to the words of Peter once again. It is written, *“He said to him the third time, ‘Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?’ Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, ‘Do you love Me?’ And he said to Him, ‘Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You’” (John 21:17).*

Such confession of faith of Peter was stemmed from the gift of salvation the Lord had given to Peter. If Jesus did not do the work of washing the feet of the disciples as recorded in the Gospel of John chapter 13, what would have been Peter’s answer when the resurrected Lord appeared to Peter and asked him, *“Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?”* We must think about this. He probably could not but say, “Lord, I have many



shortcomings. I am a sinner. I cannot love you, Lord, more than these people.” However, what was the answer of Peter who received the grace of salvation. Peter confessed sincerely, *“Yes, Lord; You know that I love You” (John 21:16).*

Dear fellow believers, you must know that this confession came out of sincere heart of Peter. This confession of faith was the confession of faith of believing that the Lord has already blotted out all his sins. If Peter did not have the faith that the Lord had blotted out once and for all, by the gospel of the water and the Spirit, even all the sins he would commit after believing in Jesus Christ, whether they were sins he would commit with his hands or feet, he would have fallen back as a sinner although he had believed in Jesus. However, the Lord did not let the beloved disciples become like that. The salvation of Peter was the perfect salvation by Jesus. Peter’s faith was based on the remission of sins that was originated from the baptism of Jesus and His death on the Cross.

Is this true or not true? We must have such faith that says, “Lord, You know that I love You. How can I not love You, Lord, when You have saved me perfectly like this?” How could you and I not love the Lord when the Lord has already blotted out all our sins, all the sins of the world? We absolutely cannot do that. If the Lord just gave the remission of the sins that we had committed until we believed in Jesus Christ as the Savior and we had to pray for repentance of the sins that we commit every day after believing in order to receive the remission of those sins, sins could not but remain in our hearts without being able to offer the prayers of repentance every day because we are lazy.

How could we love the Lord if we became a sinner? We cannot love the Lord if we were sinners. How could we believe in the Lord, then? We could not believe in the Lord. Then, how could we follow the Lord? We could not follow the Lord even if we wanted to. However, Jesus took upon Himself even all the sins we commit due to our weakness by the



baptism He received from John the Baptist. Because the Lord who is our perfect Savior has blotted out even all those sins we commit in this world, we can believe in the Lord and also love Him. I am also a person who cannot believe in the Lord and cannot do His work as the Lord's witness if He did not blot out and left even one iota of sin among all my sins. Are you also like this?

When Peter said to the Lord, *"Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You,"* Jesus said to him, *"Feed My sheep."* The Lord entrusted His sheep to the people who have received the remission of sins perfectly. At that time, the Lord asked Peter three times, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" And Peter confessed by faith, *"Yes, Lord; You know that I love You."* This was the confession of faith that came out of the faith of believing in the Lord. Like Peter's faith, our faith also is not the faith that we believe out of our own will. I want you to remember that our faith has come out of the very faith of believing in the righteousness of the Lord.

Love and Faith Out of One's Own Will Is of a Failure, but Believing That the Lord Saved Us Is the True Faith

When we love someone and try to maintain that love with our own will only, then, such love would fail once our will becomes weak. However, what would happen if the person he loves had vast and great degree of love? The love with the person would be maintained even if he was lacking.

Dear fellow believers, the love of God toward us is like this. His love is such great love that cares without reservation for us who are weak. Therefore, our faith of knowing and believing in the righteousness of God is the faith that manifested out of God's love and God's perfect salvation, not out of our will. It means that our serving God and loving God as God's workers are all out of God's love, not out of our fleshly ability. If we believed in the



righteousness of God out of our own will, then, there would be so many people who would have given up leading a life of faith cursing his own faith as they become weary because of believing faithfully one day and then falling to sin another day like that.

However, the Lord who loves us so much has blotted out all the sins of us who are like that and also holds on to us always. The Lord has blotted out all those sins like in Peter's case here, without exception. This is true. We cannot but become a failure in spiritual life if we believe in God only by our own will, our own love, and the faith of our own fleshly resolution only. However, we have become a true believer and a successful people of faith because we have the Lord's love that saved us perfectly by the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Dear fellow believers, we who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit are the children of God. We have become His children and the righteous due to the Lord's love. We who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit do not have sin. The

salvation we have received from sin is not due to fleshly faith or due to human love. It is only because of the salvation that is originated from God's love and His righteousness. We are now living out our faith as the righteous, the people who have been born again, and the people who shall go to the Kingdom of Heaven because we have the faith in His everlasting law of salvation. Because we now have our righteousness that manifested from the Lord's love, we live eternally praising the righteousness of God and live the spiritual life thanks to God. Brothers and sisters, do you believe in the righteousness of God?

Therefore, Jesus said, *"In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins"* (1 John 4:10). There was actual salvation because God's plan of saving us from sins was perfectly accomplished through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. We would not have been able to receive salvation from sins from anywhere if it had not been for God's love and the gospel of the water and the Spirit. We have received



the true salvation by the faith of believing in the salvation of the remission of sins God has given, the faith of believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. We have become the righteous before the presence of God by believing in this Truth.

There are many people in the world who live the life of faith with their own will, saying, “I will follow the Lord even unto death.” However, a human’s willful faith or willful love is actually nothing. It is not the true love, faith, or belief. It is just a momentary will of a human and it is only of a human emotion that can change at any time. There are many times when such people who believed in Jesus with their own will in the beginning like that and give up their spiritual life because they have been bounded by sins again. Therefore, we must have the true faith based on the perfect love of the Lord by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, not the faith based on our own resolution. Jesus who loves us so much saved us from even all the personal sins, including terrible sins we have committed knowingly

or unwittingly, by the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Therefore, the Lord gathered the disciples before dying on the Cross and washed their feet in order to teach us once again how definite this salvation He has given is. We must become the people who know and believe in the great love of God and the work of salvation.

“You Shall Know after This”

At that time, when Jesus wanted to wash the feet of the disciples, only Peter refused stubbornly. He refused stubbornly, saying, “You shall never wash my feet! Jesus, You must not do that! Lord, You can never wash my feet even until the end of the world.” At this, Jesus said, *“What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this.”*

Then, when did Peter come to know such will of God? Yes, it was when Jesus appeared to Peter again after dying on the Cross and was resurrected from



death. Peter, the closest disciple of Jesus, came to know, though belatedly, perfectly the meaning of the love of the Lord and the Word the Lord spoke to him before. We who have the faith of believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit also must give glory and praise to God by believing that Jesus already took all our sins upon Himself until the end.

Shall we speak a little more about Peter? After Jesus died on the Cross, Peter was fishing in the sea with the other disciples. Jesus appeared before him who returned to the old occupation as a fisherman. Then, Jesus called the disciples together. And when they came ashore, they ate together the breakfast Jesus had prepared. At that time, Peter finally came to know the deep meaning of the Lord who said, *“But you will know after this.”* “He came to realize, “Jesus really gave the remission of all my sins and saved me from all sins. The Lord knew and gave the remission of all sins, even the sins I commit due to my weaknesses and the sins I will commit in the future.”

After having breakfast, when Jesus asked Peter, *“Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?”* Peter made a profound confession of faith, saying to Him, *“Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.”* This implies, “How can I not love You when You have loved me like this? You know that I love You. My love for You has manifested out of Your love.” Peter finally came to know the meaning of the Lord’s Word, *“But you will know after this.”*

The Twelve Disciples Preached the Gospel at the Risk of Their Lives

After that, how were the lives of Peter and the disciples who came to know the profound will of Jesus? They preached the gospel of the water and the Spirit unto death, at the risk of their lives. The twelve disciples witnessed Jesus without care for their lives during the terrifying era of the Roman Empire when the believers in Jesus were persecuted severely and



put to death by the oppressors. I know that there probably are some people who have some questions here as to why I am saying there were twelve disciples instead of eleven when Judas, one of the twelve disciples of Jesus, killed himself by hanging after betraying Jesus. But, after Judas died, the disciples chose Matthias and filled the spot. However, the Lord chose the Apostle Paul and it became twelve Apostles including Paul. All of the twelve Apostles of Jesus were martyred later. However, so many people came to believe in Jesus and received salvation through the disciples who witnessed even until the moment of death, saying, “Jesus has blotted out all your sins. Jesus has saved you by taking all your sins upon Himself by receiving the baptism at the Jordan River and shedding blood and dying on the Cross. Believe in this Truth and receive the remission of sins.” We also have received the remission of sins by hearing and believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit now because of the witness of those disciples at that

time. We have also become one of the disciples of Jesus Christ due to the love of Jesus and His perfect salvation.

Dear fellow believers, do you believe in this now? We have become the disciples of Jesus absolutely not because we are great. We have become the disciples of Jesus Christ because Jesus has loved us so much. Jesus washed the feet of Peter and the other disciples in order to show His unfathomable love toward us. It was to teach you and me once again that He has cleansed all the sins you and I commit in this world. I give thanks to such deep love of the Lord. I praise the Lord.

It is written in the Gospel of John chapter 13 verses 12 to 17, “*So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, ‘Do you know what I have done to you? You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do*



as I have done to you. Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.’”

Just a little time ago, Jesus said to Peter, *“What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this.”* Dear fellow believers, Jesus washed the feet of the disciples at that time to show clearly that He is the perfect Savior who served the sinners and made them the righteous. Jesus showed personally His example of serving by washing the feet of disciples in order to teach them the truth that said, “It is right for you who have become the righteous first to serve those who have become the righteous later just as I have served you.” Therefore, in the Church of the born-again, those who have become the people of God first serve the brothers and sisters who have become the people of God later just as Jesus did. Of course, occasional disputes flare up because of human weaknesses, but, we come to realize the fact that we have become who we are

thanks to the sacrifice and service of our predecessors of faith.

Two Implications in the Account of the Lord’s Washing the Feet of the Disciples

In the Gospel of John chapter 13, there were two meanings in Jesus washing the feet of the disciples during the feast of the Passover. They are none other than “salvation” and “serving.” These two things still exist in the Church even now. I am saying that these two things are now in action in our Church now. You receive salvation by hearing and believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit through God’s Church and the servants of God. And God is serving you who are in the Church through His servants who have come before you.

Though it might seem like you are serving God’s Church and God, you are actually being served by



the Lord. The Lord always loves us first and also serves us first. That is why the Lord said that a student is never greater than a teacher. Dear fellow believers, we must serve the other people just as Jesus serves us. I am saying that you must serve the people who come after you. This is the work of preaching the gospel and the true life of faith. Our Lord washed the feet of the disciples in order to teach us this very truth.

And by recording this Word in the Scriptures, the Lord gave us the blessing of becoming the righteous by receiving the unfailing remission of sins without being deceived by Satan the Devil. The Lord has spoken to us about the perfect salvation and the work of the remission of sins by washing the feet of Peter and the other disciples. By the feast of the Passover recorded in the Scriptures, the Lord is showing us now that He has become our perfect Savior. Dear fellow believers, do you believe in this? Do you believe that Jesus has washed away all your sins completely? Believe in it. We can receive salvation

from all sins only if you believe in this gospel the Lord has given us.

Dear fellow believers, we humans are weak being who are easily deceived by Satan the Devil if we are not careful for even just a moment. Satan the Devil says to us, “How can you not have sin when you commit sin like that? You are a sinner if you have committed sin.” Then, we refute against Satan the Devil, saying, “We are not sinners. How can we be sinners when Jesus took all the sins of the world by the gospel of the water and the Spirit? What sin do we have and what debt must we pay for when the Lord has paid off the entire debt of sin completely?” There is no sin in this world when we look at this world by shedding the light of the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Therefore, everything that Satan the Devil says does not apply to us. However, the words the Devil says seem right when we think only fleshly without believing in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Therefore, we must engrave in our heart the Truth of salvation of



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the remission of sins that manifested by the gospel of the water and the Spirit as we live in the world. The Truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit means that Jesus Christ the Son of God saved us perfectly from all the sins of the world by receiving the baptism and shedding His blood on the Cross.

The disciples were able to become free from their sins because Jesus already washed the feet of the disciples beforehand. God the Father made us the children of God by washing us sinners perfectly through the righteousness of Jesus and made the people who believe in His righteousness the perfectly righteous people.

I sincerely give thanks and praise to the Lord who so loves us like this. ☒



SERMON

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Contents



Spend Your Money on A Worthwhile Cause

< John 12:1-8 >

“Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead. There they made Him a supper; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with Him. Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil. But one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, who would betray Him, said, ‘Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?’ This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the money box; and he used to take what was

put in it. But Jesus said, ‘Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial. For the poor you have with you always, but Me you do not have always.’”

Jesus Commended Mary for Anointing Him with Fragrant Oil and Rebuked Judas for Criticizing Her

Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead, who was the brother of Mary and Martha. Grateful for this, Mary and Martha held a feast in Jesus’ honor. What’s more, Mary brought a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and washed His feet with her hair. The house was then filled with the fragrance of the oil.

Judas, one of the disciples of Jesus, resented what Mary was doing. So he criticized Mary, saying to her, “How can you waste such expensive fragrant oil?” The oil that Mary poured on the feet of Jesus



was very costly, worth a full year's salary for an average worker. Judas thought that this was a waste, but he saw Jesus just sitting there without rebuking Mary. So he took it upon himself to rebuke her instead.

Judas said to Mary, "Why did you waste this expensive fragrant oil when it could have been sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?" When Judas said this, neither Lazarus nor the other disciples of Jesus said anything. They remained quiet because Judas seemed to have a valid point. But despite this criticism from Judas, Mary had no regrets. Of course, Mary also knew very well that if the fragrant oil was sold and the proceeds given to the poor, it would have fed and helped many. But Mary had prepared for Jesus' funeral in advance, knowing that Jesus would die on the Cross for her sins. In other words, she was expressing her gratitude to Jesus beforehand.

Judas is the man who, after following Jesus as his teacher, ended up betraying Him for money. At that

time, the fragrant oil that Mary poured on Jesus was worth enough to purchase a field of 7,000-10,000 square feet. So Judas, who did not know the grace of God, couldn't help but think in his mind that Mary's act was a waste of money. He just couldn't appreciate what was in Mary's mind when she anointed Jesus' feet with the oil. Mary was willing to offer Jesus everything she had without any hesitation because she knew that Jesus was the Messiah and the Savior. As Mary knew that Jesus had borne all her sins and would die on the Cross, she was rejoiced to anoint the Lord with the priceless oil.

Although Judas was a disciple of Jesus, he did not believe that Jesus was the Son of God. He just thought that Jesus was an outstanding figure among men, and that's why he was following Him. He called Jesus "Rabbi" instead of "Lord" to the very end (Matthew 26:25, 49). Judas did not realize that Jesus was the Son of God and his Savior who could save him from all sins through the gospel of the



water and the Spirit, and that's why he ended up betraying Jesus for 30 pieces of silver.

Jesus then rebuked Judas for criticizing Mary. He said, *“Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial. For the poor you have with you always, but Me you do not have always.”* Like this, far from rebuking Mary, the Lord actually commended her.

It Is More Worthwhile to Pour Fragrant Oil on Jesus' Feet Than to Help the Poor

Which is more worthwhile: Helping the poor for a while, or pouring the fragrant oil on the feet of Jesus for the day of His burial? It is more worthwhile to pour the fragrant oil on Jesus' feet. Between sending thousands of bags of flour to Somalia and offering whatever little money to the Lord to spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit, which is more important? It is more important to make your

offering to the cause of spreading the gospel of the water and the Spirit. We must remember that the money spent for the work of God is far more worthwhile than the money spent for any other cause in the world.

Mary spent her possessions for Jesus, and more broadly, for the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The Bible says that when Mary anointed the feet of Jesus with no less than a pound of oil and washed His feet with her hair, the room was filled with the fragrance of the oil. Here we must realize the fact that the contributions we make for the spreading of the gospel of the water and the Spirit enable many to receive the remission of sins. That's because just as the room was filled with fragrance, so would the gospel of the water and the Spirit also spread all over the world. Like this, we should serve the gospel trusting that the offerings we make for the sake of the gospel go a long way to help others to receive the remission of sins.



The Lord commended Mary for what she did. He said that everywhere the gospel is preached, her deed should be remembered. Mary knew beforehand that Jesus would die on the Cross, and that's why she brought her most precious treasure and prepared for the Lord's burial beforehand. Jesus told us to remember Mary's act of offering her treasure for the sake of the gospel. The proclamation of the gospel of the water and the Spirit is achieved through such people like Mary—that is, through those who can offer a pound of spikenard to the Lord for the gospel. I believe that it is because there still are many saints like Mary that the gospel of the water and the Spirit is being spread.

Jesus said, "I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me." Everything is in Jesus. In Jesus there is salvation, in Jesus there is the righteousness of God, in Jesus there was the creation of the world, and everything in this world is in Jesus. Jesus became our Savior when we were sinners. We should therefore offer our everything to this Jesus. We should spend

our possessions for the gospel of the water and the Spirit and offer all our strengths, abilities, and gifts to the Lord. Spreading the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the most precious work on this earth, and the money that's spent for the gospel of God is the money that's spent for the worthiest cause in the world. Offering the material possessions of the world to the service of the gospel of the water and the Spirit is serving God Himself.

When Jesus comes again in His glory with all the holy angels, He will sit on the throne of His glory to judge all the nations. He will gather all people before Him and separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the righteous on His right hand, but the sinners on the left (Matthew 25:31-33). Jesus will then say to the righteous at His right side, *"Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you*



took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me” (Matthew 25:34-36).

The righteous at His right hand would then be puzzled and ask Him, “Lord, when did we take care of You?” Jesus will then say to them, “What you’ve done to the born-again who believe in Me, you’ve done it to Me. So I want to reward you.”

Offering Your Material Possessions for the Spreading of the Gospel of God Is the Most Precious Work

It is a precious work for one to offer his material possessions to the Lord and himself no matter in what position he is. Jesus said that wherever the gospel is preached, it should be remembered how Mary had anointed His feet with fragrant oil. In other words, Jesus said that such acts should be encouraged. Whether your offering to God is big or

small is not what’s important. The very fact that you are offering your entire self to the work of God, and that you are spreading the gospel of the water and the Spirit by offering your treasures, is itself precious. The money that you offer to God is spent for the gospel. It is being spent for a truly worthwhile cause to save countless souls all over the world that still have not received the remission of sins.

Mary offered her treasures to Jesus, and the whole house was filled with fragrance because of this. Likewise, when the born-again saints offer their treasures to spread God’s gospel of the water and the Spirit, it is on account of these offerings that the world is filled with the knowledge of the true gospel as the waters cover the sea (Isaiah 11:9). Do you believe so, my fellow believers? We must use our material possessions appropriately. We must realize that it is when our material possessions are used for the work of God that our treasures find the most precious, worthy, meaningful, and worthwhile use. These possessions should not be used for ourselves



or for some ephemeral cause in this world, but for God Himself. That's because the work of spreading the gospel of God is the most precious task in the world.

Not only is it important for us to offer our treasures to the Lord, but it is also equally important for us to know how to use such offerings most effectively. We use our resources mainly to spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Your precious contributions are used to finance our literature ministry all over the world and to plant new churches in Korea. They are being used for the most precious cause, to bring new life to every soul throughout the whole world. Isn't this then the worthiest way to spend your money? After all, what could be worthier than saving each and every soul?

You are now offering your material possessions to the most valuable work. Indeed, you are spreading the pure and wonderful fragrance of the gospel throughout the entire world. Your contributions are even more precious because you have offered them

to God when you could have easily spent them for yourself. I do not believe that your offerings are made only after ensuring an opulent lifestyle. I am sure that you have tightened your belt to offer as much as possible to God. Such precious contributions are now being used to spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and this is the most worthwhile work. Just as the whole house was filled with fragrance when the oil was poured on the feet of Jesus Christ, so will the gospel of the water and the Spirit cover the whole world on account of the treasures that we offer to God. These treasures that we use for the gospel are indeed priceless treasures.

Referring to a virtuous wife, the Book of Proverbs says,

*“Who can find a virtuous wife?
For her worth is far above rubies.
The heart of her husband safely trusts her;
So he will have no lack of gain.
She does him good and not evil
All the days of her life.*



*She seeks wool and flax,
And willingly works with her hands.
She is like the merchant ships,
She brings her food from afar.
She also rises while it is yet night,
And provides food for her household,
And a portion for her maidservants.
She considers a field and buys it;
From her profits she plants a vineyard.
She girds herself with strength,
And strengthens her arms.
She perceives that her merchandise is good,
And her lamp does not go out by night” (Proverbs
31:10-18).*

And it is also written, “*Her husband is known in the gates, When he sits among the elders of the land*” (Proverbs 31:23). What does this passage mean? It means that when her good work is done, the virtuous wife goes to the gate of the city and gives all credit to her husband, saying, “It’s all because of my husband’s instruction that everything worked out so

well.” The Lord, who is our Groom, wants us to be such a virtuous wife to Him. The virtuous wife refers to none other than us, who have received the remission of sins and are working to spread the gospel all over the world.

Our material possessions should be used for the gospel of the water and the Spirit. All of us should realize clearly that our treasures must be used for a worthwhile cause, and that the way to do so is to spend them on the work of God.

I give all my thanks to our Lord who has saved us and enabled us to use our treasures for His true gospel. ☒

SERMON

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Contents



Let Your Faith Be United With Friendly Jesus

< John 14:1-14 >

“‘Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know.’ Thomas said to Him, ‘Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?’ Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him.’ Philip said to Him, ‘Lord, show us the Father, and

it is sufficient for us.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves. Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.’”

The Lord, who has saved us from all the sins of the world, said, *“Let not your heart be troubled; you*



believe in God, believe also in Me” (John 14:1). He said that He was going to the Kingdom of Heaven to prepare a place for us, and that He will return when this Kingdom is prepared. He then said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:6). The Lord also said, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live” (John 11:25); “If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also” (John 14:7); and, “Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me” (John 14:11). And He told us, “Whatever you ask in My name, that I will do” (John 14:13).

Let’s Think about Our Prayer Asking for the Lord’s Help

From today’s Scripture passage that we just read, we can realize that the Lord wants us to pray and that He will answer our prayers without fail. He spoke

many things about prayer. He said, “Whatever you ask in My name, that I will do,” and, “*If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.*” And He told us, “*Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves*” (John 14:11). This means that Jesus Christ is coequal to God the Father.

We believe that our Lord took upon all our sins once for all by being baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan River. In other words, through the baptism He received from John, Jesus bore all our sins once for all, and He was crucified to death and rose from the dead again. The Lord is saying that He has become the everlasting Savior of all who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit today. That we believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit means that we believe that Jesus has become our Savior and our God. By being baptized by John the Baptist, dying on the Cross, and rising from the dead again for us, the Lord has become the Savior of all His believers.



We believe that this Jesus has become our Savior, and that is our unwavering faith. Indeed, Jesus Christ is our Lord and Savior, and He is also the Creator who made us. Having made us, He has become our Savior who has delivered us from the sins of the world through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and He answers our prayers without fail.

Let's then now think about the prayers that we offer to our Lord. We pray to the Lord by faith, trusting in Him who has saved us from the sins of the world through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Whom should we really ask for help to find this help? We should pray to the Lord who came to this earth for you and me, was baptized by John the Baptist, shed His blood on the Cross, and has thereby become our Savior. When we pray to our Lord Jesus, we are actually praying to God Himself. When we pray to Jesus, He hears and answers our prayer together with God our Father.

Jesus Christ, God our Father, and the Holy Spirit are the same Triune God. This Triune God is the

same God to all of us. Whether it is God the Father or Jesus whom we ask for help, we are asking the same God. Jesus Christ has saved us from the sins of the world, and it is when we ask Him for help that this Lord helps us. We shouldn't think that our prayer has to have some grandiose request. Rather, true prayer is offered when we pray to the Lord in earnest trusting that He has become the true Savior by coming to this earth incarnated in the flesh of man, being baptized by John the Baptist, and going into the Jordan River and coming out.

Jesus Christ is indeed the Savior God who has come to us by the gospel of the water and the Spirit. We usually call Jesus "our Lord," and this designation means that He is the Savior God. Jesus is the God of the entire universe and the Savior who has saved mankind from sin. The Lord is the One who created us, and also the One who has blotted out all our sins once for all with the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Moreover, He is the Almighty God who hears and answers our prayer whenever we pray to



Him. That is who Jesus is to us. But many people tend to view God as a different entity from Jesus Christ. And too many Christians are prone to use the word “Lord” as a meaningless word just out of habit when they are praying.

Therefore, we need to reconsider how we pray to the Lord. What should be our disposition when we pray to the Lord? As the Savior who came to this earth, the Lord was baptized by John the Baptist in order to take upon all our sins. By being baptized and going into the water, He bore our sins, and He blotted them out by shedding His blood to death on the Cross. It is when we believe in this Savior God and pray to Him—that is, when we pray to Jesus recognizing that He is our Savior God—that He answers our prayer. When Jesus hears our prayer and it is fitting to Him, then He answers it by exercising His power and working for us.

That is why He said, *“Whatever you ask in My name, that I will do” (John 14:13), “I am the resurrection and the life,”* and *“I am the way, the*

truth, and the life” (John 14:6). What do all these passages mean to us? They mean that Jesus has saved us from the sins of the world, and that He is your God and mine. In other words, this Jesus who has become our Savior can hear our prayers and answer them. So we have to pray to the Lord by faith, trusting in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

We Must Pray with a Proper Understanding of Jesus

When it comes to praying to the Lord, one important fact that we must remember is that we can offer proper prayers only when we correctly understand Jesus the Savior. What really enables us to ask the Lord for His help is the fact that the Lord, as the Savior who came to save us from the sins of the world, is truly our God. Jesus Christ is indeed the God of all of us who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and He is also the Savior who



has truly blotted out all our sins. When we ask for His help through our prayers, He answers all our supplications. We have to grasp this truth and understand it clearly before we pray. Only then can our prayers be truthful; only then can our prayers be honest and sincere prayers of faith rather than just outwardly grandiose prayers; and only then can we pray to the Lord properly.

Someone said, “Prayer is the soul’s breathing.” This means that we should pray to the Lord as we breathe. Not praying to the Lord is like ceasing to breathe. Anyone who prays to God the Father with the right faith can make his request known as if he were asking his own father. “Father, please give me some allowances. I need these things. Please provide them to me.” Asking like this is what an upright prayer is all about. In other words, prayer is all about asking the Lord for His help whenever we find ourselves struggling in our lives. It is about making our requests known to Jesus our Savior by faith, trusting that the Lord took away all our sins by being

baptized in the Jordan River. “Lord, we need Your help on these issues. Please let the gospel of the water and the Spirit be spread. Bless us with prosperity and give us health to serve the gospel even more diligently. I am going to preach the gospel to that person. Please, move that man’s heart and solve his problem of sin as well.” When we pray like this to the Lord who has saved us from sin, He will answer our prayer.

That’s why we pray to God to rule over our translators and co-workers abroad, and we ask God to bless our brothers and sisters to prosper in their businesses. We pray to God to protect our brothers and sisters and their homes, and to help us and keep us all. The basic use for prayer is to ask God our Savior for His help. Honestly asking God for His help is the right faith. When we pray to the Lord, we are praying to God the Father and the Holy Spirit. Sometimes we call God “Father” in our prayers, and so we often pray to God the Father, but mostly, it is the Lord Jesus to whom we pray. Because Jesus



Christ created us, because He has the Father, and because this Father is also our Father, we are also able to call God our own Father.

Jesus Hears and Answers Our Prayer

Jesus Christ is not only the Savior who has blotted out all our sins, but He is also the Almighty God who answers our prayer. We therefore have to grasp clearly, as a matter of both faith and knowledge, who Jesus Christ really is to us. Do you ask the Lord to solve the difficulties you face in your life? Or do you pray just to God the Father when you need some help? Of course, praying to the Father is quite acceptable. However, don't you think that you are setting aside Jesus, who has actually saved us from sin and bestowed His power on us, and perhaps in some ways, even ignoring Him?

Since we have received the remission of sins and become God's children by believing in the gospel of

the water and the Spirit, God the Father is our Father as well. The Father of Jesus Christ is now our own Father, for Jesus and we are the same children before God the Father. When we the believers in the gospel of the water and the Spirit go to the Kingdom of Heaven, we will be brothers to the Lord. That is how it is on spiritual genealogy. But this doesn't mean that we should think of ourselves as equal to Jesus. Although He wants to call us His friends (John 15:15), He is our Savior and also our God.

Whenever we pray, therefore, we must always pray in the name of Jesus Christ to either the Lord Jesus or God the Father. Leaving Jesus Christ out when praying is absolutely wrong. Here, we need to look more closely at the prerequisites that enable us to pray in the first place.



The Faith of Those Who Can Pray

The Lord has become our Savior by being baptized on this earth to bear the sins of the world for you and me, shedding His blood on the Cross, and rising from the dead again. If we pray trusting that this Jesus is our Savior and our God, and that He is the Almighty God who answers our prayers, then it is not so difficult to pray to Him nor do our prayers fall short. When we have faith in the Lord, who is the same God as God the Father, we can pray intimately and openly to Him. To Jesus who has saved us from sin and become our God and our Savior, we can ask for help plainly and freely without any hesitation or any qualms in our hearts, just like a child asking for his parents' help.

When praying, it's okay to leave out ostentatious phrases like "Our God who is holy, merciful, omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent." Jesus is your God and mine, He is the Creator who made you and me, and to deliver us from the sins of the world,

He was baptized by John, shed His blood on the Cross to death, and rose from the dead again, thus becoming our Savior. This Jesus is none other than your God and my God, and this God is still the living God. There can be no hesitation at all when we pray to such a God. How could there be? It's impossible for us to feel alienated from God.

If we really understand and believe in the profound meaning of the baptism of Jesus and His Cross, then we have no reason to hesitate or fear to ask Him for His help. This Savior, Jesus Christ, loves us the believers in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. He loved you and me so much that He shouldered all our sins by being baptized by John the Baptist, and He was even crucified and shed His blood to death. That Jesus went into the water when He was baptized by John the Baptist implies our death and the eradication of our sins. Jesus is the Savior who took upon all our sins through the baptism He received from John the Baptist, and who died on the Cross for all these sins in our place. Also,



that Jesus came out of the water implies that He rose from the dead again to raise us back to life. Jesus came to this earth for you and me, was baptized, went into the water and came out of it, saved us from all sins, and is now sitting at the right hand of the Father.

Therefore, there is no reason why we should feel uneasy to ask for help from the One who has bestowed all such blessings out of His love for us. It is only natural for us to ask God our Savior for help and to rely on Him. Jesus is not someone who is aloof, but He is our Savior who is very close to us, and therefore we can pray to Him intimately as though we were talking with our own brothers or sisters. That's because Jesus came to this earth for you and me, was baptized, went into the water and came out of it, and has thereby brought true salvation to all those who believe in Him.

We Need to Learn to Pray Truthfully

We need to learn how to pray to the Lord by faith. Our lives of faith begin when we first believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, receive the remission of sins, and become God's people. But given the fact that we still come across so many difficulties and hardships while living in this world, how could we ever live according to the will of the Lord without His help? It is the power of prayer that enables us to shake off all the heavy burdens of life and live by faith. None other than the power of prayer is your strength. All that we do is just pray to the Lord by faith, and then the Lord answers our prayers on account of our faith. It is because the Lord has answered our prayers that you and I have been able to lead our lives of faith, and it is also by our prayers of faith that we can continue to lead upright lives in the years to come.

If our faith and prayers to the Lord were left out of our lives of faith, then there would be nothing



remaining. No one can lead a life of faith by leaving out faith and prayer. The prayer of faith is all about asking the Lord for His help. It is about asking Him to help us in all aspects of our lives, both in body and spirit, saying to Him, “Lord, please help me. Bless me, Lord, for I cannot live without Your blessings. I am struggling so much, Lord. Please protect me and answer my prayer.”

You cannot lead a proper life of faith unless you give such prayers of faith. Why? It’s because the life of faith cannot be led on our own physical strength, and it is only by faith and prayer that we can receive blessings. Isn’t it true that our hearts and minds sometimes stumble, slip, and fall while leading a life of faith? If you even can’t pray for the Lord’s help by faith as you are living in such a treacherous world and find yourself amid so much work of God, how could you live in this harsh world? Are we the born-again saints vicious to others? Do we ever harm others with our maliciousness? No, of course not! Our spiritual battle is not fought by relying on our

own physical strength, but by relying on God. And that is precisely why, whenever we face difficult and taxing situations, we must pray to the Lord our Savior to help us.

Jesus has delivered us from the sins of the world, and He is none other than our Savior and our God. The righteous ask this God for help, and that is what prayer is all about. When you make your request known to the Lord and ask Him for help, the Lord will surely help you and answer all your requests. Therefore, all of us must know how to pray. Now that we have been born again by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we have to pray to the Lord constantly.

The prayer of faith is offered to the God of salvation who was baptized for you and me, and who went into the water and came out of it. This is the true prayer. Anyone who has been saved from sin must have the clear conviction of faith that the Lord is his own God. If someone attains his salvation from Jesus but offers his prayers only to God the Father



thinking that He is higher than Jesus Christ, then this person is mistaken. If we get the problem of our sins solved from Jesus, but ask only God the Father to help us in our daily lives, then our faith itself may go astray. Even our lives of faith may be over.

Of course, it's not wrong for us to pray to God the Father. But my point is that Jesus Christ is also the Almighty Lord who answers your prayers. Here in today's Scripture passage Jesus said, *"Pray in My name. Whatever you ask in My name, I will do it. If you pray to Me and ask for My help, I will answer you."* To us the believers in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, Jesus, God the Father, and the Holy Spirit are the same God. These three Persons are the same God to you and me. So we have to be intimate with Them all.

Don't you like friendly people? I like friendly people. I like people whose friendship lasts long. It's so hard to meet new people and reveal my inner self to them all over again. It's hard because I have to be very careful about how they may perceive me and I

can't act casually. But what about your old friends? Since you and your friends know each other so well, you can be intimate with them. Because you are close to them, you can talk about anything with them without any hesitation. And since you are so close to your friends, you can share many things with them and you can know at once what is going on in their minds just by looking at them. You can then have fellowship with them, admonish them and pray for them as well. Like this, we must be intimate with God and Jesus in whom we believe.

Jesus our Savior is our God. He is God Himself. We must be close to Him, and we must pray to God our Savior. Jesus said, *"If you ask anything in My name, I will do it."* Therefore, we must pray to Jesus Christ by faith. We must be able to pray to Jesus Christ like this in His name. So let us believe in all these things and ask Jesus Christ for His help by faith.

Even though this is what the Bible says, there still are some people who keep on thinking mistakenly



and doubting, “But still, shouldn’t we pray to God the Father? How does this mean that we should pray to Jesus Christ?” That, however, is not what I am saying. My point is that if you’ve been praying to God the Father until now, you can also pray to Jesus Christ and your prayer will still be answered. Those who think that what the Lord said in today’s Scripture passage means something else should realize that they have not united themselves with the Word of God, and that they are actually dismissing the authority of Jesus Christ.

For a while, I used to also switch from God the Father to Jesus and the Holy Spirit when praying. I used to switch around so much. But do things not go well for you when you pray to Jesus? Does Jesus have no power to answer our prayers because He is the Son of God? Is Jesus weak, while His Father is powerful and almighty? Must we pray only to His Father? Is it wrong to pray to the Father’s Son?

Out of our ignorance, we sometimes waver back and forth, praying to Jesus one day, and when this

doesn’t seem to work out, switching to the Father. Also, the Holy Spirit is the closest to us. Does this then mean that we should pray to the Holy Spirit again? Do you pray to the Holy Spirit to help you, then to the Father, and then to the Son again, even as you feel there is something wrong with this? Prayer should be offered to God the Father and Jesus Christ. Of course, the Holy Spirit is also God. However, the Holy Spirit is the Helper God, assisting us in our weaknesses and ignorance, thus leading us to pray to God the Father and Jesus Christ. So it is wrong to pray in the name of the Holy Spirit. Yet even now, nominal Christians who still have not been saved, as they remain ignorant of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, are praying to the Holy Spirit.

For those who have been saved by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit also, unless their faith in the Truth is firmly and concretely established, it’s not easy to discern to which Person of the Triune God they should pray. However, though this may seem like a difficult issue, it is actually very simple



once you grasp it. Jesus is the Lord who came to this earth for you and me, bore all our sins by being baptized by John the Baptist, laid down His life on the Cross, and rose from the dead again. Fundamentally speaking, Jesus Christ is the Savior, the Creator, the Judge, and God Himself. Because Jesus Christ is God Himself, and because He laid down His life for our salvation, when we pray to this Lord who has saved us, He answers us most intimately and compassionately. Sometimes we have to ask our God the Father for help as well.

What Role Does God the Holy Spirit Play?

Who is the Holy Spirit then? The Holy Spirit is our Helper. When we pray to Jesus and God the Father, the Holy Spirit leads us to the right way as He knows God the Father's heart. This doesn't mean that the Holy Spirit is somehow lesser than the Lord Jesus

or the Father, but it means that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit all love us and help us from their respective places. In other words, each Person of the Triune God has a different role. Of these three Persons of God, the Father planned our salvation, Jesus Christ implemented it, and the Holy Spirit is now helping us.

God the Father sent His Son to this earth to be baptized by John the Baptist, and according to the will of the Father, Jesus completed our salvation and the remission of our sins by being baptized, shedding His blood, and rising from the dead again. He then ascended to Heaven. After this, the Holy Spirit was sent to this earth in Jesus' place. As the Holy Spirit dwells in the hearts of the saints who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, He helps them to realize the Word of God, to think of what the Father and the Son have done for them, and to believe in this work of salvation. So the Father, the Son, and the Spirit each have different roles. When we ask God the Father for help, we think about Jesus who has



saved us from the sins of the world, and when we pray to Jesus, we obtain the same answer for our prayer. Therefore, you should realize here that your prayer is answered both when you pray to God the Father in the name of Jesus Christ and when you pray to the Son. We have to remember whenever we pray that God will answer us whether we pray to the Father or His Son Jesus.

We can pray to either God the Father or His Son Jesus. It makes no difference at all if you pray to God the Father, nor is it wrong to pray to Jesus Christ in His name. What's important is that we pray constantly at all times, as often as possible. Whether it is to the Son or the Father that we pray, we are praying to the same God. Jesus is equally divine. The Son has saved us from the sins of the world, and His divine nature is the same as that of His Father. That's why we have to be as intimately close to Jesus as God the Father.

Since Jesus is our Savior God, it is proper for us to pray to this Lord. Whenever we pray, we say at the

end of the prayer, "We pray in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ," and we do this precisely because Jesus has saved us from all our sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Why do we pray in the name of Jesus? It's because He has saved us from all the sins of the world through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. We pray in the name of Jesus because He is our God and our Savior; it's because Jesus made us, He is the Savior who has blotted out all our sins, and He is the Lord who has brought us back to life. That's why when we pray in the name of Jesus Christ, we can come before His presence, and by relying on His work of salvation, we can also come boldly before God the Father. This is an absolutely indispensable faith.

This faith must be clearly understood and we must all have it. There are many times in our lives of faith when we find ourselves confined by our own weaknesses. There are times when we get too tired and weary of God's work and we feel too frustrated and exasperated to continue on. Hitting the limits of



the strength of our own flesh, sometimes we even feel that life itself is too hard to carry on. In times like these, if we unite ourselves with the Lord and pray to Him by faith to seek His help, we will be able to continue to carry on with our lives of faith, for we will receive new strength from the Lord.

When You Ask for the Lord's Help in Your Prayer, You Must Be United with the Lord by Faith

The Bible says in Galatians chapter 2, *"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me."* Many Christians can cite this verse from memory. Sometimes they sing praises that contain this verse. Yet even though they pray and praise like this, they sometimes lead a life of faith that is alienated from Jesus and is not united with Him. Even though every Christian should pray to the Lord who has blotted out all sins with the gospel of

the water and the Spirit, and every Christian's faith should be united with the Lord when asking Him for His help, many Christians actually lack this faith.

Ignorant of the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit, some Christians confess just with their lips, saying, "I have been crucified with Christ." But they have not been able to unite themselves with the Lord. They are leading their lives of faith alienated from the Lord. We have to grasp that Jesus was condemned and crucified for your sins and mine because He had borne them all by being baptized. In other words, He had shouldered all our sins by being baptized first before being crucified in our place. So it is by believing in this Truth, that the Lord bore all the sins of the world by being baptized by John the Baptist and was then crucified to death in our place, and that we were crucified with the Lord. And because the Lord rose from the dead again, we have also been brought back to life by faith. In short, it is by our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that we had died once and lived again.



It's written in Genesis, *"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light"* (Genesis 1:1-3). Jesus Christ is the very God who created the heavens and the earth. As God made man out of dust and blew the breath of life into his nostril, man became a living creature and an immortal being. The Lord became God to all creatures. It's also written, *"All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made"* (John 1:3). The Bible says that everything in the world was made by Him. It says that nothing could have existed without Jesus Christ, the Father, and the Holy Spirit that constitute the Triune God.

The name "Jesus" means the "Savior," and the name Christ means the "King of kings." This means that Jesus Christ is the Absolute God. To save us from sin, the Supreme God Himself came to this

earth incarnated in the flesh of man, and He has saved us according to His will. He is the God who created us and made all things, and He is the God who answers your prayer whenever you ask Him for help.

All of us must have the faith that's united with Jesus Christ who came by the gospel of the water and the Spirit. I, too, sometimes find myself reaching my limits while leading my life of faith. I come across many things that are beyond my reach, and I sometimes feel too weakened to continue on. There also are times when I feel acutely how I am incapable of helping our struggling brothers and sisters, and how there is nothing I can do on my own to help them. In times like these, I ask my Lord for help. Because I believe that I had died with Christ and have been brought back to life with Him, with this united faith, I request the Lord's help trusting in Him. For the Lord is my God, my Father, and my Savior, every time I rely on God and ask Him for His help, I can plow through and overcome all my difficulties.



This is true even now. Even now, there are many tasks that I am struggling with and many occasions when I have to push the limits of my own strength, but every time, I overcome all my challenges by believing that I had died with Christ. This world is full of difficulties that I cannot bear on my own, and so what do I do whenever I come across hardship? I bear it by believing that I am someone who had died with Christ and has been brought back to life with Him. That's because I believe that Christ rose from the dead again. It was to bring you and me, who believe in Jesus Christ, back to life that the Lord rose from the dead again. In other words, because I believe that I have been brought back to life with Christ, and united myself with the Lord by this faith, the Almighty God is more than able to solve all my problems, and therefore there is no problem that I cannot confront.

None of us can ever lead a proper life of faith alienated from Jesus Christ. We live out our faith by uniting with Jesus Christ. Whether it is about

reaching salvation or asking for God's help, everything comes about through Jesus Christ, and it is also this God who helps us.

True Faith Is Putting All Your Trust in the Lord

As you carry on with your life of faith, it's absolutely indispensable to grasp just how important it is to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit given by the Lord. When we first believed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we only knew that we were sinless. But as we have continued to lead our lives of faith after being born again, we must now realize that we are not only sinless, but our flesh and our emotions were also crucified.

Didn't Jesus bleed when He was crucified? Don't you die if you shed all your blood? When Jesus was crucified to death, so did you and I also die. And Jesus Christ rose from the dead again in three days.



On that day we were also brought back to life together with Jesus Christ. He had come to this earth for us and taken up all our sins once for all by being baptized by John the Baptist. The Lord had shouldered all our sins, and He was crucified to death instead of us to bear the condemnation of our sins. He then rose from the dead to make us immortal. This, my fellow believers, is the gospel of the water and the Spirit. We were crucified to death with Christ, and we are now alive with Him. You and I must have this kind of faith in our hearts.

To completely trust in Jesus Christ is to recognize that our old selves had died with Christ, and that we have also risen from the dead through the resurrection of Jesus, all by our faith in Christ. Through the baptism He received from John, Jesus Christ shouldered the sins of the world, and He also went into the water and came out of it. His submersion into the water clearly denotes His death, and His emersion from the water clearly signifies His resurrection. To believe that Jesus was baptized and

died on the Cross for us and that He rose from the dead again to bring us back to life—this is the faith by which we are united with Christ. It is by this faith that we can unite ourselves with Christ to walk with Him and live with Him. We all need to deepen the dimension of our faith by uniting ourselves with Jesus Christ in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

It is written, *“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me”* (Galatians 2:20). I understood this passage from long ago, believed in it and preached it. I preached this passage whenever I faced hardship or temptation. As we carry on with our lives of faith, sooner or later there will be times when our physical strength is exhausted. If we keep following the Lord by relying on our own inherited physical health, material possessions, circumstances, or wisdom, then we will run out of these things eventually and no longer be able to follow the Lord. Our own strength, health, wealth, and knowledge are all bound to be exhausted.



How can we then follow Jesus when all these things are exhausted? When we run out of our own strength, can we really follow God as He commanded us? If we follow God with our old selves remaining very much alive, we will only get exhausted even more and it will be impossible for us to really follow God. Even if our hearts desire to do so, because our flesh is weak, we cannot follow God. If you try to follow Christ by trusting in your own strength and based on your own inherited circumstances, material possessions, knowledge, or health, you will then not be able to follow Him to the end. Those who are foolish will then end up giving up their lives of faith.

Some people, even as they believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, still say, “Although I’ve been saved, I can’t do the rest. I really can’t lead a life of faith properly. So I give up!” In times like this, you need the faith that you were actually crucified with Christ. When Jesus Christ was baptized by John the Baptist, the sins of the world were passed onto

Him, and Christ carried them to the Cross and bore all condemnation by being crucified. At that time it was not just Christ who died, but you and I also died, and when He rose from the dead again in three days, you and I were also brought back to life. It is when we believe that Jesus Christ is the Savior who has saved us from all our sins, and when we believe that He is the God who always answers our earnest prayers, that we are able to live by faith united with the Lord. Just as Christ lives forever, so will our bodies be resurrected from death and enjoy eternal happiness with Him. To believe in this is what faith is all about, and this faith is the real faith.

You may have received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, but unless you actually realize that you were crucified with Jesus Christ, you cannot live by faith. What will happen if your old self does not die? It’ll be impossible for you to live out your faith. After all, how could we ever lead our lives of faith if we were not crucified with Christ by believing in the gospel of



the water and the Spirit? This would mean that we are still bound by our sinful past, unable to separate ourselves from our old selves and old friends.

From a spiritual point of view, if I have really united with Christ by faith, then my old self is dead. If my old self is dead, are my old friends real friends? I am sorry to say this, but they are no longer my friends, for I had died with Christ. They may still think that I am their friend looking only at my outward appearance, but in reality, they are not my friends. That's because my old self had died and I have become a new man.

The Apostle Paul said, *“Old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”* Our old selves are dead and we have now become new creatures. Yet even though we have become new creatures, we seem to be unable to actually live as new creatures. So what did God say? He said,

“Get out of your country,

From your family

And from your father's house,

To a land that I will show you” (Genesis 12:1). Why did He say so? Because even though you have become a new creature, if you stay in your old hometown, your past acquaintances will all treat you as the same, old self and do not recognize that you have been born again and become a new person. That's why God said,

“Get out of your country,

From your family

And from your father's house.” This is what God had said to Abraham, and Abraham obeyed the Word of God. Like Abraham, we must also believe that we have become new creatures, live by our faith united with the Lord, and follow the Lord every day with His help.

Jesus Is Our Closest Friend

As we are living by trusting in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, if our old acquaintances are



stumbling blocks to us, then we must be able to boldly cut them off. The moment we are born again of water and the Spirit, sinners are no longer our friends. You may wonder how you could forsake your best friends. But once you are born again, your old friends are not your real friends anymore. I, too, had many friends before I was born again. Young and old alike, everyone I knew in my town was my friend. When I was with kids, they were my friends, and even when I was with hoodlums, they were my friends. I liked socializing with people so much that I considered it a joy of life to hang around with my friends. However, once I believed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and received the remission of sins, and I came to abide in Jesus Christ, old things all passed away.

Jesus Christ is your God and mine, but at the same time, He is also our closest and most intimate friend. After all, He has saved you and me from death, sin, destruction, and curses. So is there any other friend who is as true as He is? A true friend should be

willing to lay down his life for you. How can anyone who abandons you at the first sign of trouble claim to be your real friend? Jesus Christ is your true friend and mine. He is our everlasting friend. He is the friend who even laid down His life for us. He is the faithful friend and our God who shouldered the burden of our sins, died in our place, and rose from the dead again by His own power in order to bring us back to life.

Our faith must be united with this Lord, and we have to live by this faith. My fellow believers, you've lived to this day trusting in Christ, but do you now find yourself running out of your own strength? Then ask the friendly Lord for His help. We should entrust what we cannot bear in our flesh to Jesus by faith. We can then follow the Lord to the end. We can live a blessed life. The Bible says, "*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me*" (Philippians 4:13). We can do all things through the Lord, our most faithful friend found in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.



My fellow believers, have you received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit? Jesus Christ was baptized by John the Baptist for you and me. We believe in this. Did He end everything just by being baptized? Did He end just by bearing our sins? No, that is not the case. He also laid down His life for us to save us! Because He is our everlasting friend, whatever we ask, He never refuses but always helps us. The Lord said, *“Whatever you ask in My name, that I will do”* (John 14:13). I believe that whatever you do, whether it is taking care of your business or living in this world, everything must be done in unity with Christ.

The Power of the Almighty God Knows No Bounds

I’ve preached on many occasions about how God has saved us, and how great His power is. Is there

anything that cannot be achieved if God says that He will do it? Aren’t we spreading the gospel of the water and the Spirit all because it is God who is carrying out this work? If we look through the eyes of faith trusting in God, we can see all about what kind of work is arising in which country. In time, we can indeed see God’s work unfolding everywhere with our own eyes.

What happened when God said to let there be light, and let the earth bring forth seeded plants and trees that yield fruit? Plants and trees, from apple trees to pear trees and palm trees, all sprang forth. What God said at that time still has its power to bring plants and trees to continue to spring forth from the earth pushing up the rocks. Grass continues to grow unyieldingly as it was told by the Lord. Since the plants are frozen in the winter, get trampled on all the time, and often are buried under concrete slabs, they should be all dead, but amazingly, these plants keep growing.



The following story happened somewhere in China when a very old shrine was dismantled and rebuilt on higher ground as it was about to be submerged in water with the construction of a new dam. While dismantling, workers found in this historic site some grain stored in a clay jar. Upon close investigation, they found that the grain was from over 3,000 years ago. Even more incredible was the fact that although so much time had passed by and the grain looked too dry to be alive, when it was watered, it sprouted.

So what God said at the beginning, to let the earth bring forth plants, still remains effective, and that is why everything grows. Don't the grass and plants that seemed to be all dead in the winter grow once again when the spring comes around to show their resilience? That is God's power. It is the power of the very God Jesus who was baptized for you and me. This God is your friend and mine. Because the Word He spoke still has power, even now it is working through our faith. And as He is alive, He helps those

who seek His help. It is by believing in this God that we have received the remission of sins, and it is when we believed completely and were united with Him that we can see amazing works arising.

The Bible says, *"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me"* (Philippians 4:13). What a disaster would it be if we were to fail at our ministry because of our lack of strength? That is precisely why the Lord gives us new strength. My fellow believers, when you are too weary, when you get too discouraged that life is no longer exciting for you, look toward the Lord, trust in Him, and let your heart be united with Him. You will then be blessed to find new hope, receive new strength, attain the joy of the heart, and be restored once again. It is none other than Jesus Christ, God Himself, who gives you these blessings. None other than He is your friend and mine; and He also is your God and mine. It is by trusting in this Lord that we carry on with our lives.



We pray to our Lord Jesus. It's by praying to this friendly God who has saved us that we are helped. Do you believe this? You must have this faith.

We must not believe in Jesus as our Savior only formally, without the gospel of the water and the Spirit. When the Lord's Day comes around, you may go to church with the Bible tucked at your side, greet everyone, and worship piously shouting out, "Hallelujah to the holy and merciful God of grace!" But once you return home, don't you just throw the Bible aside and go back to seeking after the things of the world, and doesn't your fervent love for God all disappear?

Even if your circumstances make it difficult for you to attend God's Church as frequently as you would like to, your faith should at least be wholeheartedly united with the Lord. Your heart must believe in Him, confessing, "The Lord is my Savior, and it is for me that He was baptized and went into the water and came out of it. He is my friend." Our Lord is our friend and our God who

kindly extends His hands to help us whenever we ask Him for help. We must have such united faith. Today also, we are living by this faith trusting that the Lord is strengthening us.

My fellow believers, we are carrying out world mission through our literature ministry. We are distributing Christian books and e-books that contain the gospel of the water and the Spirit. I would like to publish a commentary book on Romans to preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit to Christians all over the world and make them believe in it. It was about 400 years ago that the Protestant theology sprang up around the world. And you have to clearly understand what the true gospel of salvation is and believe in it through the gospel of the water and the Spirit written in the Bible, rather than believing in fallacious doctrines and creeds.

When I decided to publish a commentary book on Romans, I thought I should clarify its passages with exegesis lest it turns into a dogmatic book propagating just my own arguments. I felt that a



clear, Biblically sound exposition was necessary to turn around today's misguided Christians back to the real gospel Truth. There is no reason why we can't preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Just because some passages are hard for some people to understand, it doesn't mean that we can't explain it. Whenever we open the Bible, we can explain each and every verse correctly. There is no passage that we can't explain. Why? It is because the Bible is the God-spoken Word. Since He is now in our hearts as the Holy Spirit, we can explain every Word of God.

In some ways, spreading the gospel of the water and the Spirit all around the world seems simple enough if we are doing it by faith. That's because if we write a few books and share them with others, everyone can come to know the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and those who surrender to it by faith are saved. If anyone does not surrender to the Word of God, such a person is someone who is not surrendering to God Himself.

Would you then still stubbornly refuse to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, even though this true gospel has now arrived? If you give up your obstinacy and believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, you will receive everlasting life.

Now, it is when we live by faith united with Jesus Christ that we gain everything. The Lord is Christ, He has saved you and me from all sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and He is the God who helps us. Do you believe that the God who helps us every time we ask for His help is Jesus who came by the gospel of the water and the Spirit?

He Who Is Almighty and Friendly Helps Us

As Jesus Christ helps us, you and I are living by His power, yesterday, today, and tomorrow alike. I admonish you all to realize this. And I admonish you to have the real faith. The real faith is one that's



united with the Lord. It is about leading your life of faith by trusting in Christ rather than your own strength. We live out our faith by believing that Jesus bore all our sins by being baptized by John the Baptist, that He was crucified to death to be condemned in our place, that He rose from the dead again in three days to bring us back to life, that He is still alive, and that He is offering His help to all who seek it. In short, we live by trusting in Christ, and this is the faith that enables us to be united with Him.

Until now, perhaps you've had a faith that's a bit distanced from Jesus. But now, you must have the faith that is united with God. That you should unite yourself with God by faith means that you should be united with the Church. I can say this directly and unambiguously to all who know that uniting with the Church is none other than uniting with God. It is when we believe in the Word of God with our hearts and live united with His Church that God helps us. Uniting yourself with the ministry of God's Church to spread the gospel is uniting with God Himself.

You should all grasp this. Only when we are united with Christ by faith can we realize that what God's Church is doing is God's work, and also realize that the proper life of faith is led when we believe so.

My fellow believers, let us live by faith united with Jesus Christ. Let your faith be united with Jesus Christ. You can unite with Him with your heart and believe in Him with your heart. Live by your united faith. God will then bestow on you abundant grace, many blessings, and great power and strength; He will embolden your heart. This is something that's reserved only for those who are united with the Lord. Anyone who is not united with the Lord is someone who is living on his own strength, and as such, when he runs out of his strength, he cannot avoid but be cursed and destroyed.

My fellow believers, don't just trust in your own strength, but trust in Christ. Be united with Him. Have you really united your heart with Christ? Even though your acts may be lacking, at least in your heart you must be united with the Lord. I am no



different from you; I, too, am struggling with many difficulties and obstacles, but I am admonishing you like this because I have united myself with Christ and the Church.

Recently I've been trying hard to get into a better shape and improve my health. So I pray to God, "Lord, please renew me. I can't be so feeble like this every day. Please restore my health and strengthen me to feel as energetic as in my youth." I pray like this because health is so indispensable to serving the gospel. So every morning I wake up, I run around a playing field ten times. And thanks to God, my health has improved remarkably.

Although I have many shortcomings, because I believe in the Lord, He is my strength, and He gives me even greater powers. He helps me every day. Because you are one of God's people, our Lord also strengthens you every day.

I believe that God is helping you in all aspects of your life, whether you are facing difficult circumstances or your heart is troubled, and He is

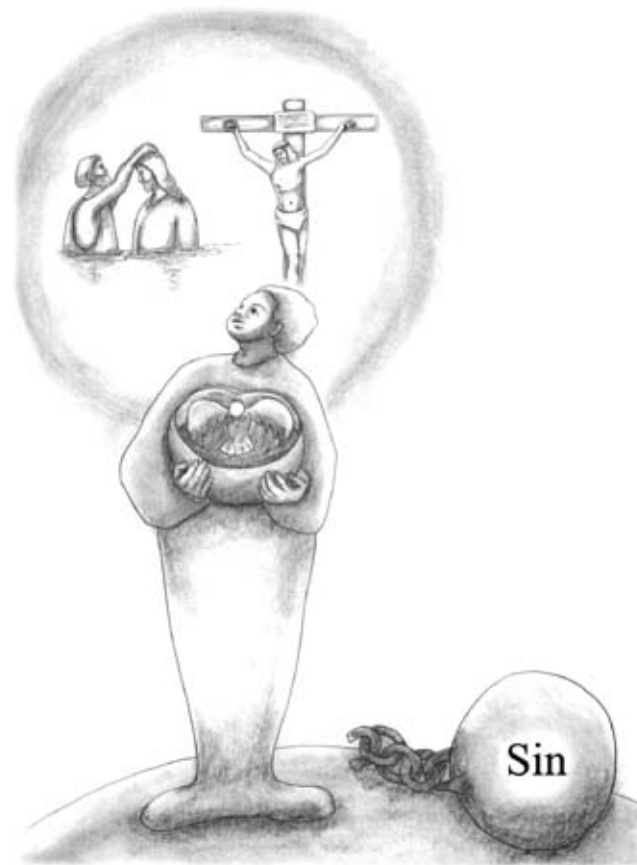
taking care of all your problems. I give all my thanks to Him for this. This is the God in whom we believe.

Praise the Lord! ☒



SERMON

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Contents



Whoever Loves the Lord Has Peace in His Heart

< John 14:15-31 >

“If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also. At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to

him.’ Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, ‘Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?’ Jesus answered and said to him, ‘If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father’s who sent Me. These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you. Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. You have heard Me say to you, ‘I am going away and coming back to you.’ If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, ‘I am going to the Father,’ for My Father is greater than I. And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass,



you may believe. I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me. But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave Me commandment, so I do. Arise, let us go from here.”

What It Means to Keep the Lord’s Commandments

This evening I would like to continue on from yesterday and share the Word from John 14:15-31, which the Lord spoke to His disciples on this earth as though He were giving His last will.

In this passage our Lord said, *“If you love Me, keep My commandments” (John 14:15)*. The Lord’s commandments here instruct us to never have any other gods before Him, love God the most and love each other as well. This reminds us of what the Lord said in Exodus 20:3: *“You shall have no other gods*

before Me.” As this passage says, if we really love the Lord, then we should have no other gods but the Lord, and we should become the disciples that love the Lord more than anything else in this world. Whoever loves the Lord truthfully is compelled to preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit all over the world which is entrusted by the Lord, and to labor to save everyone’s soul. This is a natural outcome for those who love the Lord more than anything else in this world, something that comes about even without them wishing for it.

If we really love the Lord, then it’s impossible for us not to keep the Lord’s commandment to love our neighbors. That’s because loving our neighbors as we love ourselves is the very evidence proving that we love the Lord. God’s commandments require us to love God the most, carry out the work He has entrusted to us, and love others as we love ourselves. Whoever loves the Lord truthfully is bound to love others as he loves himself. Although many changes occur when one is saved, the most important change



is that whoever is saved comes to love the Lord and serve Him, and preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit the Lord has given.

If anyone does not preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit even if he claims to believe in the Lord and love Him, this person's faith is flawed. If you love the Lord, then it's only a matter of course that you should believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and preach this love of the Truth (2 Thessalonians 2:10). The Lord's commandment to love God and love our neighbors is forever unchanging, whether before or after we were truly born again by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The Lord said to not only His disciples but also all the born-again saints that if they would love the Lord, they must keep His commandments. Because you and I love God's gospel according to His Word, we have wholly become the Lord's disciples. You can tell whether your love for the Lord is true or not just by looking at how faithfully you

believe in and serve the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

What the Lord Said in Today's Scripture Passage Is Thoroughly Applicable to Us

We can see from today's Scripture passage that whoever loves the Lord and keeps His commandments completely cannot help but believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and love this gospel and serve it. Although we are all weak and lacking, (those of us who love the Lord more than anything else in this world), are now able to devote our lives to serving the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

The Lord said in John 14:16-17: *“And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither*



sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.” When the Lord said this, He knew that He would soon leave the disciples behind on this earth and ascend back to Heaven. He was fully cognizant of what was to come, that He would die on the Cross, rise from the dead, and ascend to Heaven to sit at the right hand of the throne of God the Father. Therefore, what the Lord said here in John chapter 14 is akin to His last will, which He personally left to His disciples before ascending to Heaven.

The Lord said here that He would send the Holy Spirit for the disciples left on this earth and us as well, as it’s written: *“He [God the Father] will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever” (John 14:16)*. As this passage says, Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to all His believers to abide with them forever, so that the Holy Spirit would dwell in the hearts of the people of God and they would be helped by Him. And after Jesus ascended to Heaven after His crucifixion and

resurrection, on the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit descended on the disciples like fire just as Jesus had promised. This is true for us living in this present age as well. To you and me also, the Lord sent the Holy Spirit and fulfilled His promised Word completely.

Regarding the Holy Spirit our Lord said, *“The Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him” (John 14:17)*. But for us, who have received the remission of sins and reached our salvation through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, this Holy Spirit has actually come into our hearts as God’s gift for us. The Lord said here that the Holy Spirit does not descend on everyone in this world, but only on those who have been truly born again. And as we have been born again through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we can feel even at this very moment that the Holy Spirit is indeed with us and dwells in us forever just as the Lord said.

The Lord promised to send the Holy Spirit to His disciples who were left behind and to us as well. And



according to this promise, He has sent the Holy Spirit into the hearts of all of us who have received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. There is no question that the Holy Spirit now dwells in us. Although the people of this world do not recognize this Holy Spirit, He clearly exists in the hearts of everyone who believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. We have received the remission of sins into our hearts by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and we can testify at all times with the Word of God and our conscience that the Holy Spirit dwells in us. As the Holy Spirit teaches us, leads us and abides with us, whenever we hear the Word of God, the Spirit enables us to understand the Word, know the will of God, and realize how Satan tries to deceive us.

What about you then? Do you also believe that the Holy Spirit is in your heart? You can realize this if you have truly received the remission of sins into your heart by believing in the gospel of the water and

the Spirit. You can realize that you are led by the Holy Spirit to lead your life of faith and serve the Lord under His guidance. The Bible states, “*Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit*” (Acts 2:38). The Lord promised to give the Holy Spirit to whoever receives the remission of sins, and He has fulfilled this promise for all who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

My fellow believers, before bearing the condemnation of the Cross, our Lord clearly said, “*I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you*” (John 14:18). After the Lord ascended to Heaven, the disciples of Jesus faced untold sufferings under heavy persecution and were eventually martyred, but they all ascended to the Kingdom of God. Just as the Lord said in His last will, He did not abandon His disciples, but He said that He would come back to them at the last minute. This promise applies equally to all of us living in this present age. Whenever I read



this passage, I think to myself, “Although we are living in this world, the Lord will not leave us here but come back to us. What should we be doing until then? The Lord promised us that when the Great Tribulation is upon us, He would not leave us as orphans but come back to us. What then is it that we should work for until we meet the Lord again?”

Of course, as a human being, I also have fears when I think about the natural disasters that will strike in the end times and the cruel and nefarious things Satan will instigate. However, this fear is soon dissipated because the Lord is with me here in my heart. We cannot allow ourselves to be gripped by such fear, only to run away and hide cowardly until we receive the Lord. The Lord clearly promised us that He would not leave us as orphans but will come back to us. Therefore, if it is our unavoidable destiny to be martyred in the end times, then we ought to believe in this promised Word, diligently serve the Lord’s gospel of the water and the Spirit, finish spreading the gospel all across the world, and then go

to the Lord without any shame. The Lord said that He will not abandon us but will come back to take us away without fail.

What then should we do until we meet the Lord of Truth? Should we be solely preoccupied with guarding our own interests until we meet the Lord face to face? Or should we carry out the Lord’s work diligently and meet Him without any shame when He calls us back? You may have many conflicting thoughts, but as far as I am concerned, my sole desire is to serve the Lord united with all our saints and then meet my Savior. Just as the Lord said in John 14:15, “*If you love Me, keep My commandments,*” as those who love the Lord, you and I must serve the gospel of the water and the Spirit unto death and carry out the Lord’s work until the day we see Him face to face. If you don’t serve the Lord’s gospel even as you say that you love Him, your faith then is most certainly flawed. You must latch onto this that if you really believe in the gospel of the water and the



Spirit, then it is only fitting that you should work diligently for the spreading of the Lord's gospel.

The Lord Will Come Again Looking for the Righteous on the Last Day

The Lord promised the disciples that He would come back to them on the last day, and He will also come back to us just as He promised. Let's think about how we ought to receive the Lord at that time. Just after I received the remission of my sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, I mulled over the following question deeply: "The Lord will come back to take me away for sure, but what should I have done when I meet Him?" At that time, I resolved myself firmly to carry out the work entrusted to me by the Lord until the day I meet Him. I had decided to keep the Lord's commandments and spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit all over the world.

According to our new determination we are now working tirelessly to spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit. As the Lord continues to bless us, many people have shown interest in our ministry of spreading the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and we have over 18,000 visitors to our website every day. And furthermore we also have many people requesting our books through the website. We've even had some people changing their names or addresses deliberately to order more books than our policy allows, and because this practice is too overwhelming to our limited financial resources, we've had to work out a way to weed out such repeat orders, or otherwise we would have run out of funding in no time. Of course, I wish we could send all the books that people request from us without any financial concerns, even if just one person orders a hundred or even 5,000 books. There were many times when I wished we could accommodate every order without imposing any restrictions on the number of books ordered. Although I sincerely wish



we could send out as many books as people want and spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit in abundance all across the world, we can't do this because we still don't have enough financial resources. But I also believe that our Lord will solve this problem for us.

My fellow believers, as the Lord promised not to abandon us but to come back and take us away, we should all continue to preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit diligently until the day we meet the Lord. Whenever I think about the Lord return on the last day and taking us into His Kingdom to live there forever, I have nothing but gratitude. So, as those who believe in the Lord and love Him, we believe that it is our inherent duty to keep His commandments deserving of the blessings that He will give us in the future.

As you know, not every love is equal. Depending on what you love the most, you are bound to cherish it more. As those who love the Lord more than anything else in the world, we keep the Lord's

commandments and serve His gospel, and we devote ourselves to this Great Commission. Of course, those who have not been born again find it difficult to understand why we love and follow the Lord alone. But our Lord told us clearly, "*If you love Me, keep My commandments*" (John 14:15). It is then only a matter of course for all us who believe in the Lord and love Him to keep His commandments in our lives. Because we love the Lord, we are compelled to carry out ever more of His work and preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit even more diligently. This is the solemn duty and responsibility given to every believer.

When will the Lord come to take us away? He will return on the day that we finish spreading the gospel of the water and the Spirit throughout the whole world in obedience to His commandments—that is, on the day the Lord promised to return (Matthew 24:14, 29-31). When this planet earth is struck by unprecedented famines and natural disasters, and the Antichrist appears and the believers



are martyred, the Lord will come back to us to take us away. We will then give all our thanks to this Lord returning to take us away, for what He had said to His disciples—*“I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you” (John 15:18)*—would have been fulfilled for you and me - just as it was fulfilled to the disciples.

Our Lord said in John 14:19, *“A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also.”* This passage means that in a short while the Lord would die on the Cross and ascend to Heaven, and although the people of the world would no longer see Jesus Christ after that, His believers would continue to see Him on account of their faith. It is also the Lord’s promise that just as He would rise from the dead, our souls would also be brought back to life thanks to our faith in the Lord’s righteousness, and that He would also resurrect our dead bodies on the last day. These things were actually fulfilled to the disciples of Jesus,

and I am absolutely certain that they will be fulfilled to us as well.

The Lord said, *“At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you” (John 14:20)*. Put differently, Jesus Christ is saying here that we will know that He is in God the Father, we are in the Lord, and the Lord is in us. This Word was given not only to the disciples of Jesus but also to all of us who believe in the Lord. Do you then know that the Lord is now alive in our hearts, just as He said here? Indeed, Jesus Christ dwells in God the Father, we dwell in Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ also dwells in us. The Lord dwells in us as the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ abides in God the Father, and we abide in the Lord. Like this, we have become one with the Lord thanks to His Word and His love. On account of our faith in the Lord, we have become God’s own children.

The people of this world can never realize such a blessed truth. Even worse, they do not even wish to know it. This is the Lord’s blessing and truth that can



be enjoyed and grasped only by those who love the Lord, keep His commandments, and are born again through the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

The Lord says further in John 14:21, *“He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.”*

What are the Lord’s commandments mentioned here? I’ve mentioned it before, the Scriptures command us not to have any other gods before the true God and love the Lord God Almighty. This God, the Lord of salvation whom we love the most, has blotted out all our sins with the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and because we love Him, we are serving the gospel faithfully in our lives and preaching it to every living soul. Always remembering these commandments of the Lord to love God and love man, all of us must practice them in our everyday lives.

My fellow believers, the Lord said clearly, *“He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me.”* One of the Lord’s commandments is that we should have no other gods before the Lord, but are you really living by this commandment? By any chance, do you not have other gods before the Lord? If not, do you really love the Lord the most? Indeed, all of us love the Lord the most. It’s because we love the Lord the most that we have been able to follow and serve Him to the extent that we have, despite our many shortcomings. Had we not loved the Lord, we would have loved something else in the world. Put differently, if we had loved the world, we would have never been able to serve the Lord. It’s because we love the Lord and keep His commandments that it was possible for us to become righteous people and carry out the Lord’s work.

Therefore, it makes no sense for anyone to claim to love the Lord and yet fail to carry out His work. If anyone feels burdened by the Lord’s work rather than being delighted by it even while professing loudly to



love Him, then it can only mean that this person does not really love the Lord. Just as the Word of the Lord commands us, all of us must have no other gods before Him, realizing beyond any doubt whatsoever that the Lord alone is our true God and true Savior. In other words, we must grasp here that the Lord has blotted out all our sins with the gospel of the water and the Spirit, that He has saved us and made us God's children and the Lord's workers, and that sooner or later He will surely give us honor and glory in the next world.

As the Lord is full of love, He has given us the greatest love and the greatest glory. Because this love cannot be compared to anything else in this world, as those who have experienced this love personally, we cannot help but cherish the Lord's love and keep His commandments. We are compelled to love the Lord more than anything else. And when we make the Lord's love our foremost priority, we are able to carry out His work more than any other work of the world. It becomes a great joy for us to devote

ourselves to the spreading of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. If you want to find out whether you love the Lord the most or not, then take a look at yourself to see how much work of the Lord you are carrying out in joy, and you will find the answer right away.

“I Will Love Him and Manifest Myself to Him”

My fellow believers, our Lord said that it is those who keep His commandments that love the Lord God. He also said that those who truly love the Lord will be loved by Him in return and experience this love first-hand just as He said, *“He who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him”* (John 14:21). Indeed, the Father truly loves whoever loves the Lord. The Lord will manifest Himself to him, speak to him, inspire his heart and give him a profound understanding of



the Word. He will personally entrust God's work to him to carry it out. This Word has now been fulfilled in you and me. We are now able to realize from our first-hand experience that God indeed loves us.

Time after time, I can feel that God the Father truly loves me even though I am not particularly gifted. So my heart is always rejoiced and happy. I am sure you that you also feel the same way. Although we are often persecuted and slighted in this world, we follow the Lord even more diligently because our hearts love Him even more. In times of such hardships, the Lord comes looking for us to comfort us and strengthen us, telling us that He loves us. He makes it possible for us to bear witness of His Word even more, and He embraces us in His love. Such love has been shown to us on many occasions and in various ways and forms. So I ask you to open your eyes of faith wide and see the Lord's love with your own eyes.

We are not alone. In our hearts we have the Holy Spirit the Lord gave us. And thanks to the power of

this Holy Spirit, we can keep the Lord's commandments, love God the most, and carry out His work with passion. Moreover, through this Holy Spirit, we can find true comfort from God whenever we need encouragement or find ourselves struggling with our lives in this world. I admonish you to realize that as those who love the Lord the most, are His precious disciples who can receive such invaluable encouragement that can never be received from the world.

Jesus said in John 14:21, *"He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."* This promise has actually been fulfilled to all of us who love the Lord. Like a last will, the Lord spoke this Word of prophecy just before His imminent death. And it has now been fulfilled to you and me who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and to all those who love the Lord and follow Him. Having saved His loved ones through



the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the Lord has entrusted His gospel to us by saying, “You are now sinless, and therefore you can carry out My righteous work. So go ahead and spread My gospel.” The Lord has thus enabled us to realize His Word and made us preach it. Like this, it is through those who love God the most in obedience to the Lord’s commandments that He fulfills His work.

What the Lord said in today’s Scripture passage is like a last will and a prophecy, and it has actually been fulfilled to both Jesus’ disciples and you and me alike. If you had perhaps thought that the Bible was just a collection of good teachings in the past, but now you must believe that every Word of God is for real and that it has been fulfilled in all of us who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The Word of God does not change not even one jot nor one tittle. It is not only the forever-unchanging truth, but it is also the Word of prophecy that will be fulfilled exactly as it is.

At the time when Jesus said, “*He who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him*” (John 14:21), Judas (not Iscariot) asked Him, “*Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?*” (John 14:22) The Lord then said, “*If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him*” (John 14:23). This means that if we believe in Jesus Christ, who is our Lord God Almighty and our Savior, and believe in and cherish His salvation, the Lord will forever protect us and abide with us for eternity. Therefore, the promise He made here—“*My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him*” (John 14:23)—will also be completely fulfilled on the last day.

The Lord then continued on to say, “*He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father’s who sent Me*” (John 14:24). My fellow believers, whoever loves the Lord truthfully keeps the gospel Word of



the water and the Spirit faithfully and preaches this gospel exactly as it is. Because people like this love the Lord, they keep what must be kept, and even though they are lacking, they ensure that their hearts and faith are godly and preach the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit just as it is.

In contrast, how does someone who does not love the Lord behave? As the Lord mentioned above, people like this do not keep His Word. It's because these people don't love the Lord that they don't keep His Word and hate the very idea of serving Him. They simply love the world more than the Lord.

When I was a kid, toys were hard to come by. Most of the few toys that I had were old and used, and it was rare for me to get a brand new toy. On the rare occasion when my parents bought me a new toy, I got so excited that I played with it all day long, and time just flew by. But it didn't take long before the new toy got old and lost its novelty, and what had excited me so much no longer interested me. The same is true when it comes to loving the world. There

are many things in the world that attract us; just a new toy attracts a child. But once you meet the Lord and come to love Him truthfully, you will realize that such things are in fact insignificant.

It does not matter if you have the latest gadgets, a beautiful house, or a gorgeous spouse; once you realize the love of the Lord and believe in it, all such things of the world will look trivial. The Lord is the only honorable One in this world who deserves our utmost love. Because no one is more powerful or beautiful than the Lord, those who have met Him and love Him cannot help themselves but see everything else as inconsequential. The very moment you are born again of water and the Spirit and truly fall in love with the Lord, all the greed that you had for the world will fade away like falling leaves. Of course, this truth is not something that is realized over night. But the more time goes by, and the more you love the Lord, it will be distinctly engraved in your heart.

The Lord said repeatedly here: *“If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word”*; *“He who does not love*



me does not keep My words"; and *"He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me."* My fellow believers, all who believe in the Lord love Him. They can't help themselves but love Him. Even if they are drawn to the world for a short while, when they read and hear the Word of the Lord and share fellowship with Him, they are compelled to love the Lord again. Without even realizing it themselves, they are bound to be completely smitten with the Lord and fall into His love. Such people's eyes no longer see the things of the world. They come to love the Lord even more, follow and exalt Him even more, glorify and serve Him even more, and sacrifice themselves even more for Him.

In contrast, those who don't love the Lord, or don't realize that the Lord has saved them from sin out of His love for them, can never love Him even if they wanted to. Because they like whatever catches their eyes immediately and love the pleasures offered by the world, it's simply impossible for them to love the Lord. You must grasp here clearly that such

problems are bound to arise if you don't love God the Almighty Lord. Even the born-again can fall into the world when they do not keep the Lord's commandments.

It's in our human nature to worship idols unless we love the Lord the most, and that is why the Lord said, *"You shall have no other gods before Me"* (Exodus 20:3). If any of you are in this situation, you must repent regardless of whether you are a believer or not. Is there anything that's more majestic and lovely than God? When you think about it objectively, the Lord is always far more wonderful than anything else. The Lord loves you and has glorified you, and He has made your life worthwhile. So I admonish you all to realize that as the people of faith, it is incumbent on us to love the Lord and follow His righteousness.



Think about the End of Your Life and Live Today by Believing in the Righteousness of God

Where will everyone who loves this world instead of the Lord go in the end? The Bible says that ‘the wages of sin is death’. This means that whoever has sin must be put to death and face eternal destruction. Those who love this world more than the Lord may enjoy pleasure for a short while, but they are all inexorably destined to be cursed forever. Would you really be happy if your life and soul were ultimately destroyed and thrown into hell forever despite believing in Jesus? For a Christian, nothing would be more tragic than this. The Lord said, “*But she who lives in pleasure is dead while she lives*” (1 Timothy 5:6). You must realize here that the truly happy people are those who can foresee the end of their future, love the Lord, and thank Him for His salvation.

For those of you who have as yet not been born again, must without fail encounter the righteousness of the Lord as soon as possible while you are still alive, before the end of your life is upon you. You must look into your future and examine yourself to see whether there is sin in your heart or not, and whether you really love the Lord or not. In other words, you have to know who you really are. Above all, you must believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit with all of your heart and be completely saved by confessing, “Lord, I am nothing but a wretched man doomed to hell for my sins. Have mercy on me and save me, Lord!” Like this, you must make up your mind clearly before God. It’s people like this who are the happiest.

It doesn’t matter how prosperous we are on this earth if the end of our lives is miserable. Regardless of how prosperous we are today, if we discover when we stand before God that our final destination is a place of mourning and destruction, then our tragedy is inevitable. In contrast, if the Lord comes to us to



take us away to live with Him forever, then even if we are sad today, we will be happy in the end.

As the Lord said, “*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*” (*Hebrews 11:1*), we must think carefully about our own faith. The Lord also said that if one builds a tower without first calculating its cost, and is unable to finish it, he would be mocked (Luke 14:28-30). We ought to meditate deeply on this Word. Even when we build a house, we come up with a budget to plan ahead carefully, and so how could we lead our lives of faith without considering the final end of our lives? In another parable the Lord said that if a king with 10,000 men cannot defeat another king with 20,000 men, he should ask for terms of peace and end hostilities right away (Luke 14:31-32). Like this, for your life to have a happy end, you must meet the Lord and believe in Him as soon as possible. And you must hold onto the gospel of the water and the Spirit He has given you.

How long will we live even if we were to live a long time? Time goes by relentlessly like a river, and our lives are finite. In Korea, most men feel that time doesn’t go by fast enough until they are 20, but once they are drafted into the military; they realize that they need to take life more seriously and make something out of their lives. But from then on they get so busy with their everyday lives and time flies by so fast that this realization is soon forgotten. By the time they get married, they are already in their 30s, and by the time they have children and put them in school, they are in their 40s and looking into the 50s. When you get older, every passing year makes a huge difference. Getting just a year older makes you feel like you’ve aged a decade. When you reach a certain age, you feel every part of your body declining rapidly, your thoughts change completely, and you come to accept the reality of death.

The same is true for me as well. It seems like only yesterday that I was a teenager, but now I’m already in my mid-50s. My eyesight has deteriorated so much



that I can't even read without my glasses. When I was playing soccer with my coworkers today, I had a hard time trying to see where the ball was. Even when I had the ball in my possession, I kept fumbling so that someone else could not steal it from me. So I got upset momentarily, but I realized that I had grown old with passing time. Like this, everyone is an ephemeral being. We have seniors here, and while right now our younger brothers and sisters' show them respect, but soon it will be their turn to be shown respect. The clock ticks for everyone, you and me alike and no one can stop it. Every passing moment means that we are all just getting that much older.

Because life is short and momentary like this, you must manage your life well. You must know where your life is going, and what its end will be. And you must turn around as soon as possible and come to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and love the Lord. You must turn yourself into someone perfect who keeps the Lord's commandments. For all

Christian believers, it is a fitting commandment that they should have no other gods before the Lord. The Lord is the only One in this world who is worthy of your love, and He alone is almighty and wonderful. So you must realize here that He is your Savior who truly loves you and has delivered you from all sins. You must make up your mind immediately and believe in this Lord as soon as possible. And you must realize that if you instead take your time and enjoy fleeting pleasure without thinking about its full consequences, you could be destroyed at any time.

Of course, you can enjoy life's pleasures even as you believe in the Lord. But you are going astray if you seek after only the pleasures of life without faith in the Lord. Although we do not know the exact day and hour when the Lord will come back to take us away, He clearly promised not to leave us as orphans but come back for us.

In reality, we are in fact like orphans in this world. Because this chaotic and desolate world is not our eternal home, we are no different from orphans.



However, the Lord will never leave us here alone. Therefore, we ought to live every day by faith, reminding ourselves that the Lord will indeed come back to us on the last day and take us away in His arms.

We Have the Helper, the Holy Spirit

Our Lord said in John 14:25-27: *“These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you. Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”*

The Lord gave us a promise in this passage, *“The Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you”*

(John 14:26). This Word of the Lord has been actually fulfilled in us. The Holy Spirit sent by the Lord reminds us of His every Word. Whether we are out in the world working or traveling, not to mention when we are worshipping the Lord like this, the Holy Spirit reminds us of everything the Lord said.

We hold worship services several times a week—Wednesdays, Fridays, and twice on Sundays, in the morning and the evening. And on Thursdays and Saturdays each department holds a separate meeting as well. Such gatherings of ours are not simple gatherings. Through these meetings you and I come to stand before the Lord, and when we stand in His presence, we come to turn our hearts around from straying. Whenever we are gathered before God, through His servants God speaks to our hearts, gives us understanding, guides us and holds us steadfast. Such blessings are felt far more concretely during the hour of worship than any other time, and that is why it is so important for the born-again to gather together in the Church.



Therefore, it is wrong to miss Church meetings too often or attend reluctantly and think, “I’m so tired of this sermon; it’s so predictable.” Just as the Lord said, “What you hear is what the Father said,” whenever your Church leaders speak to you, listen to it closely and take it to your heart, realizing that whatever they are saying, God is speaking to you through them. Of course, these words are spoken to you through your Church leaders by the work of the Holy Spirit, but they are ultimately spoken to you by God the Father through the hearts and thoughts of your Church leaders, and that is why you must listen to them closely. You should realize here that it is through these hours and gatherings of worship, when we hear the Word of God that our faith grows evermore.

The Lord is holding us steadfastly not only during such hours of worship but also when we are out in the world, for He has sent us the “Helper,” the Holy Spirit who assists us. Those who have received the remission of sins through the gospel of the water and

the Spirit have the Holy Spirit inside them, and this Holy Spirit helps them understand the love of the Lord and His righteousness, and continuously brings them to remembrance. The Holy Spirit gives us faith, guides us and holds us steadfast. This Helper is the Lord’s gift that only the born-again can know and feel. This alone is enough for us to clearly discern the difference between those who have become God’s children and those who have not.

The Lord Has Left Peace with Us

The Lord said in John 14:27: *“Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”* Before we were born again, we had all tried to find peace on our own. We used to sing hymns without really understanding their meaning. A good example is the following hymn,



“Far Away in the Depths of My Spirit,” whose refrain goes:

“Peace, peace, wonderful peace,
Coming down from the Father above!
Sweep over my spirit forever, I pray
In fathomless billows of love!”

When we sang this hymn, we might have felt at peace for a while. But it was all a false peace given by the world.

The Lord said that He has personally left His peace with us, and that the peace He has given us is not like the one offered by the world. And just as He said, the Lord has given us the salvation of the remission of sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Through the gospel, the Word of Truth, His almighty power and His perfect protection, the Lord has given us true peace. This peace given by the Lord is indeed different from the peace given by the world; in contrast to the worldly peace, which one must strive to attain on his own, the God-given peace can be received just by faith.

What is the nature of the peace the Lord has given us then? It is one that comes from the complete remission of all our sins; and it is one that cannot be taken away from us, for the Lord has bestowed it on us forever by blotting out all our sins. The Lord, God Almighty, has made us His own children to perfection. He has thus given us eternal peace by assuring us, “You need not fear anymore. You are God’s perfect children. I will be with you until the end of the world. Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. I will guarantee your life.” He has left peace with us.

Although we have become God’s children and our sins have disappeared, and we also have the Lord’s promise, we sometimes get too selfish that we get into trouble. From time to time, we look for excitement and find ourselves drawn to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, thinking to ourselves, “Why am I so bored? Why is life so dull? How can I make my life more exciting?”



But all that is in vain. Because the Lord has already given us peace, we only have to receive and enjoy it by faith. Since the Lord has blotted out all our sins, all that we have to do is just abide in that peace giving thanks to the Lord and thinking of His grace.

Moreover, now it's no longer necessary to offer any prayers of repentance to make empty promises to keep the Lord's commandments and live an upright life before Him. Before we were born again, we might have felt some sense of accomplishment from offering prayers of repentance, but there is no need for this anymore, as God is now telling us to just listen to and believe in His Word, rather than offering useless prayers of repentance. Like this, the Lord has given us true peace. And since we have received such genuine peace, it is only a matter of course that we should share it with everyone else.

My fellow believers, you need to think about how you should live before God. The Lord said, *"Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you"* (John 14:27). Have you

really experienced this peace given by the Lord? Are you experiencing it even now? Whoever has received the true remission of sins from God by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit has unwavering peace in his heart.

If one has no peace, it's because his sins still remain intact in his heart. By nature, man is a fragile being, always tormented by and suffering from his sins. These sins are a heavy burden and a serious problem for everyone. Only when this problem of sin is resolved does peace come; unless one takes care of this problem, peace will never come to him. Those who still have not received the remission of sins are bound to have many unresolved problems in their hearts. Even though they spend their entire lifetime trying to solve them, all their efforts end up in vain.

But we should be different? The Lord has already solved away the problem of all our sins, both our past and our future sins, and He has given us true peace. What a wonderful blessing this is?



It is none other than the believers in the gospel of the water and the Spirit who have received the peace given by the Lord. As those who have received this blessed peace from the Lord, there is only one thing that we should be concerned while living on this earth, and it is the question of how we can preach the gospel to even more people. Lately, we've been thinking very hard about how we could preach the gospel to the visually disabled. As a step toward this, we recently uploaded an audio sermon delivered by Rev. Dong-il Kim ministering in Yenbien, China, specifically designed for the visually disabled. About 40 visually disabled people downloaded this sermon.

We also had a pastor send us an email after reading our book on the Tabernacle. I'm not sure if he is visually disabled or not, but he is a Baptist pastor, and in the email he confided just how happy he was now that he received the remission of sins by understanding and believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. While reading his email, I thought to myself, "I knew this would happen for

sure! The Lord has already left His peace with us, and this pastor is enjoying it now. I was also so happy and joyful to have the Lord's peace, and I've been at peace ever since. If there is one concern in my heart, it is how I can spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit all over the world as soon as possible." Although our current endeavor to spread the gospel is at its initial stage, I am convinced that it won't be long before we preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit to each and every one throughout the whole world. There is nothing in this world that we can't accomplish so long as God works through us.

Through the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit, God Has Given Us the Indescribable Peace of Heaven

The Lord said in today's Scripture passage, "I am leaving here. The Devil is coming. But even as I



leave, I will be with you.” This promise the Lord made to His disciples was completely fulfilled, and everything the Lord promised to you and me was also wholly fulfilled. Through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, God has indeed given us the indescribable peace of Heaven.

Have you received this peace? Do you still continue to enjoy this peace? Whoever believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit has this peace; but whoever does not believe in this gospel has no peace. Only those who have been born again through the gospel of the water and the Spirit can enjoy the true peace of the Lord.

I consider it a miracle that I came across this gospel and believed in it. I met the Lord for the first time while reading Matthew 3:13-17, and the gospel of the water and the Spirit revealed in this passage was so precious that I couldn't help but treasure it. Some people might say that I am making a big fuss out of elementary things, but I want to say to them, “Where can you reach this understanding? Is there

any philosophical school that teaches this Truth? Can you come to understand it just by praying hard? Do you think you can learn it if you sell everything you own and offer it to God? Where in this world is this Truth taught?”

I'm sure that no one takes the life of his own body lightly. That is how precious and dear everyone's life is. Is it then insignificant that Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist, died on the Cross, and rose from the dead? God Almighty was baptized and gave up His own life on the Cross to save you and me from all our sins, and yet is this somehow so trivial? No, of course not! The Lord has given us the remission of all our sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. In this salvation are all the gifts of God, all His blessings, and all the treasure of the Kingdom of Heaven. I am absolutely certain that there is nothing more precious than this.

Given this, all of us ought to testify not only on this earth but also when we go to the Kingdom of Heaven that the Lord has saved us and glorified us by



coming to this earth. We should make new songs and praise the Lord, testifying that what has enabled us to abide in the Kingdom of God is the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit, and that we have become righteous people, all thanks to this Truth. We should be able to say even to the angels, “Listen, do you know how I became your master today? I actually was a lesser creature than you. Though I had honor as a human being, I used to live in the mud and manure. But our God has made me perfect like this. You don’t even have such an opportunity. That’s how much God loves me!”

The Lord clearly said, “*My peace I give to you.*” Words cannot express just how joyful we are that we found such a powerful, wonderful and perfect gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit and were truly born again. Through the Lord’s gospel, we’ve come to know this Truth that makes it possible for us to receive all the treasures and blessings of Heaven. We must believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and preach it all the time. This gospel of the water

and the Spirit that you believe in is the one and only perfect Truth of salvation that cannot be found anywhere else in the world. You cannot find this Truth of salvation from any religionist in this entire world. Only from the believers in the gospel of the water and the Spirit can you listen to this gospel of Truth and receive true peace by faith. You have attained genuine peace by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. We should always be thankful for this in our lives.

Of course, I know that even now some of you are unsettling the peace given by the Lord with your own fleshly thoughts. However, this gives you all the more reason to follow the Lord and keep this peace He has given you. In other words, we ought to think about what it is that the Lord has entrusted us, and how we should live to lead an upright life before God. Above all, we must believe in the Lord’s Word that He would not abandon us as orphans but come back to take us away and live with us forever. By this faith we should look at everything that’s awaiting us



and carry out God's work in our lives. We should pray for the gospel, exercise our faith for the gospel, and love the Lord more than anyone or anything else.

The Lord said that those who keep His commandments are the truly blessed. It's those who love God, and love others as they love themselves, that are truly God's own children. You must realize here whoever keeps the Lord's commandment is someone who truly loves the Lord, and whoever does not keep the Lord's commandments is someone who does not love the Lord.

The Lord Almighty God has saved you and me through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and He has given us true peace. He has given us the everlasting remission of sins, adopted us as His own children, made us His righteous workers, and given us indescribable blessings. God has done so much for us that we simply do not know how we can ever thank Him enough. But even so, I give all my thanks to God! ☒



SERMON

5



Contents



We Renew Our Strength Through Prayer

< John 14:6-14 >

“Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him.’ Philip said to Him, ‘Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe

Me for the sake of the works themselves. “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.”

Warm greetings to everyone! This summer has been so hot that I can’t recall any previous summer that was as hot and difficult to cope with. I’ve also gained some weight, and so perhaps this made it more difficult for me to cope with the heat. The climate is getting increasingly hotter due to global warming, and putting on additional weight just made things worse for me. But even so, I am happy that the summer has gone by without too much trouble, and I thank God for watching over us to ensure our safety. Over this summer discipleship training camp, I noticed a few things that we should have done to



better serve the Lord, and so we need to be more prepared for next year's summer discipleship camp. But I am still very happy to see everyone here safe and sound.

I know that you, all the servants and the saints, have struggled a lot to serve the Lord's gospel. This year's discipleship training camp has not been easy, either, as the weather has been unusually hot. In particular, our ministers' wives labored very hard in the kitchen even under this intense heat, and I am very grateful to them for preparing delightful meals for us. While they probably have lost a few pounds, it seems that the rest of us have gained several pounds thanks to them. So let me take this opportunity thank each and every one of them for all they've done for us.

In every revival meeting that I've been to, there always were some ministers snoring at night. As I don't snore, I find it very difficult to cope with this. On some nights I couldn't fall asleep until 3 in the morning because of all the snoring coming from our

ministers sharing the room with me. It was very stressful as sometimes I even got a headache from the snoring and found it impossible to get any sleep at all. So I've had my fair share of difficulties over this summer, but I'm glad that it has gone by without too much trouble.

The weather was so hot that it even distracted me from God's work, and sometimes all that I could think about was finding a way to cool myself instead of serving the righteousness of Jesus. I even cordoned off an area, filled a large basin with cold water, and dipped myself several times a day. It was so icy that I got goose bumps all over my body. And it was so refreshing and fun that I didn't want to get out of the tub. At least there is some wind here; in my hometown Chuncheon, there is hardly any wind. But I came here because I missed you. I came here to comfort you with the Word of God. So I hope and pray that you would all be comforted and encouraged by my sermons. And I also hope that you would find



new strength and live out your faith with a renewed heart.

Sometimes, when we go through such a hot summer, we worry about how we can lead our lives of faith in such hard times. And sometimes our minds are preoccupied with our own prosperity rather than our lives of faith. There are times when we think of only finding a way to cool ourselves and worry about ensuring our fleshly prosperity rather than spiritual prosperity, but even so we must live out our faith while adjusting ourselves to our given circumstances.

The Importance of Prayer

Today, I would like to preach about the importance of prayer. In my life of faith, from time to time I feel that it's impossible to follow the Lord by relying on my own will or strength. Whenever I look at such limits of my flesh, I can't help but pray to the Almighty Lord. When the weather is hot, my heart is

also stifled, and when my body is in pain, my heart is also discouraged; and in times like these, my eyes are blinded by the struggle of the flesh that I find it difficult to live out my faith spiritually and properly. No matter how strong your determination is, if your circumstances turn adverse enough, it's difficult to live out your faith spiritually as your struggle against your hardship.

What should we do then? What should we do when we can no longer live out our faith on our own strength? The issue facing us here is how we can live the rest of our lives spiritually by faith even under such difficult circumstances. To find the answer to this question, to find out how we can be strengthened and by what kind of faith we ought to live, we must turn to the Word of God. And when we turn to the Word of God, there is only one conclusion to reach: The only way to lead a spiritual life of faith before God is by praying to the Almighty God. From the Word of Truth, we realize that we must pray to God and seek His help in our lives, for it is impossible for



us to live out our faith just by relying on our own strength or faculty. Because it's God the Father who strengthens us and blesses us in all things, it's when we rely on God that we can serve the gospel of salvation and follow Him. That is why prayers are so important in our lives, and why we must always pray to God the Father to sustain our lives of faith.

Jesus said in today's Scripture passage, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life"* (John 14:6). Philip then asked Him, *"Lord, show us the Father"* (John 14:8), and Jesus said to him, *"He who has seen Me has seen the Father"* (John 14:9). He went on to say: *"Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves. Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. And whatever you ask in*

My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it" (John 14:10-14).

Jesus was telling His disciples here to believe that He was God Himself. Jesus told them if His Word wasn't enough for them to believe that He Himself was God, they should believe so by looking at the many wondrous things that He had done. He also spoke to them about how to pray to God properly. Our Lord said here that if we pray to the Father in the name of Jesus Christ, He would answer all our requests. Jesus Himself promised this to us.

I have given many sermons on prayer recently. That's because I've seen many Christians using all kinds of names to call upon God when praying. They switch back and forth between different names so often that it's confusing, sometimes calling upon God the Father, other times the Lord, still other times Jehovah God, and then switching back to Jesus. They are not only to be blamed, as we have also offered such confusing prayers quite often. We, too, have



wavered back and forth, sometimes praying to Jesus, other times to God the Father, and still other times to the Holy Spirit. However, even though it seems somewhat confused, it's not a mistake to switch back and forth because God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are the same Triune God. That's because what's important is not the name of God that we call upon when we pray, but that we pray ceaselessly to the true God.

As we continue to carry on with our lives, there are many times when we fall into despair because of our weak flesh. In such times, only God the Father can help us, and the only way to get this help is by praying, as it's written in Psalm 121:1-2,

"I will lift up my eyes to the hills—

From whence comes my help?

My help comes from the LORD,

Who made heaven and earth."

This is why it's so imperative for all of us pray constantly in our lives.

When we pray, we often call upon God the Father, but this is the same as calling upon the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit at the same time. That's because God is Triune. When praying, however, it's most appropriate to pray to God the Father or Jesus.

We should ask God the Father to help us in all things as the following: "Father, we have to live in this harsh world, we have to work at a job or run a business to make money, and we also have to support our families. And amid all these burdens, we must work to preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit all over the world, the most important work that saves the soul. Father, we ask You to help us in all these things. Protect us from this harsh world, Father. Keep us from our fleshly weaknesses and help us. Bless us in both body and spirit. Bless all our saints so that they and their businesses may prosper. Give us health, so that we may lack nothing to serve the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Help us to preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit all over the world, both in Korea and abroad. And bless us to live



by faith. Make us follow Your righteousness.” We have to pray like this because we need God’s help in our lives.

What Is Prayer?

Prayer is all about asking God for His help. How should we pray then? We should begin our prayer with the name of God the Father, and end with the name of Jesus Christ. That’s because God the Father has saved us in Jesus Christ. When Philip asked Jesus to show him the Father, Jesus said to him, *“Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? And He went on to say, “The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works” (John 14:10).*

God the Father and Jesus are the same God, and the Father dwells in Jesus. Therefore, Jesus does not just speak His own thoughts, but the Lord speaks and

works according to the will of God the Father. That’s why we pray to God the Father to help us as we carry on with our lives in this world. It’s then that we can carry on with our lives and also preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit to all the souls that have not yet been born again through this gospel of salvation. When we thus ask God the Father to help us, we are able to truly follow His righteousness, carry on with our lives in this harsh world, and receive the God-given blessings in our lives. The only answer for us to live in this desert-like world is faith and prayer.

Jesus said in John 16:23-24: *“Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you. Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.”* Jesus Christ is our Mediator who, when we had drifted away from God because of our sins, reconciled us to God the Father and built a bridge for us to once again share fellowship with Him. Man’s relationship with God could be restored because Jesus accepted all the sins of the world through the



baptism He received from John the Baptist and bore all the condemnation of sin on the Cross. As a result, we have been justified freely by faith through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the God-given Truth of salvation, and we have received the right to come confidently before the presence of God in person. That we are now able to approach God the Father and ask for His help is also because Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist, died on the Cross, and rose from the dead again. This is why we begin our prayer by calling upon God the Father and end our prayer with the name of Jesus Christ.

The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 13:13, *“And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.”* Why is love the greatest? It’s because we could only be saved from all our sins thanks to the love of God the Father and the love of Jesus Christ, which is fully manifested in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. That is why the Bible calls the gospel of the water and the Spirit as “the love of the Truth” (2 Thessalonians 2:10). Through

the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we have received the remission of sins by faith and attained everlasting life to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Out of His unbound love for us, God has given us true salvation through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and He is asking us to pray to Him always. So much emphasis is put on prayer that God spoke of it in over 700 passages in the Bible. That is just how important prayer is. As such, all of us must realize and remember always that as those who have been saved by the love of God, what we need the most is prayer.

Faith in the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit is the foundation of our hearts and lives, and therefore prayer is always necessary in our lives. It’s when we pray that our strength is renewed, we receive new blessings and find the strength to save other souls, and all our needs are met. It’s because God helps us and works in our lives that we are able to carry on with our lives. That’s why prayer is so indispensable to our lives of faith. The more we



struggle, the more urgent it is for us to pray to God. King David prayed to God and sought His help constantly, even in times of crises when his life was at risk. He prayed so ceaselessly and earnestly that his prayers and supplications were collected to form the Book of Psalm. Browse through David's psalms, and you'll feel just how earnest his prayers were.

The Lord Answers Our Prayer

Jesus said, *"Whatever you ask in My name, that I will do"* (John 14:13). Our Lord will surely answer all our prayers. Because you and I are powerless, because we cannot overcome the desires of our flesh on our own, and because we can neither follow the Lord nor live in this world by relying on ourselves, it is by the strength gained by praying to God the Father, by His help, that we are able to carry on with our lives. Whoever prays to God can find new strength and live every day full of energy, for he will

be strengthened and helped by God through his prayer. That's why whoever prays to God is blessed in both body and spirit.

The reason why we should pray is now made clear then. It's because we are weak that we pray; and it's to receive God's help that we pray. The Lord told us to pray ceaselessly and be vigilant in our prayer with thanksgiving. This means that we should pray constantly at every opportunity. We should ask the Lord for our daily bread and all other needs through prayers. In short, we should pray as often as we breathe, every day and every moment.

So long as we are living in this world, we will always have difficulties. But even amid all these difficulties, we can still carry on with our lives when we pray to God the Father asking for His help and this prayer is answered. We are doing the work God has entrusted to us, and we are living by faith in obedience to Him. Therefore, even though our flesh on this earth is full of shortcomings, we can still



renew our strength every day and soar on wings like eagles.

Whoever asks for God's help will find deliverance in both body and spirit. Put differently, everyone who prays will live by faith and be blessed in both body and spirit. No matter how harsh this world is, the prayerful will live in peace, and no matter how full of shortcomings they are, they will see all their needs met. Those who pray faithfully will find deliverance even if they are in poor health, destitute, and under difficult circumstances. That is why it's so imperative for us to pray incessantly. We must seek God's help by praying. None other than praying is what all of us must do ceaselessly in these end times.

"Father, we are doing the best we can, but our own strength is finite. When we face an immovable obstacle, we don't have the strength to overcome it. We can't go on anymore. In times like this, whenever our own strength is not enough, please help us, Father!" When we pray to God earnestly like this, He will help us for sure, and we can overcome every

obstacle and carry on with our spiritual lives thanks to the power and strength of God the Father and His blessings. It's through prayer that we can receive God's help to continue on with our lives. And it's by praying like this that we are blessed to find God's help and put on His power. Do you believe this?

Prayer is indispensable because it's a constant struggle to live in this world. There is nothing you can do on your own without praying. Neither can I live on my own without God's help. Even when it comes to serving the Lord, I can do this only if God the Father helps me. I, too, pray to God the Father all the time, and what sustains my life is the help that I get from the Father through my prayer. To be honest, there have been times when I neglected to pray and tried to accomplish something on my own strength. But every time I did this, I found out that nothing could be accomplished. That's because I had relied on my own cleverness and wisdom rather than relying on God. In contrast, everything that I ever did



by praying to God and relying on His help was achieved flawlessly.

I believe that the greatest of all blessings is prayer, for it is through prayer that every blessing is received. Although faith is indispensable to be saved through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and sacrifices and devotion are necessary to spread the gospel all over the world, prayer is a blessing that you can receive without any cost. That's because you can receive whatever you ask in your prayer.

God Helps Us Whenever We Pray for His Help

God will always help us if we pray, but if we don't, He will not give us any help. Although God knows all about our needs, He does not help us until we actually ask Him for His help. This is something that's shared by all parents. All parents would feed their newly born baby and change the diaper even

when the baby can't speak a word, but once the child reaches a certain level of maturity, they wouldn't help him until he asks for something. The child would try his best to go on his way without the help of his parents, but in the end, he would return to his parents. The parents would then embrace him warmly and help him, rather than rebuking him, and at that time the child would realize how grateful he should be for his parents, and he would want to do everything with his parents from then on. God also want us to do everything with Him. He wants us to rely on the Lord even when it comes to small things. That's why we must always pray and never neglect it.

There is no need for us to test our willpower and determination or try to train them. That's because what we must be trained in is faith, not our willpower and determination. It's by faith that we pray to God for His help. The greatest blessing that we can receive at the least cost is none other than prayer. Do you grasp this? You don't need much; all that you



have to do is just ask God sincerely to help you. And if you believe that God will give you what you ask, then you will surely receive it. That is what prayer is all about. The surest and shortest way to receive blessing from the Lord is none other than prayer. So we must know how to pray and pray constantly. This is the proper faith that we are seeking, and it is the way by which our faith progresses. Rather than trying to live by our own fleshly strength, all of us should pray to God as His saints and servants.

When the weather is too hot, it's hard to pray as it's difficult to focus and we just want to find a way to escape from the heat. Even worse, I know someone who has the urge to go the bathroom whenever he tries to pray. When he comes back, almost always the phone rings or he has a visitor, making it impossible for him to pray. The only quiet time he can find is early in the morning, and after this, it's hard for him to set aside another time to pray.

But all of us must realize clearly here that prayer is the solution to all our problems, the means by which we can obtain the most assured help at the least cost. So it's absolutely imperative for you to pray. Are you too busy to pray? That's just an excuse. God is everywhere we are. You can pray in the bathroom, and you can pray even while walking. Does God somehow not hear your prayer because you are in the bathroom or out in the streets? No, that is never the case. If we just have the will to pray, then we can pray at anytime and anywhere, and we can receive God's help coming through our prayers.

So let us all pray to God in our everyday affairs. Is there anyone who doesn't have any problem? No, everyone has his share of problems. After all, who doesn't face any struggles in life? Everyone is struggling. All of us therefore must pray to God. If you have not been born again of water and the Spirit yet, then pray to God to enable you to be born again. If you have already been born again of water and the



Spirit, then pray to God to help you solve the problems you are facing in your life of faith.

How often and how earnestly do you pray? “Father, please help me. I am facing many problems, and so I need Your help, Father. Give me health and bless me, Lord. Give me a job, bless my business to prosper, give me faith, and allow me to serve You.” Do you really pray with all earnest like this? Those who pray to God can follow the Lord by faith and serve Him even more. You will be blessed greatly like this if you pray.

Again, I ask you to pray in your everyday life. Everyone struggles with life. But if you bring your problems to God, they will all be solved no matter how difficult they are. “Father, please save these lost souls. Make our circumstances ideal and send us good coworkers to spread the gospel. Bless us, Father, and help us and protect us.” If we pray like this, by the time the prayer is over, we will feel that all the blessings had already come to us. So let us all pray like this all the time. Although we all need

understanding, faith, love, and the truth in our everyday lives, the first priority is prayer. Jesus Himself also prayed all the time in His public life. Even the Son of God prayed like this, and so how much more urgent is it for us to pray? I admonish you all to pray constantly.

Today, I am preaching about prayer. Are you struggling with your life? Is your hardship too much to bear? That’s why you should pray. When you pray, are you still unsure to whom you should pray? Do you switch back and forth from God the Father to Jesus and the Holy Spirit? It would cause you a lot of headache to think, “When I pray to the Son, I feel sorry for the Father, and when I pray to the Father, I feel sorry for the Son. Our Lord is God, and so maybe I should just pray to the Lord.” Sometimes we waste time like this needlessly worrying about how to address God. Of course, this doesn’t apply to all of us, but it does show that we all need to have a clear understanding of this issue.



The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are the same God. The Holy Spirit is our God, just as Jesus Christ is our God, and the Father is also our God. However, the Trinity is a very difficult concept for those who have not been born again through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Even in the field of theology, no one has yet been able to provide a clear explanation of this concept. Even as theologians do not understand the Trinity, they don't admit their ignorance but write about it drawing from someone else's writings, but they are still agonized by their inability to reach a definitive conclusion. So in the end, they just say, "The Trinity is an extremely mysterious and difficult concept to understand, and we so need to study it more."

Jesus said that we should pray to God the Father. Who did He say will answer this prayer then? Jesus said that He Himself will answer it. Because the Father and the Son are the same God, and because God dwells in Jesus, it's to the Father that we pray and it's Jesus who answers our prayer. So we begin

our prayer by calling God the Father and end it with the name of Jesus Christ, calling on them both and asking them both for help.

To pray is to ask God for His help. Do you not have difficulties? Do you not have anything to pray about? If you are struggling with hardship, then pray to God. God said in James 5:13, "*Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray.*" This passage means that we should pray whenever we are visited by hardship. Pray if you can't cope with your hardship on your own. Pray if you find yourself struggling to lead your life of faith and follow the Lord. Pray if your body isn't well. Pray if you have a wish. Pray if there is something you want. If your heart is discouraged, pray. If you are afraid, pray. If you want to be healthy, pray. If you want to be blessed, pray. Then God the Father will help you. He will help you and answer all your prayers. God will surely help you if you pray.

When I say that you should pray to God, however, I don't mean that you should make a fuss. Crying and



wailing for everyone to hear is not the way true prayer is offered. God did not teach us to pray like that anywhere in the Bible. On the contrary, our Lord said in Matthew 6:6, *“But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.”* God knows everything, and so why should you wail and scream and make such a fuss? Real prayer is offered like a conversation, as though you were asking your own father for a favor.

“Father, I don’t have any money; please give me some money. Father, I am sick; please make me healthy again. Father, You know that I am prone to disobey Your Word; please give me the strength to follow Your Word faithfully. Empower me and bless me. My circumstances are difficult; please help me overcome them and protect me.” Like this, asking God for His help in a normal conversation is what prayer is all about. When you pray, you are actually talking with God through your prayer.

Do you cry and make a commotion every time you talk to your parents? Can you carry any meaningful conversation if you cry and wail like this every time you talk to your parents? The same is true when it comes to prayer as well. If you wail and scream when you pray, God the Father will just get annoyed and not answer you. Far from answering your prayer, He might just say, “Calm down! I can’t help you if you wail and scream. If I help you, it will just cloud your mind even more. You should pray for the clarity of the mind and ask Me for an upright heart. And when you pray, don’t use such an embellished and pretentious language. Don’t try to sound so holy and pious before Me. Be upfront and just ask. Don’t be so noisy.”

The Lord instructed us on the proper prayer also in Matthew 6:7, where He said, *“And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words.”* The heathen here refer to the Christian sinners who have not been born again through the



gospel of the water and the Spirit, rather than the Gentiles. Most Christians mumble endlessly when they pray, as though God would hear them only if they repeat themselves countless times. They don't even realize what they are saying, but they still gabble on endlessly. But our God is not deaf. God knows all about us just by looking into our eyes and hearts. We don't have to be so loud and repeat ourselves endlessly for God to hear us.

Ask God for your needs like you are having a normal conversation. God has always answered our prayers whenever we asked Him. Not even once has God refused to grant us our request. Whatever we need urgently, God will always give us without fail if we ask Him. So let us all pray to God constantly in our lives and ask Him for all our needs. When we thus pray ceaselessly, we will receive great blessings in every aspect of our lives.

There was a man named George Muller in Britain, a man of faith and a man of prayer. Said to have had his prayers answered no less than 50,000 times,

Muller is famous for having had the most prayers answered in Christian history. Through his orphanage ministry, he sought to get nearer to the Lord, and he wanted to glorify Him by demonstrating to everyone's eyes that God was forever the same and willingly helped all who relied on Him to abundance. Perhaps this explains why his orphanage ministry was so miraculous so many times. One day, the orphanage ran out of food and there was nothing to give to the children. When Muller realized that there was no bread to share, the very first thing he did was praying: "Father, the children are all starving. We have no food left at all. Father, please provide food to these children. Give them bread, Father. I believe with all my heart that You will answer my prayer. I prayed in Jesus' name, Amen."

When Muller finished praying, the manager of the orphanage came to him and asked him, "Pastor, we have no food left; what should we do?" Neither worrying far less panicking about the lack of food, George Muller quietly told the manager to pour water



into the pot and build the fire. The manager was puzzled to hear this, as there was no food to prepare. But Muller calmly told him to do so again, and the manager told the workers to build the fire as he was instructed by him. The water began to boil soon. As no food was given to the orphans even when it was past the lunch hour, they got hungry. George Muller just kept on praying calmly, saying to God, “Father, please give us some food. I believe that You will give it to us. I know that You will.”

Meanwhile, in another corner of the city, someone had prepared for a party but was forced to cancel it, as the guests couldn’t come due to heavy rain. Since there was no guest, all the food that had been prepared was going to be wasted. But the host of the party remembered George Muller’s orphanage, and so he filled his carriage with food and took it to the orphanage. Around the same time, the workers at the orphanage were pouring water into the pot and building the fire. And on that day, the children at the orphanage had all the delicious food they wanted.

Like this, Muller prayed to God the Father and asked for His help whenever he faced hardship, and it’s said that his prayers were always answered.

It’s not just George Muller who was helped by God. I, too, have been helped by God many times in my life once I received salvation and the remission of sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Do you remember what happened a few years ago when we were holding summer discipleship training camp? There was heavy rain at that time. Not only was there heavy rain, but there was also strong wind, as a category-A typhoon was approaching. Alerted into emergency mode, the public servants evacuated every camper from the valley and advised everyone to be fully prepared for the impending typhoon, repeatedly underscoring that the approaching typhoon was no ordinary typhoon. But by then the discipleship training camp had already begun, and so when we heard about the approaching typhoon, we couldn’t move anywhere. Not knowing what to do, and fearful of the massive typhoon approaching us,



we gathered together and began to pray: “Father, Your children are gathered here to hold a discipleship training camp. But there is a typhoon approaching. Father, please direct this typhoon to somewhere else. Turn it around and send it far away from here where the righteous are gathered.”

I’m sure that some of you remember how we had all prayed together so earnestly like this. Do you also remember what happened then? There was a surprising turn of events that shocked even the meteorologists. The typhoon that was so threatening suddenly changed its direction when it reached Jeju Island, and once it changed its direction, it weakened rapidly and disintegrated into the atmosphere. Usually, typhoons are so strong that they don’t weaken rapidly but only gradually, and it takes a long time before they dissipate. But this category-A typhoon dissipated suddenly. It was all because of our prayer. That’s the kind of faith that we had when we held that year’s discipleship training camp. And such faith is still with us.

Because we were facing a critically dangerous situation, we had no choice but to pray. We had no other recourse but to hang onto God and pray, “Father, we are righteous people. We are Your servants. All the brothers and the sisters gathered here are Your people. Your children are gathered here; what will happen to us if such a massive typhoon reaches here? Father, please protect us all.” And according to this prayer, we were protected. Our prayer was answered by God. When it comes to spreading the gospel of the water and the Spirit as well, our prayers for needed financial resources are also being answered in abundance. That’s why we have been able to preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit to every corner of the world.

There has never been a time, not even once, when my request for God’s help was not answered. When I first tried to found God’s Church, I had no money or building to start with. But thanks to God’s help, I was able to find a suitable house for our church. I came across this house while passing by the street. It had a



very large room that was big enough for all the church members to gather together and share fellowship. Every time I passed by this house, I prayed to God to give it to us so that we could make it our church. God the Father then gave us this house. This is a living testimony. When I prayed to the Father to draw righteous saints to me and send me workers, all these requests were answered as well.

Jesus Christ is our God and our Savior. God the Holy Spirit dwells in us. Everything is possible if we pray by faith. If we just trust in God the Father and ask for His help, He will indeed help us. It's not so difficult.

Dear brothers and sisters, if you are struggling to live out your faith, pray to the Lord. Do not give up your life of faith just because it's hard, but instead, pray to God. Then through your prayers you will be blessed to receive God's help and strength. If you are worried about your business or job, just pray. If you want to lead a healthy life of faith, then ask for this also, and you will surely receive it.

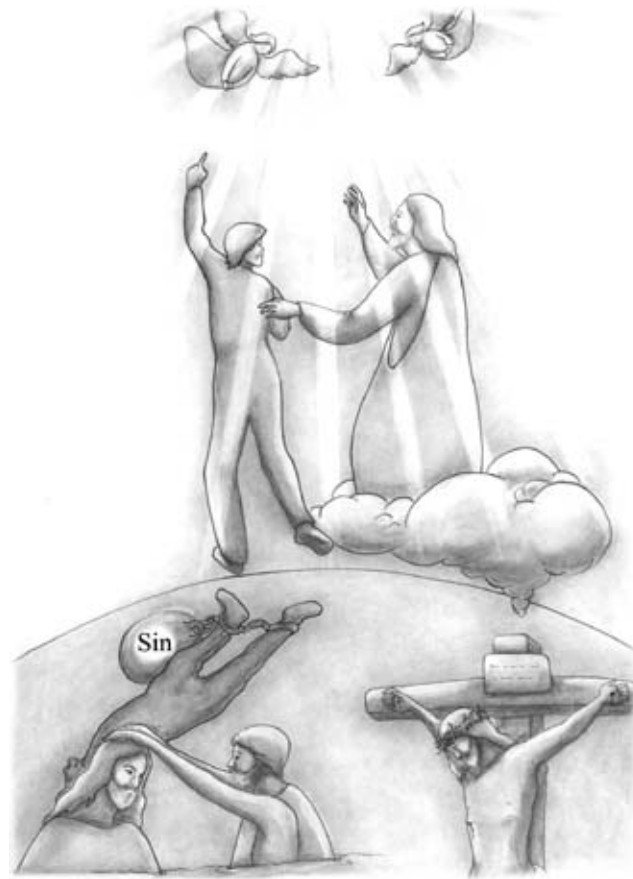
Prayer is like a savings account. The requests you make to God are saved as future blessings. Why do you worry when you can pray? Why do you fall into despair when you can pray? Why are you frustrated when you can pray? If you are frustrated, all you need to do is just pray. If you are weak, you only need to pray.

The key to receiving blessings in our lives is prayer. This prayer does wonders and brings all blessings. It is the solution to all your problems. Prayer is the master key that unlocks every lock. Just as the Bible says, *"He shall regard the prayer of the destitute, And shall not despise their prayer"* (Psalm 102:17), the Lord always listens to our prayers closely and answers us without fail. So let us all pray ceaselessly in our everyday lives. ☒



SERMON

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Contents



All the Faith of Believing in God Is Real

< John 14:1-14 >

“Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know.’ Thomas said to Him, ‘Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?’ Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him.’ Philip said to Him, ‘Lord, show us the Father, and

it is sufficient for us.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works.”

How are you today? Today, we have read together the Gospel of John from the Word of God. Through this Word, I want to share with you the fact that faith is the reality that truly exists, not a figment of imagination.

Dear fellow believers, the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the graceful Truth just as you and I believe. Such faith is not something humans can create out of fleshly imagination or human logic. The life of faith is believing and following the Word that God has actually spoken, not believing a figment of



imagination that humans create by dreams and imaginations.

Jesus Referred to Himself as the Truth

Jesus said to us, *“I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me”* (John 14:6). Because Jesus personally has become the way, the truth, and the life for us, there cannot be any lie or impossible hope that humans create in the spiritual life of us who believe in this. Therefore, I want you know clearly and believe always that your life of faith must be fulfilled by true faith, not by the faith of following a figment of imagination.

Jesus said, *“I am the truth,”* and it means that all the Words of Jesus are the very “truth” without even one iota of lie mixed in the Words. As the fact that you and I are alive at this moment is real, that we have been created by God also is real. And the fact

that you and I commit sins while living in this world as humans and that Jesus took all such sins of ours upon Himself through the baptism He received at the Jordan River also are real. Like this, that Jesus who carried all the sins of the world like this suffered and died on the Cross to pay off the wages of sins in our place and that He resurrected in three days after dying on the Cross and now sits at the right hand of the throne of God the Father are also real. And that Jesus has become the true Savior for those who believe in such facts by real faith, not as a figment of imagination, lie, or a dream and that He leads them to eternal life is also real. Believing in such facts through Jesus is as clear as the fact that you and I are here together today offering up the worship service to God and sharing the Word.

There cannot be any unclear and deceitful figment of imagination in the lives of the people who have been born again by the water and the Spirit. Just as the fact that our flesh needs air in order for our flesh to survive is an absolute fact, we must also know the



fact that our heart becomes even stronger through the true faith. The heart that believes in God does not become distant from the reality. Instead, it is the “reality” that makes our spiritual and physical life truthful.

In the Gospel of John chapter 14 verse 1 to 3, our Lord said to the disciples, *“Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.”* This was the Word Jesus spoke to the disciples about what He would do after being resurrected from death. Jesus was telling them to preach the faith without worrying about anything because He was going to prepare a place for them by returning to Heaven.

There was a disciple of Jesus called Thomas, and when Jesus said, *“In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I*

go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know” (John 14:2-4), Thomas said to Him, *“Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?”* (John 14:5). Thomas who originally had a lot of doubt probably was a realistic person who just believed only the things he can see and experience.

Jesus was telling the disciples that He was going to the very Kingdom of Heaven, not just any other place in this world. The Lord was going to Heaven to prepare a place for His disciples as He promised, *“I will be resurrected shortly from death after being crucified to death on the Cross and then ascend to Heaven and go before the presence of God the Father, and I will prepare a place for you to live there and return to receive you when the time comes.”* However, Thomas asked, *“Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the*



way?” Thomas was asking an ignorant question, that is, a foolish question, with a doubtful heart that cannot believe in the profound will and the Word of Jesus. And Jesus said again to such doubting Thomas, *“I am the way, the truth, and the life”* (John 14:6). The Lord was saying again that the Lord is the way to Heaven.

Jesus is the Lord who gave us the remission of all our sins: He is the Lord who took all our sins upon Himself at the Jordan River; the Lord who received the penalty of being crucified to death on the Cross in our place; and the Lord who has saved us and given us the eternal life by resurrecting from death. Jesus who took all our sins and bore judgment in our place has gone to Heaven to prepare a place for the believers to enter and live in the Kingdom of Heaven and will descend to this world again in His time. So, the Lord said to the disciples that the Lord Himself is the way to Heaven. After the Lord spoke such things, Thomas still asked, *“Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?”*

(John 14:5). He probably asked such a foolish question because he did not hear the Word of Jesus by the ear of faith.

The Lord said, *“I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me”* (John 14:6). Through this Word, we could understand well the authority of Jesus. Who in the universe can say such things? Who in the world can say that he is the Savior, the way to Heaven, and that people can receive the remission of sins and the blessing if they believe in him? We believe there is no one but Jesus.

People of the World Admire Such People

There are many famous people who have made their names known throughout the entire world, not only in our country, Korea. The name of Jesus also has become well known to the people of the world.



However, we must always remember that Jesus is the true God who came to this world as the Savior of humankind, not just a human being such as you and me. Although Jesus was born as a Son of a human through the body of human, He is the Son of God the Creator of all things and the Savior of humans and the Judge who judges our sins. Jesus represents the power of God and gives faith to everyone in the world through the Word and gives eternal life to us through Himself. Hence, Jesus is different from all the other scholars and religious people who made their names known throughout the world. Jesus was the Son of God who could not be mentioned in the same category as Socrates, Confucius, and Buddha.

There is a word Socrates the famous philosopher from ancient Greece said. He said, “Know thyself,” and it is one of the famous quotations of Socrates, but the funny thing is that this actually was not originated by Socrates himself. One day, he discovered it while sitting on the toilet and he happened to see a scribbling on the wall. The eyes of this philosopher

opened wide the moment he saw the scribbling that said, “Know thy self.” He realized, “This is it! How foolish it is for a human to discuss about other people when he does not know himself! Moreover, how difficult it is for a person to really know himself. A human must know himself first.”

Confucius is an advocate of Confucianism, the foundation of Taoism. He came to a conclusion that the greatest virtue is “generosity” and that “generosity” is “the love for humans.” Unlike the love of Christianity or the mercy of Buddhism, the compassion for parents and family, that is, the filial duty and brotherly compassion, was the central ideology of Confucianism. He did not come up with a new theory that was not in the world before through Confucianism. Rather, Confucius organized the most common and sensible values of this world and established them as the ideology of Confucianism. Based on ethics and morality, he said that humans needed to establish “adequate propriety” in form of rituals in order to practice “generosity.” For example,



Confucianism insists that sons and daughters must honor their parents; a person must be loyal to the nation; and friends must be faithful to each other.

The thoughts of the people of future generation were added to such ideology of Confucius and it was handed down as the customs of Confucianism in the form of “sacrificial rites for the dead ancestors.” A person must honor his or her parents, and it was the notion of the people of next generations that they had to first offer up the sacrifice to their ancestors faithfully in order to do this. Along with the purpose of doing one’s best to the deceased parents and ancestors and faithfully worshipping them, offering up the sacrifice faithfully also has the purpose of teaching the descendants the filial duty of sons and daughters and the custom of worshipping ancestors faithfully by practicing such things. We can also see it as a teaching that has the purpose of making the family prosperous generations after generations through such teaching that places great importance in traditions and propriety.

However, it is wrong to think that everything will be prosperous if one worships his or her ancestors faithfully. The heart of respect for the deceased parents and ancestors is the basic character a person should have, but the heart of seeking one’s own safety and prosperity through the ancestor worships, the heart that believes that unfortunate things happen to himself and his family if he does not offer up the sacrificial rite to the ancestors, is same as entertaining a superstitious belief and it instead violates God’s Word. We are making a great mistake of misplacing a foundation of life as well as receiving judgment from God in the future if we throw away the Word of life by believing in the deceased humans superstitiously and worshipping them. It is truly foolish for one to try to teach the filial duty to his sons and daughters through the sacrificial rites to his deceased ancestors.

It would be more proper for parents to teach their children the filial duty and ethics through strict and upright teachings in their daily lives. What benefit



would worshipping parents after they are deceased bring to the parents or their sons and daughters? Filial duty should be taught practically.

However, Confucianism has led people to wrong customs that place great importance in filial duty to deceased ancestors as the filial duty to the living parents. Confucianism teaches that the family would be prosperous only if they did this faithfully. Although Confucius was a person who achieved a great work as a scholar, his ideology has developed into wrong customs by future generations. And many people in far eastern Asian countries such as Korea, which was influenced greatly by Confucianism, learned wrong customs as a result. Even so, the ideology and name of Confucius has become well known throughout the world.

Then, what about Buddha, alias Sakyamuni, who is regarded as one of the four sages of the world? Buddha realized that humans are destroyed by their own greed and taught the deliverance of one's soul through ascetic exercises. He taught humans to throw

away greed because they could reach the state of deity if they threw away greed. Sakyamuni said every human flesh has 108 torments, and that they are all worries, concerns, and fears of the world. They are called "108 torments." He was a person who lived an ascetic life in order to be freed from worldly anguishes that humans carry in this world believing that humans can attain deliverance of their soul and become a deity if they become totally free from such worldly anguishes. Afterwards, people saw his effort and ideology and lifted him up as one of the four great sages of the world.

Some people also call Jesus a great sage. However, as I mentioned before, Jesus is the Son of God and the Savior, not just "a holy man," a creature like the so-called great sages of the world. Jesus took all the sins of humankind at once through the baptism He received from John the Baptism at the Jordan River and gave up His body to the Cross to pay off the wages of our sins. The Lord gave eternal life to us by shedding all the blood of His heart and giving



up His life. We are able to go to Heaven through the Lord. Jesus is the Savior who has become the door of salvation to the humankind and opened the door wide open to everyone. However, many people do not know such Jesus as the true Savior and instead focus on the work Jesus had done. They only emphasize His healing ministry and the other benevolent work such as His taking care of the poor and the alienated when they call Him a great sage.

Only Jesus Is the Way, the Truth, and the Life

Jesus said that He is the way to Heaven. And He is the very Creator, the Alpha and Omega. He created this world, the universe, and all things in it. The Lord said, *“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End” (Revelation 1:8)*. The world began from the Lord and the end is also from Him.

God the Father sent His only begotten Son Jesus to this world in a human body in order to remit the sins of humankind. He is also the very God Himself. And He took over all the sins of humankind when He became thirty years old by receiving the baptism at the Jordan River. Jesus bore all those sins upon Himself at that time to the Cross, died on it, and was resurrected and fulfilled the salvation of humankind. He is the Lord who has the power to make the believers in Him receive the remission of sins and become the sinless people and children of God. This is how He leads them to Heaven. By His power, the Lord has freed humankind from the slavery of Satan the Devil. Like this, Jesus has become the way for us to enter the Kingdom of God.

Jesus came to this world as the Son of Man and fulfilled the Word in the midst of suffering and persecution and gave us the Word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Jesus has become the way for us to receive the remission of our sins, the way to receive happiness, and the way to receive blessings



and eternal life due to His sacrifice and true love. Where in the world can there be a blessing greater than this? Jesus who gives us the remission of sins and eternal life is the Lord who actually gave us the most precious and valuable things. Therefore, we must always remember with thanksgiving that our eternal life comes from Jesus the Savior. This is the work Jesus has done by coming to this world.

Jesus said, *“I am the way, the truth, and the life”* (John 14:6). This means that Jesus is God Himself. Henryk Sienkiewicz, the author of the renowned novel “Quo Vadis,” also acknowledged this fact. He actually collected various kinds of materials and analyzed them in order to prove that Jesus was not a real-life person. However, he eventually surrendered to God and the Scriptures, saying, “Lord, I really believe in You. The more I examine and come to know You, the more I realize that You are a historical Person who really existed in this world and that You are also God at the same time. This is true.”

A person who had not acknowledged Jesus eventually came to believe in Jesus even more firmly.

There have been many people beside him who did not acknowledge the existence of Jesus and denied His historical existence. They denied that Jesus is the very Jehovah God Himself and persecuted the servants of God who believed in Jesus. When we look at the world history, most of the emperors of the Roman Empire persecuted the Christians ruthlessly. The political system of the Roman Empire at that time was based on the divinity of its emperors that argued, “The emperor is god himself.” However, because the number of Christians who believed and followed God increased and they refused to bow to the statue of the emperor because it was worshipping an idol, the emperor at that time used his authority and persecuted the Christians ruthlessly. The persecution of the emperor was truly vicious. They persecuted the believers and the servants of God by all kinds of vicious methods. For example, they killed Christians by putting them alive into the lions’



den. However, the worldly emperors who denied God like that and insisted on their authority ended their lives truly pitifully and unfortunately as a king and even as a human. And their empire has been destroyed completely as well. Even if an emperor has the greatest power in this world, the emperor also is nothing but a human, a creature of God. If a person misuses the power that has been entrusted to him with wrong methods and ruthlessly persecute people violently out of his stubborn self-righteousness, he will not be able to escape the judgment of those sins like the miserable end of the emperors.

Jesus is the Lord who really came to this world and ascended to Heaven. God who created the universe and all things in it came to this world personally as a human and dwelled in this world temporarily. He came to this world as the baby Jesus with flesh through the chaste body of a virgin, and He took all the sins of humankind by receiving the baptism when He grew up and became thirty years old. And He said, *"It is finished!"* when He carried

the sins of the world and died on the Cross. And Jesus was resurrected in three days after dying on the Cross and the resurrected Jesus witnessed for 40 days the amazing work of salvation He had done through His baptism and the blood of the Cross. And as He ascended to Heaven, He promised to send the Holy Spirit, and He actually sent the Holy Spirit to the people who have been born again by the gospel of the water and the Spirit according to this promise.

All such things really happened and such amazing grace is the fact that is by your side even now. As God the Holy Spirit has really witnessed in the Bible, the love and grace of Jesus Christ is proven exactly in the Scriptures. We can meet Jesus Christ if we believe in the Word of God. And we can receive the remission of sins and go to Heaven because of Jesus Christ. You and I are now living the life of faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Due to our truthful life of faith, we receive the remission of sins through Jesus Christ, receive the power to defeat the temptation of Satan the Devil, and are always full of



the Holy Spirit in our heart. And by true faith, we can go to the Kingdom of Heaven, receive the qualifications to call God the Father “Abba, Father,” and because of this, we have peace in our heart and receive the blessing God gives. All these things are real before the presence of God, not a figment of imagination. How amazing is this truth?

A certain Korean popular singer sang a song titled, “You are in my imagination,” but the Jesus we believe in is not the Lord who exist only in our imagination. The Jesus we believe in is the Lord who is really alive, the living Savior, and the living God. He is the living Lord who has given us the remission of sins; He is the living Lord who gives us His blessings in present tense, not in past tense; and He is the Lord who really gives us the Kingdom of Heaven. And He is the Lord who lifts us out of the evil scheme of the Devil and the Lord who gives us the strength to defeat all his traps of temptation. If you are suffering from the Devil, you must believe more firmly in Jesus as your Savior. You must

believe in the fact that Jesus took your sins upon Himself at the Jordan River and that He carried the sins of the world to the Cross and was crucified to death on the Cross, and also believe that Jesus thereby saved you. You really become free from the grip of Satan the Devil when you believe in the fact that the Lord who was resurrected from death and now has become your Savior and the living God.

Dear fellow believers, a person must believe in Jesus Christ who said, “I am the Truth,” as his Savior if he wants to really receive the blessing in his life and not be ensnared by Satan the Devil and become his servant while living in this world. One must really accept this Word in faith. You will really experience the miracle of all the blessings that the Lord promises in the Scriptures manifesting upon you if you hold onto this Word and believe in it. Jesus Christ Himself said precisely, “*I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me*” (John 14:6). Therefore, a person who believes in Jesus Christ receives the true life.



And Jesus Is the Living God

There are times when I think, “Is this a dream or a real life.” I think of such things whenever I experience something of significance while living in this world. When my mind is confused because I am half-awake, I seek the Lord after being wide-awake by taking a shower. I pray to the Lord to help me with all the things that worry me and trouble me. I seek and call out the Lord, praying like this, “I seek and entrust all these things to You, Lord, and I believe in You. I believe that the Lord will take control of all these things and give blessings and protect me.”

We will preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit throughout the entire world. Before we started this work, we probably were burdened greatly because of such important mission. However, haven’t we really established the Church in the United States, distributed books in Japan, and met so many people whenever we go to Europe or the other continents?

Spreading the gospel all over the world would not be impossible if we really do ministry through such encounters. However, if we just think of such things in our imagination instead of doing our best in daily lives with our hearts like this, we feel so burdened over such things that we become worried if we would not be able to do them all. Then, we do not really achieve much and the burden of the mission becomes even greater. Whenever I feel that way, I think, “That the Lord is in my heart is real; that the Holy Spirit is in my heart is real; that I have no sin in my heart is real; that I have life now is real; that the Lord is with me is real; that the saints are to receive blessings is real; that there is God’s Church is real; therefore, preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit is also real and us living for the gospel is also real.”

Dear fellow believers, people will also receive the remission of sins if they also believe by real faith in the Word of God we are preaching. All these things become more clear and organized precisely after coming to know that all these things are real. I feel



that preaching the gospel throughout the entire world is not much different from operating a huge corporation. I come to think like that because everything is real. If we just do God's work in our imagination, then, our minds would be bogged down with truly many thoughts like, "I wonder if we can really do this work. What should we do?"

However, preaching the gospel is real, not an imagination. All these things are real, the reality itself, just as moving to another Church building is real and that we had breakfast this morning is real. These things are not just a figment of imagination that exists only in our thoughts. That God saved us and that we are living the life of faith in Him are all entirely real. That you do not have sin in your heart is real and that you have become a child of God is also real. God is leading you and helping you in your lives even now. This is also real. The blessing and the miracle that God bestows upon us would become more apparent and shine even more in your life always if you really believe.

I have prayed for the coming winter discipleship training camp, "God, take control of the weather and keep us safe." We swept the slopping road to the training center so that it wouldn't be slippery, but I was still worried that the road would be frozen. Therefore, we did everything we could do and prayed. I got up next morning and went outside. I was so captivated because the morning scene full of snow that fell through the night was so beautiful. I looked around the training center as I felt, "It is so beautiful when God works like this!" Huge Korean nut pine trees revealed their mystical figure covered with thick snow and even the snow that sat on little grass covering it softly like a cotton ball seemed so beautiful. I felt truly deep fullness of mind from the fact that I could feel the hand of God through nature. After seeing the beauty of nature that day, the snow had melted completely by the morning of the last day of the training camp and we were able to come down by car safely.



The hand of the Lord and the miracle of the Lord who controls our lives become more visible when we see through faith in our lives like this. We come to really experience the Lord who controls all such things like weather, environment, and even our hearts, and also experience that God lives and works in our lives, in our faith, in our spiritual life, and in everything we do.

Our Spiritual Life Is Real

The spiritual life you and I are leading like this is real. That we are preaching the gospel in foreign countries is real and that souls are receiving the remission of sins through the gospel is also real. That someone's body is cured after being sick is also real and all these things are really happening in our lives. Living inside God's love is not a figment of imagination. Therefore, we must not dwell in our thoughts only as if we are dreaming this life of faith.

We must live this spiritual life only in real life and never live this spiritual life in our imagination.

Dear fellow believers, there are times we commit sins in our lives. And there also are times that we commit sins again even after repenting of them because the fleshly will is weak. At times, there are sins we commit because we cannot escape from the temptation of Satan the Devil. However, our Lord came to this world and defeated Satan the Devil on the Cross. Jesus took all the sins of the world upon Himself by receiving the baptism from John the Baptist and carried them to the Cross.

Dear fellow believers, do you believe in this? That is correct. That we have received the remission of sins is real. Our sins really have been atoned by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. And the Lord really gave us the Kingdom of Heaven and He ascended to Heaven before us and has prepared a place for us to live in the future. Now, the Lord will come to this world in His time again and appear to the people who seek the Lord apart from



their sins (Hebrews 9:28). And the Lord will judge the world and lead the people who have received the remission of sins to the place He has prepared.

We can see many stars when we look up to the sky after finishing a day's work. I think quietly, "In which star is our Lord preparing for us?" I dare to draw a picture of what kind of place Jesus has prepared and how beautiful it is. The Apostle Paul said that he had been caught up to the third heaven (2 Corinthians 12:3), and I also wonder if God has made a place to live in three levels of heavens. I imagine and draw a picture of Heaven in my thoughts like that. I do not know what Heaven looks like and I just draw it in my imagination, but there are times when I feel the Kingdom of Heaven. Whenever I think of the perfect salvation of the Lord, my heart is full of joy and peace, and then my sinless heart is full of the Holy Spirit. And at those times, I feel, "Oh, this precisely is the Kingdom of Heaven!" I feel the Kingdom of Heaven deep in my heart precisely when I hear the news from abroad that souls have received

the remission of sins. The Holy Spirit in my heart works in me like the Holy Spirit made the baby John the Baptist leap in the womb of Elizabeth. Just as the babe leaped in Elizabeth womb for joy when she heard the voice of Mary (Luke 1:44), my heart is filled with the Holy Spirit when I hear the news that someone has received the remission of sins.

Are you experiencing the fullness of joy manifesting in you? Are you experiencing your heart becoming full of the Holy Spirit and becoming joyful as you hear this and that good news in the Church? The fullness of the heart and the overflowing joy is precisely the fullness of the Holy Spirit, not such loud and ostentatious things like beating a drum and banging on a drum. Experiencing the joy of the Kingdom of Heaven and the joy Jesus Christ has given by devoting ourselves to the evangelization of the gospel throughout the entire world is the true fullness of the Holy Spirit.

Of course we have not really gone to Heaven and lived there. But Heaven is real, although this body has



not transformed and lived there yet. You and I and all the children of God will dwell there eternally. The Kingdom of God is real just as we are living the spiritual life like this after receiving salvation is real. You can receive heavenly blessings if you live by faith. You can never enter the Kingdom of God that the Lord has prepared for you and me and do not accumulate His blessings if you do not follow this Word and hold onto this Word.

God's Word Is the Truth

Dear fellow believers, is the Bible real and true? It is true. All the Words of the Scriptures are the treasure house of truth. The Bible that has been maintained and handed down as the Word of God is still being read by all the people although thousands of years have passed. And the Bible is being fulfilled exactly as it is written in the Scriptures through the long period of human history. In the future, even the

things written in the Book of Revelations will really happen. The rapture will also happen and the people who have received the remission of sins receiving peace and living in the splendidly golden Kingdom of Heaven will really happen. We will surely live and eat the fruit of the trees by the river of life. We believe that God has really predestined such amazing blessings and truth and such amazing facts. God will actually give much help and love always in your life if you receive the remission of sins and unite with the Church and hear the Word and live by faith together with the righteous.

If you want to do well in your life, you cannot do this by your own strength only no matter how hard you try. It is difficult to follow the Word while living alone by yourself. You can really experience God helping you when you unite with God's people. I hope that all of you prosper. I want to tell you that our faith is real. God will bless you if you unite together with God's saints according to God's will and do the work of missions by firm faith. Such



blessing manifest when your faith in this Word is firm in your life, and it is important to have the heart of really believing in the things God has witnessed through the Church.

The more I live the life of faith, the more I come to feel that the Word of God that I believe in is real. Some time ago, I went to the hospital because I was sick but the doctor in charge said that he couldn't find the cause. Although the modern medicine and medical science has progressed so much that it is even difficult to imagine the limits of human power, there still are many sicknesses that cannot be cured even in the most technologically advanced hospital. We do not know the sickness when we seem healthy. But when a person becomes sick and goes to the hospital, it could turn out to be a rare sickness that even the doctors do not know the cause. It seems the world has become a better place to live for humans as the world becomes more advanced every day. However, that is only in comparison to the days before, and the world has not become so much better

that there is nothing impossible. Although modern hospitals cure many people with the medical technology humans have developed and accumulate huge wealth, there is limit to humans. And there still are greed and vanity in such lives. A hospital that treats the human body is merely a business that is operated based on the criteria and standard of humans.

There are things that are visible to us when we look at them through the Word of God but are not visible to the eyes of humans. We are the servants of God who preach the gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven. By His providence, our God heals even the sicknesses that the professional doctors cannot heal. Therefore, I prayed to God regarding my sickness that even the hospital could not find the cause. I prayed, "God, please heal me. Even doctors do not know the cause of my illness. I have no one else to believe except You, God."

After that, by God's providence, I met a person that I needed. I do not overestimate the ability of a



human. However, if someone has accumulated experience in a certain field for a long time, I do acknowledge that person's expertise and ability. There are all kinds of people in the world. There are some people who have had proper education and attained a doctoral degree, and there are others who have become just as capable an expert as the people who have attained a doctoral degree in a certain field by accumulating experience diligently and consistently in this field although he has not studied professionally. The person I met was such a person. He was a person who has worked for forty years as an acupuncturist in one village. People outside the village might not readily trust his expertise. Rather, they probably would tell you to go to a big reputable hospital to see a medical specialist.

However, I decided to trust this person's ability because I had already heard from the hospital that I could not be cured. I thought that he could have attained high degree of expertise since he had worked at this field for forty years. My trust in his ability

returned with good results. I believe in this case as the guidance of God. I believe that God really took control of the situation and made me meet this person because I prayed to God. I was almost healed through his treatment of acupuncture. The inflammation of my spinal column is now gone. It is not completely healed, but I am so happy because it is getting better each day.

I want to tell you that all these things regarding God are real. God listens to the concerns and worries that you pray about and He really takes control of the situation and helps you. He is the living God who gives us the remission of sins, blesses us, leads us to Heaven, and gives all the blessings of Heaven. Even now, God is by our side and works in our circumstances, in our hearts, and in our faith. ☒



SERMON

7



Contents



We Have Become The Lord's Friends

< John 15:11-17 >

“These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you. You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you. These things I command you, that you

love one another.”

God Has Accepted Us as His Friends

Today's Scripture passage says that God no longer treats us as mere creatures, sinners, or slaves, but He has made us His own friends. Having made us His friends, God spoke to us everything about the plan He has for us. He is telling us in detail what work He will do, and how He will accomplish this work. Servants or slaves cannot fully understand what the master is doing, nor is there any need for them to try to understand it. All that they have to do is just do whatever the master commands them.

How, then, was it possible for us to become friends of the omniscient and omnipotent God? It was because we believed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Anyone who has not received the remission of sins is a servant of sin, no more than a slave of Satan. This was who we all were in our



fundamental nature. Yet to make such people like us His friends, God came to this earth incarnated in the flesh and solved the problem of our sins with the gospel of the water and the Spirit. To relieve us from the yoke of sin, the Lord shouldered all our sins through the baptism He received from John the Baptist, and He paid the wages of our sins for us by bleeding to death on the Cross. And as He rose from the dead again, those of us who believe in Him could be freed from the slavery of sin. Our lowly status, destined to hell for our sins, was elevated to be the Lord's friends by His love for us. And now that we have become His friends, God has shown us everything He plans to do, and while we are living on this earth, He is always walking with us.

It is truly amazing and marvelous that we the believers in the gospel of the water and the Spirit have become God's friends. How is it possible for human beings who are, after all, mere creatures to become friends with the Almighty God? As there is a saying that goes, "Birds of a feather flock together,"

people normally tend to associate with those with a similar social status. The rich and the famous befriend those who are similarly wealthy and famed. So the fact that God has become a friend of us the believers in the gospel of the water and the Spirit implies that on account of this gospel, our status has changed into the same as that of God. In other words, the Lord has not only remitted away all our sins with the gospel of the water and the Spirit, but He has also accepted us, who believe in this gospel, as His own people, which is a tremendous blessing.

We were mere creatures made by God out of dust. We were insignificant beings living imprisoned in darkness because of sin. And since we were all born as sinners incapable of avoiding sin, we could be freed from God's curse only if we were born again by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Cursed for our sins, we were worthless beings who couldn't avoid hell. Yet despite this, God made us believe in the salvation that came by the water and the blood, He accepted us as His own born-again



children, and He even treated us as His friends. It is nothing short of constituting an amazing and astounding miracle.

The Lord is saying to us, "I will now make you My friends." He has enabled us to participate in His divine attributes and stand in His file as His own children. That we have become God's children and His friends alone is an indescribable blessing to us. By believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we have not only received the remission of sins, but we are now also able to share our hearts with God in our lives.

What is a friend? A friend is someone with whom you can share your deepest secrets shared with no one else. Just like such a friend, the omniscient and omnipotent God also tells us everything, and He wants to share His heart with us because He regards us as His closest friends. Because we believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, in other words, we now have a very special relationship with God. The Lord has made us such people.

God Has Entrusted Us His Friends with His Work and Asked Us to Be Faithful to His Work

As today's Scripture passage says, servants do not know their master's work. However, because God has made us His friends, we can know what God will do in the future. God makes this known to us through His Word written in the Bible. And through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, He is leading us all. The only thing we have to do is just follow God our Shepherd according to this guidance and obey Him by faith. As we have received the remission of sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, it has become clear to us how we ought to live the rest of our lives; and as we are walking with the Lord, we are no longer lonely. You and I have now been removed far away from our past status as slaves destined to destruction for our sins.

What is our statue before God then? We are His people and His friends. The Almighty God who



created the universe and all its hosts has accepted us the believers in the gospel of the water and the Spirit to be His friends. That is why we are walking with the God of Truth in faith.

God is entrusting His work to us, who have become His friends through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. He is asking us to take care of His work as His friends, saying to us, "My friends, I want to save even more people from sin and make them My children and our friends. Would you do this for Me?" God has chosen us to be His workers so that we would bear abundant fruit. Moreover, God does not just sit idly after asking us to carry out His work, but He hears our earnest prayers for the spiritual harvest and answers us. Just as God has asked us to take up His work, so does He also provide us with more than enough help to meet His request. That is why whenever we pray, we pray in the name of Jesus who has become our own friend.

When people are asked to do a favor by someone who is not a close acquaintance, they usually try to

come up with some excuses to evade the request. However, if the request is made by a friend, not to mention a very close friend, then most people would do their best to meet the request, even if this entails them to set aside their own affairs for a while. As those who have received the remission of sins from Jesus and become God's children, we are very close friends with Jesus. So Jesus always keeps His ears open to our prayers and answers us, thus helping us to bear abundant spiritual fruit. Jesus is not only our God and our Savior, but He is also our everlasting friend.

There is a saying in Korea that if one has just one true friend, then his life is a success. That is how important friends are to everyone's life. We now have such a true friend. Not only is this Friend faithful, but He is also omniscient and omnipotent. This means that we now have a solid backer who fills all our needs and helps us to bear even more fruit. For this reason, it is absolutely imperative for us to realize clearly and believe that Jesus has become our



friend, and to thus clarify our relationship with Jesus. If we were not His friends, we would be nothing more than His enemies. We should therefore faithfully carry out the work our friend has entrusted to us, and we should also conform ourselves as to be worthy of His friendship.

How Do You Feel about Having Such a Great Friend?

If you have a friend commanding a very high stature and a great deal of power, you would have a very strong backer. Imagine that you were an extremely close friend of the president or the prime minister of your country. This fact alone would make you feel rather safe and secure. Jesus our friend has far more power and authority than any secular ruler in this world. So whenever we ask Him for His help, He does not decline our request. Far from it, He accepts our request in pleasure and He tries to answer

it as soon as possible. Of course, He doesn't answer our request if it's to satisfy our own greed or lust. That's because such a prayer is wrong.

By believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we have been saved from sin once and for all. However, attaining our salvation from sin was not the end of the story. As soon as we were saved from sin, our Lord wanted to become a friend to His people abiding in God's Church, and He has actually become our friend. In other words, there are even greater blessings awaiting us after our salvation. I don't know how many friends you have in this world, but can any of them save you from sin and grant you the Kingdom of eternal life? You will never find such a friend in this world.

Moreover, once Jesus becomes your friend, He will stay your friend no matter how insufficient you may be. So long as we are not like Judas Iscariot, Jesus will never cut us off from His friendship. The only way for this to occur is if we decide on our own to turn our friendship with Jesus into an enmity. That



is why John 13:1 says, *“Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.”* Even though Jesus knew that Peter would deny Him three times and the other disciples would flee for their own lives as well, He still loved them until the end. And He had even washed their dirty feet with a sincere heart. This was to show that Jesus had washed away His disciples' sins with the gospel of the water and the Spirit, for He knew that they were too weak and would commit sin again. Like this, once Jesus becomes our friend, His friendship lasts forever, and He continues to understand us and helps us in any and every possible way. That is why we are so much happier than anyone else, for we have Jesus, who came by the gospel of the water and the Spirit, as our friend.

Let's turn to John 15:5 here: *“I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do*

nothing.” Jesus is saying here that of those who have been saved from sin, He makes friends out of those who live out their faith and hold fast to the vine. The vine here refers to none other than Jesus. So attaching to the vine means abiding in Jesus. It is to such people that Jesus has become their everlasting friend. In other words, it is we the believers in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that Jesus treats as His friends; and as our friend He hears our prayers and answers our request. Put differently, Jesus is not only our Savior but also our friend. In this light, the saved who abide in the Church can be said to be sharing a deep friendship with the Lord.

To repeat, all of us who have been saved from sin by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit are the Lord's friends. How do you feel about having such a great friend? I am overwhelmed with joy that we have been saved from sin, that we have become friends with our Lord, and that we are now living in the Church in this friendship. As we carry on with our lives in this world, every day we receive help and



merciful love from a powerful friend called Jesus. Like this, Jesus gives everything He can to those who abide in His love and remain in God's Church as their special friend. Jesus helps them because He wants His relationship with them to be faithful and unchanging, not because He wants to show off His friendship, and that is why He blesses them throughout their entire lives.

Jesus wants to make friends with each and every human being out of His infinite love. When He was on this earth, however, the people of Israel thought that Jesus was just a prophet or Elijah. Even though they knew that He was no ordinary man, they couldn't recognize until the very end who the Lord really was. But His disciples knew that He was God Himself. Peter, for instance, confessed as the following: "Jesus, You are the Lord, the Christ and the living God. You are the Son of God and my personal Savior. You are my King and my High Priest. And I am Your sheep."

We also need to confess like Peter. By believing

in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we have now become friends with Jesus Christ. As we have been saved from sin by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we have become God's own people as well as Jesus Christ's friends. We should therefore always acknowledge who Jesus is and be thankful to Him in our lives.

I Am So Happy to Have Met a Friend Called Jesus

We have now become friends with Jesus. We are now living in this world as His friends. We are living as the holy Lord's friends, no longer as sinners destined to be cursed and destroyed. We can see that as we have been saved from sin, our stature has been elevated very high. Who can then walk shoulder-to-shoulder with the Lord and live according to His will with His encouragement? It is none other than we ourselves, who have received the amazing blessing of



being born again through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and at the same time have the omniscient and omnipotent Lord as our own friend. If we have indeed heard from the Lord Himself and realized who we are, why we are in the Church, why we are living like this, and why we must serve the gospel of the water and the Spirit; and if we have therefore decided to share our lot with the Lord our friend, then we must also realize how we ought to live from now on.

Those who have become friends with Jesus Christ must labor and live for the spreading of the gospel of the water and the Spirit that the Lord has entrusted to them. That's because it's not only the greatest commandment our Lord has given us, but it is also the sincerest wish that the Lord our friend has requested to us to fulfill. For His sake, who has given us everything so generously, it is now our duty to spread the gospel that He desires so much. The Lord has raised as His workers no one else but us, each and every one of you, and He has entrusted all of us

with the great task of spreading the gospel of the water and the Spirit throughout the whole wide world. Having been raised to be God's workers, we in turn ask for His help in order to carry out the work of God entrusted to us. The Lord then helps us as our friend, so that we may receive everything and anything we ask from Him. Jesus Himself said, "*And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive*" (Matthew 21:22).

In fact, that we have become God's workers, the Lord's friends, and righteous people—none of these came about because we ourselves loved God first. All these things were possible because God the Father loved us first. It's the Lord who first forgave us, and it's also the Lord who made us His friends, for He loved us first. It is not because we loved God, but because He chose us first, that He and we have become friends. And to us His friends, God gave us a new commandment: "*This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.*" Just as the Lord loved us and saved us from sin first, it is



now incumbent on us to love others. And as Jesus Christ has become our friend, as His Father has become our Father, and as we have become His people, in this love of God we ought to love one another and love God. That is how we must all live.

We Must Realize That It's Because God Chose Us That He and We Have Become Friends

What we must realize clearly is that it is God who accepted us to be His friends. This means that God has also entrusted us with His work. It means that it is God who loved us first. We must grasp here that it's all because God loved us first that we have become His friends. In addition to this, that God made us His friends, we must also realize that God has put His Church on this earth so that His friendship with us would be sustained, and that it is precisely through His Church that God prevents us

from being cut off from this friendship.

What all of us must realize today is that God has not only saved us, but He has also made us His friends. Remembering this, we should pray to the Lord always, who has become our friend. As we try to carry out God's work in His Church, there will surely be difficult times for us. However, if we pray to God the Father and ask Him for His help rather than falling into despair, the Lord will help us without fail, and so we will be able to accomplish God's work with His help. Let us therefore maintain our friendship with Jesus without any interruption, practice the will of God the Father our friend, and serve this will in our lives. For us to serve the will of the Father, we must first believe that we are God's friends, and we must have the faith to believe that we have become Jesus Christ's friends. God has made it clear that He has not only become our own God but also our friend, saying to us, *"No longer will I call you My servants, but My friends. Friends know everything about each other. But a servant does not*



know what his master is doing.” Therefore, we should all share fellowship with God as His friends, walk with Him as His friends, and treat Him as our friend in our lives.

You and I are not to be only in a subordinate relationship with God perpetually. We have now been saved through the water and the Spirit, we have become God's sons and daughters, and we have been made friends with Jesus Christ sharing the same Father. The day will come when we hold our hands with our everlasting friend and walk in an infinitely wide and beautiful pasture. We ought to then have the faith to live in this world as Jesus' friends with a trustworthy backer, realizing what the Lord our friend desires, serving the will of this friend, and helping each other. We are Jesus Christ's friends. We are not merely His servants, but we are also Christ's friends who can speak and share our minds with Him.

What about friends in this world? Don't even worldly friends tell everything to each other? Don't

they share even their most shameful secrets with one another? All good friends do this. You can tell your friends what you would never even dream of telling to your own father or mother. Such a friendship is to be cherished. And we have found such a dear friend in Jesus. We can tell Him everything and anything. It's all because Jesus is our friend. When we talk to those who still have not been saved from their sins, they cannot understand us. That's because for those who remain unsaved from sin, their relationship with the Lord is still that of subjugation, one between the Creator and mere creatures.

But that is no longer true for us. Our relationship with Christ is that of friends. So we can ask Jesus our friend for anything and everything. Just as we turn to our friends when we need help, so should we ask Jesus for help in His name. Then Jesus our friend intercedes between God the Father and us so that we would receive everything we ask. We can attain everything we need, for Jesus asks the Father on our behalf, saying, “Father, these are My friends. It's



only fitting for You to help them. Please do these things for My friends.” So, as we carry on with our lives in this world, all of us should indeed be friends with Jesus, and we should lead our lives in this friendship.

Are You a Friend of the Lord?

Is your relationship with God still one of subordination, between the Creator and a mere creature, or are you a friend of the Lord? Is Jesus still just your God, while you remain merely as one of His creatures? If your relationship with Jesus were not that of friends but of the Creator and a creature, then just how distanced would you be from Jesus? What an aloof, fear-provoking, and suffocating relationship would this be? Our Lord did not choose us to be in such a distant relationship of subjugation. Far from it, He has made us His friends. The Lord made us His friends rather than just His servants in order to teach

us the will of the Master. Even though Jesus is our God, this God still treats us as His own friends. We should therefore talk to Jesus as His friends, and we should lead our lives in this friendship.

Would we be able to approach God at any time if He were not our friend? If our relationship with God were that of subordination rather than friendship, then this relationship would be such a remote one that we would not even dare to approach Him unless called by the Master. Therefore, the very fact that the Lord has made us His friends means that He wants to keep us that much nearer to Him. Friends may get upset at each other, but they can still be reconciled in no time; there may be some misunderstanding between them, but they can clear it up with a dialogue; and even though they may sometimes come short of their friendship and cause some grief, they can still open their hearts, speak to each other honestly, and be reconciled again. Like this, friends have neither any barrier nor any shame.

Our ministry workers are my friends. I consider



our saints my friends also. So I can open up my mind without hesitation and say all kinds of things to my fellow born-again saints who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. That's because true friends can say anything and everything to each other. So has Jesus become such a friend to us. Our Lord says everything to us and tolerates all our mistakes. That's what a true friend does.

My fellow believers, is your relationship with Jesus that of friends? Jesus is indeed your friend. That's precisely why you can tell Jesus about everything even when you make a mistake, and you can also believe that the Lord Almighty has solved away all your problems. And as you are thankful for this, you are able to come nearer to His presence and keep your friendship until the end.

I am your friend. And you are also my friends. I believe that every saint is my friend, whether young or old. Those who have become one family by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit are all friends. Just as the Lord Himself said that He is

my friend, I believe in this wholeheartedly. And I also believe that the Lord is your friend as well. Friends understand each other. True friends have nothing but the best wish for one another.

Are we strangers to Jesus Christ and God? No, we are not. We are a family. Jesus said that He is the vine of life and we are its branches. We are therefore one family. Though we are friends with Jesus, we are family-like friends; and though we are very close friends without any barrier, we still respect the Lord and honor Him. Since Jesus is our friend, it may seem as though there is no gap between the Lord and us, but this gap is very large, for He is God and we are His creatures. Therefore, although we can share our deepest secrets with our friend Jesus, we also have to show the proper respect that He deserves as our Creator and Savior. This is what's different from worldly friendships.

It's wonderful that we have such a faithful friend. I thank Jesus for making us His friends. We will live as Jesus' friends forever, and we will do what He has



asked us to do as our friend. And we will ask the Lord for help as our friend in our lives. In my relationship with Jesus Christ, my faith is that He is my friend. You, too, are friends with Jesus Christ. Do you believe in this? And the Father of Jesus is your Father and mine. Let us then live in this world with such faith.

What did Jesus say in today's Scripture passage? He said, *"You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you"* (John 15:16).

Remember this one more time. Jesus has made us His friends. He therefore hears all our prayers. And He relays our prayers to God the Father and beseeches Him together with us, so that we may receive everything we pray for. Jesus grants all the requests of His friends, and He also helps them for their requests to be fulfilled. For this, we give all our thanks to the Lord who is always faithful.

Halleluiah! ☒



SERMON

8



Contents



If You Love the Lord and Keep His Commandments, You Will Be Filled with Joy

< John 15:1-17 >

“I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. If

you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples. As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you. You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that



whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you. These things I command you, that you love one another.”

Warm greetings to all our saints gathered here. This revival meeting has been an excellent gathering. Since Monday I've been sharing fellowship with you, I've broken bread together with you, and I've also had a chance to see the beautiful changing colors of the fall on Mount Seorak. I've really enjoyed the last three days. The turning leaves of the mountains set against the backdrop of the blue sea provided some spectacular natural scenes, making our gathering that much more special. I give all thanks to God. God always blesses wherever the righteous are gathered like this. And through His amazing plan, He has led us on this occasion to make some important decisions. I am truly grateful to God. Although I wish we could stay here longer, when the evening sermon

is over today, you and I must all return to each of our places and resume our work.

The Lord Is the True Vine and the Head of the Church

This evening, we read John 15:1-17 as our main Scripture passage. Jesus said in verse 1, *“I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser.”* Drawing an analogy to a vine, our Lord explained what it means to live a life of faith abiding in the Lord, and what true joy is. The Lord called Himself “the true vine.” The Lord is with us, who are the branches that bear grapes, and He is the Head of God's Church who has saved us from sin. And we are the members of God's Church.

The Lord also said that His Father is the vinedresser. The vinedresser cultivates the vineyard to harvest the grapes of the vine. The vinedresser takes care of the vine according to His desire and



plan. Like this, just as the vinedresser thus harvests the vineyard, so does Jesus Christ fulfill all the will of God the Father through us, the branches. God the Father, the vinedresser, had decided to save us sinners from our iniquities through His Son. What we must realize here is that Jesus Christ had come to this earth to destroy the works of the Devil. The Bible says, *“For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil” (1 John 3:8)*. Accordingly, when our Lord came to this earth, He indeed destroyed all the works of the Devil with the gospel of the water and the Spirit—that is, He obliterated all the sins of mankind.

However, even now Satan still continues to deceive Christians time after time. The Devil deceives Christians constantly so that they would not be able to fully appreciate and understand the love of God. With his deception Satan is misleading people to misunderstand the Truth and believe in Jesus only as a matter of religion. He has thereby made Christians speak in false tongues and lead a false

religious life. All the existing religions in this world are nothing more than false religions made by mankind itself, and people are bowing down to the very objects of their own creation and blindly following them. They put their trust in the gods of their of own making, and they are praying to these objects to bless them. Simply put, they are worshiping idols. This is what the religions of the world are all about.

The Lord Came to This Earth to Vanquish the Evil Wiles of Satan and Saved Us from Sin

This afternoon we went on a hike through the hills and came upon a Buddhist temple. Usually, a Buddhist temple has an inner temple dedicated to Buddha and another shrine dedicated to the gods of the mountain. The old shamanistic beliefs in Korea held that everywhere was a god—every mountain



had a god, the sea had a god, and even the moon had a god. Basically, the traditional beliefs in Korea were pantheistic, believing that every object held a spirit. So some people went as far as thinking and believing that even a sweeper used to clean the floor could be possessed by a spirit.

The gods of the mountains are better known among all these innumerable animistic deities in Korea. In the ancient times, Koreans used to build shrines to mountain gods and bow before the idols, praying to them to bless them with prosperity. For instance, when a woman was barren, she would pray at the shrine asking its god to make her fertile. When animism was at its height in Korea, every mountain had a shrine dedicated to its god. However, once Buddhism was introduced to Korea, such shrines were built inside Buddhist temples next to the inner temple, and visitors bowed before the shrine dedicated to the mountain god as well as Buddha's statue, asking them for prosperity.

This is what religion is all about. It's about people asking the objects of their own making to bless them. Ultimately, every religion is of man's own making. Although it may seem as though religious people are leading a life of faith, in reality, they are just practicing religion. The life of faith is strictly distinct from any religious life. The Christian faith is all about revering God and believing in what He has done for us. In contrast, a religious life is about making one's own idol, and submitting oneself to this object and praying to it for blessings.

Are we then leading a proper life of faith? The Lord said that He came to this earth to destroy the works of the Devil. How are today's Christians then? Today, even among Christians who claim to be leading a life of faith in Jesus, there are so many people who don't know how Jesus has saved them through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. They have no idea that it is through the gospel of the water and the Spirit that Jesus has saved them from all sins and made them God's people. And not knowing how



to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit into their hearts either, they just insist blindly that they believe in the Lord as their Savior somehow. Like this, there are many people who profess to believe in Jesus as their Savior even as they don't really know the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and none other than this is leading a religious life.

Right now many Christians are leading a religious life in vain rather a life of faith. People pray to God for blessings without any understanding of the Truth of salvation, and it breaks my heart whenever I see such people. They are not interested in the real Truth of the washing of sins, in what exactly Jesus Christ has done for them through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and instead, they ask God to accept only their own devotion. When the Bible says that Lord came to this earth to destroy the works of the Devil, it means that Jesus came to destroy precisely such works of the Devil that mislead people into practicing a futile religious life, and to thus save us from the clutches of the Devil.

In actuality, Jesus Christ the Son of God came to this earth incarnated in the flesh of man, and when He turned 30, He accepted all the sins of mankind once and for all by being baptized by John the Baptist. And as the price of all these sins, He was crucified to shed His blood to death, and rising from the dead again, He has saved us. Therefore, Jesus is indeed the Almighty God and our Savior who came by the gospel of the water and the Spirit. God the Father of Jesus Christ has destroyed the evil wiles of the Devil, so that He would save us from all sins through His Son and make us His own people. Before Jesus Christ's arrival, Adam and Eve had fallen into Satan's temptation in the Garden of Eden and committed sin by eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; as a result, the entire human race had been temporarily estranged from God.

However, Jesus Christ then came to this earth. By being baptized on this earth, He took upon all our sins; and to pay off the wages of these sins, He was



crucified to death. And rising from the dead again, He has become our true God of salvation. We were therefore able to find God again, from whom we had been estranged since the day Adam and Eve fell into Satan's temptation and sinned. We were able to become God's people. The Lord has thus saved us from all sins perfectly and completely.

The Lord is saying, "*I am the true vine,*" and it is written, "*He is the head of the body, the church*" (*Colossians 1:18*). Jesus Christ called His Father as the vinedresser. Even before the foundation of the world, Jesus' Father had planned to save us from sin and make us His people in Jesus Christ, and through His Son, He fulfilled His will. When Jesus Christ said here, "*I am the true vine, you are the branches,*" He meant that He is the Head of the Church.

It Is the Lord's Desire for Us to Pool Our Strength Together and Bear Fruit

Today's Scripture passage speaks about our lives of faith that are led in the Church after we find and believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The Lord wants to cleanse away all our sins to perfection with the gospel of the water and the Spirit, so that we would believe in the righteousness of the Lord even more and bear even more fruit. The Lord also said that He would remove those who don't bear any fruit. Therefore, in order to bear fruit, we must abide in our Lord and in our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The believers in the gospel of the water and the Spirit are the members of God's Church, and as those who have become such members of God's Church, we must lead our lives of faith by trusting in the Lord. Now that the Lord has saved us through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, He wants us to bear even more spiritual fruit.



We must live by faith following the Lord's gospel of the water and the Spirit. Realizing our insufficiencies, by faith we must follow the gospel of the water and the Spirit the Lord has given to us, we must love the Lord the most, and we must remember His commandment not to have any other gods before Him. We ought to be always thankful and serve the Lord of Truth in our lives, always thinking about how the Lord has saved us. And to live in this way, we must dedicate our lives to saving souls according to the will of the Lord.

The Way to Fill Your Life of Faith with Joy

When are your heart and mine rejoiced the most? It's when we love the Lord the most. When our hearts love the Lord the most, and when we remember His love and follow Him with all our hearts despite our insufficiencies, the Lord plants

your heart and mine with tremendous joy. It's when the Lord fills us with joy that our hearts are rejoiced and made forthright, and we can have fellowship with the Lord. It's when we have no other gods than our God that, even though there is little reason for us to rejoice in this world, joy still fills our hearts, and we feel happy and forthright. Ultimately, this is what the Lord said: "If you abide in the vine, you will bear abundant fruit." He also said, *"These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full."*

My fellow believers, what must we do in order for our lives of faith to be filled with joy? All that we have to do is just love the Lord the most. Joy will then fill our hearts. It's as simple as that. Whether we are filled with joy or not has nothing to do with our own performance. For your heart and mine to be filled with joy, all that's required is that we don't have any other gods before the Lord, love the Lord with all our hearts even though we are insufficient, honor Him and be grateful to Him. We will then be



full of joy, as the joy of the Lord will fill our hearts. That is why the Lord said, *“These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.”*

When is the Lord the most rejoiced? It’s when we love the Lord the most. The Lord is rejoiced when we love Him more than anything else in the world, and when we have no idols before God. Moreover, it is in doing so that the greatest joy bestowed by the Lord remains in our hearts. That is what our Lord is teaching us here.

We, Too, Have Become Slaves of Love

After saving us from sin through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, Jesus said to us, “I loved you truly. I have saved you from all sins.” To see this, let’s look at the dialogue the Lord had with Peter.

“Do you love Me, Peter?”

“Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.”

“Feed My sheep.”

Jesus then asked Peter again, “Do you love Me more than all these people?”

“Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.”

“Tend My sheep.”

For the third time, Jesus asked again, “Do you love Me more than all these people?”

And for the third time, Peter gave the same answer, “Lord, You know that I love You.”

Why did Jesus ask Peter three times here, when He knew everything all along? When Jesus was tried before the court of Pilate, a little maid had spotted Peter and accused him of being a follower of Jesus. To save his own life, Peter had denied Jesus three times. It would have been better if Peter had not denied Jesus and instead followed the Lord until the end according to his conviction. But when the maid exposed Peter and he was put under the spotlight, he denied Jesus and cursed Him, saying, “I know no such a man!”



At that time a rooster began to crow. When Peter heard the rooster crowing, he was startled into remembering what Jesus had told him. He remembered that, when he had said to Jesus, “I will follow You to death,” Jesus had told him, *“Assuredly, I say to you that this night, before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times before the rooster crows.”* Hearing what Jesus said, that Peter would deny Him, Peter had said to Him, *“Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!”* However, it came to pass that standing around the court of Pilate, Peter indeed ended up denying Jesus three times before the rooster crowed. So when Peter heard the rooster crowing, he wept from the depth of his heart.

Peter was a man of loyalty. When the Roman soldiers and the servants of the Jewish leaders came to arrest Jesus, Peter had struck the high priest’s servant with a sword and cut off his right ear (John 18:10). That is how loyal Peter had been to Jesus, willing to dedicate himself wholly to God.

Given how loyal Peter had been, he could not bear the shame when he found himself denying Jesus three times and even cursing Him. So even after Jesus was resurrected, he went back to the old life he had led before meeting Jesus, unable to present himself to Christ. Although some other disciples wanted to follow the Lord once they saw the resurrected Lord, because of his shame, Peter could not bring himself to face the Lord as he had before. Even though he himself had gone to Jesus’ tomb and witnessed that His body was not there, Peter did not look for Him. Instead, he went back to old occupation—fishing.

When Peter and six other disciples were out fishing, toward the dawn Jesus appeared on the shore near where they were fishing. He then said, “Friends, have you caught any fish?” “No,” Peter answered. *“Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some,”* Jesus said. When Peter threw the net on the right side of the boat as told by Jesus, he caught a lot of fish. Peter then came ashore and saw a



fire of burning coals with fish on it and some bread. Jesus then asked Peter to bring some of the fish he just caught, and together they had breakfast with grilled fish.

After finishing the meal, Jesus asked Peter, *“Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?”* Even up to that point, Peter was still too numb to answer Jesus, unsure if this whole thing was real or just a dream. Although he was happy that Jesus had risen from the dead again and come to see him, hidden deep in his heart was shame. When Peter heard Jesus’ question, he got even more ashamed and he couldn’t bear it. Before Jesus was crucified, He had asked Peter, “Do you love Me more than all these people?” At that time Peter had answered with unwavering conviction that he indeed loved the Lord. Even when Jesus said to His disciples, “You will all abandon Me and flee,” Peter had said to Him, “Lord, I’d rather die than flee. I will never run away even if I die!”

However, the Lord already knew what would happen, and everything indeed came to pass just as the Lord had said. Yet despite this, the Lord Himself had come looking for Peter who had denied Him, and at first Peter could not say anything before His presence. However, Peter realized the true love of the Lord through His repeated questions, and so when Jesus asked him, “Do you love Me more than all these people?” he answered, “Lord, You know that I love You.” Now the fountain of Peter’s love for the Lord was no longer himself, but it was our Lord.

“Lord, I now realize that You really love me like this. Even though I am so insufficient, You still came looking for me, You had spoken about me beforehand, and Your Word was indeed true. You are the Son of God, You are My Savior, and You are the Almighty God. Even though I had denied You, You still came looking for me after Your resurrection. I am at a loss for words. You know that I love You.”

When Peter thus answered, the Lord said, *“Feed My lambs.”* And when the Lord asked him again,



“Do you love Me more than all these people?” Peter still had no other words to say than to repeat his earlier answer, saying, “Lord, You know that I love You.” The Lord then said to him, “*Tend My sheep.*” With these words, the Lord told Peter to feed the sheep, guide them and nurture them well.

Peter knew that Jesus was the living God, and he also knew just how much He loved him. Yet despite this, he had denied Jesus and betrayed Him, and so Peter thought that he could not possibly present himself before the Lord with a clear conscience. However, the Lord had saved him out of His love, and He had also come looking for him. At last, Peter was able to discover the real reason why he could not help but love the Lord.

Just like Peter, we have also become slaves of love. A popular musician in Korea croons that love is the seed of tears, but love is not the seed of tears. Love is the seed of joy. We have become slaves of love, the seed of joy. Given how the Lord had not forsaken Peter but loved him forever, how could

Peter ever abandon the Lord? “Before, it was I who loved You Lord, but now, it is Your love that reigns in me. Now I cannot leave You ever again. You know that I love You.” Peter confessed like this several times. Jesus had drawn out this confession with His love. Peter confessed all his wrongdoings to Jesus, and he came to once again remember in his heart that all these sins had also been passed onto Jesus when He was baptized.

Not Having Any Other Gods before the Lord Is the Secret to Keeping the Lord’s Commandments and Leading a Joyful Life of Faith

Jesus said, “*These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full*” (John 15:11). What should we do for us to really be filled with joy in the Lord? We should



abide in the Lord by faith, walk by His commandments, and love Him the most. Also, we must remove from our hearts any idols that are placed prior to God. And if we know our insufficient selves and follow the Lord by faith, then the joy from the Lord will indeed come to us. The Lord will give us joy and make us rejoice with our hearts filled with His joy.

The way for us to lead a joyful life of faith is not to have any other gods before the Lord. This is how we love the Lord the most. And this is how we keep the Lord's commandments. Just as the Father loved the Lord, and just as the Lord Himself kept the Father's commandments while living on this earth, so must we also love the Lord and keep the Father's commandments. God's commandments are to love God the most and to love our neighbors as ourselves. Our Lord also loved God the Father the most. Likewise, we must also love the Lord the most. As the Lord said, our hearts will then be full of God's joy.

As such, if we want to lead a joyful life of faith, then we must first remove the idols of our hearts, keep the Lord's commandments, and love the Lord the most in our lives. We will then always be smiling in joy. Our hearts will be rejoiced all the time. While working, even when we are compelled to look at our circumstances and see our insufficient and weak selves exposed, if we love the Lord wholeheartedly, then our hearts will be most rejoiced and happiest despite our shortcomings. It is when we love the Lord the most that His joy comes into our hearts to the fullest extent.

My fellow believers, I admonish you all to realize that we cannot please the Lord by doing something good on our own. By ourselves, we are incapable of doing anything worthwhile. Whether it is about being martyred for the sake the Lord, bearing abundant fruit, and following the Lord, all these things are likewise made possible by keeping the Lord's commandments in our hearts and removing all idols.



Even though I am insufficient, I still love the Lord the most. The Lord is my love. He is my Master. I have nothing else but the Lord. Of course, there are times when my own thoughts, emotions, and weaknesses come between the Lord and me and prevent me from approaching the Lord. But even so, I have no one else but the Lord. Only the Lord is the most cherished and honorable One for me, and He alone is my true God.

I once heard a famous preacher in Korea saying that he respected Admiral Yi Sunshin the most when asked about whom he held in the highest regard. Then, another renowned preacher next to him said that he respected Wonhyo the Great Monk who lived about 1,400 years ago. To me, these answers sounded so funny that I laughed out loud. Of course, Admiral Yi does deserve our respect because he is the greatest admiral in the history of Korea. During the Japanese invasion of Korea in the 1590s, Admiral Yi defeated the far larger Japanese fleet single-handedly and repeatedly. And Wonhyo the Great Monk also is a

respectable figure because of his teachings and virtues. Like this, everyone has someone whom he respects. Some people respect certain scientists, others respect certain philosophers, and still others say that they respect some other figures. How about us then? Do these figures deserve our utmost respect? As the believers in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, you and I respect the Lord the most. There is no one who is more worthy of respect than the Lord.

Do you love yourself the most? Of course, it is in our human nature to love ourselves. Human beings are selfish because they love themselves too much. But is anyone as worthy of love as the Lord? No, no one deserves to be loved as much as the Lord. Can we then compare the Lord to the things of the world, such as its wealth, pleasures, riches, or power? No, they are not even comparable. Even if we were to compare them to the Lord, can any of them come ahead of the Lord? Of course not!

The Lord has saved you and me through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and with this Word



of Truth He has washed away all your sins and mine. We have thereby become righteous people. Is there anything that can be compared to this blessing of love and grace that has made us God's own children through the gospel of the water and the Spirit? No, there is nothing comparable! Because Jesus loved us unconditionally, when we fell into sin destined to destruction, He saved us freely without demanding anything in return. Regardless our merits and demerits, the Lord had compassion for us because He loved us, and it is also because He loved us that He embraced us in His arms and saved us all.

Therefore, before this love and salvation, we cannot attach any conditions but only accept them in gratitude. In other words, we cannot cling to anything else before the love of the Lord and His salvation. Even though from time to time something else tries to trumpet over the Lord's love, there is absolutely nothing that can bring Him down from the highest, most exalted place of honor. In fact, the things of the world are not even comparable to the Lord, but they

sometimes do appeal to us. Nevertheless, none of them can ever take up all our hearts.

You and I desire to lead our lives of faith in God's Church and truly follow the Lord faithfully. And although we are insufficient, we want to serve the Lord united together, and despite our insufficiencies, we still desire to follow the Lord. What is the first and the last demand that the Lord makes from us? It is none other than to defend His gospel of the water and the Spirit by faith. In other words, we must keep the commandment of the Lord instructing us not to have any gods before Him. We must obey this commandment, realizing fully that nothing in this world can be compared to the Lord, that He is the most cherished One in the whole world, and that He has an incomparable beauty.

Even though we are insufficient and weak, we still love the Lord the most. Our hearts can have fellowship with the Lord precisely because we have removed all the idols from our hearts, we keep the Lord's commandments, and we love the Lord the



most despite our insufficiencies. That is why our hearts are rejoiced, happy, peaceful, and strengthened. When the Word spoken by the Lord comes into our hearts, our hearts find so much peace that it comes as a second nature for us to love all our brothers and sisters living with one heart, and all the people of God loved by the Lord. We love the Lord so much that there is nothing that can bring us more joy.

This is precisely what the Lord said in today's Scripture passage from John chapter 15. That is also why the Lord wants us to devote our lives to Him, saying, *"You are My friends if you do whatever I command you" (John 15:14)*, and, *"Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends" (John 15:13)*. For our sake, the Lord laid down His own life. If we really obey the Lord's commandment and love Him the most, then there is nothing that's greater than to die for the Lord. No love is greater than laying down one's life for his friends. The Lord truly loved us, and He truly

sacrificed Himself for our sake. Therefore, if we indeed have no other gods before the Lord, love Him the most, and follow Him with such love and faith as to lay down even our own lives for Him, then nothing would be better. We would then become true friends of the Lord. That's why the Lord called us His friends. And He said that He would make everything known to us.

Calling us God's friends, the Lord raised us to be God's workers on this earth. It's not we who chose God, but it is God who chose us and raised us. Jesus said that He has made it possible for us to receive everything from God the Father in His name, so that we would bear even more fruit. So whenever we lack anything, we pray to the Lord. It's now possible for us to attain everything we ask from the Father if we pray in the name of Jesus Christ, in the name of God Almighty. Jesus Christ is the Almighty God, able to answer all our requests when we ask Him directly. It's because the Lord has permitted us everything that we are able to trust in Him and follow Him. It is by



this power given by the Lord, on account of His love, that we love the Lord the most.

The Lord said to us, “*These things I command you, that you love one another.*” If we really obey the Lord’s commandment not to have any other gods before Him and love God the most and follow Him, then we will indeed come to love each other and have compassion for other souls. The Lord has made us lead a life of faith so that we would love each other just as He loves us. Jesus Christ, who is the Head of the Church, has placed us in the Church as workers, and He has made us love the Lord united together in this Church. As well as commanding us to love each other, the Lord also told us to bear abundant fruit in our lives. The Lord is indeed the Head of the Church, our Savior, and God Himself.

Although you and I are insufficient, at least our hearts must always abide in the Lord. There must not be anything that we love more than the Lord. This means that all our hearts must be devoted to keeping the Lord’s commandments. We must obey the Word

of the Lord commanding us not to have any other gods before Him. Even though we are insufficient, we must try our utmost to keep the Lord’s commandments on this earth, and we must obey them by faith. And if we ever go astray, we must remember what the Lord told us and return to our place of faith to love the Lord the most. Despite our insufficiencies, we must still cherish each other and love one another. And united together in cooperation, we must preach the Truth, the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit, to all those who still do not know the Lord. Like this, our lives should be led while serving the Lord, loving other souls, and loving each other. We must thus love God the most and live according to His will. I am absolutely convinced that this is the right way for us to live. Do you also believe so?

Although we often stumble over our weaknesses like Peter, God’s profound love has already been planted in our hearts. We cannot ever forget that the Lord came to this earth and saved us through the



Truth, the gospel of the water and the Spirit. That's why we love the Lord the most. Though we are insufficient, we still love the Lord. Do you also love the Lord?

All of us are inadequate. Yet even though we are utterly insufficient, we love the Lord so much. Because the Lord loved us first and He continues to love us forever, we cannot help but also love Him. We truly love the Lord. Do you really love the Lord? Will you continue to love the Lord? Do you find it impossible not to love Him the most? I give all thanks to God!

These past three days have been like a dream to me. I am so glad and happy to have met you here. I am also very grateful for the delicious food served at this gathering, as well as for all the wonderful sceneries of autumn mountains created by God. And above all else, I am very happy that our ministry workers got a chance to get together and discuss God's work. We've accomplished a lot of spiritual works. The only thing that I regret is that we didn't

get a chance to share fellowship with our brothers and sisters abroad. I hope and pray that one day, the Lord will give us such a blessed opportunity to meet and share fellowship with all the saints from each and every corner of the world. Amen! ☒



SERMON

9



Contents



The Lord Is the True Vine, And We Are the Branches

< John 15:1-10 >

“I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you

will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples. As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love.”

We just read John 15:1-5 for today’s Scripture passage. Here the Lord said, *“I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser.”* He then went on to say that the branches must abide in the vine, and that He will cut out any branch that does not bear fruit, while cleanse every branch that bears fruit so that it may bear more fruit.

Let’s contemplate on this passage carefully today. The Lord spoke of Himself by drawing an analogy to the vine, and this parable means that although those who abide in the Lord bear fruit, those who don’t will perish spiritually like a withering branch. In other



words, today's Scripture passage teaches us what kind of faith we must have to lead a proper life of faith.

Why Did the Lord Tell Us to Abide in the Vine?

On numerous occasions, our Lord put a particular emphasis on the importance of abiding in Him, and we can see this in today's Scripture passage also, as it's written here: *"If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples"* (John 15:7-8). As the passage says, for the Lord's Word to abide in us, we must know and believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit first. This gospel proclaims that Jesus has saved His believers from all their sins by coming to this earth incarnated in the flesh, bearing the sins of the human

race by being baptized by John the Baptist, shedding His blood to death on the Cross, and rising from the dead again. Were it not for this gospel of the Lord, we could have never been blessed anywhere to be saved from our sins and become God's children. You must realize here that you can abide in the Lord and His Word wholly only if you have faith in this gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Let me ask you again: What spiritual knowledge must you have for your heart to have complete faith in the righteousness of God? You need the knowledge of the gospel of the water and the Spirit given by the Lord. The Lord already bore all your sins and mine when He was baptized by John the Baptist, and He was also crucified for these sins in our place. And having risen from the dead again, He has become the true Savior God for all of us who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. This is what Jesus Christ has done for us. Therefore, for those of us who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit now, His Father is our Father, and God the



Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are all our God. The Lord has saved us from the sins of the world out of His love for us, and He has made all this Truth known to us through the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

My fellow believers, unless this Lord who has come by the gospel of the water and the Spirit abides in our hearts, we can never lead a genuine life of faith. Therefore, it's absolutely indispensable for your heart and mine to always have the Lord who has come by the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The Lord has saved you and me from all our sins, and He loves us forever. This faith is always in our hearts, as we believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

We must believe in the Lord who has given us the gift of salvation through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and we must always abide in this Truth by faith, just as the Lord said, *"If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you"* (John 15:7). In fact, when it comes to the life of faith, we can neither

reach true salvation nor receive true love unless we believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit given by the Lord. That's because our everything will be inevitably rendered in vain if we center our hearts and live for something else other than the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Without the Lord who has come by the gospel of the water and the Spirit, our existence in this world is worthless. It is our Lord who made us, and it is He who has blotted out our sins by being baptized by John the Baptist to deliver us from the sins of the world. For our sins He was crucified to death in our place, and rising from the dead again, He has become our perfect Savior. Unless we believe in this Lord, our faith means nothing, and without the gospel of the water and the Spirit given by this Lord, our faith cannot be made whole. So I ask each and every one of you to believe unwaveringly with all your heart that the Lord has blotted out all your sins by being baptized, and that we have been saved by our faith in this gospel of the water and the Spirit.



If we have indeed been saved from all sins by the Lord who has come by the gospel of the water and the Spirit, then from now on we must seek the will of God in our lives. And we must realize that this will of God is for all of us to preach this gospel of the water and the Spirit to everyone else. The only way for us to love others and help them enjoy everlasting life in peace is to preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit to them. Had we not had the Lord's love and the gospel of the water and the Spirit in our hearts, it would have been simply impossible for us to love the people of this world. It's because of the Lord's love and His salvation that we could be born again into righteous people and love others in our lives.

My fellow believers, we have received the true remission of sins on account of our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit given by the Lord. As such, we must always think of this love of the Lord and ruminate on His gospel of the water and the Spirit all the time. And we must grow spiritually by

this faith at all times. Regardless of how long we might have led our lives of faith, it's absolutely indispensable for all of us to always think about the Lord who has come by the gospel of the water and the Spirit and brought salvation to our hearts. In other words, we must always be mindful of the perfect work of salvation the Lord has done for us, remembering that He was baptized in our place, crucified to death for our sins, and resurrected back from the dead. The Lord is the Creator who brought us unto this earth and made this infinitive universe by the power of His Word. Therefore, it is our natural duty as the people of faith to always think about the Lord Almighty and ruminate on His Word with our hearts. Only then can our faith be made perfect. If we live our lives based on the Word of God like this, we are bound to be interested even more deeply in the hope for Heaven and everlasting life. Our lives will then naturally become more generous and kinder rather than selfish, to live a righteous life that can show empathy to others rather than asking for it.



Take a moment here and ponder carefully on the true love and true salvation our Lord has given us. It's all because the Lord gave us true salvation through the gospel of the water and the Spirit that we could become His perfect people. This salvation that the Lord has bestowed on us is unveiled in our hearts as God's profound love, making us love others even more, understand them even more, and thus preach God's salvation to them even more. All this is because of the Lord's love and salvation. We offer the Lord's love to others not because you and I are somehow innately good people, but only because the Lord loved us first and we have faith in this love.

Every human being has fleshly weaknesses, and therefore no one can help but be selfish. However, because of the merciful love the Lord has shown to us, it's been possible for us to also love others even if it's not perfect. Moreover, we have also become righteous people to practice God's righteousness. In other words, it's all because the Lord has indeed bestowed us with His true love of salvation, and

because He has saved us from all the sins of the world, that our hearts are also emulating this love of the Lord. Therefore, the Lord is inexorably the Master of our lives, our love, and our everything. This Lord of the gospel of the water and the Spirit is absolutely indispensable to us.

Even though we may sometimes go astray out of our weaknesses, the Lord is still our Master who loves us all. When we think about this love of the Lord, we can actually carry out His work, follow Him, and obey His Word. Put differently, we can all overcome this evil world by our unwavering faith. It's more than possible for all of us to live such a life, for we are walking with the Lord who has come by the gospel of the water and the Spirit. We are the Lord's disciples freed from the sins of this world by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. From the very moment we were saved by believing in this true gospel, we had been delivered from all sins and become righteous people to receive the Lord's love and blessings.



As you will likely admit it yourself, we are now living in a chaotic world. Every day, we are struggling in our spiritual battle against all the temptations of the world and all its sins. However, you and I have been delivered by our Lord. By believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit given by the Lord, we have simultaneously received both the remission of sins and the gift of the Spirit of God into our hearts. As the Holy Spirit has come into us the born-again, what He desires is always different from what our flesh desires, and therefore it's inevitable for us to fight a spiritual battle. If we follow the Holy Spirit in this battle, we can resist the futile desires of the flesh and ultimately overcome them. All of us must therefore follow the desires of the Holy Spirit the Lord has given us.

At the very moment we believed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we received the remission of sins, and at the same time the Holy Spirit came into our hearts for us to live a spiritual life. And He is now holding steadfast all of us who believe in the

gospel of the water and the Spirit. Accordingly, then, we ought to place our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and think of it every day, and live in obedience to the Holy Spirit, for only then can we avoid falling into spiritual confusion. You must grasp here that this is the forever-lasting truth, an indispensable lesson that is very much applicable to your everyday life.

The Righteousness of the Lord Is Absolutely Indispensable to All of Us

Because we have already received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit given by the Lord, we can continue to live a spiritual life. For such people like us, what is absolutely indispensable is the Lord and His gospel of the water and the Spirit. Some people may think, "Now that I've received the remission of sins, the gospel of the water and the Spirit is no longer



needed.” But this is nothing more than a foolish conjecture. Everything does not end once you receive the remission of sins. Far from it, we must always think of the Lord and ruminate on His gospel of the water and the Spirit in our hearts all the time, just as the Lord said, *“If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you”* (John 15:7). Because the Lord is always alive in your heart and mine as we believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, He reminds us of the righteousness of God every day.

By being baptized by John the Baptist on this earth, the Lord accepted all the sins of this world onto His own body once and for all. Moreover, because He thus shouldered all the sins of the world, He could be crucified and shed His blood to death for our sins in our place. And having risen from the dead again in three days, He has become the everlasting Savior of all of us His believers. Whoever believes in this Truth is compelled to walk toward the Lord in every aspect of life, for this would be his purpose in

life. That’s because our Lord said, *“By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples”* (John 15:8). The Lord is our Teacher, our God, and our Savior who has delivered us from all sins. Even though we have already received the remission of sins, we must ruminate on the Lord’s Word ceaselessly and always follow His righteousness in our lives.

It is in our human nature to forget everything once our concern is addressed, no matter what it is. However, our Lord, whose love is infinite, never forgets us. Although He has completely finished His work of saving us from sin with the gospel of the water and the Spirit, He will never abandon us. As fleshly weaknesses are still with us, we must abide with the Lord at all times in our lives, in our thoughts, in our hearts, and in our plans as well. We need the Lord and His love all the time because we are such weak beings. This Good Shepherd is absolutely indispensable to us, for we are a flock of sheep that can’t find our way by ourselves. The Lord



guides us in the right direction and teaches us by what kind of faith we should live. In short, the Lord living inside us gives the strength to actually do everything that's within our reach. Like this, Jesus Christ is everything to all of us who want to live by faith.

God the Father said that He is the Vinedresser. This means that God gives true fertilizer to those who believe in and follow the Lord. Jesus also likened Himself to the vine, and He said that we are its branches. If the branches hang onto the vine, they will bear much fruit, but if they fall apart from the vine, they will wither away right away. Like this, we must abide in the Lord and think of Him always, just like the branches that abide in the vine. Even if we forget everything else, we should never forget the love of our Lord. We must ruminate on this love all the time to receive new strength from God the Father every day, so that we may always carry out His righteous work.

Does your heart have a firm foundation to live out your faith? Are you living by faith in the righteousness of God? By any chance, aren't you instead guiding yourself on your own? Just as the Lord said, "*He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing*" (John 15:5), we must abide in the Lord absolutely if we want to bear abundant spiritual fruit. Just as the branches that abide in the vine bear much fruit, it's someone who abides completely in the Lord that bears abundant fruit of righteousness. That is how one glorifies the Father and becomes a true disciple of Jesus, by bearing much fruit of righteousness.

The Lord said, "*If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love*" (John 15:10). The commandments here instruct us to love the Lord our Savior and ensure that He is in our hearts unambiguously. And the Lord says here that when we keep and practice such commandments, we



will come to love the Lord and love fellow human beings as well.

My fellow believers, do not try to do anything on your own. Whatever you do, if you do it without the Lord, then your limits will be soon exposed. We are such that we can't do anything without Jesus. At all times, whether we are strong or weak, we must always go forth and fight our spiritual battle by faith, and to do so, we must always rely on the Lord with all our hearts. The Lord will then strengthen us if we are weak, and empower us if we are powerless. Moreover, even when we face seemingly impossible tasks, our Lord will work with us to ensure that we are able to carry them out.

The Lord will provide for all our needs. Even though we have no authority to bless anyone, the Lord will bless us all, for He is the fountain of all blessings. What we cannot do with our strength, our Lord will fulfill it for us as well. This Lord will abide with us until the end of the world and make it possible for us to bear abundant spiritual fruit. All

this is entirely up to the Lord. Therefore, we must always have the Lord in our minds, rely on Him at all times, and trust in His righteousness constantly.

I Ask You to Live out Your Faith Sincerely Rather than Halfheartedly

Is the Lord who has come by the gospel of the water and the Spirit in your heart? Who has actually saved us through the gospel of the water and the Spirit? Who is the Savior that actually came to this earth and saved us according to God the Father's plan to be sealed by the Holy Spirit? It's none other than Jesus Christ. Is Jesus then a mere human being and a creature? No, of course not! He is the Creator who made the entire universe and every living creature that our eyes see, from the mountains to the seas, the birds and the fish, and every man and woman. Yet this Almighty God and our Lord personally came to this earth incarnated in the flesh of man to save us



from sins, and by being baptized and shedding His own blood, He has become our true Savior. That is why His name is Jesus Christ. The name ‘Jesus’ means He who will save His people from their sins, just as the Bible says, *“And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21).*

Even though Christ came to this earth incarnated in the flesh of lowly man as our Savior, this does not change the fact that He is God. He is our Savior and God Himself, our Messiah. That is why we’ve come to call Him Jesus Christ our Lord Savior. We must believe unwaveringly that Jesus is the Almighty God and our Savior, and we must accept Him into our hearts. It’s when you are saved by believing in this Jesus that you begin to lead the upright life of faith.

Everything is not accomplished just because we exert our own strength. When you run out of your strength and you are completely exhausted, think of Jesus your Savior and rely on Him. Once you think of Jesus Christ who has come to us by the gospel of

the water and the Spirit, your strength will be renewed in both body and spirit, and your heart will also turn tranquil, humble, and kind. That’s why we have no other choice but to think of Jesus all the time. Do not try to do God’s work with just what you have. Instead, always renew your strength by trusting in Jesus, and by this strength carry out God’s work. All of us must live by the strength Jesus gives us. Since we have no strength of our own, we should ask the Lord to help us in our prayers and put our trust in Him. Whenever we ask God for His help, our Lord will surely answer us without exception. If we think of Jesus and pray to Him, God the Father will give us everything we need.

God the Father is the Vinedresser that rules over this earth. Therefore, praying to the Father is the same as praying to Jesus. But let us not forget Jesus in our lives. Has He not come by the gospel of the water and the Spirit and saved you? It’s Jesus who has saved you; did God the Father come down to the world and save us by being baptized and crucified?



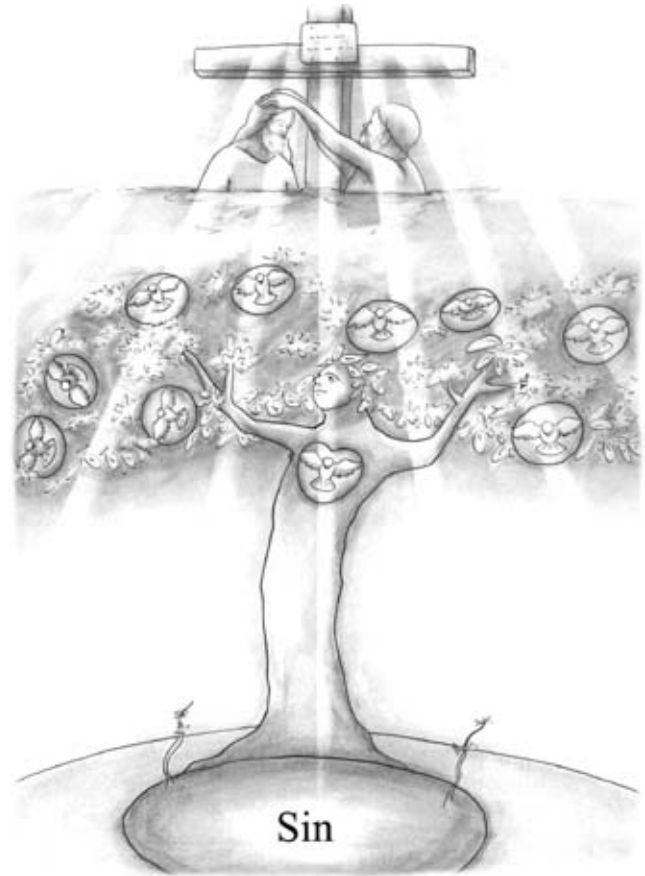
That's why we must think of Jesus. We must always meet with God the Father through Jesus our Savior.

Everything in the world is disposable, but Jesus is not disposable. He is everlasting. Jesus is indispensable to us forever. So let us all have Jesus abiding in our hearts and live out our faith truthfully until the day He returns. ☒



SERMON

10



Contents



Let Us Bear Fruit In Our Lives of Faith

< John 15:1-9 >

“I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you

will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples. As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love.”

In today's Scripture reading, our Lord is telling us that He is the vine and God the Father is the vinedresser. And He tells us that we are the branches attached to this vine. The Lord also said here that God the Father removes and discards every branch that does not bear fruit, while He prunes every branch that bears fruit so that it may bear even more fruit. The Lord is pleased by the branches that bear much fruit.

A fruit tree does not have the luxury of choosing whether to bear fruit or not. Every fruit tree must bear fruit, for that is its reason of being. A fruit tree that does not bear any fruit is completely useless. Such trees are good for nothing except for firewood.



Let's think about some kinds of fruit trees such as pear trees, apple trees and vines. Is there any use for these trees other than harvesting fruit from them? Can you build a house with pear trees? Can you use apple trees or vines as construction materials? No, fruit trees are useful because of the fruits they bear; they are completely useless as construction materials. Compared to other trees, they have too many forking branches, and because all the nutrients go to the fruit, the trunk itself is too weak to support the weight of a building. In particular, apple trees and pear trees are so weak that sometimes the branch itself breaks off if it bears too much fruit. So the orchard farmer prunes the branches when the fruit tree blossoms or begins to bear fruit.

The Lord said, *"I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser"* (John 15:1). The Father, who is the vinedresser cultivates the vine. He cuts off the branches that do not bear any fruit, and He prunes the branches that bear fruit so that they would bear even better fruit. This passage implies that the fruit of the

Spirit is absolutely indispensable to everyone born again through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. In other words, once you are born again, you don't have a choice whether to bear the fruit of the Spirit or not. You cannot lead your life of faith as a spectator watching far away, nor can you sit idle, but instead, you must bear abundant fruit as a healthy fruit tree does.

Is it okay for you not to preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit even as you say that you've been born again through this gospel and claim to be leading your life of faith in this gospel? No, this is not acceptable. You must bear the fruit of the soul. In other words, you must give birth to spiritual children by preaching the gospel. Even if you don't preach yourself, you must at least be united with God's Church and participate in its work of saving the lost souls through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. You have the duty to counsel them and teach them by their side so that they would listen to the Word and accept it by faith. And once they are saved, you must



nurture them so that they would grow and mature appropriately. You also have to support the newly born-again souls so that they may also bear spiritual fruit. That is how the fruit of the Spirit is born.

Just as every fruit tree is supposed to bear fruit; it makes no sense for any believer to lead a life of faith without bearing any fruit. Perhaps some believers have succumbed to self-complacency thinking that everything is just fine since they themselves have received the remission of sins and will therefore go to Heaven, but it's immensely frustrating for me whenever I see such believers who are so insensitive to the need to bear fruit. It's even more saddening that there are some believers who think that since they have received the remission of sins from God, all that matters now is that they get blessed for the remainder of their lives, and also think that they are not suitable for bearing fruit. If there is anyone here who thinks, "I just want to attend church and do my own thing. It should be good enough that I attend church regularly; I don't have to bear that much

fruit," this person must turn his heart around right now.

The Lord Is the Vine, and God the Father Is the Vinedresser

God said that if any vine branch does not bear fruit, it becomes a useless branch, and therefore the vinedresser will cut it off. In contrast, if a branch bears fruit, the vinedresser will not spare his labor to cleanse it and prune it so that it would bear even more fruit. Therefore, in our lives of faith we must set our purpose on bearing spiritual fruit. Now that we have been born again through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we are leading our lives of faith united with the Church, and this is done to bear fruit.

How can we bear fruit then? Of course, some of you may be skeptical of your ability to bear fruit and ask, "What can I do on my own? What can I accomplish by myself, when I can barely take care of



myself?” It’s quite possible for you to think in this way. But when the Lord told us to abide in Him, He said, *“I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing”* (John 15:5). As those who are born again of water and the Spirit, we are the branches of the vine. So long as we abide in the vine of the Lord and the Lord abides in us, we can bear much fruit even without trying to achieve something by ourselves. As God helps us to bear abundant fruit effortlessly, all that we have to do is just abide in the vine.

What then does it mean to abide in the vine? The vine here refers to the Lord as well as God’s Church. Put differently, leading your life of faith inside God’s Church is none other than abiding in the vine. What does it mean to abide in the Lord then? You have been saved and born again through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, but what does it really mean for you to abide in the Lord, and what does it mean not to abide in the Lord? What exactly is meant by

abiding in the Lord? The Lord said that whoever abides in Him bears much fruit, but what does this really mean? Such questions are particularly relevant to the righteous who have just recently received the remission of sins.

Our Lord said, *“If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you”* (John 15:7). Abiding in the Lord means uniting yourself with the Lord. Uniting yourself with the Lord, in turn means accepting His Word into your heart exactly as it is, and believing in this Word exactly as it is. This is the very faith by which we abide in the Lord after being born again through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. If we believe in the Word of God, then this means we are abiding in the Lord. It’s because we believe in God’s Word that faith springs forth in us, and it’s because we believe that everything will come to pass according to this Word that we will inherit the Kingdom of God on account of this faith. Therefore, by our faith in God we come to pray to Him; by this



faith our prayers are answered by God; and by this faith we come to bear abundant fruit naturally. That is why the Lord said, *“If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you”* (John 15:7).

Therefore, as we believe in Jesus and we have been born again through the gospel of the water and the Spirit; so for us to abide in the Lord we must know what the Lord said in the Bible. All our thoughts and decisions must be based on this Word, and we must lead our lives of faith according to this Word. Unless we have God’s Word in us, we will just live in whatever way we want based on our own standards, oblivious to the fact that we should all abide in the Lord.

The Word the Lord spoke to us was written by God’s servants over a span of one thousand and several hundred years. The Lord put together all the Word of God into a single volume of the Bible and gave it to us. Therefore, it is by believing in this Word that we can come into the Lord, abide and live

in Him, and bear abundant fruit as well. That is why whoever is born again through the gospel of the water and the Spirit by believing in Jesus must hold onto the Word of God and believe in it unwaveringly. Herein lies the reason why we should believe in the Word of God.

The Word of God says that any branch that does not bear fruit will be cut off. It also says that branches that wither, though attached to the vine, will be gathered and burned. This explains to us what will happen to us if we fail to bear fruit in our lives of faith. The branches that do not bear fruit are naturally useless, and so you should have no problem understanding why they are cut off. What then is meant by the branches that wither despite being attached to the vine? When a branch withers despite being attached to the vine, it’s because the branch is not supplied with enough nutrients from the roots. In other words, it’s because the branch does not get a continuous supply of spiritual nutrients from Jesus and His Word. For all those born again through the



gospel of the water and the Spirit, their spiritual food is none other than the Word. If you are not supplied with this Word, your soul is bound to wither, just as your body withers when you don't have enough food. Such withered branches can be used only as firewood, along with the branches that don't bear fruit.

Our Lives of Faith Will Be Over If We Don't Bear Any Fruit

The purpose for which we lead our lives of faith is to bear fruit. It's also ultimately to bear more fruit of the soul that we serve the gospel of the water and the Spirit in our lives of faith. In other words, it's to bear the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Everything we do, from evangelizing to preaching the Word, leading our lives of faith, coming to the Church to listen to the Word, and growing our faith, is done to bear the fruit of the Holy Spirit. It's invariably to bear the fruit of the

Holy Spirit that we live out our faith. The life of faith is not lived purposelessly, but it's lived to rise up to the challenge by faith and bear even more fruit of the soul. None other than this, to rise up to the challenge and bear spiritual fruit, is what the life of faith is all about.

As I said, your life of faith is all about bearing spiritual fruit by believing in the Word of God. If you are leading a dry and dull life of faith and aimlessly wasting away every day without any purpose, then you cannot bear any fruit even if you abide in the vine—that is, no matter how long you lead your life of faith. Whenever you hear the Word spoken to the Church by the Holy Spirit, you must listen attentively to and learn from what God is saying to you, what He is teaching you, and what He is asking you to do.

When you read the Bible by yourself, you can understand what the passages mean because you have the Holy Spirit in you. It's because the Holy Spirit brings understanding to you. Instead of just reading the Bible pointlessly, you hold in your heart the



passages that you read; as a result you come to have faith the size of a mustard seed; and in turn, this little faith achieves amazing results, even moving a mountain. The power of faith is that astonishing.

For that reason, your life of faith must be centered on the Word of God, and those who stand on this Word of God firmly in their lives of faith are infallibly bound to abide in the vine and bear abundant fruit. This is an absolutely assured outcome. Even if you don't want to bear any fruit, so long as you are firmly attached to the vine, you will absorb and imbibe the nutrients coming from its roots, and therefore you will bear fruit naturally. Whoever abides in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and believes in the Word of God will invariably blossom and bear fruit like this. This will happen without fail. And that is why all of us must lead our lives of faith centered on the Word. You cannot bear any fruit unless your life of faith is based on the Word. How can anyone bear any fruit by himself? How can you bear any fruit all on your own

without believing in and holding onto the Word of God? It's impossible.

False Fruit Is More Prevalent in the So-Called “Orthodox” Churches

A while ago, a great deal of commotion was stirred up in Korea due to the rise of various cults and heresies. So religious leaders in Korea got together and held a formal convention to address the problem, discussing the meaning of religion and the appropriate relationship between the state and religion. Someone representing the Christian community argued in that convention that the purpose of religion was to benefit its followers and encourage them to do good deeds to bring harmony with others, so that non-believers would also come to believe. He wasn't clear about his points, but remained rather vague and tenuous. After droning on for a while, he eventually said, “Simply put, religion



is not just about one's individual beliefs and life of faith, but it is about fostering harmony in the nation. Religion contributes to the harmony of the human race, compels its followers to love their neighbors and do good deeds, and helps them to improve themselves to become better and kinder people. That is the purpose of religion and its fruit."

This man also had a few blunt words to say about orthodox Christianity and heresy, as he argued in the convention: "There are many heresies in Christianity. These heresies are extremely detrimental, as they cause a great deal of social confusion. So the government should give us the administrative authority to root out heresies. Even though we want to eradicate them, there is no way we can achieve this as we don't have any coercive power. That's why we are having so much difficulty trying to root out heresies. The state should therefore give us administrative jurisdiction over heresies with enough teeth to eradicate them all."

But Korea has various religions. Broadly speaking, there are Christianity, Confucianism, Buddhism, and Cheondogyo (an indigenous religion of Korea), but each of these religions has numerous sects. The convention was attended by representatives from each religion, and they all presented for 10 to 15 minutes. A professor from a Buddhist university came to represent Buddhism, while Christianity was represented by a professor from a Baptist Seminary. The Baptist professor dichotomized Christianity into two camps, and saying that orthodox Christianity alone was good and heresies were bad, he argued that all these heresies had to be eradicated. He then added that to achieve this, the state should give orthodox Christian churches a strong administrative authority.

This was followed by the professor from the Buddhist university. He spoke of various problems generated by religion. He argued that although most mainstream religions assert they are immune from the corruption found in heresies, in reality these long-



established denominations and sects claiming to be orthodox actually have the most serious problems. He pointed out that the so-called “orthodox” religions cloak themselves in hypocrisy as a whitewashed grave, and that the religious practitioners recognized for their “orthodoxy” are in fact most problematic. Even though this professor was a Buddhist, he must have thought about this issue for a long time, as he hit the nail on the head. That’s because just as he pointed out, orthodox religionists are even more likely to practice evil than heretics.

Then the professor representing Buddhism said, “The problem with orthodox religions is that they embellish themselves before everyone.” According to him, the most orthodox was the most problematic. And he drew an example from Buddhism to make his point. There was a time in Korea when Buddhism was so corrupt that it was rotten to its core, and coincidentally, the nation was also facing a crisis of unprecedented proportions. Yet even as the fate of the nation hung in the most precarious balance, the

Buddhist leaders at that time were obsessed with building ever larger and ever more extravagant temples, worsening the plight of the people. In a time of national decay, the state-sponsored religion is usually the most decadent, and it must have been such a time of religious corruption and national decline.

Korean churches top the ranking when it comes to the size of church buildings and membership. A while ago, two major newspapers in Korea ran articles on the ten largest churches in the world, and the five largest churches were all located in Korea. Competing to build a larger and more extravagant church building is one of the defining characteristics of the so-called “orthodox” churches in Korea.

It’s said that Indians practice their religion looking toward the next world. Not only Indians, but most religious practitioners all over the world also look toward the next world, practicing their religion to have a better afterlife.



In contrast, Koreans are more interested in the present than the future or the next world. So every religion that was introduced from outside, whether it's Buddhism or Confucianism, failed in Korea. Since Koreans are interested in the present prosperity whereas religion emphasizes the next world, it's a forgone conclusion that such religions would have been rejected as unrealistic. So, every foreign religion, including Christianity, had to change its orientation to emphasize temporal prosperity in order to appeal to the Korean people, as they wanted to fulfill their desires in their present lives. In the end, religion colluded with such people. Rather than teaching about the next world, it emphasized the prosperity of the present—that is, it preached that its followers would all prosper in this present world, claiming that their business would flourish, they would find the perfect spouse, their children would gain admission to the university of their choice, and so on. Only then did people who were uninterested in religion begin to flock to temples and churches, and

in this way, having colluded with the present world, religion embarked on its road to corruption.

Buddhism is not alone to suffer from this problem. Christianity is also corrupt. Christianity too, has abandoned its original evangelical calling of the water and the Spirit and colluded with the greed of the people. Amongst the many Christian denominations, the so-called “orthodox” denominations are particularly more corrupt. That's because these self-acclaimed “orthodox” churches have also colluded with those who seek only present prosperity. Religion was supposed to make people think about the problem of the soul and look toward the next world, that is, Heaven. It should have solved the problem of the soul for them and guided them so that they would go to Heaven. However, far from leading people to this direction, religious leaders focused on the current problems of the present that everyone wants to solve. So they only taught them how they could receive more blessings in the present world, and as a result, religion ended up being



corrupted. This is what the Buddhist representative spoke of so pointedly.

The man representing Christianity had said that orthodox Christianity was wonderful and it was just the heresies that were problematic, and so mainstream churches should obtain jurisdiction over the heresies to eradicate them. Another man from Buddhism then said that the so-called “orthodox” religious practitioners were the ones causing the most serious problem as they were all corrupted, and that among them, the most problematic were the religious leaders. He said, “Religious corruption stems from the collusion that these religious leaders have made with the desires of the mass, and in Korea, corruption is particularly worse because people demand only the prosperity of the present.”

There are many denominations in Korea, but among them, one specific denomination has swept across the Korean Christian community in the last half century. This influential denomination is built on just one single passage: *“Beloved, I pray that you*

may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers” (3 John 1:2). This denomination deceives people by preaching that all the fleshly problems they face would be solved away if they just believe in Christianity. Even though this denomination sprang up the last compared to other denominations, it has swept across Christian communities in Korea like wild fire. The churches of this denomination stir up all kinds of rackets during the worship service, mobilizing every musical instrument, and its members scream out like there is no tomorrow, shouting out, “Lord, bless me! Fill me with the Holy Spirit!” Caught up in this own emotional excitement, these members are taken advantage of to elicit donations, and these donations are then spent to build a magnificent church building. It doesn’t take that long before a giant and extraordinarily lavish church building is finished, perhaps just a year. Instead of ministering the church by faith, it is run strategically and calculatingly. The leaders of this denomination emphasize faith as a



means to obtain material blessings in the present, teaching that one will receive many temporal blessings if he just believes in Jesus and attends their church, and they constantly incite their congregation to donate much money promising blessings in return. I'm sure that some of you know which church I am speaking of here; it's the one that demands money from the congregation all the time. When the members of this denomination don't have enough money, they even take out a bank loan just so that they can make offerings.

Not too long ago, it became almost a fad for many Christians in Korea to give as much offerings as possible, misinterpreting and misquoting a passage from the Book of Malachi to emphasize tithing. This passage is found in Malachi 3:8-10:

“‘Will a man rob God?

Yet you have robbed Me!

But you say, ‘In what way have we robbed You?’

In tithes and offerings.

You are cursed with a curse,

For you have robbed Me,

Even this whole nation.

Bring all the tithes into the storehouse,

That there may be food in My house,

And try Me now in this,’

Says the LORD of hosts,

‘If I will not open for you the windows of heaven

And pour out for you such blessing

That there will not be room enough to receive it.’”

The truth is, in the days of Malachi the hearts of the people of Israel had left God. So they had forgotten all about God in their lives, no longer giving a tithe nor any offering, and that is why they were rebuked like this; God said here that they had robbed Him. But there sprang forth some pastors who, not understanding the context of this passage and its real meaning began to preach that if one gave a tithe, he would be blessed exponentially. They went as far as saying that if one offered half of his income instead of just a tenth, this person would receive far more blessings. Many Christians went wild over this



teaching, for they all wanted to be rich. So they offered a lot of donations as though it were a fad. But all such teachings have no biblical foundation at all.

Right now, the gospel of the water and the Spirit is not received that well in Korea. No matter how passionately we preach this gospel, the response has been rather cool to say the least, rendering our effort in vain. Most Korean Christians refuse to even listen to us, saying that the gospel of the water and the Spirit is not taught in their church or by their pastor. They should at least listen to what the Bible says about the gospel of the water and the Spirit, but they shut their ears and just insist that their own denomination is orthodox and take a great deal of pride in this. Such banal things are all that they like, giving no heed to God and His true gospel.

Even secular people know that Christianity in Korea is in serious decline because its leaders have colluded with the desires of the mass. This must be corrected. To recall the religious convention that I told you about earlier; why do you think it was held?

The government sponsored this convention to prevent the kind of social confusion that occurred toward the end of 1999 instigated by doomsday cults claiming that the world was coming to its end. In that convention, some religious leaders even curried favor with the government, saying that they would do something about this problem if the government gave them the authority to rein in heresies. Of course, there were others who forthrightly pointed out that religion should not be governed by the state. Some people were even up in arms over the very fact such a convention was sponsored by the government, saying that this threatened freedom of religion. What do you think about this? What's clear is that when the chips are down, religion is religion, and should remain so.

What did our Lord say in today's Scripture reading? He said, *"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit"* (John 15:5). The Lord told us to abide in Him. It's not so difficult to abide in the Lord. You just have to listen to the written Word of God with



your ears, read it with your eyes, and believe in it and hold onto it with your heart. That is how you abide in the Lord, and that is the way you should lead your life of faith. Moreover, if you hold onto this Word, the Lord will come into you. You will then receive the remission of sins. If you believe in God's Word, the Lord will abide in you, and you will also abide in the Lord. That is how you can unite yourself with the Lord, walk with Him, and bear abundant fruit. Just as the Lord said, "*Without Me you can do nothing*" (*John 15:5*), it is by believing in the Word of God that you can come into the Lord, and it is also by believing in the Word of God that you can bear abundant fruit.

Your Life of Faith Is Led to Bear Much Spiritual Fruit

Is it not to bear spiritual fruit that you are living out your faith? Is the life of faith about whitewashing

your outside appearance or gaining superficial biblical knowledge? If you speak eloquently like a professional speaker or a politician does this mean then that you are living out your faith? Can you say that you are living out your faith well if you are just polite and humble? Or is a godly life of faith led if you just scream out the name of the Lord like a mad person? If this is not true either, then should you fast while praying until you starve to death to live out your faith? What about trying to enrich yourself by any means possible? Is this the way to lead your life of faith? Absolutely not! The life of faith is led as the vine bears fruit.

That the vine bears fruit means that it bears 'spiritual fruit'—that is, it bears the fruit of saving lives. Vine branches are very weak. When you cut them across the stem, you will see that they are empty inside. They are also very thin, no thicker than a finger, and so they burn and become ash easily. Yet such thin and hollow branches bear ripe and tasty grapes for everyone to enjoy. If you look at the vine



itself, it has little that's attractive, but because the vine bears wonderful fruit, people treasure it, and the vinedresser takes good care of it.

Our lives of faith are like this vine bearing fruit. Just as a vine that does not bear any fruit is completely useless and has no value, a life of faith that does not bear fruit is also meaningless. A fruitful life of faith is our purpose, and it is also the right life of faith. That is why all of us must bear fruit in our lives.

Does any vine bear fruit all of a sudden? Even without taking care of the vine, do you see grapes hanging on the vine when you walk to the vineyard the next day? No, of course not. To bear grapes, the branches absorb all the nutrients coming from the trunk of the vine throughout the year. They blossom when the spring comes, and then they begin to bear tiny grapes. These tiny grapes are then nourished with nutrients to grow, until they become fully ripe grapes. The vine spends all its energy to bear fruit.

That is how the branches bear such ripe and wonderful grapes.

Just as the branches spend all their energy to bear fruit, so must we also devote all our energy and effort to live out our faith. We don't necessarily save a soul right away on the very day we meet him. To save even one soul, we should have prepared our faith beforehand. Our faith grows while we read and listen to the Word of God, and only when our own faith has grown sufficiently can we finally meet our goal of bearing fruit. That is the life of life the Bible speaks of.

What then will happen to the branches that don't bear any fruit? Such fruitless branches are useless, and therefore the vinedresser will cut them off. Let's say that some branches of the vine sprouted, blossomed, and bore fruit for the first time. Then the branches next to them should also sprout, blossom and bear fruit. But what if a branch does not bear any fruit despite having blossomed, and just hangs there? The vinedresser will see that it's a fruitless branch



and cut it off without any hesitation. The vinedresser knows exactly what kind of branch is a fruitless branch. He will not hesitate to cut off such withered branches and throw them all into the fire to be burnt.

We must live with a purpose, to bear spiritual fruit in our lives of faith, so that God would not cut us off and throw us into the fire. Would our Lord be pleased if we don't bear fruit? No, absolutely not! That is why the Lord said that He would cut off and throw away any branch that does not bear fruit. This is what the Bible says to us, and this Word is the truth.

Through today's Scripture passage, the Lord painted an overall picture of our lives of faith. It's then worthwhile for you to consider here if you are a fruitless branch that will soon be cut off. I'm sure you know the answer to this yourself. Some of you may say dismissively, "What do you mean I should bear fruit? It's such a headache! It should be good enough that I am attending church." But you must all have the right purpose when attending church.

Are you attending church just to receive the gift of speaking in tongues or the gift of healing etc, so that you can heal anyone just by laying your hands on him? Do you wish you had this gift of healing like someone you know claims to have? But just because someone claims to have such power and builds a prayer center to draw people in, does it really mean that this person has born spiritual fruit? No, that's not the case.

You must serve the gospel of the water and the Spirit the Lord gave us, and unite yourself with the work of the Church, and participate in this work of saving other souls that have not been born again through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. This is what pleases the Lord, and it is also how we bear fruit in our everyday life. You don't have to work hard all by yourself or get involved directly in the ministry; if you are faithful to the task that has been entrusted to you, then you will become a cherished branch that bears fruit.



In a factory, some people run the machines while others work on nothing but design. Likewise, the areas that we are working in the Church are different for each of us. For a factory to run smoothly, it needs people with various expertise, from those who design the product to those who make the product according to the design, those who package the finished goods, and those who market and sell the goods. In a similar vein, we too must work in various ways in the Church with the talent given to each one of us, and only then can the Church grow appropriately. Regarding this, the Bible says the following in Romans 12:4-8:

“For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who

exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.”

Each of Us Has a Task to Carry out in God’s Church

It’s according to the God-given talent that we should work. Living in unity like this for the gospel of the water and the Spirit is how we bear fruit in our everyday lives. What then can we do to bear this fruit of the gospel? And what kind of work can we carry out? You will come to know this as a matter of course once you begin to live in the Church and being united with it. The Holy Spirit dwelling in you will make you realize it, and you will find out what it is that you can do united with the Church and how you can carry out your task. When you thus carry out God’s work faithfully, in due time, God will entrust you with even more work, and you will be able to



carry out every task by the God-given strength. Like this, if you abide in the vine, you will be able to continue to absorb nutrients and bear good fruit. And in doing so, you will be taken care of and loved by the Lord.

Once a branch bears fruit, it will bud new sprouts, and when the new sprouts are carefully nurtured, they will bear yet more fruit. Like this, when we preach the gospel to someone new, this person will receive the remission of sins to become a new branch, and when we nurture this new soul, he will in turn preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit to other souls as well. This cycle repeats itself. And that's why those who first believed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit are so important, as they are the channels through which nutrients are supplied to the souls that have newly received the remission of sins. When you absorb nutrients from the roots, not only do you grow on these nutrients yourself, but you also feed them to the new spouts attached to you. When this process repeats itself, the branches can easily obtain nutrients

just by abiding in the vine, and they will not only bear increasingly more abundant fruit, but they will also stem out into new branches. That is how the vine grows to its full potential. Like this, the predecessors of faith must continue to supply the food of faith to those who are following in their footsteps. It's the predecessors of faith that must supply the power of faith to all the following believers.

As long as we bear fruit in our lives, the Lord will take care of us. If we fall ill, the Lord will heal us completely and protect us so that we may resume growing again. However, if we don't bear any fruit, then the Lord will cut us off for being useless. We must therefore work ceaselessly and tirelessly until the day the Lord returns. We must continue to absorb nutrients, share them and expand our branches. That is why none of us can afford to say, "I am so sick and tired of all this work! I've worked enough; I want to quit now!"

In reality, there is nothing that we do by ourselves. That's because we work not by our own strength, but



by the new strength the Lord gives us. All that we have to do is just abide in the vine, the Lord Jesus Christ. So long as we believe in the Word of God, the Lord will renew our strength to bear fruit, and therefore just by abiding in the Lord, we can bear fruit as a matter of course. In this way we have born fruit ceaselessly year after year to offer it to the Lord. The vine bears grapes and offers them to the vinedresser every year. Only then is this vine kept. Otherwise the Lord will cut down the whole branches and burn them. Such branched have no use other than as firewood; they cannot even be used as fertilizer.

What all of us must remember clearly is that the life of faith is led to bear spiritual fruit. Whatever we do, and however our circumstances may be, we must live to bear fruit. Do not fall into despair and think, “I just can’t do anything under the current circumstances!” Instead, pray to God. You will then be strengthened through your prayers. If you can preach the gospel, then by all means preach; if, on the other hand, your circumstances make it

impossible for you to preach the gospel, look for another way to serve the Lord. If you can provide leadership, stand in front; if you think you can serve the Lord better from behind, then stand back and support the ministry from behind. That is how you bear spiritual fruit in your life. And therein lies the purpose of your life.

It will be disastrous if you succumb to self-complacency and think, “Since I’ve received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, everything is just fine!” The Bible makes it clear that if you do not serve the Lord and fail to bear fruit even after being born again by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, you will be appointed your portion with the hypocrites (Matthew 24:51). The Lord considers a fruitless believer as someone not born again. Such people will end up turning even more wicked than a sinner. If anyone does not live out his faith even as he knows that bearing spiritual fruit is the right thing to do, and does not share what he has to share with



others, then this person is not only wicked, but he is the worse than even sinners.

If there is one thing that you and I must grasp clearly in our lives of faith is this: Our lives of faith are led for the sole purpose of bearing spiritual fruit. The Lord left us here on this earth to this day instead of taking us away so that we would bear fruit. It's to save other people's souls that He placed us on this earth and made us serve the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Remember this clearly in your heart, and bear fruit accordingly.

Today is Thanksgiving Day. But, in our Church we don't observe such holidays, and instead we celebrate just Christmas once a year. We don't observe any other holidays because that's what hypocritical Christians do. Regardless of holidays, we simply work hard by faith to bear even more spiritual fruit always, we pray all the time, and we serve the gospel of the water and the Spirit diligently. We live like this because bearing even more spiritual fruit is what our lives are all about, and this by itself

is the Truth. That's why we are not doing anything special today to celebrate Thanksgiving. We should be always thankful to God, and so what's the point of thanking Him especially just this one day? It's always those who don't thank the Lord in everyday life that heap up all kinds of fruits and other harvests and perform religious rituals on a day like this. Just a while ago I watched on a Christian TV network people worshipping with a heap of fruits piled up, and I'm sure that these offerings solicited to prepare for this worship service were considerable. What do these misguided Christians do with all those offerings which was raked in? Are they not busy building a giant church building? This is exactly what the so-called "orthodox" churches do. If it were up to us, we would have spent the money to print and share our books so that we may save even just one more soul.

I hope and pray that none of us will ever be cut off from the vine of the Lord. The Lord made it clear that if we just do what benefits our own flesh instead of working to bear the fruit of the Spirit, He will cut



us off. Once the Lord cuts us off, our lives of faith will be over. Everything is finished the moment God cuts us off by saying to us, “You are useless and completely hopeless.”

Those who are cut off by God cannot live out their faith and have no choice but to live in the world. Even though they may still think for a while that they have been saved, this thought will also wither away soon. They will then lose all their joy and live a wretched life. In some extreme cases, they will even end up in a mental hospital. That’s because they will find no satisfaction in life. We should never allow such things to happen to us. And to ensure this, we must fully understand the purpose for our lives of faith, and live out our faith to bear fruit.

Our Lord said, *“If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love” (John 15:10)*. Jesus, who is equal to God the Father also kept the Father’s commandments. God the Father commanded Jesus to be baptized by John the

Baptist to blot out all the sins of the human race in our place, and because Jesus obeyed this commandment, He could stand at the right hand of the throne of God the Father. We too must keep His commandments. What are these commandments then? Do they just refer to the Ten Commandments? No, every decree of God is a commandment. What commandments has God given us then? He commanded us to love the Lord and fear God. Since we were born by God, it is only a matter of course that we should believe in God and fear Him. This is only natural. It’s God who loved us. So if we also love the Lord and put on His love, we will be able to bear abundant fruit in our lives.

I sincerely hope and pray that none of us is ever are cut off by God. I pray that such a tragedy won’t happen to any of us. Even now, I am saying these things because I earnestly do not want any of us to face this outcome. Yet even though I admonish everyone like this from the bottom of my heart, there still will be some people cut off. But no matter what



happens, even if you find yourself so lacking that you can't do anything at all, you should never leave the Church or give up serving the Lord in your life. That's because this is tantamount to your own death and destruction.

Although we each have too many shortcomings, the Lord will continue to strengthen all of us. He will give us the strength and blessings to serve Him. So all that you have to do is just abide in the tree of the Lord and serve the gospel of the water and the Spirit faithfully in your life. But what will happen to us if we don't serve the Lord? He will cut us off. The very moment this happens, all the blessings will be cut off, the healthy will fall ill and perish, and trouble will constantly besiege those who have never known any. This is what the Lord is teaching us through today's Scripture passage.

You may then think, "Well, how can God cut us off when He has saved us through the gospel of the water and the Spirit? This makes no sense!" However, my fellow believers, a fruitless believer is

completely useless to the Lord, just as a fruitless branch is completely useless to the vinedresser. This is not something we ourselves set up, but it's something determined by the Lord. Therefore, this warning applies to all of us equally, irrespective of our place in the Church. So I ask you to always abide in the Lord no matter what, even if you have many shortcomings. And I admonish you to believe that you can do all things through Christ who strengthens you. That's what I believe. If God blesses me with the strength, the opportunity and the time to do whatever must be done, then I can do anything and everything. And I do in fact carry out everything that must be done.

Why is this so? That's because there is nothing I can do unless I do the work of the Lord. The Lord has given me the strength and the time to serve the gospel, and so whose loss would it be if I did not serve the gospel? It would be my own loss. That is why, for you and I to receive the blessing of bearing fruit, we must also unite ourselves with the Church,



and whenever we listen to the Word of God, we should never regard it as man's word. Every Word of the Scriptures must be heard as the Word of God, and whenever we read the Bible, we must believe that it is God's Word and hold onto it steadfast. Once you hold onto this Word, you have heavenly life inside you even if your faith is so tiny that it's hardly visible, and therefore you will achieve great things just by hanging onto the Word with your heart. Though your faith may be feeble, God can still accomplish great achievements through you on account of this tiny faith of yours that is as small as a mustard seed. You will be able to do everything God promised in the Bible. That is why you must lead your life of faith to bear fruit.

You may have all kinds of excuses to justify why you are not bearing any fruit, but there is no excuse when it comes to God's work. The Word of God is given to everyone equally. If you can't reach any understanding individually when you read the Bible by yourself, then you must listen to the sermons

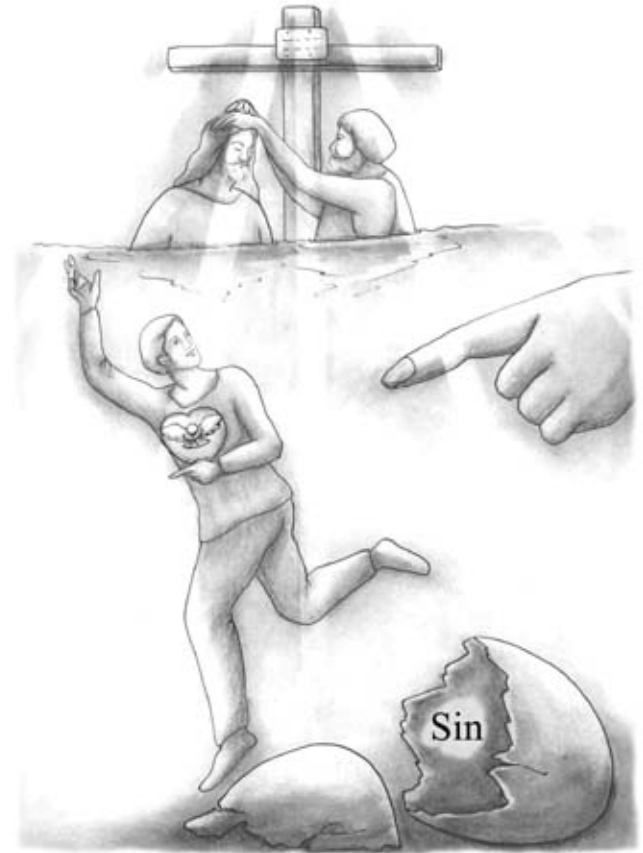
preached in God's Church. Listening to these sermons is absolutely indispensable for your faith to grow. That is why we have appointed many preachers in the Church. We did this so that you would be able to listen to all the Word of God you want even when I am absent.

All of us must live out our faith to bear fruit, and all of us must devote our every energy to this purpose. This may be only too obvious, but I hope and pray that you would all will latch on to this, believe it with your heart, and lead your life of faith accordingly to bear abundant fruit. I believe that the Lord commanded us this because that is what we must all do without fail. ☒



SERMON

11



Contents



God's Teaching about The True Life of Faith

< John 15:1-12 >

“I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you

will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples. As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.”

This evening I wish to speak to you about what the true life of faith is through the Word from the Gospel of John chapter 15. Today's Scripture passage tells us what the true spiritual life is all about. In other words, this passage tells us how to lead a proper and upright life of faith before the presence of God.

First of all, God wants us to believe with correct



understanding that Jesus Christ is the true Savior who saved us from the sins of the world. And He also wants us to know and believe that this Lord created this universe and saved us from our sins. And the Scriptures tell us that living out our faith with conviction in this fact is the true faith and the true belief.

What Is True Faith?

God says to us that Jesus Christ is our God who saved us from the sins of the world and that He is the Savior who cleansed all our sins once and for all. We are living the true life of faith by realizing and knowing and believing that this Lord is our God.

The Lord says frequently, “Abide in Me,” in the Gospel of John chapter 15. God the Father is the vinedresser and the Lord is the true-vine and we are the branches of the vine. Therefore, the Lord is telling the branches to be attached to the vine firmly.

As we who are the branches cannot maintain life if we are not attached to the vine, the Lord is telling us to live by faith by believing in the Lord since the Lord is the Master of our life. The Lord is telling us to know and believe in Jesus Christ who saved us from the sins of the world - as God. The Lord is the One who gave us the remission of sins and new life. The Lord is our God who blotted out all our sins with the gospel of the water and the Spirit and the Creator who created the universe and all things in it. Therefore, we must know and believe in Jesus Christ as our Savior and our God; we must believe that God loves us and that He has saved us from the sins of the world once and for all by the gospel of the water and the Spirit; we must know and believe that Jesus Christ has made us the people of Heaven and that He also has given us all the blessings of Heaven. We bear much fruit spiritually and spontaneously when we unite with Jesus Christ by being attached to Him firmly with such faith. This is what the Lord is telling us through the parable of the vine that we have just



read.

The Lord helps us to bear much spiritual fruit. It is written in today's Scripture reading, *"Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit."* The Lord prunes the heart with the Word of the Truth in order to bear much fruit if we believe that Jesus Christ is the true Savior and the true God. However, should we not receive the fruit of the remission of sins then we will be cut off if we do not believe in the righteousness of Jesus Christ. A person who believes in God through the gospel of the water and the Spirit must know and believe that Jesus Christ is our Master and our God. The Lord has made people who have thus lived by faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit - have more faith so that they can bear much more fruit of faith.

The Lord says, *"You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you"* (John 15:3). The Lord is saying here that for us who believe that our Lord has become our righteousness, He has

cleansed all our sins by the Word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit which He gave us. We believe in the righteousness of the Lord as our salvation. The Lord cleansed all our sins by the water and the Holy Spirit once and for all and also waters our heart so that we can live according to the gospel of the Truth properly by faith. And the Lord gives us the ability to do the Lord's work by faith and fulfill it faithfully. The Lord is our God who is always with us in whatever we do and helps us bear much fruit of salvation in preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

In addition, He made it so that people who do not believe that Jesus Christ is our Creator and that He saved us from all our sins by the gospel of the water and the Spirit not to bear any fruit of salvation spiritually. The Lord says that God the Father is the vinedresser and Jesus is the true vine and we are the branches of the vine; but the Lord says further, *"Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away."* The Lord says clearly that we will bear



much fruit of salvation spiritually if we are attached to Him by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, but that He will take us all away if we are not. However, He always prunes those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit in order to make us bear much more fruit. The Lord says this to cleanse our sins by blotting them out by the gospel of the water and the Spirit and makes us live by faith by always watering our hearts with this Truth. God has made us the people of God by His righteousness. It's because He is the true God to us who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

God loves us and will love us eternally in the future and also makes us bear much fruit. Therefore, a person who believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit receives many blessings due to his faith in the righteousness of the Lord just as we who are the branches of the vine bear much fruit spontaneously when we are attached steadfastly to the Lord. However, we the branches will surely die if we are not attached to the Lord. No one can sustain their life

if they are separated from the very life of the Lord.

Therefore, we must believe that Jesus Christ is our Master, God who is the same as God the Father, the true Savior who blotted out all our sins at once by the gospel of the water and the Spirit, our Shepherd who always watches over us, and our God who dwells with us eternally. We receive blessings by the faith of believing in the righteousness of God. It means that we can bear much spiritual fruit by the faith of believing in the blessing and the ability God gives to us. God bestows such power to us. Therefore, true faith is to believe in Jesus Christ as God and to believe that God works in the people who believe this God is the Savior who has saved you and me from all the sins of the world.

Jesus is the vine and His Father is the vinedresser. We receive salvation if we know and believe that Jesus Christ created all things and that He is God who blotted out all our sins once and for all by the gospel of the water and the Spirit because He so loved us. It means that Jesus Christ's Father is the



vinedresser of the vineyard and feeds us and leads us with the Word of the truth and watches over us so that we can grow properly by faith. A person who believes that God works like that even now is the true believer who possesses the true faith.

David professed his faith in the Book of Psalms chapter 23,

“The LORD is my shepherd;

I shall not want.

He makes me to lie down in green pastures;

He leads me beside the still waters.”

David was able to profess his faith like this because he had faith that God is his Shepherd who protects him and who forever watches over him. David knew well what kind of Person his God was and also believed in Him. Therefore, David received the God-given blessings abundantly and enjoyed the joy of being liberated from the harassment of his enemy. It means that David lived with abundant and overflowing blessing from God with his faith in God only. David was able to live a blessed life because he

had true faith and he was able to profess his faith in God even in the midst of extremely crisis in his life. In the Old Testament, a person was able to receive such blessings and glory by faith in Jehovah God.

Then, how is it explained in the New Testament? In the New Testament, we must have faith of believing that Jesus Christ is the same God as the God the Father and that He saved us from all the sins of the world once and for all by the gospel of the water and the Spirit because He so loved us who were sinners. Jesus Christ who is the true God as God the Father came to us first and took all our sins upon Himself once and for all by baptism He received from John the Baptist and died on the Cross, and saved us eternally by resurrecting from dead in three days. We must believe in this biblical Truth. We must believe that He gave us eternal life and continues to hold onto us in our life after giving us eternal life and became our Shepherd. He will surely continually to lead us and take care of us. We must believe that the Lord is our eternal Shepherd who



will give us eternal happiness and the new life after taking care of us like this. If we have faith like this, we will enjoy even greater glory than the glory David enjoyed.

True faith is faith of believing that Jesus Christ truly is our Savior and God. We must have faith inside us that professes, "Jesus Christ who is God truly loves me. He blotted out all our sins by the gospel of the water and the Spirit because He so loved me. And He even died on the Cross and was resurrected from the dead. God who loved us became our Shepherd and takes care of our entire life and watches over us and leads us." A person who believes like this is the one who truly believes in Jesus Christ. And a person who has such faith lives eternally with God.

It is written in today's Scripture reading, "*I am the vine.*" Here the word, "I" clearly denotes "Jesus Christ." But some people misunderstand this Word and insist that they are the divine leaders of their respective denominations. Hence, such people say

that their followers will face spiritual death immediately if they leave them. However, I want you to know that "I" here clearly denotes Jesus who is the same as God, and definitely not any preacher of this world.

The Implication of the Passage, "*The Word Which I Have Spoken to You*"

After the Lord said, "*Every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit,*" He said in verse 3, "*You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.*" Then, what does the passage, "*the word which I have spoken to you,*" mean? It means the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The Lord has already blotted out all our sins by this Word of the gospel. I am saying that the Lord has done the work of cleansing the sins by the Word of His power (Hebrews 1:3). The Scriptures say that the Lord prunes us in order to make us bear much more



fruit. It means that He has already cleansed us by the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

What is the faith that makes us dwell in the Lord? It is living with the faith that professes, "Jesus is God. God the Savior loves me. And He continues to love me now and will love me in the future as well." And it is living by faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Dwelling in the Lord is knowing the fact that the Lord put on human flesh and came to this world and blotted out all our sins by the gospel of the water and the Spirit and believing in it. When we dwell in Him by faith like this, the Lord also dwells in us and helps us bear even more fruit.

The Lord has completed our salvation without including our will or plan at all. Our will or merits were excluded completely from the salvation of God that saved us. People who have been truly born again by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit have been made clean by believing in the Word the Lord has spoken. The Lord said, "*Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself,*

unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me," and if we reverse this Word, it means that a branch bears fruit naturally if it is attached to the vine.

When we believe that Jesus blotted out all our sins, out of His infinite love for us and know that He has become our Shepherd and follow Him, He will lead us properly according to His wisdom. I mean the Lord shall dwell in us, and He makes us bear much fruit naturally and blesses us. Brothers and sisters, what an amazing blessing and amazing work this is? Is this true or not true?

I say it again true life of faith is believing that Jesus Christ is same God as God the Father. And this God came to this world having been incarnated in the flesh of man and took all our sins by being baptized by John the Baptist. Jesus thus completed our salvation by being resurrected from dead in three days after being crucified in our place because Jesus carried the sins of the world by receiving His baptism. Faith of believing that Jesus Christ made us



God's people and became our Shepherd is the true faith. True faith begins from believing that God will take care of us eternally and depend totally on Him. We cannot find true faith in anything else.

Our spiritual life that is, we who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the blessed life of faith in Jesus Christ. Believing in God and living the spiritual life is not a difficult thing. We just need to realize and believe how much Jesus the true God loved us and how He saved us by the gospel of the water and the Spirit. And everything will be okay if we just believe and follow that He resolved our problem of sins completely by the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and that He became our Shepherd and watches over us and guides us forever. If we do this then everything is resolved. This is the proper life of faith.

Sadly there are still many people who do not know the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Some people do not even believe that Jesus is same as God the Father. These days, there are various organizations in

Christianity that are working for the ecumenical movement, and they are more interested in achieving something, rather than knowing that Jesus is God. Some people say that Jesus is just Jesus and that He is not God. We cannot say that people like this believe that the Lord has saved us by the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Taking on religious respectable positions in Christian organizations and actively promoting various movements such as "social purification movements" and "social unity movements" are not the true faith. Most of them do not know and believe that Jesus is God.

In addition, there are many kinds of theological parties in Christian communities. Although they think of Christianity as one of 'religion' and study the Scriptures and acknowledge Jesus as their Savior, they still are of the opinion that their is salvation in other religions as well. They have never known that Jesus is the true God. That is why they refuse to believe in the truth that Jesus blotted out all our sins once and for all by the gospel of the water and the



Spirit. These are the people who believe in fleshly things and do not believe in the spiritual salvation that is manifested in the Scriptures.

Further, there are also many Christians who actually cannot dwell in the Lord because they do not know the gospel of the water and the Spirit even though they believe that Jesus is God. People like this cannot dwell in God because they refuse to accept that the Lord has blotted out all our sins once and for all by the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and also He has blotted out even our sins of the past, present, and future completely.

The Lord Told Us to Abide in Him

How can we abide in the Lord? It is possible only when we believe that Jesus is God and that Jesus is the Lord who blotted out all our sins once and for all by the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Put differently, a person who believes Jesus is God and

that Jesus has cleansed all our sins by the gospel of the water and the Spirit dwells in the Lord. However, a person who does not believe in this fact cannot abide in the Lord.

The Lord tells us to abide in Him, but how can we abide in the Lord who is holy? What must we do in order to go into Him who is holy? What kind of faith must we have? We must have our sins blotted out from our hearts first because God is sinless. And we must believe that Jesus came to this world and blotted out all our sins by the gospel of the water and the Spirit in order for all our sins to be blotted out.

The Lord put on the human flesh temporarily to blot out our sins, but He was originally God. He was God who created the universe and all things in it. This God put on human flesh and came to this world in order to save us from the sins of the world. And He took all our sins onto Himself by His baptism He received from John the Baptist and shed His blood by being crucified on the Cross. And by being resurrected from death, He saved all of us who



believe in the gospel of the water. We receive the remission of sins and abide in the Lord if we know and believe like this. Even after receiving the remission of sins, you and I can abide in the Lord when we have the faith of believing that "Jesus Christ is God and our Savior. God loves me and He is my Shepherd and takes care of me." And the Lord also abides in a person who believes in Him like that. This is the true faith that enables us to abide in the Lord. Everything is okay when we believe that Jesus is God. We must have this faith even after receiving the remission of sins.

Even if one is a Christian, he is nothing if he does not have the knowledge of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Just knowing that it is natural for a Christian not to have sin is not enough for him to be a true Christian who abides in Jesus Christ. In order for us to abide in Christ, we must know that Jesus Christ is God and He so loved us that He blotted out all our sins once and for all by the gospel of the water and the Spirit and that He is our Shepherd because

He loves us even now; and we must also know that our Lord who is the Shepherd answers our prayers, leads us on the righteous path and takes care of our futures as well.

Should we not believe in these biblical facts, our spiritual life will be in vain. We cannot be truly born again if we insist that we have received the remission of sins by believing in only the blood of the Cross without knowing the gospel of the water and the Spirit. No matter how much we profess our faith, it will be considered nothing nonsensical gibberish. A person like this cannot live the life of faith depending on the righteousness of Jesus because He is absolutely unaware of it. It's because he is cut off from Jesus due to his sins. Therefore, we must all know that Jesus Christ is the Lord who saved us from the sins of the world and know and believe that He is the same God as God the Father. We must know and believe in the righteousness of Jesus Christ if we have something to do with Him.

We receive the blessing of salvation if we



understand and believe in Jesus properly and also receive salvation from sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit He fulfilled. We cannot depend on God if we do not know the righteousness of God. We cannot depend on Jesus Christ without knowing that He is the true God. Without this knowledge, we not only cannot depend on Him but we cannot even believe in Him and follow Him.

Therefore, a person who does not know Jesus is God tries to cultivate his own life. His life would be untangled naturally should he entrusted his life to the Lord, but he tries to live by his own strength. Faith is relying totally on God. To trust in God means to believe in and depend on Him. However, many people cannot trust in Jesus like that. There are so many Christians who know that Jesus is their Savior but cannot believe that He is the true God. But the Scriptures clearly say that Jesus Christ is the true God (1 John 5:20). Therefore, it is essential for them to have this knowledge of believing in the righteousness of God.

“Who Do You Say That I Am?”

One day during His public ministry, Jesus went to the region of Caesarea Philippi with His disciples. And Jesus asked the disciples there who the people say He is. His disciples answered, *“Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets” (Matthew 16:14)*. At that time, there were many people who could not recognize Jesus. Because they could not recognize that Jesus was God, people said He was a prophet and some said He was the reincarnation of Elijah.

Jesus then asked His disciples, *“But who do you say that I am?”* At this, Simon Peter answered and said, *“You are the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16)*. Peter believed that Jesus is the true God, as well as the Son of God. To this response, Jesus commended him by saying, *“Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.”*



After confirming that Jesus was the same God as God the Father to His disciples, Jesus then spoke of the Passion He would suffer in the future from then on. It is written in the Gospel of Matthew chapter 16 verse 21, *“From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.”* Until this moment, Jesus had not spoken about the sufferings He would face in the future and instead showed many evidences of His being the Son of God. But now He now told them what would happen in the future since they now came to know that He is God.

Peter who was impetuous with a sanguine temperament heard about the Passion from Jesus and tried to stop Him by saying, *“Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You”* (Matthew 16:22). Peter probably wished in his heart that Jesus would get along with them and perform wonders and heal the sick. Also, from a humanistic heart, he probably did not like the fact that the Teacher he followed

would receive suffering like this and die. But Jesus sternly rebuked Peter who was trying to hold Him back by saying, *“Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men”* (Matthew 16:23). Just moments ago, Jesus commended Peter who confessed who Jesus really was, but He now rebuked Peter and referred to him as a servant of Satan when he put the obstacles in the way of Jesus' Passion. This was because Peter did not know clearly the reason why Jesus came to this world and instead tried to interfere with His work. And that was something Satan wanted as well.

What was the purpose of Jesus coming into this world? What is the reason Jesus received His baptism from John the Baptist? It was to resolve our problem of sin. That was the will of God and the will of Jesus. We could not have received the remission of our sins if Jesus had not suffered and died for us. Satan also did not want Jesus to suffer and die because he also knew this. Satan did everything to dissuade the



people to not receive the remission of sins and thereby go to hell. Therefore, Jesus called Peter "Satan."

When we believe in Jesus as God and God the Father, we can also come to believe that He came to this world in the flesh of man and that in order to resolve the problem of our sin, He received baptism from John the Baptist and was crucified on the Cross. With this pure faith, we can through this receive salvation from our sin. And we also come to know that Jesus saved us perfectly by being resurrected from the dead and that He became our eternal Shepherd and watches over us so that we can bear much fruit spiritually.

I reiterate the fact that one's faith will be in vain if they do not believe that Jesus is God despite the fact that they believe that He is their Savior. Such a person is not any different from someone who believes in one of the many religions of this world if they does not know and refuses to believe in this truth. Jesus is our God of righteousness. He is God of

all the people of this world. And He is the true Master of the entire universe and all things in it.

Dear fellow believers, do you believe that He is the true God? You must know this fact. This true faith starts from such knowledge. One's faith is in vain if he does not believe in this fact no matter how faithfully he attends church. No matter how you say, "I believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. I do not have sin," everything crumbles down if you cannot believe that Jesus is God. Then, you cannot believe in the righteousness of God because you do not know how to revere God, depend on Him and seek help from Him.

But you and I know this fact and also believe in it. We must not think we have arrived, but rather to seek to have even stronger faith. It is easy to think that everyone has received salvation in the same way after hearing the gospel of the water and the Spirit, but we have the correct faith because we are different from them by believing the divinity of Jesus and because we believe in the righteousness of God. We



have become the predecessors of faith with this conviction.

We abide in the Lord by this faith of believing that Jesus is our God and that He is our Savior who saved us who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit from our sins. Therefore, the Lord of righteousness abides in us we who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Dear fellow believers, is this true?

It is written in the Gospel of John chapter 15 verses 5-6, *"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned."* We come to abide in the Lord by believing in the righteousness of the Lord and we can bear much fruit when the Lord abides in us. We can bear much fruit if we know and believe that Jesus Christ is our God and our Shepherd because we become one with the Lord.

We put forth much effort to preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit throughout our country, Korea and the entire world. But we must know first that we can bear much fruit naturally if we first believe that Jesus Christ is our God and abide in the righteousness of the Lord. It's because God the Father who is the vinedresser helps us to bear much fruit. Although we now preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit in this world with all our strength, but actually the work we are doing is very feeble. But what is the result of this? What great harvest of fruit of salvation have we reaped though all our feeble efforts? We have reaped much fruit of salvation so much that we could have ever have even imagined. Our God dwells with us and blessed us in the midst of the things you and I have been doing so that we can reap much fruit that is thousands, tens of thousands, or billions times greater than the effort we put in. That is why the Lord said, *"For without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they*



gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned."

We cannot do anything apart from the righteousness of the Lord. And we would become like a dry branch which is cut off and thrown out if we do not believe in Jesus as God and do not abide in Him. Therefore, we must clearly know that Jesus is our God. We must believe that He is our God and that He became our Shepherd by saving us from sin and that He gives us many blessings while we live in this world as well as giving us the blessing of bearing much fruit of salvation. The Lord gives us all things when we believe like this. Believing is the first thing we must do.

Not believing that Jesus Christ is God is like a branch not attached to the vine. Branches like this are gathered up by people and thrown into the furnace to heat a room or used to burn garbage. However, if we believe that Jesus Christ is God who created us, God works in us, hold onto us, watches over us and blesses us. He blesses us eternally. I know and

believe in this. Knowing this truth is more important than blind faith. It is very important.

Dear fellow believers, are you lacking? Are you lacking in your deeds? Do you know and believe that Jesus is God? Also, do you believe that He has saved you from your sins? Do you believe that He has become your Shepherd? Do you believe that He is our Shepherd eternally? Everything is okay if you should believe this. Whenever you go on living with this faith and this heart, God will work in you and help you to do well and you can make the confession of faith like David, because the Lord works even greater wonders when you unite with the Church and live according to His will. You will give thanks to God by confessing, "My cup runs over!" The Lord blesses us with overflowing blessings as we do this throughout our entire life. This is the Word of our God and not our words.

When I spoke at this morning service, I would only be able to preach for a few minutes if Jesus was not God. I mean that I would not be able to do it if



someone told me to preach from something that I have heard from others or something I have seen on TV or in a movie. Some people pass that on exactly same and also imitate the same things and some even use these things they have heard and preach it more interestingly. But I cannot do that. I cannot pass on the words of mere humans. I am not good at passing on someone else's words.

But I can pass on the Word Jesus spoke because I believe in God's Word and because God the Father and Jesus is one. I can preach vigorously that Jesus is God and that He blesses us as our Savior and Shepherd. This is possible because I believe that Jesus and God the Father is the same God. I could not do this if Jesus was not God.

Some people think they preach very well. A while ago, a pastor who had planted a small church had to go on a trip due to some important church matter. The trip was for a week and he had to find someone who could preach while he was gone. Amongst his congregation was an older elder who was a professor

at a University. So this pastor asked this elder to preach during the early-morning prayer meetings, Wednesday evening worship service, and the Sunday worship service since he might be away for about a week.

The elder who was asked to preach was very dissatisfied with the pastor's sermons. He was dissatisfied because he thought that it would be better if the pastor divided up the sermon into the introduction, main points, and conclusion and also used parables and illustrations, but that the pastor was not able to do this. And he thought that he could do much better if he preached. And now the opportunity to preach had finally come. So this elder put forth all the knowledge he had and preached for one week. By the time the pastor returned, the elder told him that it was actually very difficult although he had thought the sermons the pastor preached were easy. He said he could not do it any more after preaching for one week with all the academic knowledge he attained in the world and all the



scriptural verses he knew.

The truth is preaching the Word of God is not difficult to the truly born again believers. Even though they do not have much knowledge of the world, they can preach the Truth vigorously whenever they stand behind the pulpit with the open Scriptures. Because Jesus is God who created the universe and saved you and me by the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we also will never run out of things to preach from His Word of the Truth. Do you ever feel tedious when you hear my sermon?

You will definitely be successful if you know that Jesus is God and live relying on and believing in this God only. We will definitely be successful if we are attached to this Church and do the work that is entrusted to us in the Church as we live in this world. But we will surely fail if we do not believe that Jesus is God. This is the absolute truth.

We believe that Jesus is God. We believe that Jesus is our God and that He is the omnipresent God of the universe. Do you believe this? It is God who

said, *“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”* Then God said, *“Let there be light”*; and *there was light.*” And this God is Jesus who came to save you and me from sin. He said, *“If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.”*

Jesus also said that He answers all our prayers if we believe that Jesus is God and abide in Him. The Lord fulfills all things we ask for in our prayers. He promised, *“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you”* (Matthew 7:7). Is this true or not true? And as Jesus said, *“By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples,”* the more fruit we bear, the more glory God receives and we become His disciples.

The Lord said, *“As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love.”* The Father loved His Son Jesus. And Jesus also loves us. Therefore,



we just have to know Jesus Christ as God and abide in Him by faith. We abide in Him when we believe in Him. We go inside Him. We dwell with Him. We become one body, one family with the Lord. We become like that if we just believe in His love of the Truth.

God has given a new commandment to us who believe in this truth. It is written, "*A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another*" (John 13:34). Brothers and sisters, the people who believe that Jesus is God, that is, the people who believe that this God has saved you and me from sin and become our Shepherd, cannot but love one another. We cannot but love one another because each one of us is a precious person of God. However, can people who do not believe in this Truth love one another when they are standing against God? Can people who do not believe that Jesus is God truly love one another?

Our Lord told us to abide in the Lord's love. He

told us to believe that this God loves you and me, and He admonished us to abide in Him by receiving salvation by faith. Our hearts become full of joy when we abide in Him and come to know how much God loves us and how perfectly God blotted out all our sins and made us the people of God. Our hearts become full of joy when we come to know that God has blotted out all our sins perfectly because He so loved you and me and that He still loves us as our Shepherd and that we are loved like this. Dear fellow believers, are you also joyful? Would you feel happy or not if you knew that God saved you, loved you, and that He will love you eternally from now on?

You and I are the people who are cherished by God. You and I are the people whom God loves. I am so happy that the Almighty God so loves us who are weak and lacking. This fact gives us strength to go on living joyfully in this difficult world. Therefore, God gave us this Word to make our life full of joy. Do you believe this? I know that you also believe this. I want all those who do not believe like this to hear



this Word continually and come to believe. What reason is there to not believe when God loves you so much? It would be the greatest sin in God's sight if God loved you and you did not believe in that love. You also feel most disappointed when your love is rejected. It is the same for the Lord.

I am so joyful and happy that I am preaching to those of you who are loved by God. But it is very difficult when I preach to the people who are not loved by God. I have to preach with all my strength. That's why it is so difficult to preach God's Word to sinners and there is no joy in it. It is a spiritual warfare. Why is this? It's because one cannot become a part of one family of God if he is not a people of God.

God loves you and me. God has saved you and me from sins and the Devil. This God loves you and me for eternity. Do not refuse this love. Believe in this love. I believe in this love. I know that you also believe in this love.

Halleluiah! ☒



SERMON

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Contents



Rely on the Lord

< John 16:1-21 >

“These things I have spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble. They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service. And these things they will do to you because they have not known the Father nor Me. But these things I have told you, that when the time comes, you may remember that I told you of them. And these things I did not say to you at the beginning, because I was with you. But now I go away to Him who sent Me, and none of you asks Me, ‘Where are You going?’ But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. And when He has

come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they do not believe in Me; of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you. A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me, because I go to the Father.’ Then some of His disciples said among themselves, ‘What is this that He says to us, ‘A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me’; and, ‘because I go to the Father’?’ They said



therefore, ‘What is this that He says, ‘A little while’? We do not know what He is saying.’ Now Jesus knew that they desired to ask Him, and He said to them, ‘Are you inquiring among yourselves about what I said, ‘A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me’? Most assuredly, I say to you that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy. A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come; but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world.’”

Terrible Things Will Happen in the End Times of the World

Do you remember what the Lord said would happen in the last days of the world? He said that

when this time comes, the born-again who believe in Jesus would be hated by the world. Just as Jesus was persecuted by the people of the world when He was on this earth, so would His believers be hated and persecuted by the world. The Lord also said that when the end times come, a certain nation or a certain organization would segregate those who have been born again through Jesus. This is described as being driven out of the synagogue (John 16:2). When the hour comes for the Lord to return to this earth, the Great Tribulation of seven years will unfold, and in these days of tribulation everyone who does not receive the mark of 666 will be sought after and killed.

To prepare for this time, our Lord said in John 16:1-4: *“These things I have spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble. They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God*



service. And these things they will do to you because they have not known the Father nor Me. But these things I have told you, that when the time comes, you may remember that I told you of them. And these things I did not say to you at the beginning, because I was with you.”

My fellow believers, it is absolutely critical for us to lead our lives of faith properly. Many Christians lead their lives of faith hidden in the forest of religion—that is, they practice Christianity merely as a matter of religion rather than faith—but such people cannot overcome the end times. The seven-year Great Tribulation is not too far away. The end times will surely arrive within our present age. If you don’t have the real faith and are instead satisfied with a nominal faith to live hidden among the religious people of the world, then when the Great Tribulation comes, you will find yourself among those clamoring to receive the mark of the Beast and you yourself will also receive it. Even worse, you may even take the lead in persecuting and murdering the born-again, as

though receiving the mark for yourself weren’t enough. So you must truthfully believe in the Lord with all your heart instead of just pretending to believe. You must live by believing in the Word of God wholeheartedly.

Let’s try to imagine here what might happen when the end times are here. Given how weak we already are, if some officials from a government agency ordered us to receive the mark of the Beast, wouldn’t we consent in fear? Since this hasn’t actually happened yet, you may just shrug it off, thinking that you can just refuse to receive the mark. But imagine that you are dragged by some government agents and asked, “So we hear that you are refusing to cooperate with our global unity organization. Is this true? Are you really going to refuse to cooperate with us? We’ll give you one more chance. Either you receive the mark, or face your death. It’s up to you.” Anyone who doesn’t have faith in the Word of God will choose to receive the mark at that very moment.



So you say trembling, “What should I do then?” “It’s very simple. You just have to receive one mark either on your right hand or your forehead. That’s all. It won’t even hurt. It’s as simple as piercing your ear.” While you hesitate, you see a huge guillotine. “Either you receive the mark, or you kneel before this guillotine and stick your head into it. The choice is yours. Yes or no? Make up your mind now.” The people of the world will be violent in those days. Anyone who disobeys them will be arrested at the spot and executed right away.

My dear fellow saints, the end times will indeed be filled with terrible events. Since this will be the last chance for the Devil to rule over the world, he will not remain quiet. The Devil will put up his last-ditch fight and go berserk until the very end. Not only the born-again but also those who have not been born again will face tremendous tribulations. Fire will rain down from the sky, a pandemic will break out all over the earth, and the world will turn completely chaotic ravaged by all kinds of disasters.

In this world the Devil will persecute the born-again and murder them.

Knowing beforehand that the seven-year Great Tribulation will come, our Lord told us to prepare for the hour when the born-again saints are persecuted and killed. So if your faith in Jesus is only a pretension, then you will be snared by the Devil on that day for sure. In these end times, you will have to defend your faith by yourself, for no one else will come to your assistance. Although those who have lived in this world by faith will not renounce their faith even if their lives are threatened, those who have lived only for their own flesh will beg for their lives, asking to be spared just once. There will be no mother’s love great enough to give herself up to spare her child. Everyone, whether a parent or a child, will have to choose to either receive the mark or face certain death.

This is what today’s Scripture passage teaches. It’s written, “*They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever*



kills you will think that he offers God service. And these things they will do to you because they have not known the Father nor Me. But these things I have told you, that when the time comes, you may remember that I told you of them” (John 16:2-4). As such, if you live like the bat in Aesop’s Fables, saddling on the fence unsure of your faith and swept away by the wind of the world, then your nominal faith will disappear and you will inevitably end up receiving the mark on the last day. And even at the moment of death, such people will beg cowardly to spare them just once and throw away their faith without any hesitation.

The Book of Revelation Speaks Clearly about What Will Happen in the End Times

It’s written, *“If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on*

his hand, he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God” (Revelation 14:9-10). That’s right. Here our Lord said “anyone.” So you must decide now whether you will choose martyrdom or not.

But there is one thing that you have to be careful here. Just because you’ve been asked to make your decision, you shouldn’t determine yourself to embrace martyrdom on your own will. What you need here is not your will of the moment, but true and sincere faith. Whether you truthfully believe in every Word of the Lord is what’s really important. When the hour of the last tribulation comes, you will act according to your faith.

You may think now that you will never accept the mark, but we all know just how weak man’s willpower is and how easily it can be broken at some prodding. Even among us, I am sure that there are some people who, despite being so determined, will end up receiving the mark when their lives are threatened. Such people will choose to receive the mark rather than facing execution right away, and



thus try to survive even for just ten more days. However, in no time fire and hail will rain down from the sky, making it impossible for them to live anymore. Or perhaps they will come down with some incurable disease and live a wretched life until the day the Lord returns. Unless you have the faith to believe from the depth of your heart that the Lord has clearly saved you with His water and blood, the consequences are as predictable as the scenario I just outlined here.

Seeing our faith, the Lord has already accounted us to be sinless. Now we must choose between two choices, whether we would embrace martyrdom at the last hour of tribulation according to our faith or receive the mark instead. Those with a strong will, who swear that they will never, ever receive the mark, will actually end up receiving it faster than anyone else. Just as Peter had betrayed Jesus despite having sworn to never betray Him, your own willpower is bound to be broken. Man's willpower is nothing. Even when it comes to those with a strong

determination, if enough pain is inflicted on them and inducements are offered to them, most of them will crumble in no time. The determination of man cannot last even a month, far less a year. That's why referring to the willpower of man, a proverb in Korea says that resolutions last only three days. Most people see their resolution last three days; for the stubborn, it may last for two months; and even for those with a remarkably strong willpower, it will last no more than a year. What's the same for everyone, however, is that all will surrender sooner or later.

We Prepare Our Faith for the End Times Not by Strengthening Our Own Resolve, but by Solidifying Our Faith in the Word

You must never trust in your own human determination. No matter how resolute you may be,



there is no one who can stand up to violence to the end. If you've been to a psychiatric hospital, you may have seen the demon-possessed going berserk, screaming, rolling on the floor, and shouting out all kinds of nonsense. But even the demons in them tremble and stop their seizure at the first sight of the hospital workers wielding batons to subdue them. Even when someone is demon-possessed, he is subdued into silence when violence is inflicted on him, and that's because everyone is fundamentally afraid of pain. This shows just how weak man's determination is.

Therefore, whenever the Word is preached to you in these ordinary times, you must believe in this and live out your faith accordingly. Even though your acts are insufficient, if you have a strong faith, then this in itself is sufficient. But if you don't believe, then everything is futile. Unbelief renders everything useless. It is now at this very moment that you must believe. When the day comes for your martyrdom, it is the very faith you now have that will enable you to

overcome your fears. The Holy Spirit will remind you of the Word that you had heard before, and He will strengthen you and embolden your heart with resolve so that you may boldly choose martyrdom over the mark of the Beast. At that time the Holy Spirit will also put words to your lips to speak out your faith.

However, if you don't believe in the Word of God, then it's all useless. You can never overcome the Devil by relying on your own human strength. Through the Word, we must reach a clear understanding of what will happen on the last day, and we must believe in the Word of God now to prepare for that day. When the end times come, the Devil and his followers will seize the born-again and force them to receive the mark, and they will surely kill whoever refuses to receive the mark.

However, God also said that He would provide a way of escape to those who have truly lived by faith. It is therefore absolutely indispensable for us to live by faith. I admonish each and every one of you to



lead your life of faith not by your own willpower, nor by your own stubbornness, nor according to your own circumstances, nor by your own tact, but by genuine faith.

My fellow believers, when the last day comes, the born-again will be clearly distinguished from everyone else who has not been born again. Those who have not been born again will take the lead in arresting and murdering the born-again. The born-again will not try to escape from them. The faithful will not succumb to cowardice but defend their faith even if they are beheaded, and they will face their end boldly by this faith. The faithless, in contrast, will struggle cowardly to save their lives, only to die a wretched death in the end.

We must lead our lives by the right faith. We must live by faith this very moment and also in the future. Let me reiterate once more here that your own human will and resolve are ultimately useless.

When the Holy Spirit Comes, He Tells Us Three Things

When our Lord told His disciples that He was going to His Father, the disciples were grieved. But the Lord said to them, “It is for your own good that I go to the Father. I will send you the Helper when I leave. I will send you the Holy Spirit.” And the Lord said that the Holy Spirit will speak to us of three things when He comes: It is written, *“When He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they do not believe in Me; of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged”* (John 16:8-11).

Let’s look at each of them here. First, Jesus said that the Holy Spirit would convict the world of sin. What then is sin before God? The Bible says that none other than unbelief is sin: *“Of sin, because they do not believe in Me”* (John 16:9).



Unbelief itself is sin. Unbelief in what then? It refers to unbelief in what our Lord said, in the Word of God. Although people wrong each other and commit sin against one another, in God's sight, there is a distinct, fundamental sin that sends one to hell. This offense that leads one to be cast into hell is not believing in the Word spoken by our Lord. Refusing to believe that God was conceived in the body of the Virgin Mary to come to this earth as a Man, that He took upon all our sins and washed them away by being baptized, that He atoned for all those sins by being condemned in our place on the Cross, and that He was resurrected in three days to accomplish our salvation—this is the very sin that condemns one to hell.

Why did Jesus then say in the Bible, *“Of sin, because they do not believe in Me”*? After all, there are many other sins than just the sin of not believing in the Lord, from murder to adultery, theft, jealousy, hatred, idolatry, and so forth. Why is it then written in the Bible that not believing in the Lord is sin?

Actually, because the Lord took away all the sins of world—that is, all the sins of mankind—the sins we commit out of our weak flesh have nothing to do with whether we go to Heaven or not. In other words, no matter what kind of sin we may commit in this world, our sins can still be remitted away as long as we believe in Jesus as our Savior and in the gospel through which He has saved us, the gospel of the water and the Spirit. However, there is one sin that cannot be forgiven, and it is the sin of rejecting the God-spoken Word of salvation. The Bible defines such a sin as the very sin of blaspheming the Holy Spirit (Hebrews 6:4-6, 10:26-29). While the sins that are committed out of human weaknesses can be remitted through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the sin of blaspheming the Holy Spirit cannot be forgiven by any means.

Some people say that although every sin can be remitted away, the sin of adultery cannot be forgiven, for it is committed in one's body, which is God's temple. But this is complete nonsense. It is also



contrary to the Word of God to say that the sin of murder cannot be remitted, or that while small sins can be remitted, great sins cannot be remitted. Our Lord blotted out even Hitler's sins. He had shouldered even such atrocious and perfidious sins in this world.

Why, then, do people still go to hell for their sins? In God's sight, the sin that disables them from entering Heaven and instead condemns them to hell is the sin of not believing in the salvation of Jesus and all the Word spoken by Him. The Lord said, "*Of sin, because they do not believe in Me.*" He said that when the Holy Spirit the Helper comes, He would convict us of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.

Through the Church, the Holy Spirit therefore says to everyone: "What is the sin that dooms you to hell? It is the sin of not believing that Jesus has remitted away all your sins through His water and blood. That's the sin that condemns you to hell. That's the sin of blaspheming the Holy Spirit. Although you can be remitted from every other sin,

this sin of blaspheming the Holy Spirit cannot be forgiven."

Anyone who blasphemes what God has done for the salvation of all human beings can never be forgiven. As it is written, "*The Word became flesh and dwelt among us*" (*John 1:14*), the Lord is the God of the Word who came to this earth in the flesh of man. He then accepted all our sins through His baptism, was condemned to death on the Cross, rose from the dead again in three days, and ascended to the right hand of the throne of God the Father. He has thereby saved us perfectly. Anyone who doesn't believe in this has no choice but go to hell. God said that if anyone adds anything to this Word or subtracts from it, his name will be erased from the Book of Life and God will pour down all the curses written in the Bible. Therefore, we must believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit fulfilled by Jesus exactly according to the Word.

God the Holy Spirit has clearly spoken through His Church: Jesus the Son of God came to this earth



as a Man, washed away all the sins of mankind by being baptized at the age of 30, was condemned by shedding His precious blood on the Cross, rose from the dead again in three days, and is now sitting at the right hand of the throne of God the Father. Whoever believes in this Jesus will be saved and enter the gates of Heaven instead of hell. God the Holy Spirit bears witness of this Jesus. He has spoken clearly about the sins of mankind and about those who are doomed to hell.

Second, the Holy Spirit bears witness of righteousness: *“Of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more” (John 16:10)*. This righteousness refers to the righteousness of God, and it implies that God has completed our salvation, and the Lord has accomplished the work of salvation to deliver us from sin once and for all. When our Lord came to this earth, He accepted all the sins of this world through His water baptism at once, died on the Cross once, rose from the dead again, and thereby blotted out our sins all at once. The resurrected Lord

is now sitting at the right hand of the throne of God the Father. Faith in this God is what saves us.

The Lord has fulfilled our salvation perfectly and completely without any inadequacy. There is nothing inadequate to God’s salvation. It is perfect. It needs no further work. To believe that the Lord has saved everyone through the water and the Spirit is to believe in the righteousness of God, and none other than this is salvation. Believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, in the salvation of God, is what constitutes righteousness for those who believe in this Truth. Abraham was approved as a righteous man by believing in the Word of God, and on account of this faith he was approved as a son of God, one of His people, and the blessed father of faith. Likewise, so do we also attain righteousness from God all at once by our faith in Jesus as our Savior, by believing that God Himself came to this earth as a Man, was baptized, died on the Cross, rose from the dead again, ascended to the right side of the throne of God, and is still alive. Whoever believes in



this gospel of salvation fulfilled with the water and the Spirit has now become God's own child.

It is written, *"Of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more"* (John 16:10). Salvation has already been completed. In other words, the righteousness of God has already been fulfilled. Therefore, there is nothing lacking for us to become righteous by believing in Jesus. Having completed our salvation, our Lord ascended to Heaven and is sitting at the right hand of the Father. Our Lord has made us righteous people. This is what the Lord meant by saying, *"Of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more"* (John 16:10).

Third, the Holy Spirit speaks of judgment: *"Of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged"* (John 16:11). The ruler of the world here refers to the Devil. It refers to the fallen angel, the arrogant one who stands against God, whose name is Satan the Devil. Jesus Christ judged him when He came to this earth. Through the High Priest named John the

Baptist, Jesus accepted all the sins of mankind in the Jordan River, and He was condemned on the Cross. And when Jesus Christ was condemned, He judged the ruler of this world.

We Are No Longer Sinners

Satan had tempted Adam and Eve and made them fall into sin. Having led Adam and Eve to fall into sin, the Devil then became the ruler of mankind. He was the king and ruler of this secular world. All human beings became the Devil's people and had to obey him. Satan reigned over the human race.

However, when our Lord came to this earth, He accepted all the sins of mankind by being baptized, and giving up His own body, He was crucified. In this way Jesus crucified the sins of mankind to death. Having shouldered all our sins on His own body, our Lord then surrendered His body to the Roman soldiers to crucify Him. He was punished for the sins



of mankind by shedding His own blood while shouldering all the sins of the world on His body. Satan therefore could no longer reign over the human race.

Human beings are now no longer sinners. They are no longer doomed to be condemned, nor are they destined to hell anymore. There is no longer any condemnation waiting for them. This means that they have been restored to their original innocence. When God first made man, He had made him in the likeness of His image, and now man has been once again restored to this original state. Actually, the change was even better, for human beings were elevated to be God's own children and immortal beings never to be destroyed.

Satan was judged at the moment Jesus was condemned on the Cross. The Devil is no longer the ruler of this world nor its master. It is now Jesus Christ who is the King of this world and of the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus recovered all the authority of the earth and Heaven from Satan when

He came to this world. And He became the King of kings. Having fulfilled all our salvation, Jesus then ascended to Heaven and sent us the Holy Spirit in His place.

The Spirit of Truth Has Come to Us

It's written, *"However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come"* (John 16:13). The Lord said here that when the Spirit of truth comes, He would lead us into all truth. The Holy Spirit the Helper has indeed come into the hearts of all of us who have received the remission of sins by believing in Jesus Christ. Where does this Spirit lead us then? He leads us to the Truth. Put differently, He leads us to all that is true and veritable. This means that the Holy Spirit teaches us about who God is, how we can live an upright life,



and what the Truth is. It is the Spirit of God who teaches us about all these things.

Jesus Christ is our Savior, and God the Spirit is our Helper who assists us. The Holy Spirit awakens us from our ignorance and teaches us everything, from who Jesus Christ is to how He has saved us, and who His Father is. So as God the Holy Spirit is with us, He leads us to the Truth, teaches us, and drives out all that is not true from our hearts. Therefore, those who are dwelt by the Holy Spirit do not listen to anything that is not true. They cannot tolerate to hear any falsehood, as it is disgusting to them. They can discern the Truth from the false precisely because the Holy Spirit teaches them.

The Bible says that God the Spirit “*will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come*” (John 16:13). Our Lord had His Word written down through the Holy Spirit. This Word was written by the inspiration of God the Holy Spirit. And today, when you read or hear this Word, the Holy Spirit in

your heart comes to you and teaches it to you, so that you would understand what the Word is saying to you today. God the Holy Spirit speaks to you about faith at that hour. Not everyone may be aware of this, but when I read the Bible in my sermons, God the Holy Spirit clearly speaks to me about what He will say today and what truth He wants me to teach you. In other words, it is God the Holy Spirit in me who interprets this Word for you. Therefore, the Holy Spirit does not speak on His own, but He speaks according to the written Word. That He speaks whatever He hears (John 16:13) means that He speaks according to the written Word.

God the Holy Spirit approves us when we believe according to this written Word exactly as it, and He seals our souls as righteous people. I believe that when Jesus was baptized, all my sins were passed onto Him at that moment. I believe that Jesus was condemned on the Cross in my place. I believe that He shouldered all the sins of this world for me and was condemned for everyone in this world! When we



believe in the Word of God like this, the Holy Spirit inside us seals us with His approval and assures us of our salvation. That's why Jesus called the Holy Spirit our Helper.

God the Holy Spirit never speaks on His own. It is according to what's written in the Word of God that the Holy Spirit speaks to us, convicts us of sin, saves us, gives us the confirmation of our salvation, teaches us about righteousness and judgment, and rebukes us and commends us accordingly. Like this, God the Holy Spirit fulfills a very important role. This present age is the age of the Holy Spirit.

If anyone just acknowledges the written Word of God exactly as it is, then the Holy Spirit will come into him and seal him with His approval. That is why people come to believe in God. That is why they come to call themselves righteous people. And that is why they have the sure conviction that they will indeed enter Heaven. This is never achieved by our own human willpower or wisdom. Rather, it comes by the assurance of God the Holy Spirit, His wisdom,

and His will. God the Holy Spirit says to us, "Surely, you have been saved." He gives us assurance. He says to us, "You have been saved for sure." Like this, God the Holy Spirit helps us. We must therefore believe in God the Holy Spirit and every written Word of God.

God the Holy Spirit wrote about Jesus Christ: The Holy Spirit says that this Jesus has saved us from all sins through the water and the blood, through His own flesh and blood. The Lord has saved us not just by the blood, nor by the water alone, but by the water, the blood, and the Holy Spirit, and these three are one (I John 5:7). They have all come out of one. So it's absolutely important for us to believe in the written Word exactly as it is.

That we have the criterion of salvation called the Bible is absolutely critical. You probably don't realize just how important it is that faith sprang forth not from anything else but the Word of the Scriptures. If anyone believes in God based on man's own doctrinal catechism rather than the written Word



of God, he will be cast into hell as its consequence. What convinces such people of salvation is not the Holy Spirit, but man-made denominations. The end result of everyone whose salvation is assured by his own denomination is nothing more than hell. Only those who are assured of salvation by the Holy Spirit can enter Heaven. Heaven is reserved only for those who are approved by the Holy Spirit.

Whom does the Holy Spirit approve then? He approves those who believe in the Word of God itself exactly as it is. That is precisely why we must believe in Jesus according to the written Word. We can then be approved by God the Holy Spirit and led to the Truth by Him. Those who stand on the Truth led by this guidance, who have the Spirit of God, will find complete freedom for their souls and live more happily than even kings and princes.

Just as the Bible says that God the Holy Spirit *“will tell you things to come”* (John 16:13), the Holy Spirit does indeed tell us what tribulations we will face in the future, and what glory we will receive, all

according to the written Word. Although we will face tribulations, we will also receive glory. The tribulations that we face on this earth are not even comparable to the endless glory that we will enjoy in the future.

Do you comprehend this universe fully? Man can never reach a full comprehension of the universe. This universe is infinitely large. No one has seen its end, and no one will see it either. Because the universe is so expansive, we can only see a limited portion that’s visible to our eyes. Not only is it impossible for us to measure this universe, our thoughts and minds can’t grasp its full extent either. This is the same as our inability to fully comprehend the glory that awaits us.



Our Suffering Is Incomparable to the Glory That We Will Enjoy Forever in God's Kingdom

We will face tremendous suffering in the years to come. But this suffering is not even comparable to the glory that we will enjoy. Our suffering is momentary, but the glory that we will enjoy is eternal. God the Holy Spirit teaches us about our future.

When the faithful face actual suffering, their faith is solidified even more thanks to the Word of God engraved deep in their hearts. In contrast, those who have no faith in the written Word of God exactly as it is, and instead understand and believe in it according to their own circumstances, situations, or thoughts, will run out of their faith completely when the day of suffering arrives. We must therefore believe in the written Word of God now, at this very moment, exactly as it is.

Every preacher must also speak of only the Word of God. In other words, preachers must speak of the Word of God alone, rather than their own understanding and thoughts. The real sermon is given when the preacher explains the Word of God as led by the Holy Spirit dwelling in his heart and his thoughts and mind are reigned by the Holy Spirit.

You and I will ascend to the Kingdom of Heaven and enjoy infinite glory. That's because we are qualified to receive the glory bestowed by God, for we have received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit according to the written Word of God. That is just how precious this Truth of salvation is. The Holy Spirit our Helper teaches all these things to us. The Holy Spirit is always with all of us who have been born again. And it is through the Holy Spirit who is with us at all times that we see the Word of God. Do you believe in this, my fellow believers?

Preaching the Word of God is not just about delivering a sermon. It is fundamentally different



from a worldly lesson or a mere hypothesis delivered on some neatly structured manuscript prepared beforehand. The real sermon is about the Word of God. It's the Almighty speaking His Word through His servants. So whenever we hear God's Word preached, or whenever we worship God, we must cut off our own will and thoughts as useless branches are trimmed, submit ourselves to God, and listen to the Word with our hearts.

Our Lord said, *“All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you”* (John 16:15). Jesus spoke of Heaven, He spoke of how tribulations will come on our way, and He also told us that even though we will face suffering, we will enjoy even greater glory later on.

Jesus Had to Be Baptized, Die on the Cross, and Rise from the Dead Again

Everything that belongs to God the Father belongs to Jesus. That is why whoever believes in Jesus is saved by God the Father. Those who are rewarded by Jesus are rewarded by God the Father. What Jesus said is what God the Father said to us. Our Lord has shown us what suffering He endured on this earth, and He has also shown us that three days after His death on the Cross, He rose from the dead again. He has made it known to us beforehand that we will also rise again after suffering and dying. Jesus has spoken of everything beforehand to His disciples, to us who would come to believe, to everyone in the world, and even to the Devil.

When Jesus said that He was leaving His disciples, they were dumbfounded at first. So they asked Him, “Where are You going?” Jesus then said to them: “I am going to My Father. But you are sorrowful. When a woman is in labor, she suffers



from its pain, but when she gives birth, she gains a great joy. Like this, you will also be sorrowful for a short while when I leave, but because I am leaving you, I will send you the Helper, the Holy Spirit. Once I send you the Holy Spirit, you will gain a great joy through His help. Your salvation will be complete. Your everlasting life will be perfected. And you will become God's children. Because I have accepted all the sins of this world by being baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan River, now I must die on the Cross. I must die and rise from the dead again, and I must ascend back to the Father just as I had come."

Before His death, before His resurrection, and before His ascension to Heaven to sit at the right hand of the throne of the Father, our Lord told everything to His disciples—about sin, about righteousness, about judgment, about the tribulation to come in the last days, and about the glory awaiting the disciples. As though He were leaving His last will, Jesus had spoken of everything beforehand. He said that although we are sorrowful for a short while,

our hearts will rejoice just as a woman in labor, though suffering from her pain, forgets all about this pain of labor when she gives birth to her child.

Our brothers and sisters here who have not given birth are probably having a hard time trying to understand what this passage means. Consider it in the following way then. Let's say that you are facing an extremely difficult problem, one that is impossible to solve. But this problem has to be solved. It's an enormously complex problem that will ruin you if it's not solved, but it will bring a lot of rewards if it's solved. So you've been worried to death over the problem, but one day, all of a sudden it is all solved. You can imagine just how joyful you would be when the seemingly impossible problem is completely resolved. The glory that is finally attained after overcoming the end times is akin to such a great joy.

When Jesus came to this earth to save us, He had to return to God the Father in order to save us completely. Having accepted the sins of the world through His baptism, Jesus had to die on the Cross,



rise from the dead again in three days, and then return to the Father. This was no easy task. It entailed so much pain. To the disciples who had been with Him all along, Jesus then explained beforehand why He had to endure such suffering.

“When I leave, I will send you the Holy Spirit. I will send you the Helper. I will give you the Spirit of Truth. Because you believe in Me, I will send you the Holy Spirit so that He would help you, so that your faith would not founder but be strengthened, and so that the Spirit would seal you. When He comes, He will convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He will convict the world of sin because people do not believe in Me. Whoever does not believe that I have saved everyone through the water, the blood, and the Spirit has all his sins remaining intact, and therefore he himself will pay the wages of his sins. Not to believe that God Himself came to this earth incarnated in the flesh for your sake, and that He was baptized, died on the Cross, and rose from

the dead again—this is sin. Not believing in Me is the sin that dooms one to hell.”

“The Spirit will convict the world of righteousness, for I have completed your salvation to perfection for you. And now, I will go to My Father. You have nothing to worry about anymore. Believe in Me. I will judge the ruler of this world. I will vanquish the Devil who has ruled this world as its king. As I will be condemned on the Cross, the Devil that torments you will never again be able to be your king. He can no longer torment you. I am now your Master.”

Jesus Himself said like this. His disciples were puzzled at that time, unable to truly grasp what Jesus was saying to them. However, when Jesus was crucified and resurrected, and the Holy Spirit descended on them just as Jesus had promised, they were finally able to understand what Jesus meant. They realized that Jesus had been right all along. Afterwards, the disciples of Jesus all bore witness of the gospel led by the Holy Spirit dwelling in them.



We, too, must realize what our Lord said to us in John chapter 16.

If You Overcome the End Times by Trusting in This Jesus, You Will See a Better World

In the end times, the people of this world will persecute us and take delight in killing us, thinking that they are actually doing God's bidding. Such people will say, "To purge these people from the face of the earth is how to serve God faithfully. God will be pleased if we kill them." The Bible says that they will do this because they do not know Jesus nor God the Father. The hour is coming when nations will be all united, as all religions will become one and the entire human race will come together. There will be only one type of people who don't unite with the world, and these are the righteous. The people of the world will persecute and kill such righteous people.

My fellow believers, I admonish you with all my heart to remember the Word of God when you and I are put to death. There is nothing for us to fear at that time. Regardless of whether we are martyred or lifted into the air with the Lord's return, all that we have to do is just carry out our work faithfully until the end and meet the Lord in joy. We can endure our suffering by believing with our hearts that there is the glorious Kingdom of Heaven waiting for us after our martyrdom and rapture. We must remember the Word promising us that a paradise on earth awaits us to enjoy all glory and splendor. When that day comes, we must once again remember this Word that we are hearing now. And we must not fear. Whatever we face, we must deal with it by faith.

The Apostle Paul said, "*For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us*" (Romans 8:18). We must go forth by faith. You and I must live by faith alone. We are not some unsaved sinners destined to the fire of hell. We are



the righteous. The righteous are those who will enter the paradise where Jesus Christ is, and live there happily forever with the Lord. Realizing who we are, we must live by faith. We must believe in the Word of God at all times throughout our entire lifetime. Today and tomorrow alike, we must always ruminate on this gospel of the water and the Spirit, live by faith until the last day of the world, and thus see a better world unfolding before our eyes on that promised day.

May God's abundant blessings be with you always! ☒





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Ctrl + N Key : The number of page you want to go to.

2) Acrobat Reader Scroll Bar

Click and drag in the scroll bar until the page number in the number field matches the page you want to go to.



EASIER WAY TO READ

Using Bookmarks

You can move easily where you want by using bookmarks

- Show bookmarks : Press F5 Key on your keyboard
- Hide bookmarks : Press F5 Key again

