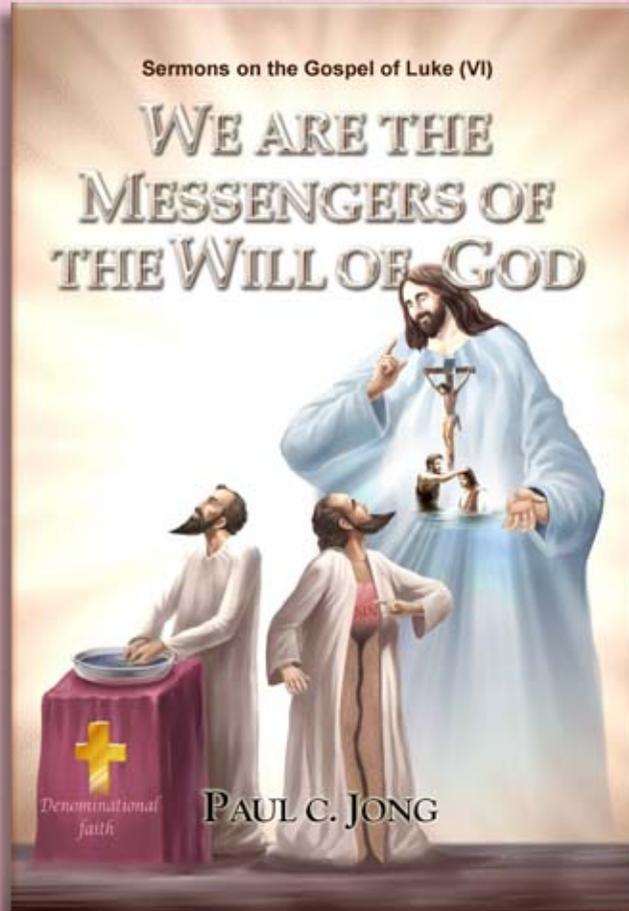




The New Life Mission

Sermons on the Gospel of Luke (VI)

# WE ARE THE MESSENGERS OF THE WILL OF GOD



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## Our Lord Actually Came Into Human History

During the reign of Caesar Augustus (27 B.C. to A.D. 14), all the colonial subjects of the Roman Empire were decreed to return to their hometowns and be registered in a census. So, a young man named Joseph also had to make a long journey toward Bethlehem, his ancestors' town, with his pregnant wife, Mary.

Our Lord was thus born in a small town called Bethlehem. It was a historical fact. At that time, out in the surrounding fields, there were shepherds keeping watch over their flock, and “Suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: ‘Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!’” Having witnessed this, the shepherds went looking for the Baby Jesus and saw Him lying in a manger, and they returned giving glory to God.

Now I sincerely hope and pray that every reader of this book would become the same witness of the Baby Jesus as the shepherds by listening to the gospel Word from Heaven.



Sermons on the Gospel of Luke (VI)

# **WE ARE THE MESSENGERS OF THE WILL OF GOD**

**PAUL C. JONG**

**Hephzibah Publishing House**  
A Ministry of THE NEW LIFE MISSION  
SEOUL, KOREA

*WE ARE THE MESSENGERS OF  
THE WILL OF GOD*

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## Preface

### The Wisest Way of Life

Life is short and meaningless, and therefore we must live this short life wisely. Those who only pursue their desires of the flesh mindlessly are no different from the beasts that perish. For what do you live? What do you think should be the purpose of your life to lead the wisest way of life? Should you live for money? For fame or power? For pleasure? Or should you live to enter the everlasting Kingdom of Heaven rather than for these ephemeral things of the world that will disappear soon?

The wisest way of life can be found only if you receive the remission of sins first and obtain everlasting life. One may gain everything under the heavens, but what use is it if he loses his life? If your short life on this earth is lived just for your flesh to enjoy fleeting prosperity, only to be punished forever



in hell after death, then you would be leading a fool's life.

Zacchaeus was a chief tax collector and a rich man. He lacked nothing in his flesh. But Zacchaeus could never find any satisfaction from his material prosperity. He yearned to find God. He longed to receive everlasting life and to be saved from his sins. So when he heard that Jesus Christ the Son of God was coming to his town Jericho, Zacchaeus ran to Him to catch His glimpse, for he wished ardently to meet with Him personally. However, there were too many people crowding the road, and Zacchaeus was too short to catch any glimpse of Jesus over the large crowd. So he climbed a sycamore tree and looked at Jesus longingly. Jesus then said to him, "*Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house.*"

Anyone who wants to find Jesus the Savior must have the same mindset as that of Zacchaeus. Zacchaeus knew that he was a sinner before God. Put differently, he was poor in spirit. He was someone

who had recognized that he was a sinner destined to hell, and therefore sought God's mercy. Whoever wants to receive the remission of sins and become a righteous person and to be granted entrance into Heaven must first admit his sins to the Lord. The perfect gospel of the Lord, who has made sinners righteous, will then wash away all the sins of this person's heart once and for all, and the Lord will seal him with the Holy Spirit so that he would never become a sinner again. Therefore, the wisest person is someone who has received the remission of sins by believing in this righteousness of God. In contrast, anyone who thinks that he is virtuous even if he has not received the remission of sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit cannot find Jesus Christ. In other words, those whose hearts are rich cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

How, then, should the redeemed people live from now on to lead a wise life? Before you received the remission of sins, what was it that you worshipped? Whose servant were you? You had served yourself as



your own king, and you had worshipped the things of this world as your gods. To put it more clearly in spiritual terms, you had been ruled by the prince of the power of the air—Satan the Devil, that is—and you had lived as his slave (Ephesians 2:2).

However, with the gospel of the water and the Spirit the Lord has broken all the chains of sin and rescued you from Satan’s trap, making you one of His own people. For the born-again, the Lord is now their everlasting King. As such, the wisest way of life for the born-again is to live as the faithful servants of the Lord from now on. Living for the Lord’s Kingdom according to His will is the most blessed and wisest way of life.

All those who have now received everlasting life are citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven. The Lord, our Savior and our King, is commanding us the born-again to live as His servants spreading His gospel. Serving the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the most right thing to do. It’s then only a matter of course that we should serve the Lord as our King and

faithfully fulfill our role as His stewards until the day He returns.

The wise are those whose hearts are disposed as the servants of God. They are the ones who bear abundant fruit by faithfully carrying out the gospel-preaching ministry the Lord has entrusted to them. In the parable of the minas, the master who was leaving to a distant country to succeed his throne gave his ten servants a mina each, and these servants had to put this mina to a good use and turn a profit from trading. When the master returned after being crowned, the servants who made a profit were commended and rewarded. This parable is the Lord’s promise that when He returns in the future, those who have saved many souls by faithfully trading in the gospel will be made tetrarchs to reign over ten cities or five cities in the Millennial Kingdom. Those who live the rest of their remaining lives on this earth wisely will reign for a thousand years, and after this they will enjoy the blessings of everlasting life with the Lord in the eternal Kingdom of Heaven.



But what happened to the servant who hid the mina in his handkerchief and brought the same one mina when the master returned? This servant refers to those who, even after receiving the remission of sins by believing in the gospel, serve their own flesh instead of the gospel. Such people are the ones who do not trade with the gospel at all, and they are the ones who don't recognize the Lord as their King. The Lord will annul such people's salvation and throw them into the fire of hell, for He said, "*To everyone who has will be given; and from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him*" (Luke 19:26).

In this time and age when the Lord's return is imminent, those who are wise place their hope on Heaven and devote themselves to the spreading of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The Bible says, "*A wise man's heart is at his right hand, But a fool's heart at his left (Ecclesiastes 10:2)*". This passage means that the wise are devoted to the work of the Spirit while the foolish are preoccupied only with

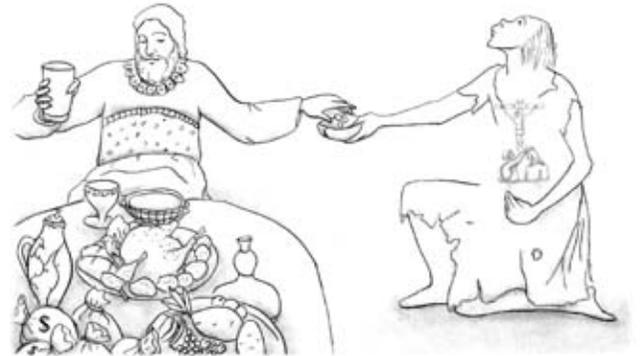
their own fleshly affairs. It is my sincerest hope and prayer that you would all live a wise life so that you will hear from the Lord, saying to you, "Well done, good and faithful servant!" ☒



# SERMON

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## 1



CONTENTS



## Let Us Believe in The Righteousness of God

< Luke 16:19-31 >

“There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man’s table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. Then he cried and said, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.’

But Abraham said, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.’ Then he said, ‘I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father’s house, for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.’ Abraham said to him, ‘They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.’ And he said, ‘No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.’ But he said to him, ‘If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.’”



## What Must We Believe In?

Dear fellow believers, upon reading today's Scripture passages, I feel as though I've just seen a movie called "The Rich Man and Lazarus." Truly, as I saw these two people's lives, I felt as though I was seeing a certain drama unfold. Unclear as to what kind of family background this rich man had, one thing which is clear is that he lived sumptuously as a great rich man without any indisposition, eating well and living richly until the day he died. Contrastingly, this beggar of poverty named Lazarus lived in true misery all throughout his life, although it is unknown how his household had fallen like that. He lived his life by sitting in front of the rich man's gate and begging and by going through garbage bins and eating the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Like so, while in this world, these two men had led a life of two extremes.

However, what happened to them after their death? The situation changed. It's like watching a

movie with a dramatic turnaround. After death, Lazarus the beggar was carried to Abraham's bosom. In other words, he got to live tasting all sorts of wealth and glory in Heaven and receiving God's love. However, the rich man, the other protagonist, fell into the fire that never quenches and had no choice but to go on receiving the utmost torment among all torments after death. Like a drama, the lives of these two men are portrayed before us. The Gospel of Luke chapter 16 speaks of such things like these.

Dear fellow believers, like so, a life is but an empty dream. Like a night's dream, it is futile. And we are like fisherman sailing across that wide and rough ocean called life. Truly, a life is like fog, and its glory is like a grass flower. I think that is why there are so many words like that used as metaphors to life. Our lives are like flowers blossoming in spring only for short while and then fading away.

Then, regarding our lives, what do you think is most important? Also, what do you think we must



obtain while we are alive? Through the Scripture passages we have read today, the Lord tells us the answers to such questions and also the answer to the question, “What kind of life is a successful one?” The most important thing in one’s entire life is only faith. Therefore, we all must possess the true faith. Even though Lazarus had suffered hardships while on this earth, begging for leftover food coming out from the rich man’s house, but after death, he got to be held in Abraham’s bosom. Lazarus could be carried to Abraham’s bosom after death precisely because he had the faith of believing in God.

Abraham is the father of faith, and he was a man whose faith was the greatest among those who believed in the Word of God. Then, why do you think the Bible said that Lazarus got to be held in Abraham’s bosom, instead of directly saying he had entered Heaven? It is likely that this very Lazarus got to enter Heaven only by ‘the faith’ of believing in the righteousness of God just like Abraham did.

Anyway, Lazarus was a man who knew what he really needed while living on this earth. It means that he was a man of faith. His situation was difficult, and the story of his life was so tiresome and agonizing that from a fleshly perspective, it would have been better if he had not been born at all. But because he had the most important thing in his life, that is, the faith of believing in God, he was able to become a successful life. I hope you will realize the fact that we all need to have the faith that this Lazarus had, and that the faith will allow us to be carried to the bosom of Abraham, the father of faith. Lazarus’ faith is the sincere faith of believing in God, just like Abraham.

In our lives, what is the most important thing that we need? It is the faith of believing in the righteousness of God. Even if we don’t get to possess anything else, we must at least possess such faith without fail. All those born onto this earth must possess the faith of believing in God’s righteousness inside their heart. We must believe in God. The faith



has to be inside our hearts. But instead, should we not possess true faith inside our hearts, our lives will only become something trivial, and they will be of the vanity of life. Although we came into life empty handed, we must at least possess faith when we go to God. If we cannot take faith with us when we go before God, then our lives would be a failure. Regardless of how we have lived in this world, when we go before God, we must go with the faith of believing in God inside our hearts, just like Abraham. Instead of saying, “This is what Lazarus did,” we the born-again must follow Lazarus’ example and possess the faith of believing in the righteousness of God.

In this world, there are numerous people who do not do so. It precisely means that there are many people who are like the rich man mentioned in today’s Scripture passage. The Bible probably did not disclose the name of this rich man because most people end up falling into a life of such a man. This rich man could not get carried to Abraham’s bosom

after death. He was thrown into the burning fire of hell.

Some people ask, “Did you see hell? How do you know if you didn’t even see it?” But you have to keep in mind that the image of hell is clearly depicted in the Bible. A place where it is so hot that one wishes in earnest for not even a sip of water but just a drop of water at the tip of the finger is precisely what hell is. The substantive manifestation of torment is precisely hell. There was a reason as to why we often use the expression, ‘hellish torment.’ In any event, this rich man got to go to hell because he didn’t have the faith of believing in God. He ended up falling into hell, rather than being able to be carried to Abraham’s bosom.



## **In This Passage, There Is Nothing That States Whether or Not the Rich Man Had Sinned More than Lazarus Had and Vice Versa**

People usually think that one has to go to hell because he or she had sinned much more than average people had and that another one has to go to Heaven because he or she had sinned less. However, people do not go to Heaven or hell just by having committed a lot of sins or a few. Things like that are one's own standard, and they are just erroneous human thoughts. Can you or can you not enter the Kingdom of God? Are you going to Heaven or are you going to hell? Dear fellow believers, it only depends on whether or not you believe in the righteousness of God. It depends on whether or not you possess the faith of believing in the Word of God. The reason why all lives have to have true faith is right here.

We must surely have the faith of believing in the righteousness of God. If we start to believe in the righteousness of God, that faith will grow inside our hearts, but if we do not believe in the righteousness of God, such faith will not even be formed from the outset. If we believe in the righteousness of God with heart, God will be with us, but if we do not believe, He will not be with us. Also, if we believe in the righteousness of God in our hearts, Heaven awaits us; but if do not, there is only hell that awaits us. If we believe in God having remitted all our sins, that is, the Lord having remitted all our sins by receiving the baptism of water and by shedding His blood to death on the Cross, we will become people of faith, but if we do not believe in this fact in our hearts, we become faithless ones and sinners. In short, if we believe in the righteousness of God, we become the righteous.

The Bible says, *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first*



*and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, 'The just shall live by faith'” (Romans 1:16-17).* Dear fellow believers, all you have to do is believe. If you do not believe, then there is no faith. Yet, if you believe, then the faith shall come into existence. Therefore, you must possess faith without fail. We must surely believe in the righteousness of God.

As for us, the believers, receiving salvation isn't everything. Even after having received salvation, we must go on living holding fast to that faith lest we should lose it. We must always live by faith, and then when the Lord calls us, we must be carried to Abraham's bosom, in other words, the bosom of our Lord. Without the faith, this cannot be possible. Without the faith, we cannot please God.

Dear fellow believers, you cannot imagine how severe the ruins of disbelief is. However, if we believe in God, we can escape from all such ruins. If you and I continue to keep the faith of believing in God for always, there will be nothing worry about.

We should always possess the faith of believing in God, and go on living amid that faith. We should possess the sincere faith of believing in all the Words of the Lord. In our lives, the most important thing is none other than the faith. God clearly says so. He says that the most important thing in life is precisely the faithful heart of believing in God. The Lord said in today's Scripture passage that those who possess the faith of believing in God are those living a successful life.

## **Whether or Not We Know and Believe in the Righteousness of God Is Important**

We cannot just haphazardly believe. We must have the faith of believing in the righteousness of God. I see instances of people relying on and believing in truly all kinds of things. People who believe in Buddhism rely on Buddha, and those who



believe in superstitions believe in various gods. To believe in superstitions is indeed a type of faith, but such a faith isn't the faith that can ever lead us to Heaven. I am saying that only the faith of believing in the righteousness of God is needed. We must believe in the righteousness of God only, and we must believe in God Himself having blotted out all our sins. We must believe in the Words spoken by God only. People who possess the faith of believing in the righteousness of God will be able to go to the Heavenly Paradise in the end, having lived a successful life.

People say that if a human being were to act evil and not carry out virtues, that person will be punished. Such thinking is based on the notion of the law of causality. But, no matter how virtuous one may seem, no human behavior in itself can be approved as absolutely virtuous in God's eyes. Can someone trust his or her own act? Who can assert that one's own standard of good and evil is right? Knowing how weak human beings are, who can

possibly say something like that with confidence? Can superstitions be trusted? If not, can we rely on material things? Besides our Lord, what is there that we can trust? All we have to do is to believe in the righteousness of God only. I am saying that one is safest when one lives out one's life by having faith in God. One must go on living by believing in the righteousness of God to lead a successful life. Dear fellow believers, one must genuinely live like that in order to be carried to Abraham's bosom. Only then, will one be able to go to Heaven. On this earth, we get to live out our lives by receiving God's help and God's love. Despite all that, if a person were to not believe in the righteousness of God, that is, if a person were to not believe in God having blotted out all his or her sins once and for all by the gospel of the water and the Spirit, then, regardless of what else that person believes, that person's life will only be in vain.

In today's Scripture passage, we can see the life of Lazarus and the rich man completely reversing after



their death. Each man went to where they were suppose to go, but one of them went to an immeasurably hot place, a burning place where it is so hot that the tongue would roll up into the throat because saliva would dry up completely. In contrast, the other man, that is, Lazarus got to go to a place where beautiful flowers blossom and fruit trees and things to eat abound.

But there was a great gulf between the places where each of these two had gone. There was a deep sunken hollow, that is, an endless hollow. Thus, the Bible tells us that these two men could not visit each other. It tells us that there is a gulf so great that if a person in Heaven were to try to visit another person in hell out of pity, that person would not be able to do so. Thus, people will not be able to go back and forth to visit each other.

In conclusion, this means that a person who has sins can never go to Heaven, and in the same manner, a person who is without sin can never go to hell. In the passage that says people cannot visit each other

for there is a great gulf fixed, this great gulf symbolizes none other than sin. It is a metaphor for the sins of people. There is a river between Heaven and hell that no one can ever cross, and this river is in other words the river of sin. Thus, if a person has sins, that person can never go across to Heaven. No matter how strong or smart the person may be, that person will never be able to cross that river of sin.

Then, to be able to say we believe in the righteousness of God, how must we believe? To profess such faith, we have to know first how the righteousness of God was fulfilled and then believe it. Jesus has remitted all our sins by coming down to this earth, taking on all the sins of the world by having received the baptism from John the Baptist, and vicariously dying on the Cross for all our sins. Jesus had fulfilled God's righteousness through these righteous acts. We have to have such faith of believing in the righteousness of God. True faith that allows us to receive salvation from our sins isn't the faith of believing in mammon or superstition, but



rather, it is the faith of believing in the righteousness of God. This is the faith that enables us to receive salvation from sin.

In this world, there are many people who say they believe in something or another, and there also are a large number of people who say they believe in God. Take for instance South Korea. Most people have a religion. Christians and Buddhists are the two largest religious groups in Korea. If we were to divide up those people with religion once more, a third of them will be people who believe in Christianity and another one third of them will be those who believe in Buddhism. If so, among those who profess to believe in God, just how many of them do you think genuinely possess the faith of knowing and believing in the righteousness of God? We need to think at least once about whether or not they sincerely believe in all the righteous acts carried out by Jesus like Lazarus who was carried to Abraham's bosom. The faith of believing in the righteousness of God is the one that saves you from sin and allows you to enter

Heaven. There has to be such faith inside of us: the faith of believing in the Lord having made us to be the born-again righteous people, that is, the faith of believing in Him having taken us in as children of God.

“By granting me the gospel of the water and the Spirit, God made me His child, and thus, He will give me blessings and take care of me.” We should possess this kind of faith. Such faith is precisely the same faith as that of Lazarus which enables us to enter Heaven. All people can go to Heaven only if they possess a faith like that of Lazarus. And once people possess such a faith, they must hold fast to that faith and ruminate over this faith every day lest they should lose that faith.

Take the beggar Lazarus for instance. He probably died a beggar until his death. However, that is not what is important. Although he had begged all his life, it is important that when he died, he was carried to Abraham's bosom. Clearly, this is what the Bible writes. God does not have much interest in carnal



things such as wealth, prosperity, honor, and health pertaining to our lives in this world. I think He had allowed Lazarus to live in a bit of want in this world because He was going to compensate him with much better things and make him live more richly. It means that He does not consider worldly things important.

In the end, where did Lazarus go? He went to Heaven. He was able to enter Heaven because He had believed in God well. He went to Heaven because He truly believed in the Word of God. Even though in his life he was under the situation of begging for food in front of another person's gate and lived off of that, but in the end, he entered Heaven because he got to hear the Word of God and believed in the Truth that God had blotted out all his sins by the water, the blood, and the Spirit. He believed in the Word of promise that God would make anyone who believed like that as His children. He got to receive the remission of sins because He believed. And after having received the remission of sins and

having lived believing in God, He could be carried to God's bosom when He had called him.

Dear fellow believers, can you imagine how happy Lazarus was? Let us live a successful life like Lazarus. In today's Scripture passage, we saw the rich man and Lazarus. Between these two men, the conclusion is that Lazarus had lived a successful life but the rich man had lived a worthless life. Hence, can you imagine just how much happier Lazarus must have felt, for he had gone to Heaven just by having believed in God even though he had lived so miserably like that while he was alive?

Even though Lazarus was lacking, he was nevertheless suitable to abide in Heaven for he had the faith of believing in God. Because he had received the remission of sins by believing in the Lord, it was only right for him to attain eternal life. The Lord probably said the following: "Beloved Lazarus. Until you came to Me, you had the faith of believing in Me. Therefore, it is only fitting for you to be coming here. It is only fitting that you stay here



with Me. But, you, the rich man, did not have the faith of believing in Me. Did you not live out your life enjoying all the pleasures of the world without believing in Me? For that price, you have lost your qualification to come to Me, and for the price of not believing in Me, it is right that you should go to hell. What do you have to resent? You have enjoyed much wealth and prosperity. And then, you came to this afterlife empty handed. Therefore, it is only proper that you are cast into hell. Did you pay for the cost of fuel for your eternal residence or for anything else? So you should only be thankful for living in fire right now.”

Because God so loves us people, He planned from the days of Genesis to take us in as His people. Because God has created us with such purpose, people who believe in the Word of God’s promise that shows His love and intention in their heart will be blessed by Him, and they will be granted eternal life dwelling together with Him. Therefore, we should possess the faith of believing in God more

than anything else while you and I go on living in this world. I am saying that we must believe in the Lord. And even that, we must believe with our hearts. And we must also keep and defend that faith. When we do so, our lives become a success. Anything else isn’t a successful life. So long as we possess the faith of believing in God, our lives will be a success. If we don’t believe in God, our lives will be a failure, but if we do possess the faith of believing in God, our lives will be a success. Anyone who realizes this simple truth will also be able to realize it is only proper that one must believe in God. We must always live by faith. We must go to Heaven by faith. We must receive the remission of sins by faith. We must receive heavenly blessings by faith. We must receive resolutions to all our problems by faith.

Solution to problems actually lies in the proper faith. For this reason, I continue to tell you that we must believe in the Word of God. And, we the saved have to keep that faith until the end. We must live out



our faith by believing in the Lord. If we could only live out our faith by cherishing the faith, then there is nothing we cannot do. You may well ask, “How can I believe in the so-called righteousness of God which can neither be seen nor heard?” All you have to do is to just believe in God Himself, don’t you? If you believe in God, you can fully believe in the righteousness of God. Believing in God is the cornerstone of our faith. If you believe in God, you can believe in what He has planned, what He has done, and what He will carry out upon us in the future, in all.

## **We Must Lead a Successful Life by Believing in the Righteousness of God**

If we want to succeed, we must first believe in God. If we want to fail, we do not have to believe in God, but if we want to lead a successful life, we have to believe in God. Is there anyone in this world who

does not hope for success? Thus, I am saying that everyone must believe in God, regardless of who they are. The Lord told us, “*Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God*” (1 Corinthians 10:31). We have to believe in God, no matter what we do in this world, no matter how we live, no matter what kind of situation we live in, and no matter what kind of work we do and go on living. Henceforth, we must live out our lives keeping that faith.

People who do not believe in God are all bound to be destroyed. On the other hand, people who believe in God are bound to succeed. Believers in God will receive the strength to live out their lives in this world, but unbelievers in God will not be able to live out their lives. As we live in this world, what that makes us troubled is not having faith in God. So once you start believing in God, there won’t be any hardships and agonies. We all should go on living with such faith. You and I in all have to live out our lives by having faith. In short, it is only right that all



people have to ultimately believe in God. Only then, will people succeed. And especially for those who have received salvation, they must keep that faith well. The faith of believing in God must always be inside your heart. The faith of believing in God must genuinely have its place inside your heart. Only when there is that faith, can you become a successful person and be able to live happily. Without faith, everything is useless. The Lord says, *“But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him”* (Hebrews 11:6). Do you believe? Yes, please do believe.

Dear fellow believers, I hope there won't be anyone among you dying of thirst after having come to the fountain. For the fountain of life is right before you, all you to have to do, therefore, is to drink the water from that fountain. I hope you won't become someone dying of thirst just because you do not drink that water. Surprisingly, there are many people like

that. Despite having come to God's Church and hearing the Word of God, there are lots of people destined for hell because they do not accept that Word into their hearts and believe. There are people who go on living under the curse of God because they do not believe. I am saying that there truly are many people like that. I hope there will be no one among you who are like that.

This Church is none other than God's Church. The Word of God is preached to you through this Church. And also, numerous people pass by here. But among those numerous people who pass by the Church, some believe, but some do not. What happens to the unbelievers? For they do not believe, they will go to the very place where the rich man mentioned in today's Scripture passage had gone. After death, especially in hell, family tree and the sort mean nothing. If a person does not believe, then that person is bound to go there for sure.

“Alas, then allow Lazarus to visit my home. I have five brothers, and among my siblings, I am the



eldest. So, please let those five brothers know that their eldest brother is in hell now, and tell them that they must go to Heaven without fail by having faith. If You make Lazarus to say those things, then my brothers will all believe.” Like so, the rich man implores.

To that entreaty, God answers like this. “Even if I were to give life back to Lazarus and send him to your brothers, they will still not believe.”

“No. They will surely believe. They will believe if Lazarus were to rise from his tomb and clarify that he is the very beggar who had died not too long ago. All he has to do is to say to them that as he died, he found himself in Heaven, but across the hollow, he saw their eldest brother gasping for breath in the burning fire of hell. Just let him say to my brother, ‘Actually, I came because your eldest brother had implored before God to send me here. He begged before God never to let his younger brothers to come to hell.’ If he says something like this, my younger brother will surely believe.”

Such words by the rich man who has fallen into hell are all useless. You all know that no matter what one does, someone who isn’t going to believe won’t believe, right? Also, God has said that He will never do so. What will happen if someone like Lazarus here dies and goes to Heaven after having lived truly in want on this earth but then has to come back once more to this disgusting world in this loathsome flesh? I guess if the Lord were to allow these things to happen anyhow, then there wouldn’t be any unbelievers. No mission workers would be needed on this earth then. I guess the Church would not be needed on this earth, too. It is because if a believer dies and goes to the Kingdom of God but then after having lived there, receive a command, come back to life and say, “Believe,” everyone will believe. If so, what need would there be for the Church on this earth? What need would there be for servants of God to preach the Word of God? There wouldn’t be the need for us to lead a life of faith. God can do all that by Himself, and it would suffice. God Himself has



created all things, so He can preach the gospel and all else by Himself. If God were to preach the Word through someone who had died and come back to life, then isn't it true that we don't have to do the Lord's work so hard like this?

But, God told us that He is the Head of the Church and the believers on this earth are the body, that is, His hands and feet. If the Lord were to do all the work, then we wouldn't have any work to do. If we were to die the moment we believe in Jesus on this earth and if we were to go Heaven the moment we die, then this earth will be nothing but a cemetery.

As long as He doesn't do so, the role and duty of the saved is therefore very important. We have to believe in the Word of God. As for people who haven't received salvation, they are like that because they don't have the faith of believing in God. They go to hell because they do not believe. Dear fellow believers, must you go to the United States to believe that the United States does exist? Even though God and what He has done through the Word cannot be

seen with our naked eyes, if we were to look spiritually, we can see everything. People who are spiritual can believe the Word fully. Dear fellow believers, do you believe in the righteousness of God? Believe. God has saved you and me by His righteousness. So that we may not fall into the great pit, He has given you and me, the believers, salvation and eternal life by completely blotting out the sins of the world as well as all our sins.

If you live out your life by believing in God and in His Word, you will get to receive salvation, gain eternal life, and be clothed in His grace. Yet, why do people not believe in God and act so stubbornly? There is nothing for us to gain by denying God. If one can go to a good place after having lived well without believing in God, then, there would be no need to believe in Him.

It is written, "*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*" (Hebrews 11:1). Dear fellow believers, this is what faith is. I want you to know that just because what we believe



in cannot be seen with the naked eye it does not mean that it is merely a sweet illusion. Rather, I want you to know that one can see the reality of everything by opening up the spiritual eyes through faith. By believing in God, we arrive at the true and genuine faith, the only single thing that is absolutely indispensable to us in this world. Dear fellow believers, let us therefore live out our lives by believing in the righteousness of God. ☒



# SERMON

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CONTENTS



## People with Servant Hearts for God

< Luke 16:8-13 >

**“So the master commended the unjust steward because he had dealt shrewdly. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than the sons of light. And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon, that when you fail, they may receive you into an everlasting home. He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much. Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if you have not been faithful in what is another man’s, who will give you what is your own? No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he**

**will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”**

### Who Are the Servants of God?

Today’s Scripture passage talks about a shrewd steward in a household. Through this parable, the Lord is asking us whether we should live as a servant of righteousness or a servant of man. The Lord said that the sons of this world are shrewder in their generation than the sons of light. He is telling that there are so many quick-witted people this world who behave more wisely than God’s people.

We can apply His teaching to our life as follows: Let’s suppose there is a man who is about to be fired because of his tardiness and inability to work. He thought hard what to do before he would lose his job, and filled out paper works to remit all the debt that the debtors to the company had. Simply speaking, he forged documents. He helped the debtors to the



company in such way. Precisely speaking, he was committing sins of breach of his duties and forgery, but let's focus on his motive only. Why did he do so? It was because he wanted to be shown kindness by those debtors when he lost his job. In other words, he was scrupulous in preparing his future. The Lord regarded such action as shrewd. With the servant in the parable in mind, He said, *"The sons of this world in this generation are more shrewd than the sons of light."* Even though such selfish conduct of people in this world is saddening, the Lord still regards it as shrewd behavior. Through today's passage, we the righteous need to think about whom to serve throughout our lives.

The Lord told us to make friends with unrighteous mammon. He also said, *"He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much."* He asked rhetorically if you have not been faithful in what is another man's, who will give you what is your own; He also told us not to serve two masters. He

concluded by telling us to make up our minds whether to live for ourselves or to live for the Lord.

## **We Can't Serve Two Masters**

In other words, this world cannot be our master at the same time as we serve God as our Master. We must choose one out of the two. We need to decide whether to serve the Lord as our Master or to serve the world.

However, before we make our decision, there is one thing we should consider. How can a righteous man live a wise and shrewd life? We all need to be scrupulous in doing everything. We need critical eyes. It applies to us as well as to this world. We need to look back the paths we have walked and decide what we need to do to change for more shrewd living. If we don't think about such things first, it is not easy to make a quick judgment and thereof make proper choices. I would like to point



out to you clearly that it is not the Lord's will for us to live in a happy-go-lucky way without self-examination.

Brothers and sisters, we have a totally new Master different from our old master. What our new Master wants from us is completely different from what our old master demanded from us, so if we live our old life from force of habit, we cannot please our new Master. It will bring us a great loss. Therefore, we need to think carefully about how to receive the grace from the Lord, and make a right judgment.

Brothers and sisters, striving to live for the Lord is truly righteous life. We should change our self-centered life styles and live for the righteousness of the Lord. The Lord once told us the parable to teach us to think ahead whether to be able to win a war against twenty thousand with ten thousand, and to send a delegation for peace if it is less likely to win the war. He told us the parable to mean we should calculate beforehand what is more profitable in our decision-making process. Therefore, we should

remember God's Word and make a right choice. That will lead us to live a life without regrets.

Those who live for the righteousness of the Lord seek His Kingdom and His righteousness first. Who lives a careful and prudent life remembering the Word of God and making good choices? They are those who live for the righteousness of the Lord. They always calculate prudently beforehand and try to live a more profitable life than they do now. They always choose what is more beneficial for them and stick to their decisions. If you are a businessperson, it is natural for you to run your business for more profits. That way, you are a wise businessperson. Likewise you and I also need to take the cost and result of our pending plans into consideration and think about whom to live for and try to live a righteous life.

The procedure of your life is as important as its result. Most people regret their past lives when they look back at an elderly age. Most of the aged say that they have lived their life in vain when they are asked



if they think they lived a successful life. They add that they will definitely live a different life if they could be given another chance. You and I haven't reached the final stage of our life yet, but we should be able to give accounts for our lives without any regrets in the future. Our Lord knows well where we are headed. If we do not calculate the cost and result of our lives and live in a happy-go-lucky way without planning for our future, we will most likely regret when we stand before the Lord.

Therefore, we need to be more calculative with our lives just as we would in running a business. Serving the righteousness of the Lord is just like running a business in a sense. There is a parable in the Bible about a man who delivered some talents to his servants as he was leaving for somewhere. When he came back, he commended the servant who earned five talents with the five talents he received from the master. He also commended the servant who earned two talents with two talents. But the servant who had one talent kept the talent in the ground and was

rebuked and punished for his unfaithfulness. The man was truly foolish.

Yesterday we had quite a bit of snow. This morning I heard on the news that a man who owned a chicken farm has just lost his business when the snowstorm hit the chicken coops and killed them all. During the interview with a reporter, he said bitterly that he would think what had happened to his fortune and look for a new job. But when I think about the man, he should have been prepared for the severe snowstorm. He could have prevented the tragedy if he had planned for the upcoming danger. Unfortunately, most people do not live a preventive life but blame their failure on their destiny. As a matter of fact, a lot of people regard what happens to them as a part of their destiny. But Jesus did not tell us what jobs we should have and how to live in preparing for the future. Since we are given a common sense, those who do not prepare for such disasters are foolish. Such person is foolish and he is not accommodating himself to the destiny that the Lord has given. Even



though you and I are born again through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we should calculate prudently. If we don't, we are as foolish as the man whose business went bankrupt due to the severe snowstorm.

Brothers and sisters, we should dedicate our lives to God and live our lives for the gospel of the water and the Spirit. We can see clearly it is the right way to live our lives when we calculate its cost and result. So which life would you choose? There is a huge difference between the man who calculates the cost and the result and the man who doesn't. The size of the happiness and unhappiness will vary depending on whether we count the cost or not.

We are all born again Christians through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Do you think God will mislead His children? I don't think so. I do believe that He rather blesses His children. I also believe that He is prepared to give greater blessings to those who live for His Kingdom and His righteousness. But for those who do not calculate the

cost and the result, only difficulties will wait for them.

Therefore, we should think ahead and calculate beforehand the cost and the result as we live. We should think carefully how to live. As for those of us who are born again, living for the Lord is taken for granted. But if we contemplate how to give more glory to God, He will give us wisdom to find answers for the questions we have. If you discuss your concerns with your pastor, you might find more solutions.

I always experience in the evangelism ministry to the world that God never fails to provide us with material things we need. However, we should think about His blessings and pray a lot to be able to receive such blessings. We also need to calculate how many souls we can save with the amount of money that God grants us for the gospel of the water and the Spirit. We the servants of God should calculate the cost and the result in world mission and pray and challenge for the task.



Some ministers live very poorly, while others are affluent. The difference comes from whether they calculate the cost and the result of their ministry or not. Those who are concerned with their present conditions live from hand to mouth, while those who live for the spread of the gospel always lead an abundant life because the Lord fulfills and blesses their lives. Therefore, we need to think again what is profitable to us. I want you to remember that there is a huge gap between the life with careful plans, prayers, and challenges and the life without them. We need to calculate the cost and the result of our plans and set a clear goal about our life. And then we should make a challenge with everything ahead by faith.

## **Even in This Depressed Period We Can Live for the Righteousness of God**

Even in this economic depression, there are a lot of businesses that are likely to boom if carefully planned and prayed about. Haven't you heard that crisis can be a chance? Some people become rich by doing business, while others fail; the difference is in whether they started the business after thorough researching and planning. It is true of those who are not born-again as much as to the born-again. That is why we always need to pray. We need to pray for the money for our Church. If we just try to spread the gospel without prayers and challenges by faith, how can God give us any blessings? The Lord is God the Creator. We should use our brain to preach the gospel. As we are prudent for God and think more about Him, we will naturally get good results.

If we ask God for more money for spreading the gospel, God will give us more. I believe that God



will grant us more money when we pray, think and seek by faith. These days there are a lot of people who are forced to retire from their jobs prematurely; it is happening to them because they didn't know how to calculate the cost and the result of their lives. Those who go to work, do their jobs half-heartedly, come home, wash themselves and go to bed without much challenge will face premature retirement. In other words, those people do not think creatively about their lives. If they have more passion and think more progressively trying hard to be someone that their work places really appreciate and need, such thing will not happen to them. If you have faith, you will get good results through God's Church. I want you to believe that you can be the best in your field when you learn the faith and be guided by the servants of God.

We need much money to preach the gospel to people all over the world. At such time as this, we need to challenge by faith and prepare a big vessel to hold all God's blessings. I hope and pray that God

will help us find businesses that need little investment and bring much income. Reaping much with little effort is the principle logic of economy.

In today's message the Lord says that a man cannot serve two masters. So it is easy to calculate what is more blessed whether to serve the gospel with God and share God's glory when He returns or to be friends with the world and perish with the worldly. However, there are some saints who do not calculate the investments and the results of their lives. Brothers and sisters, our life doesn't come back once it is gone. Life is one time deal for everyone so we should live a life without regrets. Do not forget this. Time that has passed will never come back. It is the same as not being able to wash your hands with the same creek water that has just passed you by.

This is a digression from the sermon, but there is a bar called 'Lee Chung Dol' near the Chuncheon Church. I didn't have any idea what the name of the bar meant when I first saw it. Two months later, I found out the word is an acronym of Korean words



meaning, ‘Give my youth back.’ It seems to me that the owner of the bar misses his youth very much. But as you all know, the youth period you had cannot come back. That is totally impossible. Time flows like a stream of water, and we have regrets, while we have good memories as well as bad memories as we look back our past. For the passed time doesn’t come back to us ever again. Therefore, if one can say to oneself, “I couldn’t have gotten this, if I hadn’t made such choice then,” he or she is likely to have led an okay life. Any man feels regretful about things he could have done better. Time does not pass without leaving everyone with either a feeling of satisfaction or regrets.

Anyway, I will still calculate the investments and the results of my way of life carefully no matter whether Jesus is coming tomorrow or a hundred years from now. I recommend the same thing to you. Time flies while you just sit there helplessly. So we need to count our cost all the time. Those who do so do not have regrets about their past. They may have

small regrets but they would not lament over what had happened to them.

However, those who live their life without any calculation and thoughtful plans will end up with regrets. You should know that there is nothing to gain from living a long life without calculating the investments and the results of your life and living an aimless life that never sows the seed of future harvest. Those who do not live by the faith in the righteousness of God will regret without fail. They will say regretfully in their old age, “I could have learned and earned more if I had walked in union with the Lord by faith.”

Faith is the most important thing for the righteous to lead a satisfactory life. Then what should we do to have such important faith? First of all, we need to learn such faith from our predecessors of faith who have had true faith. In other words, we should follow their steps by being guided by people of faith. In a sense living a life of faith is not so easy. Even though we are saved from sin and renewed, we cannot do



everything arbitrarily or independently. Moreover, faith doesn't grow without learning. It is impossible to find someone with faith who doesn't belong to any Church. People who have left God's Church tend to stand against His Church. They cannot help living a regretful life once they leave the Church. Therefore, we should learn the faith in the righteousness of God from the people of faith. That is how we can live by faith. We need to try to live by faith through learning and praying.

In world history, there are some reckless people who tried to conquer the world but failed. Such attempts are so reckless and selfish before God. The only thing that pleases God is to conquer the world with the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Whenever we plan for something and carry out our plans, we must have good intention to spread the gospel to the world for the Lord; otherwise we cannot get any help from the Lord. Since the Lord told us to first seek His Kingdom and His righteousness, we need to live an obedient life to the command by spreading the gospel

for the righteousness of God, for the expansion of God's Church, for saving souls, and for the peace of all men. To preach the gospel, we should not do anything without plans. We must have plans before we carry out any tasks.

You also need to figure out how much longer you will live and what you need to do during the rest of your life. Otherwise, you will fall prey to the fatalism and give up on your life. However, God has never set such limits as fates in our lives. God is the just God who gives the same opportunity to enjoy His peace and blessings to whoever makes the right choice.

## **We Will Preach the Gospel This Year as Much as We Have Done So Far**

Up until now, we have preached the gospel of the water and the Spirit to about 110 countries in the world. We should not feel content with this, but should try, pray and seek even harder to preach the



gospel to unreached countries in every corner of the world. To do so, we need more ministry workers and more money. So we need to keep challenging in the faith that God provides us with what we need in His time. Money doesn't grow on a tree. Only God can fill our empty bowls when we prepare the bowls and pray to God by faith. 2 Kings chapter 4 describes the miracle of a widow's oil. When the widow and her two sons borrowed empty bowls from her neighbors in obedience to the words of Elisha, those vessels were filled with the oil flowing out of the oil jar. From that moment the widow and her children lived a comfortable life.

Likewise we need to prepare our bowls before we ask God for material things. We have to carry out the work by doing our best in our own places. God will then absolutely fill our bowls and when we make wise judgments for the benefit of God's Kingdom and carry out our prudent plans. This means that we should always pray and seek God's blessings with the goals in our minds that we do what we do for the

spreading of the gospel. Without our knowledge, God will then fill our empty bowls all of sudden. The Lord said, "*If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!*" (Matthew 7:11) When we look at this world in the eyes of faith, we can tell that multitudes of people will come to the Lord when He returns to this world.

Now is the time for us to sow the seeds of gospel. The more seeds we plant, the more harvest we will reap. In other words, the more we preach the gospel, the more blessing we will receive in the future. We will have abundant fruits from here and there at the time of harvest. By then some people may become the wealthiest in the world, while others become heroes who are well revered and shine like sun in the sky for benefiting a lot of people on this earth.

Brothers and sisters, do you know who makes the most contributions and bring the most benefits to the human race? It is those of us who are born again.



You and I are doing the most works for the benefit of human race ever since human beings were created. We live for other people in the world by praying for them, while others live self-centered lives. I am not encouraging you to blow your own horns, but we are in fact the greatest and the most useful people of God. You should feel proud of yourselves for being the number one God's chosen people with humanitarian spirit.

Let's talk about what kinds of contribution we have been making to this world. We are the model citizens, who always keep the traffic rules and pay taxes. We also help people in difficulties. There are so many people who do not keep the most basic norms of a society, but we are different. We do not have any evil plans but pray for people in the world. We are working for the reconciliation between God and human beings with the gospel Truth that brings peace to everyone. No matter where we go, it is hard to find people to work for other people's benefits. We may receive the awards much greater than the

Nobel Prize. The Lord said, "*Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven (Mathew 5:10)*" and those who are peacemakers will be given peace.

You and I are such blessed people. I believe that God will pour out His blessings on what we do for the Lord. We will be blessed when we believe in His faithfulness and challenge by faith. Let's find out the goals, methods and positions we are given and serve the Lord with all our hearts and strength until we die. Then God will add more blessings to us so that we can benefit more people.

We are on the same boat with the Lord: We need to make up our mind to serve Jesus Christ as our Lord and join Him in expanding His Kingdom. We shouldn't expect to get any blessings without such commitment of our hearts to God. Even though we are insufficient, we should commit our lives to the Kingdom of God thinking that our bodies are no more ours but the precious instrument for His



righteousness. When we set our hearts to serve only the Lord, God will be with us and bless us.

Therefore, making up our mind is so important. There is a huge difference between those who have committed their hearts to God and those who do not. Those who serve the Lord without any commitments in his heart will eventually betray the Lord. On the other hand, those who set their hearts to serve only the Lord will always live for the Lord whether they are in good conditions or in bad conditions; whether it rains or snows. God is on their sides. The faith in our hearts is more important than anything else. I want to re-emphasize this to you. Once you make up your mind and seek His help with such confession as this, “I only have one Master. I am the servant of God. So I will live for the Lord, my Master,” you can live a life as a faithful servant of the Lord. When we live such lives, our Master will glorify us and bless us.

## **However, the Lord Does Not Acknowledge Those Who Try to Serve the Lord without Making up Their Mind to Live for Him**

People who live for something else will turn their back against God some day. Therefore, we need to become trustworthy in the eyes of the Lord. We can do the work of the Lord when we have a strong determination that we will do anything and overcome any difficulties for the Lord. The Lord gives more work to those who try hard. Those who have such attitude will be loved and blessed more by the Lord, and we should keep this in mind.

However, the Lord is worried about those who live without making any commitment to the Lord. Even if they seem to be doing okay at the moment, the Lord knows that they will eventually leave Him with worse conditions than right now. God can assure those who are committed, “Rejoice always; pray



without ceasing, in everything give thanks (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).” He also promises them, “I will help you and support you, for you are my servant no matter how insufficient you are”, but to those who are not committed, He doesn’t say such things. The Lord also makes His mind to be on the side with those who decided to work for Him.

Brothers and sisters, we are serving the Lord. So we are His servants. Some people think that the word ‘servant’ carries some kind of privilege, but a servant of God means just the one who does what the Lord tells the person to do. If the Master holds a feast, the servant has to go to the feast and enjoy the food; when there is something bothering his Master, he has to do his best to help the Master solve the problem. That is what servants should do. From the moment when we make up our mind and say to ourselves, “The Lord is my Master and therefore I will live only for Him from now on,” the Lord’s work becomes our own task. We as His servants should work hard for

the benefit of the Master and take a good care of our Master’s possessions.

## **God’s Servants Do Not Get Tired While Doing God’s Work**

Our body may get tired, but our hearts will always be glad and peaceful when we do God’s work. Doing the work for our Master is like doing our own work. It is because we are one in a sense, even though we stand in the relationship of master and servant.

In the movie ‘Ben-Hur’ the main character comes back to his house after an exile. When he came back, his old house had been completely ruined. At that moment, someone shows up. It was a daughter of his old servant he had before he had gone into the exile. She takes him to some place, where he finds his old servant with his one leg cut. He finds out that his servant had to go through the torture because of him, and he carries him on his back to his house. Then he



falls in love with the servant's daughter, who has remained in the house.

The servant in the movie never blamed his master even though he had to suffer from the pain when his leg was chopped because of the master. Neither did he lament over his fate, nor did he blame on the indifference of his master. I was really touched by the attitude of this servant when I watched 'Ben-Hur.' Servants may suffer for their master, since their life is tied to the life of their master; faithful servants should have the same attitude of the servant in the movie, who felt sorry for not being able to serve his master as well as he did before without claiming any righteousness when his master came back. It is needless to mention that servants should share the joy of his master.

Just like a steward takes care of a household as his job, the job of servant of God is to live for God and die for God. It is natural for servants to be glorified as well as to be humbled for the master. Likewise we all need to become the faithful servants for the Lord.

We should always remember that the Lord's business is our business, that His glory is ours, and finally that our Master is the Lord Jesus Christ. With such an attitude in our hearts, we can do anything with joy. By remembering that everything comes from God, we should rejoice always, pray without ceasing and give thanks to God. That is the true state of mind of a faithful servant.

If we consider ourselves the master of our own lives and try to do things with our own ideas and volition, we cannot do Lord's work willingly. We should always discuss what is on our minds and be united with other saints lest that we feel like doing our own thing. To divide and do God's work more efficiently, we need to consult with God's servants and our coworkers and make decisions based on the discussion we have with them.

He who can work with joyful heart for the Lord no matter what task is given to him is truly committed to the Lord. Such person can do anything with cheerful heart. He might feel bothersome about his own work,



but he will try to do better in the work for the Lord. On the other hand, those who consider themselves as their own masters, make decisions based on whether it is beneficial to them or not. However, Lord's servants will not pick and choose what he wants to do for the Lord as long as it is for the Lord. He knows that he will be blessed for that in the future.

There are two kinds of believers: Those who became their own kings and those who serve the Lord as their King. When we compare the hearts of these two groups, we can find that the hearts of the latter is more peaceful than the hearts of the former. Those who serve the Lord as their Master do everything for the glory of God, no matter what they eat or drink. They tune everything to the will of the Lord, their Master. Faithful servants of God have the courage to do what seems crazy in people's eyes but profitable to the Lord, the courage to refuse to do what looks beneficial to themselves but not to the Lord.

Brothers and sisters, haven't we been serving the Lord in such way? We have been working for the Lord without ceasing. Was preaching the gospel to over 110 countries done for us? If we had worked to satisfy our own desires, we couldn't have preached the gospel in so many countries. If it is something for us, we can feel satisfied with small achievement. But when we do things for the Lord, our Master, we cannot stop at a small achievement. We don't have time to enjoy such small achievements because we see many other things to do. The heart of the faithful servant differs so much from the heart of those who are masters to themselves. There are also distinct features between people who live for other people and people who live for God.

Ministering is the same thing. Those who minister for God and those who carry out pastoral duties for people according to the situation are different as well. Since their goals are different, the means and results are all different. Their beginnings look similar to each other's, but when a problem arises, each of the



groups shows different ways and attitudes to handle the situation. Those who serve God as their Master can understand what went wrong, turn around, and stand on God's side in such troubled situations. At the moment of decision-making, they always take their stand by God's side. But those who are not committed are most likely to betray the Lord and pursue their own profits in such situations. That is why the commitment of the heart is so important in serving the Lord.

Those who set their hearts towards God can profess, "I will give up my life and live for God. It is worth it since the gospel is so precious and brings benefits to people. So I will work for the Lord and live for Him with all my heart." God cherishes those who have such faith. Will God not take care of such faithful servants? Therefore, you and I should become truthful servants. As a matter of fact, everyone needs to become such a faithful servant of the Lord.

But there are not many faithful servants of God. We need 'true servants' not 'mere servants'. When we commit our hearts to Jesus Christ and set our hearts to live for Him, God can do amazing things through us. No matter how big a crowd is following the Lord, if they are not committed, they are all useless to the Lord. They are of no use to God. They will most likely run away when they see an iron hammer. However, truly faithful servant of God is not afraid of anything in this world. We can do the same thing in return; we shall throw the iron hammer of the Truth to people in this world in return.

Let us not serve two masters but serve only one Master. Let us set our hearts to live for the Lord. Let's set our hearts towards the Lord no matter how hard our life will get. I believe God will work things out once we commit our hearts to Him.

Brothers and sisters let us live by faith. And let us live as the servants of faith. We are the servants of God's Kingdom. The servants of God are truly happy. They are not ordinary servants that work for



the people of the world but the servants of the Christ. As you all know, there are people who are slaves to others. Let us laugh at them when we see them. Whom we serve as our master puts us in a different position. We serve the Master, who is worthy of our lives. He is more than worthy of our lives. It is a great blessing to have such a great Master. We are such blessed people.

Blessed are those who do not feel sorry about sacrificing themselves to serve the Lord. It is really worth being the servant of the Lord. On the contrary, those who serve unworthy masters are really pathetic. Our Master is the Lord only. I believe that God will help us and work through us when we set our hearts to preach the gospel diligently and to do the work of the Lord. He will surely do it for us. All we need to do is to seek, ask and knock by faith and prepare our vessels. And we need to keep on going by faith. God will help us and accomplish everything through us with His almighty power, as we move on seeking His help. I do believe this as truth. I believe you all do so.

Brothers and sisters let us live by faith. We can just render all our worries to the Lord and live a prayerful life focused on the work of the Lord. All we need to do is to live a faithful life as His servants. In other words, we can just serve the Lord as our only Master. I believe that He will bring us life, peace and blessings when we serve Him as our Master with all our heart. I end this sermon with thankful heart to the Lord. ☒



# SERMON

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## Wisdom of the Steward

< Luke 16:1-14 >

“He also said to His disciples: ‘There was a certain rich man who had a steward, and an accusation was brought to him that this man was wasting his goods. So he called him and said to him, ‘What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.’ Then the steward said within himself, ‘What shall I do? For my master is taking the stewardship away from me. I cannot dig; I am ashamed to beg. I have resolved what to do, that when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.’ So he called every one of his master’s debtors to him, and said to the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ And he said, ‘A hundred measures of oil.’ So he said to him, ‘Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.’ Then he said to another, ‘And how

much do you owe?’ So he said, ‘A hundred measures of wheat.’ And he said to him, ‘Take your bill, and write eighty.’ So the master commended the unjust steward because he had dealt shrewdly. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than the sons of light. And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon, that when you fail, they may receive you into an everlasting home. He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much. Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if you have not been faithful in what is another man’s, who will give you what is your own? No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”



Dear brothers and sisters, we are going to have a look at Luke chapter 16.

In the previous chapter, there was a story of a man with two sons, one of whom came back after he had left home and wasted all his possessions with prodigal living. His first son complained about his brother. “How can you hold a feast with a fat cow for the son, who left with your possessions and wasted all, while you didn’t give a young goat to me, who have been serving you all these years?” He protested the unfairness of his father’s generosity and insisted upon his right. Then his father replied. *“Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours. It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found”* (Luke 15:31-32). Through the story, God is telling His servants to work for Him with a sense of ownership.

Let’s look at verses 1 and 2 in Luke chapter 16. *“He also said to His disciples: ‘There was a certain rich man who had a steward, and an accusation was*

*brought to him that this man was wasting his goods. So he called him and said to him, ‘What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.’”* When someone reaches the state of being fired because of his incapability on the job, the person will most likely get reprimanded for the failure to do certain tasks. He might be told to hand in a written explanation. By the time the person reaches that point, he might think that he would be let go sooner or later. Some people who are in that situation try to take the confidential documents of the company and sell those to other companies when they leave their jobs. They use the documents as bait, “If you hire me, I will share the confidential of my old company.” In fact there are people who do that.

In today’s Scripture passage, a man was about to be kicked out of his job. I assume he was an accountant. In other words, he seems to have taken care of the finances of the household. Since he was about to be fired, he had to prepare for that; he had to



find something to do and some place to go to. Usually landowners have tenant farmers. In the past landowners used to rent their land to farmers, and build their possessions by collecting some portion of the harvests without working on the farm for themselves. They increased their wealth just by renting their land to tenant farmers. The rich man in today's passage must have had a steward to keep track of his possessions. He had him make an inventory of his possessions and sum up his income and expenses.

When the steward found out that he was going to be let go, he called every one of his master's debtors to him. He was going to reduce their debt. "How much do you owe my master?" "A hundred measures of oil." "Take your bill and sit down quickly and write fifty." He called another debtor to his master. "How much do you owe?" "A hundred measures of wheat." "Take your bill and write eighty." They counterfeited their bills this way.

## **I Want All of You to Become Truly Wise Servants of God**

Here is one strange thing; the Lord said, "*So the master commended the unjust steward because he had dealt shrewdly. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than the sons of light*" (Luke 16:8). The master in the passage doesn't refer to a human. If it had happened between a human employer and an employee, the steward would have gone to jail for embezzlement and forgery of private documents. However, the master commended the steward. The master in today's passage refers to God. In God's eyes, the steward dealt it shrewdly. He secured his standing ground by being kind to the farmers in case of losing his job and living as a pheasant along with those people who owe his master. He planned wisely.

The Lord didn't praise his act of forgery. Do you think he would have been commended for the forgery purely done for his benefits? God said that he was



wise because he prepared for the future by being magnanimous to his master's debtors. That is why the Lord said, "*For the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than the sons of light*" (Luke 16:8).

He continued in Luke 16:9, "*And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon that when you fail, they may receive you into an everlasting home.*" The reason He used the term, 'unrighteous mammon' is not because the act of accruing possession is not sinful, but because people tend to use their possessions for evil purposes. However, such unrighteous mammon can be pure in the hand of those who are righteous. Mammon itself is neither evil nor good, but it is merely a tool: It is a good tool when used well; it is an evil tool when used in evil things.

*"Make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon that when you fail, they may receive you into an everlasting home"* (Luke 16:9). This Word of God that commands us to make friends by unrighteous

mammon is given to us believers, not to non-believers. As for the worldly people who will go to the burning hell, it is beneficial for them to live only for themselves; but it is right for us believers to make friends with people, bring them to the right place, and make them to receive the remission of sins. God will acknowledge those people who serve the gospel as it is written, "*Those who are wise shall shine*

*Like the brightness of the firmament,*

*And those who turn many to righteousness*

*Like the stars forever and ever"* (Daniel 12:3).

God will give them rewards during the Millennial Kingdom and take them to His eternal Kingdom. But as for those who are not born again, they will have no choice but to enter the everlasting hell by the end of the Millennial Kingdom. The Lord prophesied definitely that those who participate in his first resurrection and those who participate in the second resurrection would be divided that way.

Brothers and sisters, steward is a person who is in charge of someone's treasure. We are all God's



stewards, who take care of materials from God. This is the reason we should use the materials properly and wisely in doing good. The command that we should make friends by unrighteous mammon means that we must work hard to preach the gospel; to do so, we should serve one Master. One person cannot serve two masters and for us Christians, one Master is more than enough.

Shall we look at verse 13? *“No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”* In this verse, God is asking us whether we should serve God or we should serve mammon; which one we should cherish. Brothers and sisters, the choice is not so difficult, is it? This is a very easy choice. It is important for us Christians to understand the Word of God, but it is more important to live out the knowledge by faith. So the Lord said this.

In Luke chapter 15, there is a parable of two sons. The second son left the house with his father’s

possession and returned home after wasting all the possession by prodigal life. However, the father embraced his second son, washed him, clothed him, put a ring on his finger and held a feast for the second son. The first son, who had been working hard in his father’s house without any complaints, felt displeased and upset to see all that. His father did not even kill a goat, not to mention a cow for him, who served the father all his life, but his father held a feast for such a prodigal son. It is understandable why the first son was so upset. But we should not look at the Scripture passage only superficially, because this passage was written for you and me.

The second son in the parable stands for those who do not know the Lord or the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and used up everything from God physically and spiritually. But such prodigal son came back with faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Therefore, God says it is worthwhile to have a feast, for the lost son is now back.



But how about the first son, who had been working himself to death? From human perspective, he could have felt that he was unfairly treated, but from his father's point of view, what belongs to him belongs to the first son. After the harvest on earth is over, 'the first son' will have his portion waiting for him. Brothers and sisters, we who have had faith first might not be treated fairly while we are on this earth. That is why God is telling us to take such thing easy.

The Lord is telling us the parable of the steward for the same reason. It is not surprising to hear that one man cannot serve two masters. 'Making friends by unrighteous mammon' means preaching the gospel with all our strength. Should we seek the mammon or God? For whom should we live? Whom should we serve? For what should we live as we live on this earth? What is the wisest way of life as the world is heading to an end? To all these questions, there is one common answer. It is serving the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The Lord told us the parables to enlighten us with the truth. Therefore, it is

crucial for us to be loyal and faithful as the stewards of the Lord. We should know that God assigns His work to those who are faithful.

How are we supposed to live as believers of the gospel of the water and the Spirit? Even though we may not be acknowledged or treated well on earth just as the first son, who worked hard silently, we should live faithfully with servant's heart. We should obey the Lord remembering that we will be recognized and rewarded for our work when we get to His Kingdom. That is why we should always live for His Kingdom.

We are meant to seek His will even if we won't get any reward from the Lord. We are the people who are supposed to live for God. Since God has saved us by the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit, removed our sins, adopted us as His children, promised us eternal life, happiness and glorious life, we must live such a faithful life even if we may not get any immediate reward for our work. We should



live such a life just because of the salvation we have received.

The Lord asks us the question, “What is the wise way of life after the salvation” and gives us the answer to the question. We cannot serve two masters. We need to make up our mind and choose one; whether to serve God or serve the world. We should choose God, of course. We can’t have two masters. It is impossible to serve two masters. Then which side should we choose? We ought to serve the Lord, who has saved us, He will take care of our future, He will bless us, and lead us into the eternal Kingdom. We have to do His work faithfully until He calls us to His eternal Kingdom. This is what the Lord tells us to do.

Unfortunately, we forget this truth so often. I am not accusing you for not working faithfully, but I just want to emphasize that all the work we do should be the ministry that gives people joy and receive love from them. I hope that our Church will become a Church that benefits people and receives more love from them. It is our job to preach the gospel and help

people by praying for them. We are doing such ministry to serve the gospel.

The message from today’s Scripture passage that we should make friends by unrighteous mammon implies that we should preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit to those who are not born-again and lead them to salvation. This is what the Lord is telling us through today’s passage. When we ask people if they have sins, some people respond coldly, “Why do you care if I have sins or not?” Nevertheless, we still need to preach the gospel to them. To do so, we need some material things. Without money, it is difficult to hand out books or to manage our homepage; but it is hard to make money while it is easy to spend it.

Brothers and sisters, stewards have a mission to take good care of their master’s wealth and bring profit to their masters. That is their duty. Therefore, we should not pretend to live a holy life without doing anything, but we should earn money and spend our material things for the gospel.



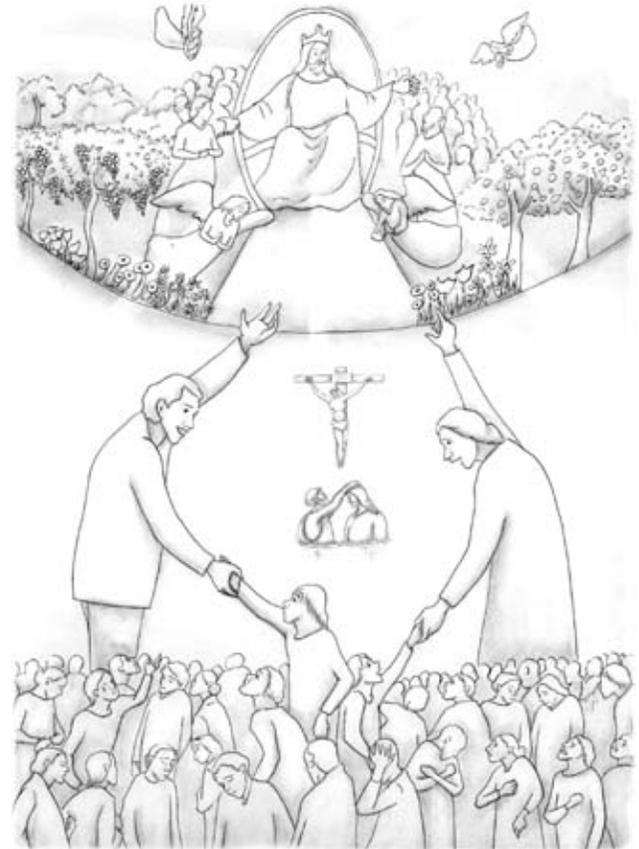
I want to make friends by unrighteous mammon. I want to live a life of faithful steward. I believe you have the same wish. I pray that God will bless us who have such desire. I strongly believe that God will do so. I pray that we will have much more mammon so that we will serve the Lord abundantly.



# SERMON

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## 4



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## **Is There a Life of the Wise In the Presence of God?**

< Luke 16:1-13 >

“He also said to His disciples: ‘There was a certain rich man who had a steward, and an accusation was brought to him that this man was wasting his goods. So he called him and said to him, ‘What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.’ Then the steward said within himself, ‘What shall I do? For my master is taking the stewardship away from me. I cannot dig; I am ashamed to beg. I have resolved what to do, that when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.’ So he called every one of his master’s debtors to him, and said to the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ And he said, ‘A hundred measures of oil.’ So he said to

him, ‘Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.’ Then he said to another, ‘And how much do you owe?’ So he said, ‘A hundred measures of wheat.’ And he said to him, ‘Take your bill, and write eighty.’ So the master commended the unjust steward because he had dealt shrewdly. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than the sons of light. And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon, that when you fail, they may receive you into an everlasting home. He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much. Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if you have not been faithful in what is another man’s, who will give you what is your own? No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be



**loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”**

## **What Is a Righteous Life Before God?**

Did you all enjoy your meal? As I said in the morning service, it is true to those who have been born again by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that the more we serve the Lord, the more weaknesses we find in ourselves and the less self-righteousness we have. Since we are originally weak and imperfect, we get to realize fully what we had thought was our own righteousness and ability is nothing. Therefore, the righteous must live by believing in the righteousness of God and by acknowledging their insufficiencies of their flesh. This is the typical life of Christian who trusts and follows God’s righteousness.

To tell you the truth, every actual life seen from a fleshly perspective is almost alike. In other words, there is no one perfect in this world. Where on earth would you find a perfect person? Since we human beings are created from the dust, we are fragile and insufficient in many ways. Just as even the most precious looking vessel becomes discolored and full of scratches as it is used, the more we are used in the work of God, the more broken our self-righteousness gets as time goes by. Therefore, it is difficult to get our self-righteousness back. We should know and believe this fact.

Even after we become out of shape and discolored, God keeps using us as His vessel for His convenience. A vessel that has been used frequently tells us that the vessel is very useful for holding something. If we want to become a person (,) whom God will entrust with anything and use frequently, we have to have our righteousness and beauty broken first. You and I will see more and more weaknesses, iniquities and insufficiencies as we live out our faith.



Therefore our self-righteousness will be shattered and we will have no choice but to live by the faith in the righteousness of God. That is the life of faith that real Christians live. I want to tell you that it is natural for Christians to feel more thankful to God and to have greater understanding of God's righteousness as we get to see our weaknesses.

## **Life of the Wise**

In today's passage, Jesus said that the sons of this world are shrewder in their generation than the sons of light. People in this world will do anything for their own success. If a businessman were offered better working conditions than that of his current company, he would not hesitate at all but agree to leave his company with all the useful information. This is very common with people in the business world. The Lord called their astuteness shrewd. Then why does God tell us this? For God wants us to live a

shrewd life just as worldly people do before we come to Him. I believe that God is telling us to live a more shrewd life than the sons of this world in this generation even though we are His children who will share His glory before Him. In short, the Lord said so for our understanding.

You and I are human beings who have fading appearances and will find more and more weaknesses as time goes by. However, there is one thing that becomes stronger with time. It is our faith in the righteousness of God. For those of us who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and understand the righteousness of God, the faith in His righteousness becomes solid and the wisdom in Him grows with time, even though our flesh gets weaker everyday. We are holy people, who received the remission of sins by understanding and trusting in the righteousness of God. That is the reason that our spiritual faith will always be renewed even as our physical body is slowly declining. The righteousness of God has saved us from all sins, which makes us



strong. Whenever I remember this, I feel so thankful and joyous.

We still need the wisdom to live the rest of our life since we have imperfect body's, regardless of the fact that we received the remission of sins by believing the righteousness of God. We have to live a shrewd life for the rest of our lives because we have to go through this world even though we are close to God spiritually by understanding and trusting His righteousness. We are waiting for Jesus, who is going to come soon. But we still have a long journey in this world before we go to live with Jesus. Until then we need to know how to live a righteous and shrewd life on earth. That is why Jesus told us to live a shrewd life.

This is the typical life of people in this world: They steal the confidential things from their former company when they move to different company. The steward in today's passage called the debtors to his master and reduced the amount of their debt. He did such thing that he could be treated well by other

people when he leaves his master. Remember that Jesus regarded his action as shrewd.

You and I became righteous through the gospel of the water and the Spirit and we became sinless people of God and His saints by receiving Jesus as our Savior. In spite of the fact, we still have life on earth. How then should we live the rest of our life? We need to live a shrewd life by faith. Brothers and sisters, the righteousness of our flesh will be continuously broken and deteriorated. All the body parts will get worn out and become weaker and weaker. We sometimes feel tired of living in this world. At such moments, we feel like going to see the Lord as soon as possible.

But the reality is we cannot go to Him at our will at anytime, so we need to do our best in doing His work until the day comes. God's people may feel physically tired and fatigued as their own righteousness is all disappearing in God. But we have responsibility to live a shrewd life for the rest of our lives on earth carrying the glory of God on our back,



since we became righteous through the faith in His righteousness and the remission of sins we have received from God. In other words, we should seek to live a shrewd life as we live by faith in the righteousness of God before we stand in the presence of God. That is what the Lord is telling us in today's Scripture passage.

## **It Is Not Right for Believers of the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit to Show off Their Self-righteousness**

Our self-righteousness should be broken while our faith in the righteousness of God should grow stronger. That is the life of the wise. As a matter of fact, we could be saved because we recognized ourselves as those who have nothing to boast about, rather than that we have so many insufficiencies. We are always weak and wicked; we are foolish people who are full of blemishes and mistakes. Therefore, it

is right to live for the Kingdom of God, not for ourselves for the rest of our lives. Even though we are insufficient in many ways, it is wise to live as a people of God's Kingdom and to be a part of the work in fulfilling the prosperity of His Kingdom. We have already moved our citizenship to the Kingdom of God; we are supposed to pour our energy and heart for our future residence. That is the true wisdom.

Didn't God say that the more broken and more lost we are, the more useful we become to Him? Then how are we before God? Let's think about it. Is your righteousness getting bigger with time? Or do you realize your weakness and insufficiency even more as times go by? Before God we get to see our weak and foolish aspects that we never knew. We become fully aware of how insufficient we are to the degree of being shocked. For those of us who received the remission of sins, our weaknesses and insufficiencies keep revealing with time as we serve



Jesus. That is how we get to see the original picture of ourselves.

To our disappointment, we cannot do anything about our weaknesses. All we can do with our weaknesses and insufficiencies is to admit and accept them as they are. That is the wise thing to do. If any one of you wants to go back to your old days, thinking, “I used to be a better person,” you should realize that you have no idea what you used to be like. Therefore, you should stop such foolish thoughts. We are all insufficient and full of blemishes. When we do not know about ourselves, we tend to give ourselves better grades; we think of ourselves as courageous and righteous enough to judge others. However, when we find out about who we really are, such self-righteousness will disappear. We should not criticize other people for their weaknesses or insufficiencies. We should know that we are not different from them and we are nothing. We should realize that only the righteousness of God is true righteousness. Only the gospel of the water

and the Spirit that saved us, only the grace of God that remitted all our sins, only the gospel that adopted us as God’s children are the things we can boast about. The more broken our flesh gets, the more grateful we become for those things. So having our self-righteousness broken is a great blessing.

Then how should we live the rest of our lives? First of all, we should live wisely by faith. Even though we are insufficient, we become wise people when we live for the Kingdom of God. On the other hand, those who still live for themselves after receiving the remission of sins are truly foolish and stupid. In other words, those who don’t have their righteousness but live for God’s righteousness; those who live for expanding the Kingdom of God are truly wise people while those who just live for themselves after receiving the remission of sins are foolish. That is what the Lord is clearly telling us.

Today’s Scripture passage tells us how we, receivers of remission of sins, can live a shrewd life just as the unrighteous steward did. Brothers and



sisters, we have weak bodies but it is wise for us to live for the expansion of God's Kingdom by trusting in His righteousness. When we live with such a holy purpose, we will be blessed and hear Jesus say, "*Well done, good servant, because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities*" (Luke 19:17). There are people among the righteous whom God acknowledges. There is no other way to be recognized by God. We do not get acknowledged before God just because we personally have something to boast about. God acknowledges those who know where they will be living; whom they belong to; what they work for and do their best for the Kingdom of God. God commends those who are faithful to Him in spite of their weaknesses.

Brothers and sisters, suppose you are running a company. All of your employees are unique individuals. Can you love them if they boast their smartness and achievements causing frictions at work and not doing their jobs for the company? No, you can't. This is the same to Jesus. When we compare

ourselves to others, some are better than others. However, we are absolutely nothing before God no matter how smart some people seem in comparison to others. Wouldn't Jesus commend us when we work faithfully for the expansion of the Kingdom of God without competing with others? Those people are really wise people before God's eyes.

We are all unique individuals. We look so different when we compare ourselves with others. But closer examination will show us that all people are basically the same. From the statistics of survey or counseling, people who seem so different from others have very much the same life with similar thoughts and worries. It is because people are basically the same and that the problems people have are basically the same as well. We are all equal human beings before God.

Did we receive the remission of sins because we lived a good and righteous life before God? Don't we all know that that is not true? It is only by God's love that we could receive the remission of sins. We



became righteous not because we are better than other people in the world or sinned less than they did, or did many good deeds; but because God loved us and chose us out of His love. We are all prone to commit sins before God, so how can we claim that we received the remission of sins because of our good deeds? I believe you know what is true.

## **Neither God's People Nor God's Servants Should Claim Their Own Righteousness**

People who are just born again tend to try hard to cover up their weaknesses by doing good deeds and to show off what they did as they have immature faith in the righteousness of God. They are afraid that their weaknesses will be revealed if they don't show off first. If too much of their weaknesses get revealed, they don't have strength to handle it. If too much of their weaknesses are revealed to people,

they feel too ashamed to come to church. That is why they try even harder to hide their weaknesses by showing off. Brothers and sisters, we are such pathetic beings that we cannot live without boasting or claiming our self-righteousness even if it is insignificantly small as dirt. Human beings are originally such weak and insufficient beings. Who can be happy when his or her own body hurts? Who can smile when the body is in pain? Where can you find someone who says, "I am happy" when he is hurting? If there is such person, he is most likely to be doing drugs. If someone greets others with smile in spite of the pain he is in, he must be really good at acting or he must have a double personality.

Since all human beings are originally weak, there is no one who is without weaknesses and insufficiencies. However, that is not a problem in our Lord. All we should do is to be united with God's Church in His order and preach the gospel to the world. On the other hand, it is evil to claim one's righteousness and thereof disturbing the gospel



ministry and destroying the order that God has established. Disturbing the order that has been established in God's Church and not admitting the order inside the Church is act of rebellion against God. I hope that won't happen in our Church. I also hope that nobody will claim his righteousness and praise himself in the Church that is the body of God.

No matter whether we are somebody or not, we should get our strength together by faith and put it towards the ministry of preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit. We are living in the difficult time, but we should be united in doing the evangelism work for the gospel of the water and the Spirit. When the work is finished, Jesus will return and give us a new heaven and a new earth. I believe we will all reign with Him there as kings. God will also give us His eternal Kingdom as our inheritance. The Lord is our Father, who will hand over us everything He has, so we need to live for His Kingdom and His righteousness. Therefore, we should set our goals to enter the Kingdom of God and

preach the gospel all over the world with all our strength. Whether we are insufficient or talented; whether we are smart or not, we all should do the best in our assigned work and live for our King, Jesus Christ. For such faith is what is expected for those who received the remission of sins. Such saints are truly wise people.

## **We Are God's Children Born Again by the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit**

God's children live for God the Father. Whether we are blameless or not from our perspectives doesn't matter at all before God. We do not serve the gospel of the Lord with our own righteousness but we live for the gospel by faith. That is the right way to live. When people drink alcoholic beverage, they say, 'Cheers!'; likewise we the righteous should keep



in mind that we always give ‘cheers’ for God not for ourselves.

For whom are we born-again Christians living? Who should we work for? We need to live for the Lord and for His ministry to be prevalent on this earth. We need to live for the gospel. That is the shrewd life. When we do so, we will be given talents and gifts from God.

Brothers and sisters, do you have anything you think you are better at? Can we boast to each other about something we are good at? No, we can’t. We all respect those who faithfully serve God wherever they are. There is not any specific position that we think of highly or lowly. God uses His servants to assign His work to each saint, saying, “This saint will be useful in this field of work.” So God’s servants can see where someone can be best used when they look at their spiritual conditions. They understand what kind of talents God has given the specific individual and how the person will turn out when a certain task is given to him. Because of their ability

to see that, they can post fellow Christians in the most appropriate places for their talents and gifts to be used in serving the gospel. Different talents given by God will be used in different places. Saints are supposed to use their gifts and talents for the work of God. Since every saint has different talents, they can serve the Lord in different places.

We have nothing to boast about. We can live a wise life thanks to the talents from God. And we must live the rest of our lives that way. To live a shrewd life, we have no other choice but to live for God only. There is no other ways to live a shrewd life except for living for God.

## **That Is Why Jesus Told Us to Make Friends by Unrighteous Mammon**

Property of this world in itself isn’t actually dirty. Money itself has a neutral value; it turns out to be good or evil according to the person who uses it; and



it is originally clean since it is from God. But God called it ‘unrighteous mammon’ because most people use it for satisfying their sinful desires and for themselves only. People these days regard money as the highest value, don’t they? It is so common that people put more emphasis on making money than knowing God. If they can get more mammons, they would do things against their characters and even abandon God not to mention the fidelity to others or even their own life. Since it promotes people’s greed and feeds their sinful desires, mammon became unrighteous. “Make friends for yourself by unrighteous mammon.” This Word of God means we should take possessions from those who are living for wrong purposes, and use those properties for the righteous task of saving other souls. Those who live such a life are shrewd.

The Lord also said that those who are faithful in very little tasks are shrewd. How can God give more work to those who are not faithful before God? Even if God has prepared so many blessings for them, He

will not give His blessings to those who do not live for Him. Since God said so, we cannot serve two masters. The Lord said that there should be only one Master. To Christians Jesus Christ is the only Master.

In the past there were faithful royal servants who gave up their lives for their kings. They willingly took a poisonous drink from their kings without questioning after serving them with love and sincerity. Why did they do that? They could even drink the poison from their loyalty that they would do anything that their king told them to do. History will remember such faithful royal servants even if the people in his time might not recognize his loyalty to the king.

There was a general named Seung-gyum Shin, who died for King Wang Gun, the founder of Koryeo Dynasty (918-1392). When their enemy in a war surrounded them, he put on the king’s clothes and sat in the king’s carriage just to save his king. Because of his sacrifice, the king could escape from the crisis wearing the general’s armor and survive the war. The



king held the biggest memorial service for the servant, who had served him so faithfully even to give up his own life; the king buried him in a good place near Chuncheon City, where I am living. The size of the grave is not very big, but it was so well preserved because his proud descendants still take good care of his gravesite. Generation after generation, people remember him for his loyalty to the king, that he changed into the king's armor and sat in the king's carriage to die for the king. One strange thing about his gravesite is that there are three mounds. It is because the king was afraid that the golden head of the servant that he made as a replacement of his head and in memory of his loyalty might get stolen. So he had his people make three mounds instead of one. That way people do not know in which mound his real body was buried.

From this historical anecdote of King Wang Gun, who rewarded the faithful servant, late General Seung-gyum Shin and his descendants, we can learn something important. "The Lord our King will treat

us the same way. If we live for the Lord regardless of our weaknesses, He will crown us and give us a luxurious place to live and many servants to serve us just because of our loyalty to Him." We can have such faith. How can our King Christ forget about us if we live for Him and for the expansion of His Kingdom with all our strength and heart, while King Wang Gun commemorated the general, who died for him, by making a luxurious gravesite and having the next generations follow his example? The Lord promised that He would make us kings in the new heaven and the new earth when He comes back. Can you imagine how big our reward will be? Loyalty to a king of a country could be remembered several hundred years after it happened; then what will happen to those of us who faithfully served God who is above all and eternal? We will be remembered forever.

The general as a human being was supposed to die sometime whether in the war or in his sick bed. But he chose to die for his king, and he is treated with



honor and praise. When we live for our Lord, we will receive even greater reward than his. Even though we may not be as courageous and faithful as General Seung-gyum Shin, we are certainly living for Christ our King. We have done so, and we will always live for Jesus Christ until the end of our days. I believe the Lord will clothe us with glory just for that reason. The glory will be so magnificent. That is why 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). I want you to believe that the sufferings in this world are only temporary, but the tremendous glory will last forever. I believe that God will grant us such glory.

Even though we are so insufficient, I am certain that God will let us share His glory just because we lived for Him; just because we lived for preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit and spreading the righteousness of God. We distribute the mission books, publish them, offer our material things for the

work, make and spend money for the Lord, send out emails all day, make three meals a day for the workers, run errands, mop the floor and steps, and start a fire for the workers every morning when it is cold. Isn't that all? No. Anyway, we have lived for the glory of God whether we drink or eat. For that reason only, God will give us reward no matter how well we did our job. And He will acknowledge us as shrewd servants.

## **Do You Have Faith in the Righteousness of God?**

My righteousness is all broken and the only thing left with me is the faith in the righteousness of God. I take pride in having God's righteousness and serve Him with pride. I believe that we, who live with the strength springing from the faith in God's righteousness, will turn into glorious beings that will



receive all the blessings and glory before God on the last day.

When the day comes, God will judge those who intimidate God's people who live for the righteousness of God on this earth. Among the born-again, for those who bothered and confronted the wise people, God said He would cut each of them in two and appoint them their portion with the hypocrites (Matthew 24:51). The words "to appoint them their portion with the hypocrites" means God will punish them in the same way He will treat those who are not born again. To be blessed, we should live a wise life trusting in the righteousness of God. Anybody who has received the remission of sins should live a wise life.

Since we have received the remission of sins by believing in the righteousness of God, the only thing left for us to do is to live a shrewd life. This means we should do our best in what we are doing at the moment and we should grow in our faith. Shrewd life is listening to God's Word, giving our heart,

thoughts, body, time and money for Him. The righteous live for the glory of God no matter what they drink or eat, no matter what they do, and living with such faith is truly shrewd before God. We will be commended and loved by God when we live this kind of life. We can receive all the blessings God is willing to give us only when we live such a shrewd life. Such life brings joy to the righteous. But if you don't live for God's righteousness or the expansion of His Kingdom even after receiving the remission of sins and righteousness of God, you are foolish and just the same as an evil person. Such a person is stupid and evil enough to kick away the golden chance that came to him.

Not being so wise has something to do with the reward in Heaven. It is also related to receiving blessings on this earth. We should not boast our own righteousness, but should realize our insufficiencies and come to God believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that has eradicated all our sins. And we should boast the righteousness of God that has



enabled us to receive the remission of sins. Only then can we become shrewd before God. We who became God's children by gaining the righteousness of God ought to live such a shrewd life.

Do we have anything to brag about before God? No matter how long you look for such things, we will not find anything. Some people take pride in their physical strength and righteousness; they say they trust in their fists, shrugging their shoulders. People in the world might have something to boast about, but we, the born-again Christians, do not have anything to boast of before God. If we find something to brag about, that will be the faith in the righteousness of God. That is glorifying God. We can give the glory back to God by believing in the righteousness of God. That is the only time when we have something to boast of by believing in the righteousness of the Christ. I thank God for the fact that we have nothing else to boast about other than Christ Jesus.

You all might have thought about how to live your life and what to live by. We all have experience of being in between the important decisions. You and I chose to step forward by faith in the righteousness of God. Therefore, we cannot go back. We bet our lives on the righteous work of preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit to the whole wide world. That was the most important and shrewd decision, and what we have to do now is to live the rest of our lives based on the decisions. God has given everything for us to live a shrewd life. God gave us His Church, work place, and grace to live a righteous life. We are well equipped with everything for any circumstances; time wise, and faith wise, and in spiritual, physical and mental sense. Therefore, we should be thankful to God from our heart. As soon as we made up our mind after believing in the righteousness of God, God welcomed us and responded with abundant grace. Actually, we are greatly blessed before God and we have a lot to thank for.



## **Then What Should We Live for the Rest of Our Lives?**

Brothers and sisters, all our sins were remitted by the righteousness of God. Then what can we boast of? If we have anything to boast of, that will be all concerning the righteousness of God. You and I are sinless children of God, who are born again by the water and the Spirit. Brothers and sisters, I want you to boast of Jesus Christ by faith in God's righteousness: Boast of Jesus Christ in the Church and in the work places where God put you. If you are not in your place and things go wrong because of you, it is not glorifying God but rather embarrassing God. I see many worldly people who leave their work places to go to sauna during the office hours, which is so irresponsible behavior. They might get away with their hypocrisy with plausible lies, but such behaviors in the Church cannot be overlooked by eloquent excuses. For The Lord is watching out for His Church. Therefore, we should not even try to

make any excuses or lie in the first place, but be faithful and proud in the tasks that the Lord has assigned us.

Do you think anybody will listen to us if we leave our places in the Church and shout on the street, "I am a righteous person who has received the remission of sins!" Not only will there be nobody listening, but also we will become corrupted by being mingled with the world. That should not happen. The righteous, whether he is smart or not, should be content in doing the assigned work by God. That is the way of living a shrewd life.

As a way of being recognized by God, you have to give God unrighteous mammon so that many sinners can be saved; that is really shrewd way of living. Such person is truly shrewd. There is no distinction of how important each one's entrusted work is. No matter what the task is, the faithful children of God treat their work sincerely and do the job silently and diligently. And by keeping their entrusted places, the gospel can be preached to the world.



I am a very happy person before God. Because I stay in God's Church, I can be served in many ways and I can live a blessed life of serving God. This is why I feel always thankful to God. Working under and for God, and not for the world, is such a great blessing. And working with you the righteous also brings me so much joy. There is nothing better than sharing with you and working with you; whether we eat good food, whether we share God's Word, whether we do the righteous work of God, it is great to be able to collaborate even though we are all insufficient by ourselves. As I get older, I am not as healthy as I was when I was younger but I thank God for my present physical condition which is good enough for serving the gospel. These days, I worry about what if I can't digest this food, no matter how delicious the food is which I have in front of me. This aging thing makes me sad sometimes. Those of you who are my age may understand that my body reached the age that cannot digest food well and do

not have good sense of taste. As time goes by, our bodies get deteriorated.

However, the faith of our inner self becomes stronger and bolder. We who are righteous and shrewd strive to preach the gospel to the world and give our body, mind and heart in spreading the glory of God to the world. I am pleased to think that I have been a small help to Him in expanding His Kingdom on earth. God works through us and keeps everything going as He planned. God will be glorified and our life will be prosperous by faith. And this will continue. Thank God for fulfilling all these things. From now on, we will stay in His Church and preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit no matter whether we are smart or not, no matter whether we live or die. I will live by faith in God's righteousness. I believe you will also live such a life, won't you?

We are nothing. Attempting to boast our righteousness before God is more laughable than a dayfly trying to brag about his long and wonderful life before men. We are all imperfect and insufficient



beings who have nothing to boast about before God. But there is no one who thinks he is less than others. Everybody thinks he is something. Even a beggar on the overpass will get upset when people throw ten cents to him. Even when such a lowly beggar pretends to be something, are we silent because we don't have anything to brag about? It is because we all know that claiming one's righteousness is really laughable before God.

There are so many people who constantly worry about filling their stomachs to the full, insisting that living for themselves is the only right way to live. But those of us who are born again by the water and the Spirit do not live just for ourselves. We—the servants of God, His workers and the saints alike—gather money to do the righteous work with unrighteous mammon. We preach the gospel with the mammon. All our life is focused on serving the Lord, revealing His glory and spreading His righteousness to the whole wide world. That is our mission and the way to live a shrewd life.

In big cities like Seoul, there are a lot of professional beggars. A nicely dressed gentleman goes into the men's room and comes out looking like a beggar. He just came to work. That is how they come to work and start begging on the streets or on bridges in dirty clothes. They are so-called professional beggars. When they are done with their begging for the day, they go back to the men's room to change their clothes, then drive away to their nice homes. Then who can say they are shrewd for making money without much effort? Are they wise because they make a lot of money, drive a nice car and live in a decent house without the sweat of their brows?

Some newly built church buildings that cost some tens of millions dollars have stunning grandeur. Sometimes they deposit five million dollars in a bank for interest to build up and share the interest among the staff clergies. Sometimes they advertise their church by donating about ten thousand dollars for poor neighbors. Some churches celebrate saving



some million dollars in their saving's account by posting a placard. But how is their life before God? Are they living a shrewd life since they are making a lot of money? Then what is the difference in their life goals from that of professional beggars? Living for materialistic and physical profits apart from the righteousness of God and His glory is truly foolish. Such a life has nothing to do with the gospel. God doesn't walk with those people.

Truly wise people seek the righteousness of God, devoting themselves to the gospel and acknowledging their insufficiencies. Those who trust in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, preach the gospel to the world, and try hard to expand God's Kingdom on earth are the ones who really live a shrewd life. God supports us, leads us for doing so, and He works incessantly.

Brothers and sisters, living for God's righteousness is the shrewdest way of living. Those, who trust in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, deny themselves, and live for God, are truly wise

people. This is not our wishful thinking but God's definition. Didn't God clearly say that to us? God is telling us it is right for a born again person to find out where he really belongs and to faithfully serve the One who will take him and bless him. The world throws away people when they are not beneficial any more. What can you get from this world after working your entire life for the world? We need to realize the truth and commit our lives to God, who will always embrace us, love us, and welcome us for our loyalty. God will then absolutely show us His grace. When we live for the gospel, God will love us and give us everything. But when we live for ourselves only, God will not bless us even if we have been born again. We, the born-again Christians, should keep in mind that it is shrewd to live for the righteousness of God and we will be blessed multiple folds for such life.

I am not saying that we will receive physical blessings automatically from Heaven. But one thing I can assure you is that we will have peace while living



on earth. And we will see and feel the work of God when we live for Him. We will go to His Kingdom in the future after living as a debtor to the gospel in this world. Anybody who realizes this as the greatest blessing is a really shrewd person.

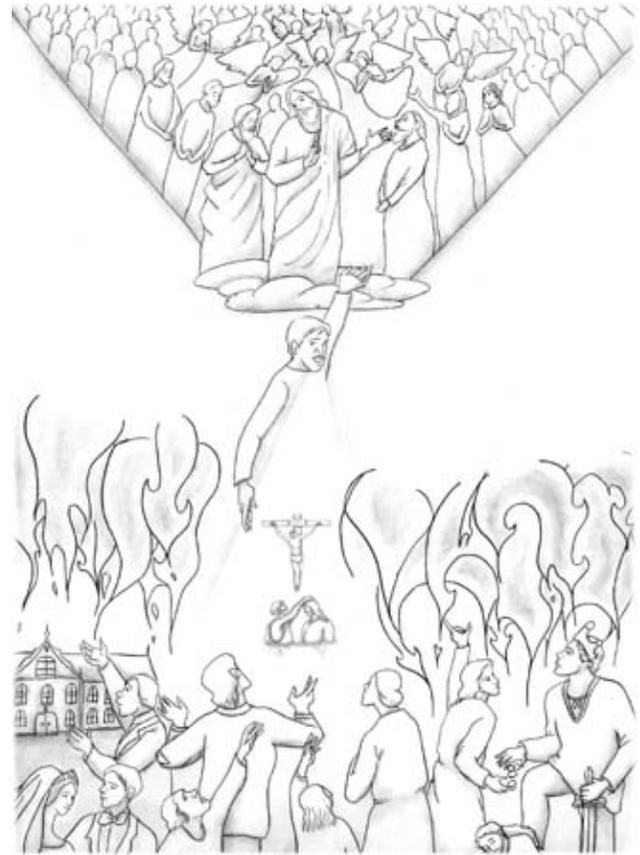
Now we have chosen to live a life of the wise. I believe God will pour His blessings and rewards on us when we live for God, for the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and for the glory of God. ☒



# SERMON

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## 5



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## **This Period Is Like The Days of Noah**

< Luke 17:26-37 >

“And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed. In that day, he who is on the housetop, and his goods are in the house, let him not come down to take them away. And likewise the one who is in the field, let him not turn back. Remember Lot’s wife.

**Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it. I tell you, in that night there will be two men in one bed: the one will be taken and the other will be left. Two women will be grinding together: the one will be taken and the other left. Two men will be in the field: the one will be taken and the other left.’ And they answered and said to Him, ‘Where, Lord?’ So He said to them, ‘Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together.’”**

## **What Sort of Era Is It Now?**

What will the world be like when the time of destruction comes? The Scriptures say, *“They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.”* And the Scriptures say that it will be like the days of Lot. As in the end time, people will eat, drink, get married,



and build houses, but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. The Lord says it will be like that when the Son of Man is revealed.

The Lord was saying that it would be like that at the time the Lord comes again to the world. At the time of the Lord's return, the world would be like the days of Noah and like the days of Lot. And the people will greet Jesus like the people of Sodom and Gomorrah. They will eat, drink, and live joyfully until the moment of the Lord's return, and then the judgment will fall on them suddenly and they all will be destroyed.

There probably is no one who does not know this Word. Even Sunday school children know this Word. This Word is the truth. As this Word states, when Jesus comes again to this world, the world will be like the days of Noah and Lot, and many people will face sudden destruction because of not being prepared for the judgment.

Jesus said, *“In that day, he who is on the housetop, and his goods are in the house, let him not come down to take them away. And likewise the one who is in the field, let him not turn back.”* This is telling us that we must not be attached to the things of the world because such things will happen in the world. Our hearts must be gradually detached from the things of the world. We must not live an improper spiritual life even at the moment of Jesus' return. We must greet the Lord while doing God's work with a really light heart, without the heart being attached to the world, and always preparing the faith. We must meet the Lord after doing God's work faithfully until the time of the Lord's return.

People are prone to live immersed in the world until five minutes before the Lord's return because humans are like animals that perish. However, we the righteous must not live like that. Instead, how closer the day draws to the coming of the Lord, the more faithfully we should be doing God's work to remove the hearts that are attached to the world, live with



faith, and meet the Lord after living with such heart and faith of a bride waiting for her groom. I want you to have such faith. Let all of us meet the Lord after living with upright faith.

The Word we have read today is the most proper Word to you and me who are living in this era. We could say that it is the Word that we need to pay no attention to because we have heard this Word so frequently. As the Lord said, since the Lord will be revealed when the world will be unfolded like the days of Lot in Sodom and Gomorrah, we must meet the Lord while doing God's work and preparing the faith properly without being attached to the world. I do not want you to be like the wife of Lot because your heart is attached to the world. The Lord says that this era is unfolding just the way God's Word has told us. However, there are many people whose hearts are absorbed in the world. They must turn back. Until the day of the Lord's return, we must live while doing God's work in our position. I am a minister who believes we must do the things we

should do, eat what we need to eat, wash the dishes, and at least do the things we must do.

However, we must not be attached to the world and invest our money in the worldly things, invest a lot for the children, or invest a lot on the land and such things. If we really believe in the righteousness of God, if we really believe in the Word, if we believe that the world will be unfolded according to His Word, then, we must not be so attached to the world like Lot's wife. She was attached to the world as if she could live for thousands of years if she only had material things in the world, but she was destroyed because of such attachment. Such a person cannot escape the judgment. That is not upright living.

Until the day of the Lord's return, we must set our hearts on Heaven, serve the gospel only, and unite our hearts together with the Church for the work of evangelizing the gospel throughout the entire world. We must give all our hearts for the evangelization of the gospel without being attached to the world. A



person who is not like that will perish along with the world even if he has received salvation. Such people cannot maintain their faith. The Lord says, *“Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together.”* At the time when the second coming of the Lord is near, Satan the Devil will run rampant and people will be taken and forced to receive the mark of the beast, and they will kill anyone that refuses to receive it. At that time, those who are attached to the world will receive the mark of the beast.

The Scriptures tell us. Those who receive the mark of the beast will be thrown into the burning fire and suffer. People who don’t prepare the faith in their hearts will receive the mark on that day. Some people have betrayed God’s Church and the righteousness of the Lord for even small matters. They left brothers and sisters without hesitation. However, their life hinges on such things.

Our brothers and sisters who have been born again have kept the faith of believing in the righteousness

of God. And they will meet the Lord as it is written in the Scriptures. There are some people who meet the Lord without facing death. Because I believe in God’s Word, I believe that God will protect me especially at the time of tribulation in His special providence. However, I am willing to embrace martyrdom if God wants me to do so.

Some of the servants of God and some brothers and sisters who do not believe in God’s Word and who are attached to the world will betray the Lord during the last days. They will receive the mark first, they will be ordered to arrest and kill the born-again servants of God, and to stand against God. But they will be killed eventually and be cast into the bottomless pit that burns with fire and brimstone along with the Devil. They will suffer pain forever and ever. Therefore, we must believe in this Word that says a person who is on the rooftop must not have their hearts on the properties in his home and a person who is in the field must not look back. We



must go forth toward God with our hearts set toward Him instead of setting our hearts toward the world.

What happens when the Lord comes again to this world? The Lord told us to remember what happened to Lot's wife. The Lord says, *"For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it"* (Luke 9:24). The faith of those who do not believe in the Word of the righteousness of God will die when they look back in the end time. Let's have correct faith. It is okay for us to be lacking, but God will never admit those who do not believe in His Word because such people are the servants of Satan. Therefore, we will meet the Lord by being equipped fully with faith when He comes again if we believe God's Word with our hearts even though we are lacking. Let's have the faith of believing in God's Word that enables us to stand before the presence of the Lord no matter when the Lord comes.

## **The Lord Said He Will Bring Back to Life Those Who Lose Their Physical Life for the Sake of the Righteousness of the Lord**

I have spoken to you about how wonderful it is to receive salvation. God will bring a person of faith back to life only if the person has believed in the righteous Word of God and was faithful to the life of faith. He will bestow grace and every wonderful thing to such a person of faith. However, God will cast the person who is not like that into hell that burns with fire and brimstone eternally. Such a person will be cast into the fire of hell even though he has received salvation from sin because he betrayed the Lord, he did not believe in God's Word, and his faith was theoretical, and because he is on the side of the Devil.

Such things will happen at the time of the Lord's coming. The Lord said, *"I tell you, in that night there*



*will be two men in one bed: the one will be taken and the other will be left” (Luke 17:34).* When people die, they go to a crematorium or a grave. Let’s say a married couple died, and one was born again while the other was not born again. God will bring alive the born-again person, and He will not bring alive the spouse who was not born-again. The Lord will bring the born-again back to life at that time and reward him by allowing him to live in the Millennial Kingdom for a thousand years.

We do not believe and serve the righteousness of the Lord to be rewarded by God. We serve the Lord out of thankfulness. Even if God treated a person who worked like this and a person who did not work like this in same manner, there are people who say that they would still choose this way of life that serves the gospel. I believe you are all like that.

*“There will be two men in one bed: the one will be taken and the other will be left.”* The Word is speaking of people in this world. People live in the world for about 100 years at the most and then go

into sleep, and the Lord will bring them alive in the end when the Lord comes again. He will bring alive the people who died with their born-again faith, make the whole universe anew, and let them rule the universe for a thousand years. Such things will happen at the time of the Lord’s return. However, one will be left. God will leave them there. God will not bring them alive. The Lord said they would be resurrected after a thousand years have passed.

The first resurrection is for you and me who have received the remission of sin. When our Lord comes again, we will be brought back to life from death. The second resurrection is the resurrection for the judgment. The Lord said, *“And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment” (Hebrews 9:27).* If God did not judge the sinners of this world, if there was no judgment of God for people who commit all kinds of evil, then this would be the evidence that God does not exist.

Why will God resurrect the people after the Millennial Kingdom? He said that He would bring



them back to life to judge them. The Lord said, *“Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation”* (John 5:28-29). Who are “those who have done good”? They are the righteous who have served the gospel of water and the Spirit faithfully. There can be no better work in the world than the work of preaching the gospel to save the lost souls.

Anyway, when a person is resurrected at the time of resurrection for condemnation, he will suffer a really horrible death. The wrath of God will be given to those who have stood against Him; on the other hand, He will reward the saved who have suffered persecution for God’s existence and for the righteousness of God. God will thus show that He is alive. Such things will happen on the day of the Lord’s coming. *“The one will be taken and the other left.”*

And what will happen at the time of the Lord’s return? He said, *“Two women will be grinding together: the one will be taken and the other left.”* This was spoken to the people who would be alive at that time. That they are grinding the hand mill means that they are making a living. Rich and poor alike eat three times a day. What does it mean by “grinding the hand mill”? That people grind the hand mill is for chewing and swallowing food. It says, *“Two women will be grinding together: the one will be taken and the other left.”* Among the people who are still alive at the time of Lord’s return, people who have been born again will be taken and the people who have not been born again will be left behind. Even after suffering the tribulations and dying, they will be brought back to life to be condemned after the Millennial Kingdom.

And what other things will happen at the time of the Lord’s coming? The Lord said, *“Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together.”* When an animal dies, the first animal that appears is



a pack of hyenas. But what come a step faster than hyenas are vultures. Vultures eat the dead corpse. What is active at the time of the final judgment of the world? The Devil becomes active. The Devil works actively in the people of condemnation who have sin and are distressed because of sin. The Devil does the work of taking such people to hell, making them listen and obey him, and killing them. Such things will happen at the time of the Lord's coming.

We hear this Word frequently. However, do you really believe in God's Word with your hearts while living in this world? Really, the time of the Lord's return has drawn near. I am not telling you to do this or that personally. Today's Scripture passage tells us not to look back to the properties at home, and that a person who is in the field must not look back. However, don't we place our hearts in the world? Do you place your hope on your children, or on your business or company? Do you, by any chance, have hope in yourself? I admonish you not to be attached to the world like that. I am not saying that you should

not do it at all. But I am saying that it is proper for the born-gain to live for the gospel. Go ahead and serve the gospel first. Whatever you do, whether you drink or eat, do it for the glory of God and live for the gospel. The Word of the Scriptures says this. I am under this Word and you are also under this Word. Both people who have received the remission of sins and those who have not are all under the Scripture Word alike. It's fair.

Really, we must not put our hearts in this world. Those saints who shall earn money should earn money, and those who shall live for the Lord wholeheartedly and utterly should live by faith as the servants of God. Whatever we do, we must live diligently for the work of evangelizing the gospel throughout the entire world. And we must witness the gospel to the people around us who have not been born again. The work which we the righteous must do in this world is to preach the gospel. There is nothing else.



Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today, without changing eternally. The purpose of life of the people who have been born again is the same; God's Word to the born again is the same; and how to be born again is the same now as it was a thousand years ago. It's the same in the future as well. It's because God's Word does not change.

How would you greet the Lord if He were to come again now? Are you prepared? What will you be doing when the Lord calls you? Let's go to the Lord after living in this world with God's Word in our hearts after doing the work that pleases the Lord. Let's not think about absurd things. Do not be attached to the things of the world. It is foolish to join your heart with the world. The things of the world are vain and useless. They are things that will only corrupt. Things of the world are disposable. They are like paper cups that are thrown away after using it once. No one uses a paper cup for a long time. Everything in this world is like that. They are things we need to live in this world temporarily.

They are not eternal. Don't place your heart in the world. Live with faith. I am lacking, but I live with faith.

In this week, we are planning to print the books that have been translated in Indian and Portuguese language. Please, pray for this. We should concentrate our attention on this task; we must really do this work with the spirit of the warrior on the battlefield. We must serve the Lord with such mindset.

We will preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit domestically in the first half of the year, and we will start to post our e-books in the second half of the year. There will be great evangelization of the gospel through these ministries. We will give the gospel freely since we have received it freely. We have been translating this gospel in each language and have uploaded it on our web site in order for everyone to see it through the Internet. There is no choice but to do this work before we leave this world.



We will do all these missions with the material blessing the Lord gives.

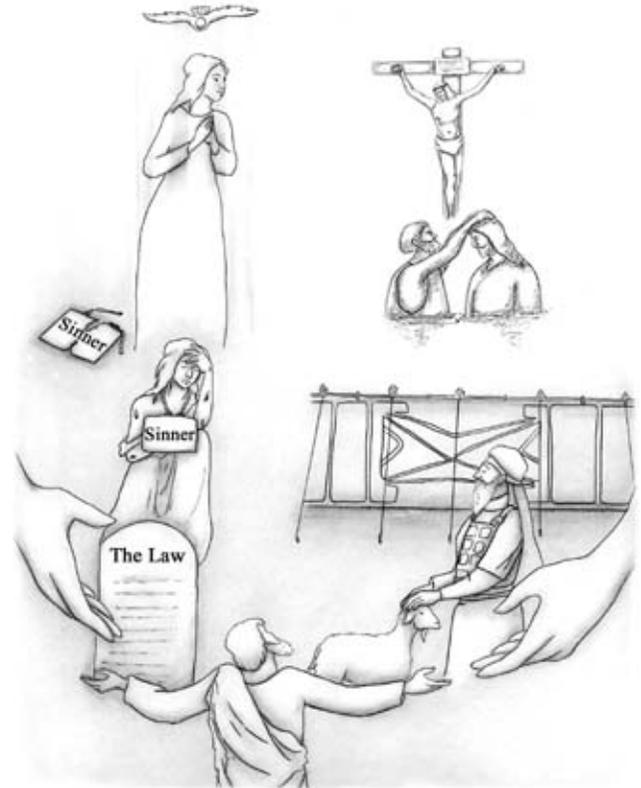
We must at least place our hearts on the gospel even though we still have a long journey. I believe that God fulfills His will through all things in the entire universe. We must be more diligent because it is God's work, and we must meet the Lord after doing God's work without having our hearts set for the world. We will print and distribute at least 10,000 books of ours for each country. Our work of publishing the books is not easy at all. And it is not an easy task to distribute 10,000 books overseas. Only the postages will be about 100,000 dollars because we usually send the books by air parcels. However, we will distribute them to the people who really need them. There is a Korean saying that goes, "We should work hard like a dog to earn money and spend it like a king." We collect the money that is offered to the head office by our domestic Churches nationwide and use it for truly necessary things. We spend it for the things God is pleased with.

We should greet the Lord with joyful heart, after living with joy and faith, after living with our hearts not set for the world. Let's go to God after living with faith with this Word of God in our hearts. ☒



# SERMON

## 6



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## The Lord Who Changes Sinners into the Righteous

< Luke 18:9-14 >

“Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.’ And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me a sinner!’ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts

himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

### God Changed Us Who Were Sinners into the Righteous?

In the future, many people will accept Jesus who came by the water and the Spirit as their Savior when things become more and more difficult. However, I want people to return to God willingly and receive the remission of sins after recognizing their sinful nature rather than they come to receive Jesus as their Savior unwillingly because of difficult environmental condition.

In today’s Scripture passage, two men went up to the Temple and prayed to God. One person believed that he was righteous and looked down on the other person with contempt. Jesus illustrated through the parable of these two people. God illustrated two kinds of people as He said, “*Two men went up to the*



*temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.”*

The Pharisee was a person who believed in God very faithfully. He was a person who believes faithfully only outwardly. He was a person who believed very faithfully according to the Word when seen from a religious perspective. On the other hand, a tax collector was a sinner from the worldly point of view. He was nothing from the worldly point of view. He was an absolute sinner from the perspective of ethics, morality, and the faith in God. Jesus illustrated with the parable of these two people.

A Pharisee who was considered a person that believed in God faithfully and lived according to the Word stood at the Temple and prayed, *“God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.”* He was a person who believed that he was righteous, a person who thought he was better than the tax collector, a person who thought he was different from

the other person as he prayed to God. He said he was different from those wretched people. Not only that, he said that he also fasted twice a week and that he also tithed well. However, the tax collector stood far from there and did not dare to even lift up his eyes and just pounded his chest and said, *“God, be merciful to me a sinner!”*

He said there were two kinds of people. The Pharisee prayed, “God, I am Thankful that I am unlike the other people—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week and I give tithes of all that I possess. I am of different offspring than this tax collector.” When we look at the Pharisee who prayed like this, he is indeed a perfect person from worldly perspective. He said he had given tithes of all he possessed thoroughly. He gave 200 dollars if he earned 2,000 dollars. Some people even calculate down to a few dollars to offer tithe correctly. Of course, it is proper for a person to tithe before the presence of God. However, this person boasted of this before the presence of God.



And he said that he fasted twice a week. That is such a great thing.

From a religious point of view, he was really a great person. Moreover, he said he did not even sin. He was a person who did not even sin much. He was a great person who did not even commit adultery even when he saw a woman, did not have lewd thoughts, did not envy, did not dispute, did not drink, did not steal, did not harbor evil thoughts, and did not practice evil deeds.

Jesus made a conclusion of this parable and said, *“I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”* We can see here that the Lord classified men into two kinds: One kind of people were those who were confident that they could live faithfully according to God’s will before the presence of God and the other were people who lowered themselves saying that they were nothing before God.

When living in this world becomes more difficult and the basic needs of food and shelter are not resolved, the cry of people saying “Lord, Lord” and seeking God and praying before the presence of God will be heard from this house and that house, this corner and that corner, this church and that church. Then, many people will return to God because of the difficult situation. But instead of returning to God only after the circumstances become so difficult like that, it is more proper for them to return to God willingly by believing in His Word beforehand.

There are two kinds of people. As we see how wrong the Pharisee was, you and I must also look at ourselves and see what kind of person we are essentially. The tax collector could not even look up toward the sky. The only thing he could do was pound on his chest and say, “God, be merciful to me.”

What kind of people are all those humans before the presence of God? They are people who sin until their hearts stop breathing like the tax collector. What



kind of people are we when we reveal our hearts before the presence of God and the Word of God? We have believed in Jesus until now, but we have committed sins so far; we are not beings who do not sin from now on. Rather, we are people who commit sin until our last breath. You and I are people who are so lacking that we cannot but sin until our last breath, even though it is right that we should not sin before the presence of God.

You and I are really inadequate, so when we look at our selves before the presence of God, we cannot but pound our chest and say, “God, have mercy on me. I am a sinner.” When we reveal ourselves before God and look at our hearts, we are people who cannot help but be sinners. Yes, people are like that. They are animals that sin until they die. Humans sin until they die even if they believe in Jesus. Even though we Christians wish to walk with Jesus seeking the sublime life and serve the Lord Jesus, tithe, fast twice a week, but that does not mean we do not have sin. Of course we do not sin blatantly for

people to see, but when we look at ourselves in light of our hearts, we cannot deny that we are inadequate people who always sin before the presence of God. We have always sinned while living in this world up until now, and we will sin as long as we live. We are weak human beings who cannot but say, “Lord, have mercy on me since I cannot live without sinning.” Who among us can say confidently, “I have never committed any sin, whether it is big or small”? A person sins from the time he was born until he dies. Committing sin from the time they were born until they die is the original nature of human beings. No one in the world can deny that he is not a person who commits sin.

Therefore, we must first realize and know our fundamental nature as it is. People become determined. They make a resolution in their hearts not to do such wrong things again and that they will correct themselves and become righteous people who do not steal again. However, they inevitably sin until they die if they are human beings. There are some



people who steal as a hobby, but people usually steal because they do not have money and human beings snatch something to eat from supermarkets if they do not have anything to eat.

In the Word from the Gospel of Mark chapter 7, there are twelve kinds of sins, the sins of evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, and foolishness. Humans commit such sins not because they intend to, but because such circumstances are fostered. Who in the world would not steal when he is hungry and he sees food? One becomes a thief after stealing food. Who in the world would not snatch the money when a wad of bills is lying on the street?

Who does not commit adultery? Who does not commit sin of lewd conduct? After committing the sin of lewd conduct in their imaginations, they all commit the sin of lewd conduct and adultery when they have an opportunity. That's why God said humans are offspring of evil deeds.

## **Everyone Was a Mass of Sin Essentially**

Can the physical body of a person not sin? No, it can never be like that. It sins until it dies. Humans can turn their hearts from sin, but they are people who will die because of the sins of their flesh. That's why we always say before the presence of God, "Have mercy on me. I am a person who commits sin until I die. Therefore, have mercy on me, God. I am a weak person. I am a sinner."

You were born with sin. In other words, you have inherited the lewd heart, the heart of murder, the heart of committing theft, the heart of lying, and all kinds of filthy sins. But, let's say you did not commit such behaviors openly. So you can say with pride, "I am different from the people of the world. I am different from those people who drink. I am different from the prostitute and the swindlers." But are you truly a righteous person even before the presence of God? Would you truly be a righteous person just because



the circumstances were right for you to follow the spiritual life faithfully and therefore you went to church with the Bible at your side?

Strictly speaking, we must realize that all the sins that the prostitutes, male prostitutes, thieves, and robbers, and all the sins that the most wanted criminals of the world commit are the very sins that you and I commit. We must realize that we are such people before the presence of God. You and I are such people. From cradle to grave, until we stand before the presence of God, our physical body commits sin. Human beings commit sin until they die. Therefore, we are definitely sinners unless we are born again by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. No one can be righteous if he has not been born again through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. They are all same sinners who deserve to go to hell before the presence of God.

We are like the tax collector. We are the same as the tax collector who cheats and swindles, spends his money lavishly, and sins all the time. He took the tax

from his country and put it into his own pocket. We are like the tax collector who sucked the blood of his own people and filled up his own stomach. You and I must know that our physical body commits sin from birth to the time of death. Do you believe? Do you acknowledge this?

## **Many Christians Are Actually Like the Pharisees Even Though They Profess to Believe in Jesus as Their Savior**

Although they do not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, they walk solemnly, open their eyes wide on their smiling face, and go into the church solemnly, and worship as if they are holy as they sing, “Halleluiah. I praise this house of God.” “They sing, “ Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!  Early in the morning our song shall rise



to thee. ♪” Then a pastor with holy appearance comes forth and prays, “Holy Father God, your people have come here after having sinned much during the week. Forgive all these sins and cause this worship service to be holy and make us worship as holy and bless us. I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.”

Then He preaches, “God said in the Word from the First Epistle of John chapter 1 verse 9, ‘If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.’ I believe God has cleansed all the sins that you have confessed through the blood of Jesus Christ. Amen. We are holy because we have all received the remission of sins as we confess our sins everyday. Now, we, the people who believe in Jesus Christ, are the light and the salt of the world. What is the life of the salt and the light like? It’s living a good life. Let’s go to the old folks home and help them. Let’s follow the laws of the road. Let’s not swindle. Let’s not steal. That is the ethical life that Christians

should live. Let’s illuminate the light in the world that is filled with darkness through our holy and righteous life. We have finished the worship service for God. Let’s return home. I will lead the benediction. In the name of the Holy Father, the Holy Son, and the Holy Spirit, I bless with the overflowing grace to all those who believe in the grace of Jesus Christ and all the people who believe in the holy love of our God the Father and the work of the Holy Father, the Holy Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen”

Then, the choir sings the most sublime religious hymn. How inspirational is it when a Christian finishes such a grand worship in such an impressive church building! That is a religious life. Such people pray boastfully like the Pharisee, “I fast twice a week. I live an upright life. I do not sin. And I tithe out of all my possessions.” They think they are more righteous than the people of the world, but they return home without receiving the righteousness from God.



What kind of people receives the remission of sins? Sinners receive the remission of sins. The Lord said, “It would have been better if you knew the meaning of the Word that says, ‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice.’” What is the mercy of the Lord? It means that our Lord accepts us who admit they cannot help but sin as His people; that He blotted out all our sins cleanly through the water and the Holy Spirit; and thereby making us righteous before the presence of God. When we look at the meaning of the word ‘mercy,’ it means being pitied by God.

God’s mercy is like the womb. When a fertilized egg is planted in the woman’s womb, it protects the life inside it from all things on the outside. Even if it’s cold on the outside, inside is warm and it nurtures the fetus for nine months and gives birth into the world. That is God’s mercy. A fertilized egg itself does not have any strength. It cannot but die if it is exposed by minutest germ. The womb protects and nurtures such a thing and bears it as a new life to the world. That is God’s mercy.

We human beings are really nothing before the presence of God. Physiologically, we who have been born as descendants of Adam are offspring who cannot but sin inherently. We are offspring who cannot help but sin no matter how hard we try. We sin all our lives because we are seeds of sin.

However, our God made us who are sinners as the righteous. He did so through the water and the Spirit. In the Old Testament, they laid their hands on the head of the sacrificial animal. When an Israelite sinned, he always brought a sacrificial offspring to the Tabernacle. They brought clean animals whichever having cloven hooves and chewing the cud like a sheep, a goat, or a cow, and laid their hands on its head. “I have committed murder; I have committed adultery; I have committed theft.” They confessed their sin while they lay their hands on the sacrifice. Then, the sin was transferred over to the animal. “Laying on of hands” means “to transfer over sacrificial sin.” Then, they cut the throat of the animal and drew its blood. The wages of sin is death.



They should have died because they had committed sin, but the sacrificial animal died in their place.

God gave two kinds of law to the Israelites. One was the Law that made them realize sin, and the other was the sacrificial system that made them receive the remission of sins. God gave both kinds of law to Moses at the same time when God called Moses to the Mount Sinai. Moses received the 613 commandments of the Law there. You are mistaking if you think Moses came down from the Mount Sinai after receiving only the Law of do's and don'ts. Moses also received the Tabernacle system from there. God spoke of the sacrificial system of the Tabernacle that defined the sacrificial offerings. God told the Israelites to offer up grain offering, burnt offering, or peace offering. And those who had sinned by offending the Law had to bring a clean animal without blemish and transfer over their sins by laying on of hands and then cut the throat and take the blood and give it to the priests. Then the priests had to skin the burnt offering and cut it into pieces,

cut off the head and the ankle, take out all the fat that was in the gut and the outer layer of the liver, and throw out even the filthy intestine at the ceremonially clean place outside the camp. And God told him to cut it into pieces and offer it up on the altar of burnt offering, burn it with the fat, and it was offered up before the presence of God.

For the sacrifice to God, an animal without blemish had to receive the laying on of hands and be killed. They had to offer up the pieces of cut meat before the presence of God along with its fat, and the priest had to offer it up for the sinner. God had set a law that one could receive the remission of sins only if he transferred over his sins himself by laying on of hands, but the high priest had to offer up the sacrifice for his sake on the day of atonement.

Like this, God gave Moses both the Law and the sacrificial system. Moses received them and gave them to the people of Israel, and they also are inherited to us today. Before we understand and believe the righteousness of God, we understand our



sins through God's Law. The Law tells us not to commit murder. This means that we are humans who commit murder. The Law teaches us of our sins, "You are humans who commit adultery. You are humans that steal. You are humans who serve other gods. You are foolish people. You are humans who cannot keep the Sabbath. You are people who cannot honor your parents." And God the Father also gave us Jesus Christ. He gave us Jesus Christ to make us receive the remission of sins.

God gave us God's Law and Jesus Christ. We know the Law of God. However, He gave us the Law of God to make us realize and understand sin, not to keep it. The Book of Romans chapter 3 tells us, "*For by the law is the knowledge of sin.*" People usually try to keep the Law, but God did not give us the Law to keep it. God gave the Law to us so that we may know ourselves. What is the use of a mirror? We reflect our face on a mirror and we can cleanse our face when we see any soot on it in the mirror. As such, the Law makes us realize and know our sins.

And Jesus Christ bestows mercy upon us. Mercy is having pity on some one who deserves it. Jesus had pity on us and blotted out all our sins.

In the Old Testament, the High Priest transferred over all the sins of Israeli people by laying his hands on the head of the scapegoat. This sacrifice was offered once a year, on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the seventh month. How is it done in the New Testament? God's Son Jesus was born in this world. What was the first thing Jesus did during the public life when He came to this world?

Then, why did He receive the baptism? We will look at the Word. It says in the Gospel of Matthew chapter 3 verses 13 to 17, "*Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. And John tried to prevent Him, saying, 'I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?'* But Jesus answered and said to him, '*Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.*' Then he allowed Him. When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the



*water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'*"

## **Jesus Received the Baptism from John the Baptist Just Once**

Why did Jesus receive the baptism? Was it because He was humble, bored, or to become just like a human? The reason why Jesus received the baptism is clearly noted here in Matthew 11:11-14, *"Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if*

*you are willing to receive it, he is Elijah who is to come."*

We have read the Word from the Gospel of Matthew, and you can understand the whole Old Testament if you can understand the Word here. Jesus said, *"Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist,"* and this means that God has sent John the Baptist as the representative of all humankind." However, He continued, "He who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." It means that no matter how great a human is, he is smaller than a child of God. And then He said, *"And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force."* It means that we go to Heaven if we believe in the work John the Baptist has done. It says, *"For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John,"* and this means that all the prophecies in the Old Testament were fulfilled by the ministries of John the Baptist and Jesus Christ. It means that John



is the last prophet of the Old Testament, the representative of all humankind, the greatest among all human beings, and the last High Priest. He was a prophet and the last High Priest greater than the Prophet Isaiah, the Prophet Ezekiel, and the Prophet Daniel. It is because, in the Old Testament, house of Aaron was the house of the High Priests, and John the Baptist was a descendant of Aaron, of the house of priest Zacharias. Therefore, it says, *“For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.”*

## **All the Prophecies in the Old Testament Point to the Righteousness of Jesus**

Jesus who was prophesized actually came in the age of the New Testament. He was born in a stable in Bethlehem. God became a human and came to this world. Jesus came to this world just as we sing, “♪Joy to the world, the Lord is come.♪”

John the Baptist was sent six months prior to the Savior Jesus. John was born from the house of Aaron the High Priest and Jesus was born as the descendant of David. From fleshly point of view, John was from the house of the High Priest while Jesus was of the royal family. These two met in the Jordan River when Jesus was at the age of thirty. *“Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. And John tried to prevent Him, saying, ‘I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?’ But Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.’ Then he allowed Him.”* It is recorded in the Gospel of Matthew chapter 3 verses 13 to 15.

Why did Jesus have to come to the Jordan River and receive the baptism from John the Baptist? Jesus received the baptism at the Jordan River, the river of death, to save all the sinners of the world who cannot help but go to hell from the sins. As the High Priests of the Old Testament age transferred yearly sins of



the Israelites once and for all by laying on of hands on the scapegoat, John the Baptist, the representative of the humankind, baptized Jesus in the beginning of the New Testament era. Jesus received the baptism at the Jordan River to blot out all our sins. Laying hands on the head and pushing the head into the water and pulling it up is the baptism by immersion. By this baptism of Jesus, all our sins were transferred onto the body of Jesus. What would happen if the sins that belonged to us were transferred over to Jesus? Our sins will disappear. The animal that took over the sins must be killed. Likewise, Jesus who took over the sins of the world had to die. But He was resurrected in order to save us. Then, He went to the right hand of God the Father's throne. That's why Jesus received the baptism.

Jesus received the baptism to take over all our sins, to take over all the sins of sinners without any remaining and receive the judgment in place of all the sinners, and to save you and me. He did so because He had mercy on us. Jesus answered and

said, *“Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.”* Then John the Baptist baptized Jesus. This means, “Transfer all the sins of all humankind to Me by baptizing Me. By receiving your baptism, I shall receive all the sins of humankind and I shall receive the judgment for those sins; I shall be crucified to death on the Cross in your place; and I will cleanse all those sins by being resurrected again. I will make you people without sins. That is my love for you.” That's why Jesus received the baptism from John the Baptist.

The Scriptures say, *“When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’”* Jesus received the baptism. The Scriptures say, *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life,”* and



“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” All these words were fulfilled by the baptism Jesus received from John the Baptist.

Matthew 3:15 says, “Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.” Here, “all righteousness” in Greek is “πάσαν δικαιοσύνην (*pasan dikaiosunen*),” which means the fairest state that has no defect at all. And “for thus” is ‘οὕτως γάρ (*hoo’-tos gar*)’ in Greek, which means ‘just in this way,’ ‘most fitting,’ or ‘there is no other way besides this.’ This word shows that Jesus took the sins of humankind onto Him irreversibly and most properly through the baptism He received from John the Baptist.

Through this method, the method of receiving the baptism from John the Baptist, Jesus came to this world as the scapegoat of the Day of Atonement. The High Priest of the Old Testament era took two goats: One was offered in the Tabernacle and the other was offered in front of the Israelites. The High Priest had

to lay his hands on the goats in order to transfer all the yearly sins of his people. This sacrifice is the shadow of the good things to come, that is, the eternal sacrifice of Jesus (Hebrews 10:1).

Our Lord said to John the Baptist, “It is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness. I have come to take all the sins of the humanity upon Myself. I must take over all the sins through you. It is appropriate for Me to take over all the sins through this method of receiving baptism. I must receive the baptism to blot out all the sins of the world and to make them the children of God by believing in Me. I need to receive the baptism for you to say that you do not have sin and call God the Father your Father. And there is no other way. If not for this method of receiving the baptism, if not for this method of taking over the sins of humankind through you, all those who will believe in me later will not be able to become righteous. Therefore, I must receive baptism from you.” Hence, Jesus received the baptism from John the Baptist.



The Lord said, *“It is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness,”* and the righteousness here is righteous work of God that saved us. God the Father established John the Baptist and Jesus and transferred all the sins of humankind over to Jesus by laying of hands through the arm of John the Baptist. That is the most righteous thing that He loved us with. Therefore, Jesus received the baptism. That is God’s love. That is the fairest method. It means that God saved us through the most fair and appropriate method of having Jesus take over all the sins by receiving the baptism and dying on the Cross. God saved you and me from sin. That is the Way of God.

The Bible records that Jesus took all our sins upon Himself by receiving the baptism from John the Baptist. He said, *“Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.”* John allowed it when Jesus said this. John the Baptist transferred all the sins of humankind to Jesus as the High Priest of all humanity. We don’t know when the end of the earth comes, but the sins of all humanity

who cannot but become sinners in this world were transferred over to Jesus through the arms of John the Baptist.

All the sins that people commit with their flesh from their birth to death were transferred over. So John the Baptist testified the very next day he administered baptism to Jesus, *“Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”* (John 1:29) When God speaks of ‘the world,’ he is not talking about the physical world itself. Rather, it refers to all human beings including you and me who are made in the likeness of God. He took over all our sins. All the sins of all the people have been transferred over to Jesus. “It is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness. It is fitting for Me to take over all the sins of all the people through My baptism and save them.” Jesus received the baptism in order to take over the sins, to save you and me, to blot out and cleanse all the sins of the world, and to receive the judgment in place of you and me.



And when Jesus came up from the water, the doors of Heaven opened and said, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” God says, “My Son took all the sins of the humankind upon Himself. My Son went to the Cross to receive the judgment because He took over all their sins. My Son obeyed My will.” God the Father sent His only begotten Son to the world and saved all the people of the world from their sins.

What would have happened if Jesus refused and said that He didn’t want to follow God’s plan of salvation when God the Father sent His Son Jesus to this world with such will? Then, you and I would go to hell. However, Jesus received the baptism from John the Baptist according to God’s will.

Have our sins been transferred over to Jesus, or have they not? All the sins were transferred over to Him. All the sins include the sins that we commit from our birth in this world to the time we die. It says that Jesus received all our sins upon Him. Then, are all the sins that you and I have committed since being

born from our mothers’ wombs until the age of twenty included in all the sins, or are they not? They are included.

I do not want to live until the age of 120. However, I would live that long if God made me live until then. If Jesus is coming late and I could live healthily as I do now, then I do want to enjoy life for a hundred of years. Any way, Jesus took even all my future sins that I will commit until I die. Jesus received all my sins. Jesus received the baptism to make you and me without sin.

This world is ruled by the law of the jungle, and the strong oppress the weak in such a terrible way. How much do the eldest oppress the younger siblings? Jesus is the Almighty God, but He did not bother us at all. Rather, He gave Himself as the propitiation of humankind. Jesus not only blotted out all our sins, but He took all the sins of all people in the entire world upon Himself. Jesus took all the sins of all human beings, not only ours. God took all the



sins of all the people upon Himself to fulfill all righteousness. That is how God so loved the world.

Only the people who know that Jesus took their sins upon Himself at the time He received the baptism, only the people who believe that Jesus is our Savior and God, receive salvation and go to Heaven. However, from God's standpoint, He took all the sins of all the people of the world without omitting anyone's sin. We go to Heaven by faith. Those who believe in this Truth go to Heaven, and those who do not believe go to hell. We go to Heaven by faith, not by works. It is written in the Bible. *"For the ways of the LORD are right; The righteous walk in them, But transgressors stumble in them"* (Hosea 14:9). The person who acknowledges his sinful self says, "God, I am a sinner. I am a person who cannot but go to hell. I am a person who commits sin until I die. I believe that our Lord received the baptism for me and took all my sins upon Himself." The person who acknowledges himself like that and acknowledges God's salvation goes to Heaven.

All our sins have transferred over to Jesus Christ. The first thing Jesus did during His public life was receiving the baptism. Jesus did not receive the baptism because He was humble. He said it was proper for Him to fulfill all the righteousness by doing this. Receiving the baptism was a very important matter.

Until the age of twenty-nine, Jesus helped the work of Joseph, His fleshly father. His fleshly father Joseph was a carpenter. Jesus probably did such works like cleaning up the residues from the plane and sweeping the workroom. When He became thirty years old, He went to the Jordan River to see John the Baptist. John the Baptist was baptizing people there.

There was a servant of God. John said to the crowd, "Repent, "Brood of vipers!" A servant of God speaks clearly.

Then, Jesus approached to him and said, "Baptize me."



“What! How could You come to me and be baptized by me?”

The word ‘baptism’ has two meanings. One meaning is “to return to God from serving gentile gods.” The other meaning is “to be covered with something,” “to take sins upon oneself,” or “to cleanse sins.” The baptism Jesus received from John the Baptist was the baptism to take over all our sins. People used to receive the baptism from John the Baptist as a sign of returning to God after serving other god and not believing in God. And there are two kinds of people who have received the baptism in the world. One is a person who has received the baptism as a sign that says, “I had believed gentile god before, but I now believe in God as my Savior. I am returning to God.” And the other is a person who receives the baptism with the faith in his heart that says, “All my sins have transferred over to God at the time when Jesus received the baptism.” This is the spiritual circumcision.

Jesus took all our sins upon Himself by receiving the baptism. Let’s read the Gospel of John chapter 1 verse 29 in one voice to see whether Jesus took our sins upon Him or not.

It says, “*The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, ‘Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!’*” As Jesus started His ministry after receiving the baptism officially at the Jordan River, John the Baptist who baptized Jesus saw Him coming toward him, and he said, “*Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!*” This Word was spoken on the very next day of His baptism. Therefore, John the Baptist was saying, “Look, people. Jesus received His baptism from me yesterday to take all your sins onto His body. He is the Lamb of God and He is the Lord who took the sins of the world upon Him.”



## **Jesus Could Not Have Washed Away the Sins of the World if He Did Not Receive All Those Sins upon Him at the Time He Received the Baptism from John the Baptist**

How could Jesus say that He carried all the sins of the world upon Him without taking them over through John the Baptist? God cannot lie. God took all the sins of you and me upon Him through His baptism. He became the Lamb of God who carries the sins of the world because He took them all upon Himself. Where did He then carry the sins of the world to? He went to the Cross, and died there. He lived the public life from His baptism to the Cross for three years.

The life of Jesus is divided into the personal life and the public life. The personal life is considered until His age of twenty-nine and the public life is considered from the age of thirty to thirty-three. He

was just because He took all the sins of all the people and died for them in their place and saved those who believe in Him. *“Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”* There is only this one verse that records it so obviously like this. John the Baptist witnessed this Word. He witnessed this because he himself gave the baptism to Jesus.

Mathew recorded the Gospel of Matthew to witness that Jesus is the King, the Savior of the humankind. That’s why he recorded, *“The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham” (Matthew 1:1)*. The writer of the Gospel of Matthew wrote this genealogy of Jesus to let us know that anyone who believes in Jesus Christ as his Savior who took all the sins upon Him by receiving the baptism from John and paid for the sins by dying on the Cross in his place becomes a descendant of Abraham and David. Therefore, Matthew, a disciple of Jesus, records about Jesus receiving the baptism in concrete terms. He records clearly the reason why He received the baptism, that



is, for what He received the baptism. It says that Jesus received the baptism to fulfill all the righteousness, to make all the people sinless.

Jesus said, *“Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.”* He received the baptism to make all the people sinless. That is the reason. Jesus received the baptism for all the people, to make all the people sinless. That He received the baptism means that He received all the sins. How? It was done through the most proper, most appropriate, and the most righteous way. It records that Jesus received the baptism from John the Baptist because there was no other way to take over all the sins of the humankind besides this method of Jesus receiving the baptism.

And after taking over all the sins of humankind upon Himself by receiving the baptism, He went around all over the country during the next three years saying, “Son, your sins are forgiven you” to the woman who was caught in adultery, the blind, the lame, and all other sinners. In the Gospel of John

chapter 8, Jesus told the woman who was caught in adultery, “Neither do I condemn you. I do not say that you have sin, also. I do not judge you either.” Why? It’s because our Lord Himself took over all the sins of the world including this sin of adultery upon Him through the baptism of John. That’s why the Lord had to receive the judgment. As a result, all the sins of the world were in His physical body, not in us humans. It means that even the woman caught in adultery did not have sin. This woman thought she was a sinner since she did not believe in Jesus. Therefore, the woman was trembling in fear because the people were about to stone her to death according to the Law. At that time, Jesus went to her and asked her. “Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?”

She replied, “No one, Lord.”

And Jesus said to her, “Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more. Just follow Me. I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in



darkness and they will never be sinners. They have received salvation from the judgment of the Law.”

“*Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!*” John the Baptist was telling people to look to Jesus. We must look at the sins of the world too. How far do all the sins of the world stretch? If we say that the sins of the world stretch from one end of the pulpit to the other end, the Lord who says, “I am the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end,” has taken all those sins. Our Lord is God’s the Lamb that carries the sins of the world.

According to the prophecy of the Old Testament, our Lord was born to this world, received the baptism, and died on the Cross. By receiving the baptism, Jesus took all the sins of the humankind upon Himself. Jesus took all the sins of the world including all the sins of those who would be born about 2000 years later and all the sins of those who will be born within that period, all the sins of all the people in the Old Testament, and all the sins of all

the people from Adam to the all people until the end of the earth.

John the Baptist witnessed for Jesus saying, “*Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!*” Do you sin in this world, or do you not? You do sin in this world. Do not say, “I am different from those people” when you are a person who will sin today, sin tomorrow, and sin the day after tomorrow. Do not live so slickly like you have olive oil all over your face when the inside is full of evil. We are all same before the presence of God. We ought only to say, “I really am a sinner. I cannot but go to hell.” However, the Lord made such people receive the righteousness and sent them on their way.

Our God made the sinners into righteous. The Lamb of God who carried the sins of the world has done a wonderful work. Do you and I who were born from our mothers’ womb with sin commit sin until the age of twelve, or do we not? We do commit sin everyday until we die. Has that sin been transferred over to Jesus, or not? It has. The sins we commit here



and there after being born in this world constitute the sins of the world. Do you think the sins of the world are anything special or different than that? All the sins that we commit with our mind and our actions are the sins of the world.

You and I were born from our mothers' womb, and we go through the infantile stage, the childhood stage, adolescent stage, young adulthood, middle age, and the old age. Someone has said that life is having four legs in the morning, two legs in the daytime, and three legs at night. Being born and living like this is the human life, and all the sins we humans commit throughout this lifetime are the sins of the world.

Our Lord took all the sins of the world upon Himself. However, you still have sin even if you believe in Jesus if you cannot acknowledge that Jesus took all the sins upon Himself at the time He received the baptism. The sin remains in you when you commit sin unless you do not believe His baptism.

Jesus took all the sins of the world upon Himself once and for all. Do not say, "I have never heard such things," not even as a joke. The Bible is the Truth. All the Words of the New Testament and the Old Testament have their match as it is written,

*"Search from the book of the LORD, and read:*

*Not one of these shall fail;*

*Not one shall lack her mate.*

*For My mouth has commanded it, and His Spirit has gathered them" (Isaiah 34:16).*

The Bible is like the chain. When one mystery is solved, then all the other secrets are unraveled. If you sin without knowing that Jesus took all the sins of the world when He received the baptism, you cannot but remain a sinner. You are a sinner everyday since you commit sin everyday. You were sinners before you believed in Jesus and you are still sinners even after believing in Jesus.

The Apostles believed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. In 313 AD, Rome declared the Edict of Milan and their form of Christianity became the



national religion of the Roman Empire. And for more than one thousand years thereafter, they forbade people from reading the Bible. It was the period of darkness. During the Middle Age, they taught that they had to do good works even after believing in God, but Martine Luther of 16<sup>th</sup> century said that people become righteous by believing in Jesus.

Religious Reformation seemed to recover the Truth in Christianity. But in reality, nothing was changed. The book that I read twenty years ago is still in the Christian bookstore even now. Even the books that are published these days cannot escape from the past ones. People now think that Christianity has a long history and tradition, but the history of Christianity is short and the Christianity has collapsed in the Western countries where Christianity had originated. In those countries, Buddhism and Islam are torching off a boom. It is because Christianity has lost the Truth and because its leaders are ignorant of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. How could people say they are studying

theology when they do not even know the Bible? How could people say they are studying theology when they do not even know that all the sins of the world were transferred over to Jesus at the time Jesus received the baptism from John the Baptist?

Therefore, there are some people who ask, “Are we sinners even though we believe? Are we in debt even though we have paid the debt? Are we sinners even though we have believed in Jesus to receive the remission of sins?” Jesus told us that we could enter the Kingdom of God only if we are born again of water and the Spirit (John 3:5). He said that a person must be born again by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit if he wants to enter the Kingdom of God.

Then, what is being born again by believing the gospel of the water and the Spirit? The place Jesus received the baptism from John the Baptist was the Jordan River. What is the function of water? It washes the filth from the world. It is raining outside at this moment, and we wouldn't be able to live if it



did not rain because it would be so contaminated. People cannot live without water. Therefore, God gives rain from time to time. God lifts up the vapor from sea and land and washes the earth clean and protects all living things with rain. Water has the cleaning function, and the fire has the function of the judgment. After Jesus received the baptism, no sin remains in the world. That is why Jesus received the baptism from John the Baptist. That is why Jesus became the Lamb of God who carries the sins of the world.

As one needs to have necessary knowledge if he wants to become a leader of a community, don't we need to know the Truth of the blessing of being born again through the water and the Spirit in order to hold revival meetings and preach the Word? See if there is even one book that deals with the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit. They do not even have one page about this issue. They do not know about being born-again. Some say being born-again is achieved by praying in the midst of wind or in a

dream while believing in Jesus, but what in the world is that? Truth is a clear thing. It is a concrete one.

It's because Jesus has taken all our sins upon Himself by receiving the baptism, because our sins have been transferred over to Jesus, and because He carried the sins of the world to the Cross and received the judgment in our place that we do not receive the judgment for our sins. As a result, we have come to call God our Father, we have become righteous, and we have become the children of God. The Scriptures say, *“But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name” (John 1:12)*. It is done by faith. It says, *“For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”*

All our sins have transferred over to Jesus at the time Jesus received the baptism. Jesus saved me by taking all my sins upon Himself and receiving judgment for my sake. I believe this Truth. Believing with our heart brings salvation. The Word says that



we can be saved by faith not by our works. It says, *“For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse.”* It means those who want to be saved by their works are under the curse. Those who believe that one can be blessed, become righteous, and go to the Kingdom of God by doing something good are all under the curse. God gave us the Law in order to make us realize and understand the sin and make us realize that we are under the judgment. And along with the Law, God gave us the law of the Spirit of life (Romans 8:2), which enables us to be born again of water and the Spirit. God gave us the Law and the sacrificial system. We must know and believe that Jesus saved us by receiving the baptism and the judgment. And it was God’s will that He wants us to realize the sin through the Law and that He made us His children by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and receiving the remission of sins.

It is written, *“Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”* Is there any sin in the world? No, there isn’t. Did that entire sin transfer

over to Jesus Christ, or not? Have the sins you had committed ten years ago transfer over to Jesus Christ, or did they not? Have all the sins you have committed until now transfer over to Jesus Christ, or have they not? They have transferred over. All the sins we commit until we die are the sins of the world. When you get married and have children, are the sins of those children transferred over, are they not? They did.

## **The Word ‘Passover Feast’ Implies Passing Over**

The judgment of sin passes over because Jesus received the baptism from John the Baptist and died on the Cross. To whom and how did the judgment transfer over? Jesus came to this world, received the baptism, shed blood, and died on the Cross. Therefore, when the messenger of death visits you, he cannot judge you where the blood of the Lam of



God is on the sides and the top of your doorframe and passes over you. ‘Passover’ means passing over. Jesus took the sins upon Himself and shed blood. It is speaking of circumcision. The sin is cut off by Jesus’ baptism. Our sins are cut off from our hearts when we believe that our sins were passed over at the time Jesus Christ received the baptism. That is the circumcision of the heart (Romans 2:29). The circumcision of the heart means that those who believe in the baptism of Jesus and the blood of the Cross are able to receive salvation. What is important is the faith that enables us to receive salvation. God required this faith and still requires such faith now.

As it is written, “It is finished!” (John 19:30), Jesus fulfilled everything as He died on the Cross. And He resurrected in three days after death and ascended to the right hand of God the Father’s throne.

We are people who commit sin until we die. However, that sin was transferred over to Jesus. Jesus saved you and me. We must believe this Truth with

our hearts. We must realize the Truth. We must grasp the Word that says, “*And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free*” (John 8:32). You can believe the Truth only if you understand it.

Believing without understanding is a superstition and blind faith. That you can receive material blessing and be healed from sickness if you believe in Jesus is the teaching of Christian shamans under the veil of Jesus. There are many such denominations in this era too. Being healed from sickness, receiving blessing, and becoming rich and such things by believing in Jesus is same as becoming rich and receiving blessing when one performs an act of shamanism. A shaman says that demons are cast out and they receive the forgiveness of sins they commit to their ancestors when they exorcise. A Korean shaman says, “Dung, dung. A pumpkin has bust open. Let the morning come. Let the morning come. It will all be mine when the morning comes.” When a pastor who claims to believe in Jesus says, “You will receive the blessing when you believe in Jesus. I



believe God will bless you ten fold if you serve the church,” that is of the Jesus shamans.

Christians ask God to call them when Jesus calls everyone to allow them to enter the Kingdom of God. They say, “You have called me, a sinner. Hence, here I am.” And God will say, “Where does a sinner who has sin go?” “He goes to hell.” “Is a person who has sin a child of God or is he a child of the Devil?” “He is a child of the Devil.” “Go as you have said.”

Our God came to the world, received the baptism, died on the Cross, and was resurrected from death to save us from our sins. And He became the God of salvation for those who believe. Now, the Lord gives the Holy Spirit to those who believe in the gospel of the water and the blood. Do you believe that all the sins of humanity were transferred over to Jesus at the time He received the baptism? Do you believe that the judgment of the Cross that Jesus received was the judgment for the sake of our sins? If you believe so, the Holy Spirit stamps the seal on your heart saying, “You are my child. You are my offspring. I will be

with you until the end of the world. Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me, Jesus. I go to prepare a place for you in My Father’s Kingdom. I have won against the world. The faith of defeating the world is the faith of believing in Jesus Christ who came by the water and the blood.”

1 John 5:4-10 states, *“For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? This is He who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ; not only by water, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who bears witness, because the Spirit is truth. For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness on earth: the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree as one. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God which He has testified of His Son. He who believes in the Son of*



*God has the witness in himself; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son.”*

Here, the Bible states that Jesus has come by the water and the blood. The Holy Spirit stamps the seal on a person who believes that the Lord has come by the water and the blood. Therefore, the water and the blood and the Spirit are one. It says there are three that bear witness to our salvation. The verse 8 says, *“And there are three that bear witness on earth: the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree as one.”* Do you believe the baptism of Jesus Christ? Do you believe the blood of Jesus Christ? Even though Jesus took our sins upon Himself through the baptism, you and I should have received the judgment if he had returned to God without going to the Cross. That’s why Jesus has come by the Spirit, the water, and the blood.

Holy Spirit is the Truth. That the Holy Spirit is the Truth means that He puts a seal on the heart of

people who believe in the water and the blood. Is your sin blotted away even if you just believe in the blood of the Cross without acknowledging the baptism of Jesus? Believing like that is not the true faith. Such a person still has sin in his heart because he has never transferred the sins over to Jesus. Therefore, they go to hell even though they have believed in Jesus. They will cry out, “Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?” The Lord will then say, *“I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!”* They will be cast away like that. Therefore, we must absolutely know the Truth when we know Jesus. We must accept and believe the blessing that made us born again through the water, the blood, and the Spirit.

However, there are many people who just believe in the blood of the Cross. They are sinners. Do they have the Holy Spirit in their hearts? No, they don’t. Let’s talk about this matter more precisely. Do you



have sin, or do you not? No, you don't have sin. You will sin recklessly since you do not have sin, right? No, it's not like that. Then, you would not sin from now on since you do not have sin, right? No, it's not like that either. We commit sin all the time since we have weak flesh. We sin continuously while living in this world because we are weak. However, Jesus took all those sins upon Himself.

Are we sinners, or are we the righteous? That's correct. We are the righteous. Do we have sin to be judged, or do we not? That's correct. We do not have anything to be judged for. Jesus is our Savior and the Son of the Living God.

The Scriptures note, "*The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham*" (Matthew 1:1). In the genealogy of Jesus Christ, a certain daughter-in-law became a wife of that father-in-law. And Rahab the prostitute is counted in the genealogy of Jesus Christ. A few women appear in the Scriptures, and it includes even a gentile woman too. They all became descendants of

Abraham by faith. They were all ancestors of Jesus Christ, the Son of David. It was possible because they believed. Otherwise, how could a prostitute or a gentile woman become a person of God? They became like that by believing the gospel of water and the Spirit, by believing that Jesus was their Savior.

Then, some might question, "There probably wasn't the gospel of the water and the blood in the Old Testament, right?" Don't be ridiculous. We can find so many accounts in the Old Testament that point the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit. Crossing the Jordan River is the account about the water and the blood. Hebrews itself means those who crossed the water. Korean pastors just say anything because they are ignorant. I don't know if they do not have a Bible dictionary or they do not know how to use it, but there are so many ridiculous people. That's why they are sinners every day even though they seek Jesus and believe in Jesus every day. You must not go to such a church. Fire will fall upon such a church. That is not a Church of God. That's a place



where they sell out people's souls and do business with them.

Only the people who have received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit are God's children. And you must go to such a Church. Jesus Christ is our Savior. God's Church is not just any place. Not just any place it is a place that bears witness to the gospel. I said God's Church is not just any place. Citizens of Wonjoo City are so pitiful. Not even a handful came to this revival meeting we are holding now. Why do they not come? Besides this Church, there isn't any place that preaches this kind of sermon in this city. Even so, they do not come. They do not come because pastors of such churches do not let them go. They should come here like a swarm of bees, sit here, and tell us what part is wrong and how it is wrong biblically with the Bible. However, they just hide in the back and whisper secretly, "You become sinless when you go there. Do not go there. You must be a sinner until the end if you believe in Jesus." They are sinners

even after believing Jesus, they are sinners even if they do not believe, and they became the graver sinners ever since they met Jesus. They were destined to go to hell ever since knowing Jesus.

Before the world becomes more difficult, we must look into our hearts, not the circumstance. We must say, "God, I am a sinner who cannot but die, a sinner who cannot but go to hell, and a sinner who cannot but sin. Save me. I am a sinner." Jesus says, "I have saved you through the gospel of the water and Holy Spirit." Do you believe?

Come to God's Church faithfully. People who have come here are special people. Not all the churches are God's temples. The temple is the heart of the people who have received the remission of sins. Red bricks are all for buildings and storages.

It doesn't matter even if you study theology for 100 years. One can barely say he studied theology even if he studied all the theologies of the world. There is no need to talk about theology. Pastors talk about theology, but that is not a realm of human



science. True scholarship is studying all the theologies of the entire world. Claiming that only the doctrines of their own denominations are correct is not theology. Real scholarship is of broad-minded. One must analyze and distinguish this and that after studying everything.

Does a doctorate recipient or a chancellor of a university talk about the faith of believing the gospel of the water and the Spirit? Do famous theologians talk about this gospel? No, they don't. They just insist that being born again is something that is achieved unconsciously. If you have any question, go to the seminary and try to learn. You wouldn't learn anything even if you went there and learned for two lifetimes.

Have you received the remission of sins in your heart? Do you believe the gospel of the water and the Spirit? You must be honest before the presence of God. "I cannot but commit sin. However, Jesus saved me by receiving the baptism and dying on the Cross.

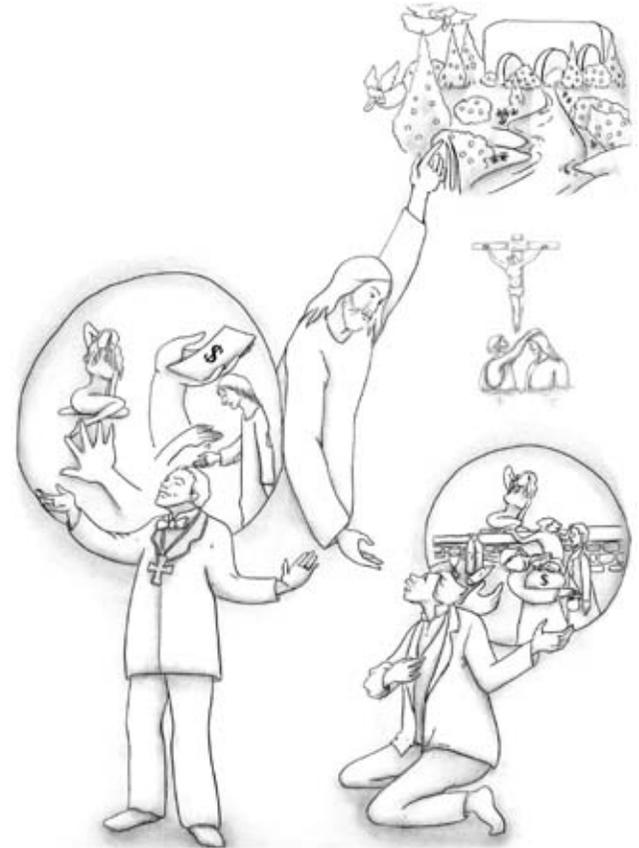
I believe this." Those who believe like that receive salvation.

You must receive salvation first and grow up. A child must grow up. You will become an amazing person after you hear the Word and grow for one year. You become a worker for God's Kingdom. You become a minister. And you will be utilized in the Church. One who truly believes becomes a useful person. Let's all become people who are used for the Kingdom of God. ☒



# SERMON

7



CONTENTS



## The Rich in Heart Cannot Enter The Kingdom of Heaven

< Luke 18:18-27 >

“Now a certain ruler asked Him, saying, ‘Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?’ So Jesus said to him, ‘Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. You know the commandments: ‘Do not commit adultery,’ ‘Do not murder,’ ‘Do not steal,’ ‘Do not bear false witness,’ ‘Honor your father and your mother.’ And he said, ‘All these things I have kept from my youth.’ So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, ‘You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.’ But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich. And when Jesus saw that he

became very sorrowful, He said, ‘How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.’ And those who heard it said, ‘Who then can be saved?’ But He said, ‘The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.’”

### Did the Lord Say So?

In today’s Scripture passage, the Lord said, “*It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.*” It’s so hard for the rich to enter the Kingdom of God that Jesus said that it’s easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for the rich to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Does this then mean that there really is no one rich in Heaven? Is it useless for the wealthy in this world to believe in Jesus? Are



they not allowed to be saved from sin? The Bible writes that it's easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God. However, this passage has a spiritual meaning, and so in reality, there are many rich people in this world who have received the remission of sins to enter Heaven by believing in the righteousness of God.

## **The Rich That the Lord Spoke of Here Refers to Those Who Are Rich in Heart**

This Word was actually spoken to the rich young man who had asked, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" This young man was a ruler. His faith was bound by his own acts. Jesus said, "*Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God.*" Of course, Jesus said so here because in the ruler's view, Jesus was just a good teacher.

The rich ruler saw Jesus just as one of the respected sages in this world, like Socrates, Plato, Buddha, and Confucius. That's why Jesus said, "No one is good but God." In other words, He made it clear here that human beings are absolutely devoid of virtue.

Do you also see Jesus only as a human being? Jesus is God Himself. He is also the Son of God the Father.

Our Lord said to the rich young man, "*You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not murder,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not bear false witness,' 'Honor your father and your mother.'*" The rich young man then claimed that he had kept all these commandments. This means that he had kept all the Word of the Law of God with his acts. He had not committed adultery, nor murdered anyone, nor stolen, nor born any false witness, and had honored his parents.

However, far from praising the man, our Lord said to him, "*You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have*



*treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.*” The Bible says, “*But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich.*” That’s why Jesus said, “*It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.*” Jesus’ point is that the young man had to be poor in heart. In other words, for those whose hearts are filled with the things of the world, the gospel salvation of the water and the Spirit offered by our Lord cannot enter their hearts. Nor is there any room for our Lord’s Word of life, the Word of the remission of sins, to enter. The young man in today’s Scripture passage was rich in both his flesh and his acts. He was a self-righteous man. So it was a forgone conclusion that this man would not accept Jesus as his Savior, nor have the eyes to recognize Him as such. After all, his heart was already filled with the things of the world, and so how could Jesus have entered his heart? How could the gospel Word, which proclaims that Jesus has saved everyone

through His baptism and blood from all the sins of the world, enter such a heart?

The rich young man tried to obtain the remission of his sins and eternal life through his own acts. For Jesus, in contrast, the young man’s salvation did not rest on his own acts, but on Jesus’ baptism and blood. They focused on different things. The young man thought that he could eventually obtain eternal life if he did many good deeds and kept the Word of God and His commandments, whereas Jesus, in complete contrast, was the Savior who had come to deliver those who knew their sinful nature and therefore relied on the love of God and His righteousness.

Everyone living in this world is completely devoid of any virtue. Jesus wanted the young man to say that there was no one good but God, and that every human being was an evil and inadequate sinner. But the young man’s focus laid elsewhere. He was a rich man both materially and spiritually, with his heart filled with self-righteousness and hypocrisy. So those whose hearts are rich—that is, those who are self-



righteous—cannot enter Heaven, just as no camel can ever go through the eye of a needle. However, the Lord preaches a message of hope saying, “*The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.*” No one can enter Heaven by relying on his own righteousness and virtues or by keeping the commandments with his own acts. However, Jesus said that what is impossible with men is “possible with God.”

Indeed, the Lord died for this rich young man, for this evil man. He made him sinless by being baptized in the Jordan River by John the Baptist, the representative of all humankind, and thereby taking upon all his sins. He also bore the condemnation that the rich young man had to bear before God for his sins. Our God has saved everyone—the rich, the poor, the old, and the young alike, and even those who don’t know that God does exist.

## **Everyone Is Always Insufficient in Both Body and Spirit**

Doesn’t everyone in this world commit sin until the end of his life? Everyone commits sin until the day he dies. What about you then? Do you believe that you yourself commit sin until the day you die, or do you believe that you can avoid committing any sin in the future? We all commit sin until the end of our lives without any exception. You know that as a human being, it is in your nature to commit sin from your birth to your death. If Socrates were here, he would have commended you, for he said, “Know yourself.” So all human beings are poor, completely devoid of any virtue or righteousness before God. That is why you must believe that Jesus has saved you through His baptism and blood. Indeed, man has nothing to boast of in his acts.

The Lord said, “*The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.*” We can be saved from all our sins by believing that the Lord bore them



all through the baptism He received from John the Baptist and the blood He shed on the Cross, but unless we do so, we cannot say on our own, “I have no sin; I am a righteous person.” There is no way for anyone to be confident of this unless he believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Yet even though everyone commits sin from the day he is born to the day he dies, those who don’t know their sinful nature still swear to God, “If You forgive me just this one time, I will never commit such sins again.” People say such things only because they don’t know themselves; if they knew themselves, they would have no choice but to thank the Lord for saving them. So the Bible says, “*Let God be true but every man a liar. No one is good but One, that is, God.*” If you know and understand this Word, I am sure that your faith will grow and you will lead an upright life of faith in your personal relationship with the Lord.

We humans have no genuine virtue but only false goodness. It’s all nothing more than hypocrisy. We are devoid of any genuine goodness. You may then

ask, “A lot of people do good deeds in their lives, and so what’s this if not virtue?” It’s hypocrisy. It’s merely a lie. We can see this when we look at the Bible saying, “*No one is good but One, that is, God.*” Can anyone really lay down his life for someone else and give up his everything for the sake of others? If anyone does this, it’s actually done for himself, not because he is inherently good. No one can give up his everything for something that is completely unrelated to him. People practice virtue because it is somehow related to them.

Just a moment ago I had asked you, “Does everyone commit sin from the day he is born to the day he dies?” Your answer was yes, that everyone does indeed commit sin from birth to death. This was the correct answer to the right question, and if that is the case, then it means that we could never be saved unless Jesus bore, in the Jordan River, all the sins that we commit throughout our entire lifetime. Even though we have now been saved, we still commit sin again, and so if the Lord had not taken away all the



sins that we commit from now on until we take the last breath, then it would not have been possible for us to be really saved, nor would we have been able to say so.

However, through His baptism, our Lord bore all the sins that you and I commit until the day we die, and thereby He has become our perfect Savior. If this is true, then one must admit that only God is good. The Bible says, “*It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.*” *And those who heard it said, ‘Who then can be saved?’ But He said, ‘The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.’*” This means that no one can reach his salvation through his perfect acts, by not committing sin and keeping the Law of God.

However, the Bible says that this is possible with God. Having come to this earth, Jesus has saved you and me from all the sins of the world—that is, from our original sin, our personal sins, and our future sins—through the baptism He received in the Jordan

River from John the Baptist and the blood He shed on the Cross. When we quietly ruminate on this love of the Lord who has saved us, we can see that Jesus knew even all our future sins, bore them all through His baptism, and thereby saved us from all the sins of the world. And the covenant that we made with our Lord is forever unchanging, so assured and secure, that once we realize the salvation of the Lord, we can’t help but thank Him. By saving us through the baptism He received in the Jordan River and the blood He shed on the Cross, the Lord has made it possible for us to enter Heaven just by our faith in His righteousness. All of us will die at least once at the end of our lives on this earth, but those of us who take this salvation by faith will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Therefore, we who believe in the baptism of Jesus and His blood have been saved from the sins of the world to enter Heaven. This remission of sins is so precious that whenever we think about all these blessings of God, we cannot help but give Him all thanks.



Salvation cannot be bought with money. The rich young man would not have been saved even if he came back to Jesus and said, “I will give up all my possessions, and so please save me from sin. Use all my possessions to help the poor, but in return, send me to Heaven and give me eternal life to live forever.” The wealthy who try to obtain eternal life with such a mindset will not be approved by Jesus, but instead be cast into hell for their lack of faith. The salvation from sin that God has given us is so precious that no one could achieve it on one’s own, but God has fulfilled it once and for all through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. We must all recognize that every human being disobeys God until his death.

## **Even Christians Are Standing against His Righteousness**

When we turn to the Old Testament, we see how the people of Israel had disobeyed God until their destruction, and in the New Testament, we see that those who disobeyed Jesus were actually those professing to believe in God. Who agitated to crucify Jesus? It was the chief priests, the Pharisees, and the scribes, the three uppermost classes in Israel and its leaders, all of whom professed to believe in God faithfully. The Word that Jesus spoke was not the word of the earth. It was the Word of the Kingdom of Heaven. So those who were poor in heart believed in Him. And the marginalized in this world, the sick, the disabled, and the widows believed in Him as well.

However, the leaders of Israel gave Jesus up to be crucified, saying, “Release Barabbas and crucify this young Man Jesus.” And as though this weren’t enough, they incited the people and said, “His blood



be on us and on our children.” Let’s take a moment to look at the chief priests, the Pharisees, and the scribes. The chief priests were the leaders of the Law of God. These people offered the sacrifice of the Day of Atonement once a year and presided over the legal system of the nation of Israel. They were the judges, in other words.

The chief priests believed that they were qualified to remit away others’ sins as well as theirs at any time. The Pharisees believed that they were preserving the conservative Law faithfully and unchangingly, adhering to the Word of God not only by themselves but also leading others to keep it, and therefore they believed that they were qualified. The scribes were men of authority. They were self-righteous people who thought that they believed in God faithfully and protected their nation. So all these three classes of people were rich.

However, the scribes, the Pharisees, and the chief priests rejected Jesus. When we turn to John chapter 3, we see a man named Nicodemus appearing, who

was a religious leader at the time. This man was looking for God and waiting for the Messiah. He, too, did not realize that Jesus was the Son of God and the Savior. So he just called Jesus rabbi. However, Jesus explained salvation to him, saying to him, “One can see and enter the Kingdom of Heaven only if he is born again of water and the Spirit.” So Nicodemus was eventually born again, and when Jesus died on the Cross, he and Joseph of Arimathea laid the body of Jesus in a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. Nicodemus was a Pharisee, but he was someone looking for God.

Is Jesus really just a man or God Himself? He is God. Even though in His essence He is equal to God, He came to this earth in the image of man to save mankind. Those who recognized this Jesus as God Himself and their Savior were devoid of their own merits. Only those who had no merit of their own at all recognized Jesus. And only these people were saved by believing in Jesus’ baptism, which washed



away the sins of the world, and His blood on the Cross.

The scribes, the Pharisees, and the chief priests were full of their own merits. In this age also, many conceited people agree that Jesus is the Savior, and that one is sinless if he believes in Jesus. However, they can't agree when we say, "Jesus has blotted out all our sins with His water and blood." Why? Because they don't agree that they are so evil without any merit, and they are ignorant of what the Lord has done for such evil beings like them. It's because they don't know the Truth that Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan River in order to bear the sins of mankind. So they believe only in the blood of Jesus. They say that Jesus has blotted out all sins with His blood alone. However, the Truth of salvation is that Jesus has blotted out all the sins of mankind, all the sins of each and every human being, by being baptized and condemned on the Cross.

Those who believe only in the blood of Jesus have too much of their own righteousness. It is not by His

blood alone that Jesus has saved us, but it is by the baptism He received in the Jordan River as well as His blood that He has saved us. Those who are self-righteous do not recognize what Jesus has done for them—that is, the baptism of the covenant that He received in order to bear the sins of mankind, and the blood of the covenant that He shed on the Cross (Matthew 26:26-28, Leviticus 16:21). Today also, those who are self-righteous even as they profess to believe in Jesus—the men of cloth, those who make a lot of offerings, those who hold high church offices, in short, the so-called leaders of Christian communities—are unable to be born again, for they do not believe in the baptism that Jesus received in order to save us sinners from all the sins of the world, the baptism of the covenant foreshadowed by the laying on of hands in the Old Testament. Such Christians cannot believe in this baptism of Jesus because their hearts are too wealthy. Anyone who wants to believe in Jesus must be devoid of his own merits and virtues, and only then can this person



accept the salvation that has come by the water and blood of Jesus.

The Lord said, *“Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven”* (Matthew 5:3). For you to become poor in spirit, you must realize just how insufficient you are and how many sins you will commit in the future, and only such people can fully accept Jesus as their Savior and what He has done for them. Those who are confident that they will not commit too many sins in the future are sinners and modern-day Pharisees standing against Jesus.

Another type of Christian leaders will boast about their high positions in their denominations, saying, “I am the head of this denomination!” Because they’ve done many things for their respective churches, they are self-confident that they will go to Heaven even if they have sin. But these people will all go to hell, for they have not been born again. Nonetheless, Jesus has blotted out even their sins with His baptism and blood. All that they have to do is just believe in this Truth. The salvation of everlasting life is attained by

believing in the baptism of Jesus and His blood. It’s not enough to just believe in the blood of the Cross alone.

The Bible says, *“This is an evil in all that is done under the sun: that one thing happens to all. Truly the hearts of the sons of men are full of evil; madness is in their hearts while they live, and after that they go to the dead”* (Ecclesiastes 9:3). Think about this for a moment. Think about how you have lived so far, how you were so childish and didn’t really mature until later on. Haven’t you lived all this time having mad thoughts and doing mad things? Is there anyone here who wants to object and say, “Maybe that’s true for you, but I’ve never lived like that”? I am sure that some of you may want to say this. But in God’s sight, any sinner that does not pass his sins to Jesus by believing in His baptism cannot believe in Jesus’ crucifixion either, and therefore he will be punished farther down the road.

My fellow believers, have you not had mad thoughts quite frequently? Not only mad thoughts,



but have you not actually done mad things also? All of us have done so before God. Moreover, all of us are bound to continue to commit sin until the day we die. Are you confident that you won't commit any sin in your life? No? Then you are being truly honest. Now then, are you grateful to Jesus knowing that He has blotted out not just your past sins but also your future sins? If your answer is yes, then it is none other than people like you who are poor in heart, and it is such people who can be saved. And it is our God who saves such people. It's written, *"The things which are impossible with men are possible with God."* Put differently, it is God who has saved us.

But in the Bible, Jesus said to the rich young man, *"Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and then follow Me."* The young man's heart was troubled when he heard this. Even though he had said to Jesus, "I've done everything to keep the Law commanding me not to murder, not to steal, not to commit adultery, and to honor my parents," our Lord knew what was in his mind and said to him, *"Sell all*

*you have and distribute to the poor, and then follow Me."* The Lord knew that this rich young man had tried his utmost to obey the Law, and that he was sincere in his desire to keep all its commandments. But Jesus also knew that in his heart, wealth was his god. In other words, even though the young man claimed to practice and keep the Law in his life, he wasn't actually following the Word of God; rather, he was seeking the riches. Knowing this very well, Jesus told him, *"Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and then follow Me."* Put differently, Jesus was saying to the young man: "It's not God whom you believe in, nor is it God whom you are following. You are neither keeping the Law nor striving to do so for the sake of God, and so you cannot enter Heaven. Unless you cast away the riches that are in your heart, you will never be able to go to Heaven. You will not be able to receive eternal life nor attain salvation. However, even though this is impossible for you, if you discover yourself, realize that the wealth that you cherish as though it were



your god actually is not the real God, and truthfully desire to believe in God, then you, too, can be saved.” So our Lord is saying to us, we need to believe in His baptism and blood.

## **The Gospel of the Water and the Spirit Has Remitted Away the Sins of This World**

There are many people living in this world. The issue facing them all is whether they actually believe in the righteousness of God, or, like this young rich man, they believe mammon as their god. If we believe in God, our possessions mean nothing. So long as we use these possessions for a good cause like the faithful steward, our riches by themselves will never constitute a sin before God. But if we regard and believe this wealth as though it were our god, then the wealth itself will turn into an idol.

Everyone’s mind is preoccupied with the riches of the world, and everyone seeks the wealth of the world. However, if you really want to follow God, your possessions should not mean much to you. You have to listen to the Word of God that says, “The silver is Mine, and the gold is mine.” Everything you have belongs to God, and you are just managing what God has entrusted to you. And if you really believe in God as your God, then you should surrender yourself to His written Word and acknowledge its teaching. If the Word says that you are a sinner, that you will commit sin until the day you die, and that you will harbor mad thoughts and do mad things, then you should admit them all and say, “Yes, I am indeed such a sinner; that is who I really am.”

The Bible says, “*Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots?*” (*Jeremiah 13:23*) This passage means that because we were all conceived as sinners in our mothers’ wombs, we simply cannot change ourselves on our own. We can be saved only if God Himself saves us from all our sins through the



water of His baptism and His blood on the Cross. So the poor in spirit can say to the Lord, “Lord, it is Your salvation that has delivered me. It’s the water of Your baptism and Your blood on the Cross that have saved me. I accept the salvation You are offering me.”

The Bible that we now have is the holy Word written by the holy God. God had written His Word through His servants. So we say that this Word of the Scriptures is the Word of God. The Bible is also called as the Scriptures because it transcribes the sacred Word. To believe in this Word as the Word of God is to believe in God Himself.

As it’s shown in Matthew 3:15, do you believe that Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River to thus fulfill all righteousness, and that He has thereby saved us all? Do you believe that the Lord has washed away all your sins? Do you believe that He was condemned on the Cross in your place? Do you believe that Jesus died in our place, and that He rose from the dead again in order to raise us back to life?

And do you believe in this God who is now sitting at the right hand of the throne of the Father, and who will come again in the future? If you do, then this means that you have been saved.

Our Lord has saved us from all the sins of the world through the baptism He received and the blood He shed on the Cross in order to deliver us from all sins. I give all my thanks to the Lord for giving us the gospel of the water and the Spirit and the righteousness of God. ☒



# SERMON

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8



CONTENTS



## **The Salvation of Zacchaeus The Tax Collector**

< Luke 19:1-10 >

**“Then Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. Now behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was of short stature. So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, ‘Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house.’ So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully. But when they saw it, they all complained, saying, ‘He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner.’ Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, ‘Look,**

**Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold.’ And Jesus said to him, ‘Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.’”**

### **It’s People Like Zacchaeus Who Are Saved by God**

Warm greetings to all of you! The summer discipleship training camp starts tomorrow. Many saints are already at the discipleship-training center, and we are all quite excited about it. I ask you all to pray for the safety of everyone traveling to and from the center. Road accidents are particularly prevalent during the summer vacation season, leading to many injuries and deaths. So let’s all pray to God to watch over everyone traveling from our Churches all over



Korea, to protect our saints and servants of the Lord, and to ensure their safety. And let's also pray to our Lord to watch over each and every family.

We just published a book in Hindi. It came out nice. The publication of this book means that we can now spread the gospel to India more effectively. I am so grateful for this. India has multiple languages. Our books have been translating into two of these languages so far, Hindi and Telugu. We will soon translate our books into other Indian languages as well, such as Tamil, Malayalam, Urdu, and Marathi. Our books are also being translated into Tagalog, which is one of many languages of Philippines. Like this, there are so many pending tasks, but for now, we should set aside our work and concentrate on the summer discipleship training camp.

Today, brother Sakamoto from Japan and deacon Soon-ok Park will travel to Inje Discipleship Training Center (DTC). I am sure that more souls will come to Inje DTC from around the world to attend our next discipleship training camp. I hope we

can all get some rest for a week, share fellowship through the Word, and receive many blessings in both body and spirit.

Recently we composed some new praises. This endeavor has also produced a very good result. If we continue in this direction, it seems to me that we will also make a name for ourselves as excellent composers and writers of gospel songs.

My fellow believers, there are many people who are unable to set their minds in the right direction. This is particularly true when it comes to today's youth. Adolescence is a very confusing time, as this is when one builds his values and forms his character, rather than just learning about social norms. Nevertheless, I am confident that in time, the young men and women in our Church will all be able to set their minds and decide on their direction.

Today, we will look at how a man named Zacchaeus was able to receive the remission of sins. Jesus said in today's Scripture passage that He came to this earth in order to find and save those who are



lost. Looking at this passage, several questions come to our minds: “What kind of people receive the remission of sins? What is important when it comes to receiving the remission of sins?” And we can also thank the Lord once again for the grace He has bestowed on us. My fellow believers, Jesus’ mind is set on all the people of this world, not anywhere else.

Today’s Scripture passage starts with words, “*Jesus entered and passed through Jericho.*” There was a man named Zacchaeus in Jericho, who was a chief tax collector and very rich as well. When Jesus came into Jericho, Zacchaeus wanted to see Him. But because he was too short and there was a big crowd gathered there, he couldn’t see Jesus at the other side of the crowd. So he climbed up into a sycamore tree trying to see Jesus.

Most people who receive the remission of sins by believing in Jesus are in fact like Zacchaeus here—they have many problems, they suffer from inferiority complex, and they are weak. What does this mean then? Simply put, Zacchaeus was a thief.

The Bible says that Zacchaeus was a chief tax collector and a rich man. But Zacchaeus had many serious problems. He was suffering from inferiority complex, and he was also a weak man. As a chief tax collector, he had accepted a lot of bribes. In other words, he had become wealthy by unjust means. Money has a captivating allure enticing everyone—the bigger the bribe is, the more effective it is.

What the Bible is teaching us here is that it’s such flawed people who receive the remission of sins. As mentioned, Zacchaeus was a chief tax collector and rich. But no matter how high his position might have been in the tax bureau, he couldn’t possibly have become rich solely on his salaries. After all, few salaried workers can really become wealthy just by relying on their monthly income. How could Zacchaeus then have become so rich? He had built his wealth on bribes. As a tax collector, he probably got kickbacks for turning a blind eye to tax evasion. In other words, he used his position to receive a lot of



money under the table through various means. In all likelihood, that is how he became a wealthy man.

## **A Big Crowd Gathered in Zacchaeus' Town**

One day in Zacchaeus' town, a big crowd gathered around to see Jesus when He was passing through the town. People spoke about what Jesus had done, saying how He had not only healed lepers but also raised the dead back to life, and how He had commanded even the stormy sea into submission.

As one of the inhabitants of this town, Zacchaeus was also very much interested in Jesus. Even though he didn't quite know who Jesus was, he still wanted to see him, wondering what He was like. So Zacchaeus climbed up into a sycamore tree hoping to catch a glimpse of Jesus. Why did he climb up into the sycamore tree? To harvest its fruit? Sycamore trees bear mulberries, and if you eat them, your

mouth will turn all black. It was not to harvest its fruit that Zacchaeus climbed up into the sycamore tree. Rather, he went up the tree to see Jesus. As he was a short man, he couldn't see Jesus with the crowd blocking his view. That's why he climbed up the sycamore tree to see Jesus.

I'd like you to all realize that those who are saved by believing in Jesus Christ are, in fact, weak people suffering from inferiority complex and numerous problems, rather than smart and perfect people. We need to grasp here that it is the imperfect rather than the perfect ones who find Jesus and receive the salvation offered by Him. People demand perfection in all things, but there is no one who is actually perfect. Just like Zacchaeus, everyone is greedy and weak, and everyone has human weaknesses. It's such people who are able to receive the remission of sins, and Zacchaeus is their symbolic representation. Today's Scripture passage illustrates that it is such people who are remitted from their sins.



Zacchaeus saw Jesus from a sycamore tree. While he was watching Jesus passing under the sycamore tree, Jesus looked up and saw him up in the tree, and He said to him, *“Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house.”* Jesus said to Zacchaeus that He would stay at his house. Zacchaeus was watching from above, and Jesus looked up from below and said, *“Come down, for today I must stay at your house.”* Rejoiced to hear this, Zacchaeus came down and received Him in joy, taking Him to his house. Jesus already knew all about Zacchaeus. He knew that Zacchaeus was a weak man, that he had become rich by stealing, and that he had many complexities as a human being. Jesus also knew that Zacchaeus was an imperfect man. But referring to Zacchaeus, Jesus said that this man knew his shortcomings and admitted them, and that instead of trying to cover himself up before God, he sought salvation and the remission of sins from Him. This means that Jesus wants to dwell in the hearts of those who are like Zacchaeus.

In what kind of heart does Jesus want to live ? It’s the hearts of those who are like Zacchaeus here. In other words, Jesus wants to call those who are suffering from inferiority complex, those who are flawed, and those who are insufficient; He wants to blot out all their sins with His baptism and His precious blood on the Cross; and He wants to dwell in their hearts. It’s such people whom Jesus has saved, and it’s in such people’s hearts that He dwells as the Holy Spirit.

All of us want to be completely perfect. However, Jesus said, *“The Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”* Jesus came to this earth to find and save from sin those who are lost and suffering from their insufficiencies—that is, the lost souls who, born as the descendants of Adam and Eve, inherited their weaknesses and shortcomings and are doomed to be cast into hell. In other words, Jesus came to save all human beings from all their sins.

When Jesus called Zacchaeus, He did so because He knew all his flaws. So He said to him, *“Come*



*down, for today I must stay at your house.*” Rejoiced to hear this Word of Jesus, Zacchaeus came down from the tree in haste and held a feast in his house.

Zacchaeus then said to Jesus, *“Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold.”* When one finds the Lord and receives the remission of sins, he is grateful for the fact that even though he is such an insufficient being, Jesus accepted and bore all his sins through His baptism, died on the Cross, rose from the dead again, and thereby blotted out all his sins. And when this person believes in the Lord and his heart is dwelt by Jesus, he is made a new person. What Zacchaeus meant was that he would no longer steal as he had done so before. He had become a new man.

After meeting the Lord, Zacchaeus became a new man. Although he had been a dishonest thief before, now that he met the Lord, he became a new person. From then on he wanted to live righteously. He had always lived in opulence and wealth from his ill-

gotten proceeds, defrauding and extorting people shamelessly, but now he no longer wanted to live for such ends, but for others.

Once someone is born again, he comes to truly realize all about his inferiority complex, his handicaps, and his weaknesses. Moreover, when one understands the Word of God and admits that he is indeed destined to hell according to the Word of God, he comes to believe that in order to save him, Jesus came to this earth, was baptized, died on the Cross, and rose from the dead again. And when this happens, salvation comes into his heart. The remission of sins descends upon him. Gratitude arises from the depth of his heart, realizing, “Jesus took away all my sins. He has become my Savior. I have now really become a righteous man. I’ve become righteous even though I didn’t deserve this. Even though my acts may not have changed that much, at least my heart has been completely transformed. Before, I used to have sin in my heart, but now, there is no more sin.” This person then becomes a



completely new person. This is none other than ‘being born again of water and the Spirit.’

For Zacchaeus too, it was by meeting Jesus who called him, and by going through such transformation, that his heart was renewed before the Lord. It was with this renewed heart that he said to Jesus, *“I give half of my good to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold.”* This means he now wanted to live righteously. This shows that Zacchaeus was determined to end his past practices. The flawed life that he had led until then was no more.

Truly, Jesus knows all our shortcomings. According to the Law of God, we could not avoid but be cast into hell. But a new life will begin if we believe that the Lord has saved us through His water and blood, through His baptism and His blood on the Cross; if we believe that all our sins were passed on to the head of Jesus when He was baptized; and if we believe that our hearts are sinless. We will then become like Zacchaeus.

Those who have received the remission of sins are like Zacchaeus. Zacchaeus was a chief tax collector and rich, a man of short stature looked down upon by his neighbors. All of us are like Zacchaeus before God. We are insufficient people, weak and vulnerable. Yet even so, the Lord has called such people like us. Our Lord said, “I did not come to call the righteous, but to call sinners and make them righteous.” It’s our Lord who has saved us from all sins and made us righteous.

Our Lord said to Zacchaeus, *“Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham.”* Even though you and I are so insufficient, our Lord has still saved us. He has blotted out all our sins. He has made us righteous. He has turned us into new people, able to do truly righteous work. He has given you and me the same blessings that He had given to Abraham, and He has bestowed on us today the same salvation that He had bestowed on Abraham.



You and I need to ponder on here and ask ourselves whether we are like Zacchaeus. Because he was short, he couldn't see Jesus well, and so he climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him more clearly. In doing so he was able to see Jesus and meet Him. This man knew himself well even before he encountered Jesus. He had embezzled so much tax money that it would have taken him just one morning to appropriate a whole building for himself. Zacchaeus also knew very well how many bribes he had accepted. When he compared himself to others, he knew that he had stolen more than anyone else, that he was ethically and morally worse than others, and that he had more shortcomings than everyone else. But this man had heard about Jesus, and he wanted to verify what he had heard and to truly believe in Him. So, wanting to see what Jesus was like, Zacchaeus climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, and Jesus looked up and said to Him, *"Come down, for today I must stay at your house."* Jesus is the Lord who blots out all the sins that are in

such people's hearts, dwells in their hearts, and makes them God's children to take them away to Heaven.

## **You and I Must Cast away Our Preconceived Notions**

Do you think on your own that the Lord has called you and you are now leading a life of faith like this because you yourself is a perfect person, because your ethics and morals are decent compared to most people? There are many people who are even worse than Zacchaeus, but in general, they do not know this themselves. In contrast, Zacchaeus knew himself very well. When Jesus looked at Zacchaeus, He saw that his mind was set on salvation. Suffering from the sins of his heart, Zacchaeus had truly longed for Jesus Christ and waited for the Messiah to deliver him. He was ready to hold on to Jesus and believe in Him as soon as He appeared. As Zacchaeus was



looking down from above, Jesus looked up and saw him yearning to receive His mercy. And knowing all about Zacchaeus, Jesus told him to come down. Zacchaeus, too, also realized that Jesus knew all about him. So he hurried down from the tree, took Jesus to his house, and treated Him to a dinner.

When we stand before someone who knows all about us, we are compelled to speak everything that's in our minds. Jesus knows all about you and me. He knows even the things that you don't know about yourself. It's a mistake to think that the Lord somehow doesn't know you that well. Jesus knows even what kind of sins we are going to commit in the future. You cannot cover yourself up from His eyes no matter how hard you try.

Some people think that they are quite decent, but others think that they have some serious flaws. I'm sure that there are both types of people among us. But Jesus knows all about these people also. We had all gone each on our own sinful way, and yet Jehovah bore our iniquities and died in our place. We are all

flawed and insufficient. However, Jesus knows all about our weaknesses. Do you recognize your fragility? The longer you live, the more your shortcomings will be exposed.

The people of the town denounced Zacchaeus. But in their inside, they were not any better than Zacchaeus, if not even worse than him. All of us also have weaknesses. Jesus knows this very well. When the Lord told Zacchaeus to come down from the tree, Zacchaeus hurried down and took the Lord to his house. What did the Lord then say to him? He told him, "Salvation has come to your house." Jesus had told him to come down from the tree because He already knew everything about Zacchaeus and He absolutely had cleansed all his sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. It's the Lord who reached out to Zacchaeus and met him with His righteousness.

It's the Lord who has blotted out all our sins. Our Lord bore all your sins through His baptism. And He



carried the sins of the world to the Cross and died on it. That is how Jesus has saved you and me.

My fellow believers, if you have an arrogant heart, I ask you to humble it. I admonish you to come out to Jesus Christ, hold on to Him, and believe in His baptism and His blood of the Cross. I ask you to receive the remission of sins by faith like Zacchaeus. If you receive the remission of sins, you will be born again into a new person even if you try not to.

People change when they receive the remission of sins. Their minds are changed. Their acts are changed. Their faith is changed. Their wisdom is changed. Do you really want to become an upright person? Do you want to become a virtuous person? Then believe in the salvation that Jesus is offering you through His baptism and blood. Accept this salvation into your heart. You will then become a new person. It's not by trying on your own that you can become a righteous person, but it is by believing in Jesus Christ with all your heart. In other words, if you believe that the baptism of Jesus and His blood

on the Cross constitutes your salvation, you can become a new person by your faith in Christ. Then your acts will be upright and your heart will be transformed.

My fellow believers, do you really want to become new men and women? Then believe in Jesus. If you want to become a servant of God and used by Him as His instrument for His righteous work, to live an upright life, and to go to Heaven, all that you have to do is just believe in the salvation of Jesus Christ. God will then stay with you, just as the Lord said to Zacchaeus, *"Today I must stay at your house."* The Holy Spirit will descend on your heart, and through the Holy Spirit God will lead your heart, hold it, and guide it to live a righteous life. So if you really want to lead an upright life, all that you have to do is just believe in this gospel. If you believe in the Lord and His gospel Word, you will become a righteous person. But if don't, then you will stay a sinner, and you will never be able to be born again into a new person.



I can understand what Zacchaeus said after he met the Lord. I can appreciate why he said, “*I will give half of my possessions to the poor.*” If you meet the Lord and truly believe in Him, a new heart will spring forth. You will want to really live an upright life. You will yearn to live the life that God wants you to lead.

Before I was born again, I was just like everyone else. Even though I wanted to live virtuously, I was too sinful to lead an upright life. However, once I met the Lord, I became a changed man. Before, I used to do many evil things even as I tried not to commit sin, but once I received the remission of sins, everything changed. I wanted to dedicate the rest of my life to the Lord, to offer my mind, my will, and my everything to Him, and to live for His righteous work. I now had a joyful reason to live in this world. If you meet the Lord, you will also be changed like this.

If you really want to become an upright person, I ask you to believe in the Lord. The Lord will then

transform you. Believe in the Lord first, and He will transform you without fail. If you instead try to fix your acts without believing in the Lord, then you will only go astray even more.

My fellow believers, today you heard about how Zacchaeus was saved. Spiritually speaking, weren't you and I also like Zacchaeus? Indeed, all of us were just like Zacchaeus. We had many handicaps and weaknesses. When facing an extreme situation, everyone's weaknesses are exposed eventually. However, when we were yearning to be saved, and when we had fallen into despair wondering who would save us from our sins, Jesus came looking for us. He came looking for you through the gospel Word of His baptism and blood. And we accepted this gospel. By accepting this gospel, you and I became new creatures. That is how we came to lead a completely righteous life before God. We have become God's own children.

If you are having a hard time trying to correct your flawed behavior, do not be too disappointed by



this. Instead, ruminate on this gospel, preach it and take pride in it, and meditate on it. Remember that all your sins were passed onto Jesus when He was baptized in the Jordan River. Look toward the fact that Jesus has fulfilled your salvation by being baptized and dying on the Cross. Your heart will then be renewed. It's the Holy Spirit, not yourself, who transforms you. Rely on God. Look for Jesus Christ and hang on to Him. And once you are born again, never lose the sight of the way of Jesus but follow it always. Believe that when you listen to and learn about the Word of God countless times, wisdom will spring forth and a new way will be opened to you. The Lord has given truly amazing salvation to you and me. I give all my thanks to the Lord time after time.

Now that we have become new people, we are sharing half of our possessions with the poor. We have indeed dedicated all our lives to the Lord, 100 percent. None of our ministry workers has private property. We are devoted to the work of the Lord so

singularly that it may even seem obsessive. But we are working to save countless people. The Lord has made us live such a righteous life. It's not because of our own merits that we are leading a righteous life. Rather, it's all because the Lord has met us, who, just like Zacchaeus, are full of handicaps and weaknesses. He also said to us, "Come down, for today I must stay at your house." Even though we were doomed to hell because of our sins, the Lord has saved you and me from all our sins by coming to this earth, being baptized, and dying on the Cross. He has made it possible for us to live a righteous life.

Words cannot express just how grateful I am to the Lord. For the sake of this salvation that the Lord has given us, we must spread the gospel Word all over the world, lead a righteous life, and then go to the Lord to see Him face to face.

Half of this year has gone by, and we've faced many difficulties so far. But on this summer discipleship training camp, let us meet all the servants of God and His saints from all over the

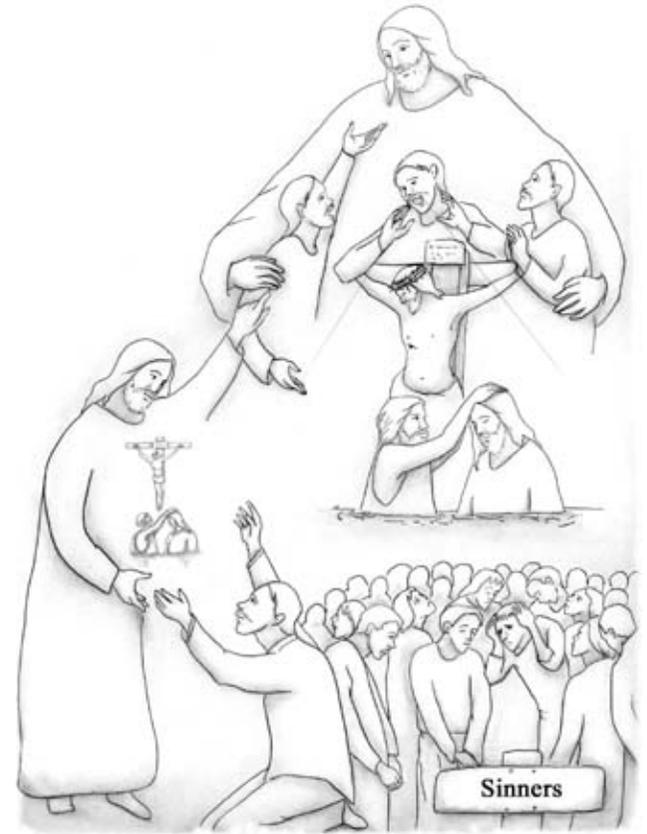


country, share fellowship with them, and give our testimonies. Through this, we will find new strength.



# SERMON

## 9



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## **Serving the Gospel of The Water and the Spirit Is the Most Righteous Thing to Do**

< Luke 19:1-10 >

**“Then Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. Now behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was of short stature. So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, ‘Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house.’ So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully. But when**

**they saw it, they all complained, saying, ‘He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner.’ Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, ‘Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold.’ And Jesus said to him, ‘Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.’”**

### **God Looks for Those Who Desire to Live Righteously and Meets Them Personally**

God knows very well who is looking for Him. He understands the hearts of those who desire to live righteously. In today’s Scripture passage, there appears a chief tax collector named Zacchaeus. When this man heard that Jesus was coming to his town, he



ran out to see Him. However, as he was a short man, he couldn't see Jesus across the crowd, and so he climbed up into a sycamore tree to catch a glimpse of Him and saw the Lord from there.

While Zacchaeus was perched on the sycamore tree, Jesus passed underneath the tree, looked up at Zacchaeus in the tree, and said to Him, "*Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house.*" Zacchaeus then came down from the tree in joy, held a feast for Jesus, and said to Him, "*Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold.*" These words of Zacchaeus were his confession, admitting that although he couldn't live righteously despite his wish, now that the Lord came to such an insufficient man like Zacchaeus and he met the Lord, he wanted to live righteously from then on. We can see here how Zacchaeus became a changed man.

Zacchaeus was a chief tax collector. At that time, Israel was a tributary state of the Roman Empire. So

when the people of Israel were taxed, a certain portion of the tax revenue was sent to Rome. However, this did not mean that all the tax revenue earmarked for Rome actually made its way to Rome's treasury. Some of the money was skimmed off by tax collectors. For instance, if \$100 were collected in tax, only about \$50 to \$70 were handed over to Rome, and the rest were embezzled by the tax collectors. In this way, the tax collectors also enriched themselves by diverting some of the tax revenue.

As a chief tax collector, Zacchaeus had also led such an unrighteous life. So when Jesus went to Zacchaeus' house, the people complained about how Jesus was visiting a sinner's home. However, Zacchaeus had climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Jesus Christ and to find out who He was, and from there he had seen Jesus passing through the town. And when he saw Jesus eye to eye, at this very moment he realized who Jesus was, and a new desire sprang forth in his heart to live righteously.



My fellow believers, every human being has the desire to live righteously. Although in our hearts we all want to lead a righteous life, it's also true that before we met Jesus, all our lives had gone astray. We are just like Zacchaeus. We had lived by unrighteousness, just wanting to lead a comfortable life and justifying ourselves constantly. But how did Zacchaeus change after he met Jesus? He said to Jesus, *"I give half of my goods to the poor."* This means that he was promising to lead an upright life from now on. By saying that he would give half of his wealth to the poor, Zacchaeus was confessing that his heart now desired to live righteously and for a righteous cause. His heart was thus transformed. He also said, *"If I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold."* This is the evidence showing the great transformation that occurred in Zacchaeus' heart, a man who had always lived in unrighteousness until then. A thief was now declaring that he would turn his heart around and live

righteously from now on. Once Zacchaeus met the Lord, his heart was changed in this way.

My fellow believers, it's when we meet the Lord that our hearts desire to live for the righteousness of God. Moreover, it is only after we meet the Lord that we can actually lead an upright life. Before we met the Lord, none of us was able to live righteously. However, now that we have met the Lord, we all yearn to lead an upright life. Thanks to the Lord, we now have the desire to live a truly righteous and upright life. Having blotted out all our sins, the Lord now dwells in our hearts as the Holy Spirit and abides in us. Just as our Lord had led unrighteous Zacchaeus to desire to live an upright life, so has He also come into our hearts and provoked the desire to live an upright life in us now that we've met Him. Isn't this true, my fellow believers? God has given such desires to our hearts. He has raised these desires in us. We now want to lead an upright life. We want to live for what is righteous. Regardless of how we have lived in the past, God has stirred us to desire to



live a new life with a new beginning, and to devote our lives to His righteous work.

Having thus raised the desire to live an upright life in our hearts, the Lord is now guiding us so that we would live such a righteous life. Our Lord works inside us. He gives us the desire to do what is right, and He helps us to achieve it. Like this, God is supporting us from behind. God has clearly given us the desire to live for what is right, but we need to ask ourselves whether or not we have really accepted this will of the Lord. Given the fact that the Lord has raised the willpower to live such a life in our hearts, it would be profoundly wrong for us ignore the will of the Lord. We shouldn't pretend not to hear Him. The Lord has given us the desire to live a righteous life, and He is always reminding us of this desire. It is then our duty to respond sincerely to the Word of the Lord and His calling, and we should live the rest of our lives according to the God-given desire.

Before I met the Lord, I used to think that I was living a virtuous life for a righteous cause in my own

way. When you look back to your life, you probably thought the same way. However, what happened after you and I actually met the Lord? We no longer think about our own righteousness that we had, nor our own virtues, but we think about the true desire that our Lord God has given us to really live for what is right despite the lack of our own strength. Our Lord has given us such a worthy desire to live for what is right, leading us to serve His righteous work in the Church, spread the gospel, and live the rest of our lives for the Lord and His righteous work. He has made us live righteously.

It is not because of our own merits that we are abiding in this Church. It's not because you are good and righteous that you are in the Church. We are here now because God has stirred in us the desire to live for His righteous work. It's because God has given us such righteousness and raised such a good desire in our hearts that we have come into the Church and we are now serving the Lord, leading a life of faith and carrying out His good work in our lives. All these



things have come about thanks to God. The Lord knows very well who desires to live righteously. And it's such people whom He meets. Zacchaeus knew his unrighteous self very well. And Jesus also knew very well that Zacchaeus was an unrighteous man. Even though at one corner of his heart Zacchaeus wanted to live righteously, until then he did not have anyone to lead him to the right path. However, when Zacchaeus heard that Jesus was coming to his town, he yearned to see Him, wondering who Jesus was, and as a result of this search, Zacchaeus got to see Jesus.

And once he met Jesus, his heart was completely changed. A great transformation occurred in Zacchaeus' heart. He now desired to live for what was righteous. My fellow believers, there are those in this world who want to live for what is righteous. Of course, such sublime desires are not the exclusive possession of a few special people, but everyone, including you and me, has the same desire. So long

as our conscience has not been seared with a hot iron, all of us have at least some desire for goodness.

However, the problem is that even if we want to do what is right, we cannot do so unless we meet the King of righteousness. Unless one meets Jesus and is led by Him, no one can do what is right. Recently we've pledged to offer donations to finance a new church. Such devotion is very good to our spiritual lives. This endeavor is pursued with Jesus in our minds, to do what is right, rather than for the sake of the ministers and the saints per se. It's a wonderful thing to dedicate ourselves to the righteousness of God. It provides us with an opportunity to serve the Lord before God. It's an excellent opportunity to do what is right, to serve God with a sincere heart, and to reorient our hearts' disposition away from the world. If the saints are exempted from serving the righteous work, they will inevitably fall into the world. There is no end to worldly desires; when one desire is satisfied, another desire pops up, leading us to be evermore greedy to fall deeper into the world.



My fellow believers, you will know what I mean once you actually start serving the Lord. You will then come to realize just how gratifying it is to serve the Lord. To this very day we have served the Lord faithfully despite our difficulties. As a result, our Church has spread throughout Korea. Whatever little sacrifices that we might have made to serve the Lord, the result of our endeavor has exceed all expectations, and we are still standing strong to meet new challenges and carry out new tasks. If we had instead devoted our energy to increasing our worldly possessions and taking care of our worldly affairs, there would be no end to this, and it would not bring any satisfaction. However, this work of serving the Lord is truly worthwhile. There is nothing that's more worthwhile than this work. As you may all know from your own experience, serving the world is meaningless. The world cannot bring any satisfaction to us.

However, if you serve the Lord, your heart will find satisfaction even if your service is small. Every

branch of our Church in Korea has pledged to make financial contributions for evangelism even under difficult circumstances and with few resources, and thanks to this devotion, many souls are now being saved all across Korea and beyond. God has blessed us to live righteously. Even though our offerings to God are small, He has blessed us greatly and led us faithfully, so that we may live righteously. God has even enabled us to plant our Churches overseas, and He has stirred up a righteous desire in our hearts and led us so that we would be able to carry out such a great work of righteousness.



## **Having Met the Lord, Zacchaeus Said, “*If I Have Taken Anything from Anyone by False Accusation, I Restore Fourfold*”**

Now, from this passage we may very well conclude here that Zacchaeus had already lost all his possessions. That’s because most of his wealth had been built unjustly as a chief tax collector. In fact, it wasn’t just most of his riches that were accumulated by stealing, but literally all his riches were ill-gotten, and so it would have taken his entire wealth to pay back his victims. From this we can see that Zacchaeus’ heart was profoundly changed. Once he met Jesus, his heart was completely changed into a new one.

When God saved us, our hearts were also completely changed thanks to the righteousness of God that was installed in us by God. My fellow believers, you should never forget or overlook this.

Our Lord has given us a new heart. He has made us do new works. Yet despite this, are we not by any chance drawn to the flesh, and overlooking this desire that the Lord has given us to carry out His righteous work? When the Lord raises His righteousness in our hearts and leads us to do His righteous work, we must obey Him. God has provoked a desire in our hearts to carry out many righteous works and He has made us do what is right. That is how God works in you and me.

Do not follow only your desires of the flesh. If you do so, you will be drawn into a life of complacency and end up thinking that you don’t need to listen to the Word anymore now that you’ve received the remission of sins. Even after receiving the remission of sins, if your heart is attached to the world, you can fall into its bottomless pit with no end. And once your heart falls into the world like this, peace can never abide in your heart. Instead, your heart will be always troubled and tormented. You will suffer. It’s far more tortuous than serving



the Lord. There is no satisfaction if your heart falls into the world. Whenever you can't guard your heart, suffering will soon visit you. It may seem as though everything is going well, but nothing will go well. In the end, you will fall into a trap.

However, if we live according to the righteous desire that the Lord has stirred in us, carry out and serve His righteous work, and follow the Lord and serve Him, then despite our hardships and difficulties, the Lord will lead us to the blessed way of peace. You must grasp that God has inspired such a desire in our hearts. All of us must realize that we have such a desire not because we are righteous on our own, but because God has planted it in your heart and in mine.

Even though you have received the remission of sins, are you not still bound by the world, always worrying about how to make a living, what to eat and what to drink? Or, by any chance, is there anyone among the redeemed who has bet his everything on himself? My fellow believers, you can never live in

prosperity just by relying on what you now have. Do you think you would live in opulence if you had a million dollars? Those who are pressed for money may think that they would never have to worry about money if they had a million dollars. But it all depends on how you spend your money. If you think to yourself, "Whatever I have, I will manage it well and make sure that it lasts to ensure my livelihood," then you will never be able to do any righteous work in your entire life; instead, you will end up spending all your money just on yourself.

However, my fellow believers, if you live for the Lord, then you will be able to live in prosperity even if your present possessions are few. Even as you help your neighbors, live for God's righteousness, and do the righteous work, you will live the rest of your life as a rich person. We must grasp this. We must realize clearly what the righteous work is, and what is the right life for us to lead. Money is actually worthless unless it's used for what is righteous. If one turns into a slave of money, he will turn into a despicable



person. Every human being should practice and carry out the righteous work before his life is over.

In Zacchaeus' heart, he had the desire to practice righteousness for the rest of his life. The Bible says, "*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled*" (Matthew 5:6). My fellow believers, do you want to practice righteousness in your life? If that is what our hearts really desire, then God will enable us to do so. I believe that if we yearn to live for the righteousness of God, then God will entrust us with His righteous work so that we would indeed live for His righteousness and carry out His righteous work, all the while abounding in prosperity. Our God's blessings are given in abundance. If only we have the desire to live for righteousness, the Lord will bless us abundantly.

Looking back to the 30 years of my life that I had lived before meeting the Lord, and the past two decades that I've led after meeting Him, I ponder about which life was right and worthwhile. Although

it's a wonderful blessing that I've received everlasting life from the Lord to live forever, I am even more rejoiced by the fact that I have met the Lord, and that thanks to this, I've been able to lead a more righteous life. Even if one were to live for just a month on this earth, the life that he leads after meeting the Lord is far more precious and righteous than his entire past life. Our Lord has enabled us to do far more righteous work every year after meeting Him than all the work that we had done for decades before we met Him.

We sometimes feel that it's a burden to do what is right. However, once we give some more thought to it and reach the conclusion that it is the right thing to do, then we ought to participate in this work. We must know whether what we are doing is right or wrong, choose the right work, and carry it out. God plants unambiguously right desires in our hearts.

However, the problem is that we succumb to fear too easily without even thinking about it carefully, and that is why righteous desires disappear from us,



and in the end, we find ourselves able to neither practice righteousness nor fulfill our will, and instead live in wretchedness for the rest of our lives. We should not be deceived by Satan. The Devil is still trying to lure us into the lusts of the world just like he did to Adam and Eve. Therefore, we must think about what is right, make it our goal, and run for righteousness.

## **We Must Realize What Is Right in God's Sight**

There are two things in this world that the Lord told us to commemorate without fail to the end of the world. One of them is that we must remember how the Lord has saved us from all our sins by coming to this earth and giving us His body and blood. For this, the Lord told us to hold the sacrament of Holy Communion.

Another thing that the Lord told us to remember is how a woman named Mary, who had been demon-possessed, broke a jar of fragrant oil and poured it on the head of Jesus. Her dedication was to prepare for the burial of Jesus, and it was the confession of her faith that declared, “The Lord Jesus has blotted out all my sins with His baptism and His blood on the Cross. He has offered such a wonderful sacrifice with His own body for me that nothing is more precious than this salvation.” The Lord was pleased with Mary’s faith and said, “*Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her*” (Mark 14:9).

What is the most righteous work in this world? It is serving the gospel. Serving the gospel is the most righteous work. Do you believe this? Serving the gospel is what pleases the Lord the most. In the sight of the Lord, this is the most worthwhile work. What you do to serve the gospel is stored as your rewards before the Lord, and it is also what bears the most



virtuous fruit. Planting churches, spreading the gospel to souls, and serving it in whatever way possible, whether with our possessions, prayers, bodies, services, or time—these are the righteous work that we can do for the gospel, and they are also what pleases the Lord the most.

By preaching the gospel, we commemorate the act of Mary Magdalene, which the Lord told us to remember. This woman had been demon-possessed, but after she met the Lord, she broke her priceless alabaster jar of fragrant oil for the burial of the Lord. And she poured the whole bottle on the head of Jesus. At that time, those nearby thought to themselves, “That woman must have gone mad. Why did she break the alabaster jar of fragrant oil and pour it on Jesus’ head? It would have been better if she had sold it and gave the proceeds to the poor.” They criticized Mary and rebuked her like this. And they criticized Jesus as well, saying, “How can You just watch this woman wasting so much and not do anything about it? Why are You leaving her alone?”

Jesus then said to them, “*The poor will be always with you, but I will not be with you always.*” He also said, “*Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her.*” This means that Mary did what was right. Through her righteous act, the Lord is speaking about how we should serve the Lord. And He is encouraging us to serve Him in the right way. My fellow believers, we all need to learn from Mary’s example, realizing that what she did here was the right thing to do.

Poverty is an intractable problem that cannot be resolved no matter how much we try to help the poor. Even though rich countries have been providing economic assistance to poor countries for many years, the problem of poverty has not been resolved yet. Take a look at what’s going on in countries like Ethiopia and Somalia. Despite the fact that the whole world came to the assistance of these famine-stricken countries, many people there are still continuing to die of starvation. These countries received a



tremendous amount of food and aid from countries all around the world. Why is it then that so many people are still starving to death? Even though many countries and organizations have worked hard to alleviate poverty, such efforts have produced hardly any change and little fruit. This is a serious failure. In Korea there is a saying that even kings cannot eradicate poverty.

However, although the effort to address the problem of perpetual poverty has resulted in little progress, with many people continuing to die in abject poverty, serving the gospel of Jesus Christ is not in vain. The preaching of the gospel bears fruit. If you serve the gospel, countless people will receive the remission of sins. Serving the gospel will bear such fruit. None other than this is the right thing to do. Even though people may not be rescued from their poverty by the gospel, they can still receive their spiritual salvation. What a precious fruit is this? Thanks to the services and sacrifices of the

predecessors of faith, on account of their righteous acts, countless people following us are being saved.

The Lord commended the saints of the Church in Philadelphia for their faithfulness. He said, *“I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name”* (Revelation 3:8). The Church in Philadelphia had little strength, but the saints there had kept God’s Word faithfully. The Lord is truly pleased when we keep our faith until the end. If this faith is corrupted, we will be thrown into tremendous suffering.

Like this, the Lord is interested in the faith that we are defending and the gospel that we are serving. In other words, the Lord is interested in those who are doing what is right after meeting Him, those who have become His people. The reason why we are following God and doing what is right is because God said that He would remember everything, and that we would never lose our rewards for the smallest



things that we have done, even for giving a cup of cold water to the little ones.

You and I must realize clearly and remember just how much God approves us when we serve the gospel. He is pleased with us. When the Lord saw a poor widow putting in two mites on the collection plate, He praised this poor widow, saying, “*She out of her poverty put in all the livelihood that she had.*” Whatever we may have, we must realize that what’s important is our hearts’ desire to do the right thing and follow the righteous work, the heart that hungers and thirsts for righteousness, and the desire to practice righteousness.

My fellow believers, I admonish you all to participate in the righteous work even if it is small. And I ask you to participate in great works as well. Be rejoiced to serve the Lord. I am sure that there is no end to your heart’s desire to serve God. There always are more things that you can do to serve the Lord, and I know that God will give you everything you need to serve the Lord. If we serve the Lord

wholeheartedly, God will provide for all our needs. He will not only provide for what we need to serve the Lord, but along with this He will also provide for everything we need to make a living.

A righteous life is one that is led by doing what is right. God has given us such a disposition. Just as He provoked Zacchaeus’ heart to yearn for God’s righteousness, so has the Lord also provoked the hearts of the saints to long for the righteousness of God. Let us then not deny this. Let us instead live for God’s righteousness in obedience. That is the right thing to do. If you cling to the few things that you now have and rely on them, then you will have no choice but to live the rest of your life confined by the limits of your possessions and you will bear no fruit. However, if you serve the Lord, pray to Him, and live by faith, then you will surely live a prosperous life even after offering all your possessions to the Lord. My fellow believers, you must learn this secret of service.



If you fret about your possessions, the Lord will say to you, “Live the rest of your life with what you have now.” However, even if you have no possession, if you serve the Lord with all your heart, then He will fill you even more if only to be served by you and fulfill His will. This is the secret of service. It’s not a lie. It’s the Word of God promising us that if we serve the Lord, the Lord will take care of us. If you serve the Lord, then the Lord will serve you. This is the secret to a successful life. It’s the hidden truth. It’s the truth appreciated by only those who have actually served the Lord.

Those who live according to the Word of God are able to recognize the white stone given by God. The Lord said in the Book of Revelation, “*To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it*” (Revelation 2:17). Only those who have served the Lord are able to experience how the Lord helps them in their everyday lives. This is

the life that all of us should lead as Christians. Unless we serve the Lord, we will remain at the level at which we find ourselves. But if we serve the Lord, then we will be able to live in abundant prosperity. Do you grasp this? We must give wholehearted thanks to God. Such a way of service is a mystery. It’s not just the remission of sins that’s mysterious, but this, too, is a blessed mystery.

What would you do if you had a million dollars? If I had a million dollars, I’d use it for a worthy cause. I’d start new businesses to carry out the Lord’s work. But for some people, a million dollars means little. It’s not enough for them, other than to barely make a living. But if I had a million dollars, this money would not be wasted on just eating and drinking. Instead, I’d invest it wisely to increase the amount by dozens and hundreds of times. I’d maximize the return to serve the Lord. Based on the investment of a million dollars, I’d produce millions more dollars in return.



This is how the people of faith are different from ordinary people. You have received the remission of sins. How should you then live from now on? If you cling to your possessions like Scrooge, your wealth will not increase. You will instead lead a penny-pinching life only to die in the end. However, if you live to serve the Lord, you will be able to live in prosperity. For those who serve the Lord, their lives will be made richer even after giving up all their possessions. This is what the Lord is saying to us through today's Scripture passage.

We don't know exactly how much wealth Zacchaeus had accumulated. But since he was a chief tax collector, he must have accumulated a lot of ill-gotten wealth. However, even though Zacchaeus had enriched himself unjustly in greed, once he met the Lord, he confessed, "I will give half of my possession to the poor." What a rich life is this? Before Zacchaeus met the Lord, he was a penny-pinching miser who gave not even a cent to the poor despite being a rich man. However, after he met the

Lord, he said that he would give half of his possessions to the poor. And he also said, "*If I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold.*" Having met the Lord, Zacchaeus' heart discovered the righteousness of God, and his entire life was transformed to live such a rich life.

When you look at the life that Zacchaeus was leading before meeting the Lord and the life that he began to lead after he met the Lord, which is richer? Which Zacchaeus is richer—the old, penny-pinching Zacchaeus or the new, transformed Zacchaeus? It's the new Zacchaeus who lived a richer life after meeting the Lord. This is what it really means to be rich.

Zacchaeus was so short that he had to climb up into a sycamore tree to see Jesus. A sycamore tree is not that big. How short, then, must he have been to climb up a sycamore tree? He wasn't just a bit shorter than the average man at the time, but he was among the shortest of all. So he couldn't see Jesus across the crowd, and that's why he climbed up into a



sycamore tree. What did Jesus do then? He saw and recognized Zacchaeus despite his short stature. He called Zacchaeus perched on the tree and revealed Himself to him, saying, “*Zacchaeus, come down, for today I must stay at your house.*” How did Jesus know about Zacchaeus then? He knew about Zacchaeus because He had come to his town to meet him personally. After meeting the Lord, Zacchaeus lived in prosperity. He led a righteous and upright life.

Once we receive the remission of sins, at the very least we must serve the Lord in our lives. This is what every Christian’s life is all about. You need to grasp here that this is the life that the righteous who have received the remission of sins should all live, and that it is the normal life that every righteous person is expected to lead. If we fail to serve the Lord even as we have received the remission of sins, the Lord will not serve us either. The Lord serves those who serve Him. He said, “*Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is*

*the Law and the Prophets*” (Matthew 7:12). If you want to be loved by the people of the world, then serve the world and its people. If, on the other hand, you want to be blessed by God, then serve God. You will reap what you sow. Although the remission of our sins is received as a gift through out faith, our rewards are reaped according to what we sow. Those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness will be called God’s sons and daughters, and they will be rewarded for their suffering. The Lord will serve those who have served Him. In contrast, those who serve the world will suffer because of the world.

All of us must grasp this elementary truth. How you live your life is not up to me, but I have to teach you the basic principles that you should know as a Christian. Whether you, after listening to the Word of God, practice what you’ve learned or not depends entirely on you. It depends on your personal relationship with God. Try serving the Lord for a change. Then the Lord will never leave you alone. He will repay you in one way or another and clothe you



in abundant grace for serving Him. The Lord will serve you even more than what you've done to serve Him. Those who have actually served the Lord know this. Try not to be so stingy when serving the Lord. The Lord will then not be so stingy with His blessings either.

Rather than working directly by Himself, the Lord does everything He wants to do through us, in the hearts of our redeemed saints, by borrowing our hands, lips, legs, eyes, and ears. God blesses those who are used by Him even more, so that they may bear more fruit and be used even more. Do you believe this, my fellow believers? This is God's principle.

My dear fellow saints, I admonish you all to live for what is right. The Lord has provoked righteous desires in us. I ask you to live according to these righteous desires. I admonish you to live the rest of your life righteously and uprightly. Do not waste away your life in vain. Do you want to be happy? Then follow the Lord. Your happiness is then already

secured. Do you want to be blessed in your life? Follow the Lord then, and you are guaranteed to be blessed. God has planted righteous desires in us to practice righteousness. Even at this very moment, God is stirring up righteous desires in us.

Once such desires are provoked, we are driven to serve the Lord in whatever way possible, so much so that our hearts are actually tormented if we do not carry out the Lord's righteous works and fail to serve Him even for a day. Is this also true for you? God has provoked righteous desires in us. He has given you and me the desire to lead an upright life.

Let us then all give praise and thanks to our Lord God. ☒



# SERMON

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## 10



CONTENTS



## **Possess the Mindset Like That of Zacchaeus**

< Luke 19:1-10 >

**“Then Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. Now behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was of short stature. So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, ‘Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house.’ So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully. But when they saw it, they all complained, saying, ‘He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner.’ Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord,**

**‘Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold.’ And Jesus said to him, ‘Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.’”**

### **Spiritually Speaking, Who Is Zacchaeus among Us?**

Today, I want to give a sermon about the story of Zacchaeus shown in the Gospel of Luke chapter 19. Dear fellow believers, you all might know Zacchaeus well, don't you? Among Christians, there probably isn't a person who doesn't know Zacchaeus. Today's Scripture passage is a famous one about that tax collector Zacchaeus who had climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Jesus. This is a well-known Scripture to us, and his story even appears in our new



hymnbook. As you have read today, Zacchaeus received blessings for He had accepted Jesus, and by having accepted Jesus into his heart, He was able to go through a great and wonderful change. This story about Zacchaeus gives us a tremendously wonderful teaching.

It is written, *“Then Jesus entered and passed through Jericho” (Luke 19:1)*. The word, ‘Jericho,’ has the meaning of ‘aroma,’ and this in turn refers to this very world. Hence spiritually speaking, the passage which says that Jesus entered and passed through the town of Jericho, which means ‘aroma,’ tells us that our Lord has come to this world having thrown away His throne in the Kingdom of Heaven.

And then it goes on to say, *“Now behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was of short stature. So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, He*

*looked up and saw him, and said to him, ‘Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house.’ So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully” (Luke 19:2-6)*.

When we look at the personal profile of this Zacchaeus, it states that this man was a chief tax collector and very rich. In today’s terms, a chief tax collector is equivalent to the head of the revenue office. Usually, government officials’ salaries are a set amount, and so it is only right that they should only have a reasonable amount of wealth to make a living. But despite being a government official, Zacchaeus was said to be an enormously rich man. It probably means that he had sat behind an important post and embezzled some backdoor funds. Even these days, it is possible to think that those government officials who own much land or have palace-like houses are people who sit behind important posts being bribed with much money. We can’t say all of them are like that, but it is very difficult for a person to buy even a small house with



the amount of salary earned by having worked all throughout his life as a government official. Yet, that person owning much land and having a large house would probably mean, nine times out of ten, that the person sat behind an important post and received bribes coming in backdoor. Whatever the case, we could safely assume that Zacchaeus had filled himself up with the much money he had embezzled.

This man named Zacchaeus being a chief tax collector and a rich man means that he was person whose worldly status was at a certain level and that he had a large amount of wealth. This Zacchaeus' only weakness was his very short stature. Zacchaeus had an interest in Jesus, and when he opportunely heard that Jesus was going to enter and pass through Jericho, he climbed up into a sycamore tree, thinking in his heart, "Let me for once see who this Jesus is by taking this opportunity." Climbing up into a sycamore tree, that was how he got to see Jesus.

Just then, from underneath the sycamore tree, Jesus saw that sight and said, "*Zacchaeus, make*

*haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house*" (Luke 19:5). Hearing those words, Zacchaeus quickly came down, brought Jesus to his house, and provided a meal. As he did so, a surprising change came about in his heart. Regarding this, the Bible tells us the following: "*Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, 'Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold'*" (Luke 19:8). After receiving Jesus, Zacchaeus, who was a corrupt government official, experienced such a surprising change.

## What Happened to Zacchaeus?

How did this Zacchaeus react when he was told by Jesus to come down from the sycamore tree? Following Jesus' words, He came down quickly from the sycamore tree. And a change occurred in his heart as he received Jesus. But what do these Scripture



passages mean? Dear fellow believers, if you take a look at chapter 19, verse 10, it is said, “*For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.*” The Lord came to seek and to save those who were lost. In other words, today’s Scripture passage is telling us that Jesus came to this earth to seek people who are like this Zacchaeus and save them.

When we look at Zacchaeus, we can see that he had strengths and weaknesses such as being a chief tax collector, rich, and short in stature. However, regardless of such humanly things, it is clear that Zacchaeus’ heart was headed toward Jesus. When Jesus told Zacchaeus to come down quickly, Zacchaeus obeyed Jesus’ words by coming down in haste. In this part, we must also be able to realize how Zacchaeus came to meet the Lord and how he got to experience change in his heart. From a worldly perspective, Zacchaeus was very rich and held an adequate position, but on the other hand, he was short and had nothing much to show. However, regardless of these things, he came down in an instant without

any hesitation when the Lord told him to come down. And this shows us that regardless of what kind of a man he was, he was able to recognize who Jesus was. Zacchaeus would often hear about who Jesus was only through words. But after having met Him personally, Zacchaeus quickly realized that He was the One whom the Israelites had been waiting for, the Savior who was to remit all their sins and to save them. Zacchaeus had accepted such truth into heart. That is why he was able to accept the Savior Jesus into his heart and to gain salvation.

However, if everything had ended with Zacchaeus coming down from the sycamore tree, saying, “Oh my, how does He know my name,” when Jesus said to him, “Zacchaeus, come down,” taking Jesus to his house, and providing Him with food, then Jesus would have been of no meaning to him. However, we can confirm that this man named Zacchaeus went through a very surprising change in his heart when we look at the words he spoke to that Jesus after he had taken Jesus into his house and received Him.



Zacchaeus said that he would divide his goods in half and give it to the poor and that if he had taken anything from anyone by false accusation, he would restore fourfold.

When we listen to the Word from the Scriptures, we must know what they mean spiritually, and we must recognize what kind of changes will occur when we listen to those Words and believe in them. It is the same thing when you read today's Scripture passages. It is because all the Scripture passages are Words that the Lord speaks toward you and me. You and I are like Zacchaeus. Like this Zacchaeus, we are those who have worldly wealth, prestige, and power, and we are also those who have human weaknesses and trespasses. That is why we must realize why Zacchaeus had shown such surprising changes after having met the Lord, and why we must also receive the blessing of great surprising change in our hearts like Zacchaeus.

I am not saying these words to admonish you to help the poor by sharing your wealth. Rather, what

you need in this day and age would be the attitude of trying to keep what you have. Along the lines of formality, people have the biased view that Christians have to help the poor unconditionally and perform many virtuous works. I think that sermons given in churches usually flow along that line. However, the Bible tells us something opposite to that instead. The Bible isn't speaking of such things. People of other religions in this world can help the poor and the pitiful far better than Christians.

The Bible speaks about us human beings and our lives, and it tells the most important thing for us human beings – the salvation from sins, eternal life, and how to enter Heaven. Therefore, when we hear the Word, we must listen to it by throwing away our thoughts and carefully see how that Word relates to you.

In your own ways, you have wealth and prestige, as well as fleshly weaknesses and strengths. Everyone is the same. Someone who is tall may have his or her own weaknesses for sure. There are people



whose outer appearance is sleekly but the inside is all rotten, and then there are those whose outer appearance is poor but the inside is full. There are certain people who are smart, of good personality, and good all around but without money. Then again, there are certain others who have great amount money but lacks prestige. Also, there are certain people who have it all including wealth and prestige but from a human perspective, small in stature and fat.

If you ask how could being small and being fat be a weakness, I say yes it can. Modern people really despise people like that. Especially women don't like people like that. There were times in the past when such people were favored. They used to be envied because people had thought that being pot-bellied meant that the person would have to be someone like a president of a company who could get hands on and consume a lot of rich food. However, these days, people who are pot-bellied are considered as those who cannot take care of themselves, not some

company president. "To be considered" might not be the right words because it is actually true.

But the truth is that everyone, regardless of whom, has some sort of a handicap, either in one's outer appearance or in one's mentality. There are certain people who have enormous wealth, rich, and from a fleshly perspective, good looking but has a complex over their level of education. And so, at times in the newspapers, don't we hear about people like that going back to high school at an old age and getting a diploma that's thirty years late, or about people receiving an honorary degree from a certain university although they had never even been close to entering a college? Like so, from a worldly perspective, everyone has at least one or more these shortcomings for sure.

Zacchaeus climbed up into a sycamore tree and looked down, but then, Jesus told Zacchaeus to come down quickly. Now, why do you think Zacchaeus had climbed up into a sycamore tree? Because of his fleshly handicap, he had tried to see Jesus by



climbing up into a sycamore tree. A sycamore tree is a plant that grows well even when it's lying sideways. Jesus was walking past that sycamore tree. And as Jesus passed under that sycamore tree, His heart communed with Zacchaeus' heart.

## **Truly, Zacchaeus Was Wholeheartedly Waiting for the Savior**

He was waiting for someone who is worthy of his respect, can solve his problem of sin and restore his honor, and give him salvation, eternal life, and blessings. He was waiting for someone like that. Just then, on top of a sycamore tree, Zacchaeus saw Jesus walking by, and Jesus, as He stood right under the sycamore tree that Zacchaeus had climbed up into, looked up and said, "*Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house.*" In other words, Zacchaeus' heart had communicated

with Jesus' heart. By meeting Jesus, Zacchaeus experienced a change of heart. His heart had been congenial with the Lord's heart.

What kind of grace did Zacchaeus receive? How was he able to receive grace from the Lord? When Zacchaeus met Jesus, he did not just meet and showed his respects to Jesus simply from a fleshly perspective. Rather, he was able to recognize Jesus spiritually. Zacchaeus, able to recognize who Jesus was, was able to receive grace in his heart.

Jesus is the Son of God who had come to save the humankind from sins and also the Creator of all things of this universe. When we believe in Jesus, we mustn't believe in Him thinking that He's just one of the four great sages. Jesus isn't just another great man, but rather, He is the Master of Creation who had created this universe and everything in it. Furthermore, He is the Savior who had come to save people from sins. He is the One who had come to this earth to save us from all sins. I am saying that He is the Messiah who has blotted out our sins and blessed



us by changing our status from sinners to the righteous and making us God’s children. Having met Jesus, who was to take responsibility for his past, present, and future, Zacchaeus got to receive all the grace that the Lord wanted to offer.

What does Jesus going into Zacchaeus’ house mean? It means that Jesus recognized that Zacchaeus was looking for the Savior and that Zacchaeus, too, recognized Jesus to be the Savior. And, Jesus going into Zacchaeus’ house means that Zacchaeus has received Jesus into his heart and that Jesus has gone into Zacchaeus’ heart. Thus, this represents Jesus Christ having given Zacchaeus not only the true remission of sins and the genuine salvation but also all the blessings of eternal life.

## **How Do We Think about Jesus?**

“Who do you say that I am?” asked Jesus to His disciples. Then, Peter answered, “Jesus, You are God

and also the Son of the Living God.” This is how we must know Him.

Yesterdays, news about the space shuttle Columbia exploding in mid-air was broadcasted. Columbia was a space shuttle that had traveled into space seven times. This time, the shuttle was carrying seven astronauts who were coming back from space after having conducted various tests for seven days. Fifteen minutes to landing, it had exploded in mid-air. It was reported that the remains of the explosion have fallen in a certain state in the United States.

Who was the One who had created this very universe that they were trying to explore? He is none other than Jesus. What does the word, ‘Jesus,’ mean? It means ‘the Savior.’ Jesus Christ is God, the King of all kings, the Master of Creation who had made all things of the universe, and the One who had come down to this earth as our Savior. That is why we call Him, Jesus Christ. When we say that we believe in Jesus, we are saying that we believe in God, precisely. It means that we believe in Him as the



Savior God, who has saved us all and made us children of God by saving us from the destruction and the curse, the One gives us blessings, rather than simply believing in Him as God.

By coming down to this earth, what did Jesus do for you? Jesus saved you and me from sin. And, He gave us the blessing of becoming the children of God. In order to blot out your sins and mine, our Lord received the baptism from John the Baptist. If you read the Gospel of Matthew chapter 3, you will see a scene in which Jesus receives the baptism from John the Baptist. Well, let's take a look at the Gospel of Matthew chapter 3 verse 13 through 15 together. *“Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. And John tried to prevent Him, saying, ‘I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?’ But Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.’ Then he allowed Him” (Matthew 3:13-15).*

Dear fellow believers, you must know what Jesus has done for you by coming down to this earth. Jesus came down to this earth and became your true Savior by taking on your sins through His baptism, vicariously dying on the Cross, and being resurrected from that death. For He has taken away all your sins and received the judgment for you, God has indeed given you the enormous blessing of becoming God's children. Ever since the beginning of the world, Jesus had made the promise that He would come to this earth to save you and me. And He actually did come by being born into this world in human flesh, and at the age of thirty, He did indeed receive the baptism from John the Baptist. Just as He said, *“For thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness,”* as He was receiving the baptism, Jesus took on all your sins and mine by receiving the baptism. I am saying that Jesus received the baptism to take on your sins and mine. Finding joy in that, just as Jesus came up from the water after having been baptized by John the Baptist,



God said, “*This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*” (Matthew 3:17).

After having come down to this earth, how did Jesus blot out all your sins and mine, and how did He become our Savior? Also, how did He blot out all the sins of Zacchaeus? In order to blot out all your sins and mine, as well as those of Zacchaeus, Jesus came to this earth and at the age of thirty received the baptism from John the Baptist.

The word “baptism” is “βάπτισμα (*baptisma*)” in Greek, and it means “being immersed.” This word also implies ‘to cleanse’ or ‘to bury.’ Jesus received the baptism from John the Baptist, the representative of all humankind. However, this baptism wasn’t like the baptism by effusion practiced these days in which a pastor brings a bowl of water and says, “In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, I baptize you,” as he sprinkles water on top of a person using his or her fingers. Rather, it was a baptism by immersion in which Jesus went into the waters of the Jordan River and came out, just as John the Baptist,

the representative of all humankind, laid both of his hands on top of Jesus’ head. This is referred to as the baptism by immersion.

What is important is that in this baptism of Jesus, John the Baptist laid his both hands on Jesus head. You have to pay great attention to this fact. “To lay on hands” implies “to transfer sin onto the sacrifice.” When Aaron the High Priest laid his hands on the head of the scapegoat, all the yearly sins of the Israelites were passed onto the goat (Leviticus 16:21). Like so, Jesus came to this earth and at the age of thirty received the baptism from John the Baptist, a descendant of Aaron the High Priest. Then, why do you think Jesus received the baptism? The reason why Jesus received the baptism at the age of thirty was to fulfill all righteousness. Jesus received the baptism in order to carry out the righteous work of blotting out all the sins of all people.

What did Jesus do for you and me by coming down to this earth? He took on all your sins and mine completely by receiving the baptism. By receiving



the baptism through John the Baptist, He took on all the sins of humankind. Human beings cannot but only commit sins from when they are in their mother's womb until they die and from the days of Adam until the last day when the last person dies. But, Jesus received the baptism so that He could take away all those sins. Jesus took on all those sins you commit from your birth until your death, regardless of how long you will live. Jesus received the baptism that takes away all the sins of this world that people commit, leaving out none, and also, after having taken on all the sins through that baptism, He vicariously received the judgment for those sins on the Cross. In doing so, He fully achieved the goal of saving you and me from sins. Jesus had fully accomplished that righteous work which He had planned and promised even before the creation.

## **What Kind of Change Did Zacchaeus' Heart Receive?**

If Zacchaeus had welcomed Jesus only to a moderate degree thinking, "How does Jesus know my name," and also if Jesus had gone into Zacchaeus' house, had a meal, and went away saying only, "Thank you. I wish you many blessings. Take care. Good-bye," then as we read the Bible, there wouldn't have been anything for us to realize and the incident wouldn't have been anything meaningful. It is because for all human beings, the most important problem is how to resolve the problem of sins inside one's heart. Therefore, if this problem hadn't been solved, solving any other problem would have meant nothing. This is same for all human beings including Zacchaeus, you, and me. For Zacchaeus as well as us, all human beings have many sins—sins we have committed consciously or unconsciously, sins that we know only ourselves, sins that others also know, and so on—this is the greatest problem. Only after



solving this problem, other problems such as having no wealth or prosperity, having no reputation, and having certain weaknesses can be listed as problems. Whether or not we have received the remission of sins while living in this world is our most important issue that decides whether we will go to Heaven or hell in the next life.

Therefore, even though Jesus has carried out with authority and performed many miracles, more than all these, His work of having blotted out all our sins and solving the problem of sins is the most prominent and meaningful work. We must realize this fact and believe in it. In order to save you and me from sins, Jesus came to this earth and received the baptism like this. Believe in the baptism through which Jesus has taken on all your sins, so that you may be able to receive the remission of sins while you are alive in this world and then go to Heaven while you move into the next life.

When were your sins transferred over to Jesus? Do you accurately know this fact? The Scripture

passage from Matthew 3:13-15 we just read tells us this. As you believe in Jesus, you read the same Bible in the same way, but you might never have heard a sermon like this. However, once you hear it—whether you had heard it in the past, whether you are now hearing it for the first time or whether you will hear it in the future—all you have to do is to realize the Truth, thinking, “Alas, Jesus did not just die on the Cross after having come down to this earth to save me from sins. He didn’t save me with the blood of the Cross alone.” Jesus having taken on our sins occurred not when He was at the Cross but when He received the baptism. I want you to accurately know the fact that Jesus took on all your sins and mine by receiving the baptism.

Because He has cleansed us by taking on the sins by receiving the baptism, the word ‘baptism’ also means ‘to cleanse.’ It was possible for our sins to be cleansed because all your sins and mine have been transferred over to Jesus through the laying on of hands. You must realize this fact and confess, “My



sins were transferred over to Jesus because Jesus had received the baptism from John the Baptist. Jesus has taken away all our sins by receiving the baptism.”

Some people say that the Bible isn't more accurate than the science of people. However, they are saying so with a mistaken knowledge. In a figure of speaking, the Bible is like a grandfather to science. What do people do when they shoot up rockets in to space? They measure distance, calculate time, and make various preparations, but information regarding this can already be found inside the Bible. To such an extent, the Bible holds inside infinite knowledge and information that we need in this world. But among them, the most precious truth is the work of Jesus having blotted out all our sins completely and thereby washing us into having clean consciences.

Then, when did Jesus Christ take away all your sins and mine? Jesus came down to this earth and at the age of thirty, took away all our sins by receiving the baptism from John the Baptist. In that moment, all your sins and mine were transferred over to Jesus.

*“But Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.’ Then he allowed Him” (Matthew 3:15).* Because Jesus took on your sins and mine by receiving the baptism, all our sins were transferred over to Him. Also, by our faith in this, all the sins are washed away. To take on all our sins, Jesus vicariously received the punishment for those sins by getting nailed to the Cross. In other words, He had suffered death, which is the wages of sin, on our behalf. Henceforth, by believing in Jesus Christ as our own Savior, you and I are able to pass onto Him all those sins, which we commit consciously or unconsciously with our hearts and actions, and we also can receive judgment by faith. This is how we are able to receive the perfect salvation by faith.

Jesus completely took away all the sins of all the people, leaving out no one. There are people who insist that He has taken away the sins of only those who had already been chosen before the creation, but that is not true. God is the God of everyone, not of



just a small number of selected people. Therefore, by faith, anyone can be cleansed of their sins, become clean in his or her heart, and avoid the judgment.

How was Zacchaeus able to obtain a change of heart? Zacchaeus was also able to receive the remission of sins because Jesus had taken on all his sins through the very baptism He had received from John the Baptist in the Jordan River. All our sins were cleansed because they had all been transferred over to Jesus through the baptism. We have become clean all the way through our heart because we had sent over our sins by faith.

*“Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”* As this passage tells us, Jesus bore the sin of the world on His back, receive the punishment of getting nailed to the Cross, and saved you and me from all the judgments. If Jesus hadn’t received the baptism, there wouldn’t have been His passing away on the Cross. *“Without shedding of blood there is no remission” (Hebrews 9:22)*. If Jesus hadn’t shed blood, there wouldn’t have been the

remission of sins. Also, Jesus was able to shed His precious blood vicariously because He had taken on our sins through the baptism. Like so, Jesus died for you and me, and by resurrecting from the dead in three days, He lives eternally. And He became God to those who believe in Him even now.

He is the One who becomes the Savior to those who believe in the fact that the Lord came down to this earth and blotted out all your sins and mine through His baptism and the blood of the Cross. He became the Master of Salvation to people who believe in their heart, who have passed on their sins by faith, who have received judgment for all sins by faith, and who have received salvation by faith. Accordingly, a change comes about in the hearts of those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Then, what kind of change occurs in the hearts of those who believe in Jesus? A change of heart like that of Zacchaeus occurred when he said, “I will give half of my goods to the poor,” as he received Jesus



who came by the gospel of the water and the Spirit as the Savior. What kind of change is this? The heart of caring for other souls will arise in those who believe in our Lord having saved us perfectly by taking on all our sins by being baptized, cleansing our sins, and receiving the judgment on the Cross. An altruistic change of heart will occur. As for those who believe in the Lord having truly become their Savior, they cannot but live for the souls of others because deeply thankful thoughts for that Lord-given salvation will arise in their heart. The righteous without sin cannot but carry out this noble work of spreading the gospel to others. Furthermore, even though they had lived unjustly and like a miser in the past, after the receiving of salvation, a renewed heart of living for the others will come into existence.

From under the sycamore tree, Jesus said, “Zacchaeus, come down. Today, I must stay at your house.” Just then, Zacchaeus came down from the top of the sycamore tree. He then took Jesus into his house and received a great grace. After that, this

Zacchaeus had a change in his heart for having received a great blessing, and thus, he was able to confess his resolution.

When Jesus told Zacchaeus to come down, he came down immediately. What about you? You are also a human being like Zacchaeus who has honor and wealth as well as handicaps in fleshly terms. To you who are like that, if the Lord says, “Come down. I must stay at your house. I will save you, and I want to go inside your heart,” what will you do? Will you be able to obey the Word of the Lord and open up your heart to the Lord, whether or not you are decent? Dear fellow believers, are you thankful for the fact that the Lord has saved you and me by the water and the Spirit? Are you accepting this fact? Like Zacchaeus in today’s Scripture passage, those who recognizes, believe in, and follow Jesus will be greatly blessed. People who genuinely accept the Lord with a thankful heart and faith will receive the wonderful blessing of becoming God’s children. Those who receive Him, that is, those who believe in



His name will be given the right to become children of God. And in this world and the next, they will get to receive wonderful blessings.

Dear fellow believers, the Lord tells you and me that He has saved us by the water, the blood, and the Holy Spirit (1 John 5:5-8). When we accept in our hearts this word of the Truth that the Lord has blotted out all your sins and mine and has made us God's children, a great change comes to our hearts. The Lord has blotted all our sins clean like the white snow and has made us God's children. Thus, you and I must truly become someone like Zacchaeus who had immediately climbed down to Jesus and said to Him, "I believe in You according to your Words." All people, regardless of whether their status is high or low, whether they are high in honor or full of disgrace, and whether their humanistic weaknesses and trespasses are a lot or a few, they have to believe in the gospel in which Jesus has saved them by the water, the blood, and the Holy Spirit with their heart.

Some people say they believe in Jesus as their Savior, but these people, at the same time, do not know about Jesus having blotted out all their sins by His baptism and the blood on the Cross and having allowed us to be born again by the water and the Spirit. And then there are some people who are able to accept Jesus as their Savior into their heart and believe in Him because of their self-conceit. They think like this: "I am a person who has honor in this world, yet must I timidly go to a place so-called a church?" In this world, there truly are many people like this who think: "I would rather go to a large church. Why must I go to a small church like that? I would rather go to a large church if I were to believe in Jesus. Do you think I can properly believe in Jesus by going to a tiny church?"

Like so, there are people who do not believe despite the Word of God falling upon them. That is just another excuse said by many people who do not believe in the Truth of Jesus. Certain people have so much money that they don't believe, and then there



are certain people who say they cannot believe in Jesus Christ who has come by the water and the blood as their Savior because they lack so much. People who do not believe with all sorts of human thoughts and excuses like that as they hear the Word of God are the ignorant who block the path of the approaching blessing on their own.

## What Was Zacchaeus Like?

He probably also had many reasons not to believe in Jesus, but when Jesus told him to come down, he did not hesitate to do so. When Jesus told him, “For today I must stay at your house,” Zacchaeus immediately heeded that Word. And by quickly coming down from the sycamore tree, he invited Jesus to his house.

Dear fellow believers, with the faith of believing in Jesus truly being inside your heart, it is only right that you accept wholeheartedly like this: “Yes. You

have taken on all my sins. I have committed sins since my birth until ten, but even those sins were transferred over to You. Also, You took away the sins I have committed up until the age of twenty, thirty, as well as forty. I believe you have saved me by coming down to this earth, taking on all my sins up until the day my life ends, although I don’t know how long my lifespan will be, and by receiving the baptism once, and dying through crucifixion once.” If the Word of the Lord like that, then no matter what your situations are, you must believe in Jesus Christ as your Savior by immediately coming down from where you are situated. You must believe like Zacchaeus. People who come down immediately and believe in Jesus at once, regardless of the work that they have to do or their status, when they are called by Jesus to come down after having put down all their circumstances, get to receive the blessing.

Dear fellow believers, the Lord saved you and me by the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit. He said people can enter the Kingdom of God only by



being born of water and the Spirit, and the water mentioned here refers to the baptism Jesus had received. The Spirit bears witness to the fact that God has saved us by becoming a human being, taking on all your sins and mine through His baptism, and vicariously receiving the judgment for those sins on the Cross. And yet, should we be making other excuses instead of believing in this blessed fact with our hearts? I want you to carefully examine yourself to see what you will genuinely look like before God. Are you not making up this excuse and that by putting up a sense of superiority or a sense of inferiority, thinking perhaps your prestige would suffer or you are either so great or so foolish? Rather than making excuses before God, it is wiser to believe in the Lord-given gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit.

The Lord knows everything about you and me. He knows everything: How weak you are, how arrogant you are, and also what your problems are. Therefore, as we hear the Lord telling us that He has saved you

and me by coming down to this earth, receiving the baptism, taking the sins of the world to the Cross by bearing them on His back, getting crucified, receiving the judgment for those sins, finishing it, dying, and then being resurrected from the dead in three days, all we have to do from our side is to say, “I believe. Lord, You have told me to come down like this, so I have come down. And, because You told me that You have saved me like this, I believe in that Truth,” I believe. Everyone must possess the faith of genuinely believing in and obeying the salvation God has given you all. Dear fellow believers, do you believe?

Dear fellow believers, this isn’t just a sermon. Yes, it is a sermon, but it is the Living Word that will blot out the sins only when you actually believe it in your hearts. With this Truth, I speak to those who have sins inside their heart.

If a patient has to go to a general hospital and visit the psychiatry department, the doctor on duty will ask the patient, “Where are you feeling ill?” When



the patient says to the doctor, “I came here because of pain in my head,” the doctor will then ask various questions, “What is your job? What is your age? How are your household circumstances? Did you ever experience a business failure? Have you ever been shocked?” Then the patient will answer the doctor. The doctor carefully writes down what the patient says. He also checks up some physical conditions, like blood pressure, and practices some inspections. And then, he prescribes accordingly.

It is said that Jesus is the Physician. Worldly physicians find out symptoms only after having checked up many conditions and answers, but Jesus already knows all about our problems. He knows all your problems of sin, and He fully knows that you suffer hardship and are cursed because of sins. He also knows that you act as servants of the devil because of sins, and He fully knows that even though you hate sins, you cannot help but commit sins. He fully knows that inside your hearts, there are sins which cannot be blotted away even if you were to

repent. Because the Lord knows it all, He came to this earth and took over all the sins of humankind along with all your sins and mine by receiving the baptism without even asking us. Through the baptism, Jesus took on all the sins, regardless of whose sins they were, even those of Kim Il Sung, the former North Korean dictator, as well as those of Adolph Hitler. If there is someone who seems to be good, without blemish, and perfect, then that person is indeed a hypocrite and a person of falsehood. Speaking about human beings themselves, there isn't a single human being who isn't evil and wicked. Everyone is a fierce rat-like being. As it is written, *“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned” (Romans 5:12)*, our lives are such that we are born with 12 kinds of sin and die after having committed these 12 kinds of sin day by day, season by season each and every year.

By receiving the baptism just once, our Lord took on the sins of mine and yours once and for all.



*“Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29)* Then, the Lord went to the Cross carrying the sin of the world once and for all on His back, was crucified, received the judgment for all our sins, and said, *“It is finished!” (John 19:30)* Afterwards, He came back to life in just three days after His death, bore witness to His resurrection for forty days, and went up to Heaven. It is this Jesus Christ who is your Savior and mine. Jesus Christ came down to this earth to blot out your sins and mine, and through the 33 years of His life, He completely blotted out the sins of all those on this earth, including of course, you and me. And by doing so, He has saved us perfectly like this.

The Lord has given us this wonderful grace. Yet, if you and I were to make this excuse and that, saying, “I cannot believe,” then we only would be deceiving God. “I cannot believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit because I feel shameful. I already have faith in Jesus, but why must I believe in so-called the gospel of the water and the Spirit to

complicate things? Of course, there are sins in my heart, but if I were to say that I believe the gospel of the water and the Spirit once again, wouldn't that be something cumbersome and shameful? My current status in my church is all right, and my standpoint is such that I cannot confess to believe in Jesus once again. My current rank in the Christian community is very high, so even if I am not born again, I would still be someone who is high in rank.” Have you perhaps had thoughts like this? If yes, you must remember the fact that Zacchaeus went down immediately when Jesus said to him, “Zacchaeus, come down.” And when Jesus said to him, “I must stay at your house,” Zacchaeus immediately welcomed Jesus. Like so, we must also receive Jesus Christ who has saved us by faith.

You must profess, “Lord Jesus is Christ and the Son of the Living God. He came to this earth as my Savior, and took on my sins by receiving the baptism, and He died vicariously on the Cross for me and saved me by resurrection from the dead.”



Wholeheartedly, we must receive Jesus in to our hearts by faith, saying, “You are my God of salvation. You are my Savior.” What kind of faith? Jesus came to this earth and took on our sins once and for all by receiving the baptism. And through His 33 years of life, He perfectly saved you and me from sins, destruction, curse, all weaknesses, and the devil once and for all by dying by getting crucified once and shedding blood. I am saying that you must receive salvation like Zacchaeus by believing in all this wholeheartedly.

Today’s Scripture passage is telling us exactly this. It’s not telling us to do good. Once a person believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and receives the remission of sins, that person will become all so thankful for the God-given grace. The Lord took on all my sins by receiving the baptism. And how thankful is this? Being grateful and thankful again and again, the righteous heart of wishing to preach this gospel to others arises. And this reflects a change of heart, wishing to do

righteous works rather than wicked deeds, even though we have been committing many wicked deeds up until now, for a new heart has come into existence. Dear fellow believers, do you believe?

Dear fellow believers, do you commit numerous sins, or do you not? Truly, we all commit so many sins. Especially for those living in this day and age, sins are very common and familiar. So much so that it is almost a great discourtesy to be telling them not to commit sins as we are discussing sins. We must realize that the Lord has given such a precious Truth of the water and the Spirit to those of us living in an age like this.

The Lord says that He has saved you and me by the water and the blood. He says that He has saved us by receiving the baptism and dying vicariously on the Cross. Now, what is important is whether or not you have in your heart the faith of believing in Jesus as your true Savior. Jesus requires such faith from you. Even though Jesus did save you perfectly from sins, if you don’t accept Jesus into your heart, it will be of



no use at all. My sins were also transferred over to Jesus when He received the baptism. Jesus took away not only my sins but all your sins as well. Furthermore, He has taken away not only our sins but the sins of our children, our parents, and all others. Thus, shouldn't we be greatly thankful?

Jesus told us to spread this gospel of the water and the Spirit to all the people throughout the world. Because Jesus has blotted out all our sins, we are able to receive the remission of sins by believe in that same Jesus Christ. Thus, we must accept Jesus Christ as our Savior by faith. Dear fellow believers, do you believe?

Dear fellow believers, for the past week, did you commit sins or not? Yes, you did. Today is the Lord's Day. There are people who will gather here on the next Lord's Day. On that day, if I were to ask, "Did you or did you not commit sins during the week," you will all answer the same, "We have committed sins." However, of course including all the numerous sins we have committed thus far, Jesus

has blotted out even those sins that we will be committing in the future.

If so, how did Jesus blot out all the sins? Did He blot them out just by getting crucified? By getting crucified, Jesus vicariously received the judgment on our behalf, and it was when He received the baptism from John the Baptist that He took on all our sins. Like so, we must know properly. This is why the Lord said, "*And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free*" (John 8:32) and "*Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God*" (John 3:5).

The words, 'water' and 'the Spirit,' appear quite often in the Bible. In the Book of Hebrews, there appears the phrase, "*our bodies washed with pure water*" (Hebrews 10:22), and if you take a look at the First Epistle of Peter chapter 3, verse 21, the Lord firmly says to us, "*Water is an antitype which now saves us—baptism.*" As we look at these Words, we must wholeheartedly have the faith of believing in Jesus Christ, who has saved us by the water, the



blood, and the Holy Spirit, as our true Savior. Jesus Christ took on all the worldly sins that all the human beings commit throughout their entire lifetime, received the judgment for those worldly sins vicariously by carrying them on His back, and became the Savior for you and me by being resurrected in three days after His death. Therefore, you must genuinely believe in this Truth with all your heart.

The Living God created this universe, but if you and I don't have in our hearts the fundamental heart of believing in God, this Creator God will also not exist in your hearts. However, if you have in your heart the faith of believing in God and the heart of believing in the Word of God, God will become someone who is greatly related to you. To believe in and follow Jesus, who carried out the sacrificial ministry of remission of sins according to the way it is written in the Bible, is to receive God into your heart. If you and I read the written Word of God with our eyes, listen to it with our ears, know and verify it

through the sermons, and believe in God, we will get to believe in the work He has done. By that faith, we get to receive salvation.

God said, *“For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” (Romans 10:10)*. When He says “with the heart one believes unto righteousness,” the word ‘righteousness’ can be written with the Chinese character, ‘義(yi).’ When you look at this character, you may be able to recognize that it is comprised of two separate characters, ‘羊(yang),’ meaning ‘sheep’ and ‘我(wo),’ meaning ‘I.’ Chinese characters are hieroglyphic characters, that is, characters represented by pictures, so one can see that in the word ‘righteousness,’ its spiritual meaning is shown within that character. In order for us to receive the remission of sins and to become righteous, we need a sacrificial lamb. And that in turn witnesses that Jesus Christ who has come as the sacrificial Lamb is our Savior. Jesus Christ came down to this earth as the Lamb of God, and by receiving the baptism, taking



on the sins of the world, and dying on the Cross, He saved all of us. This is why the righteous work of God is expressed with Jesus' baptism and the Cross.

Also, 'righteousness' in Greek is 'δικαιοσύνην (*dikaïosunen*),' which means the fairest state that has no defect at all. The Son of God came down to this earth and carried out the righteous work in the fairest way. Rather than coming down to this earth and simply saying, "I will save only those whom I like and send all the rest to hell," He saved the entire humankind by He himself coming down to this earth in human flesh to save you and me from sins, receiving the baptism righteously, taking on the sins, vicariously receiving the judgment for the sins on the Cross, and coming back to life from the dead.

We should no longer be having false faith by having fallen into a false religion, but rather, we should believe in the Lord justly having saved us with accuracy as it is and accept it wholeheartedly. The Lord has saved us most properly and justly, but the most important thing is whether or not you and I

believe in that Lord wholeheartedly by having put off everything else. Dear fellow believers, do you believe in God? Do you believe in the work that God has done, that Jesus has done?

Dear fellow believers, regarding having faith in the Lord, you must believe in and know about Him through the Scriptures. How did your sins get transferred over to Jesus Christ? It went over when Jesus was receiving the baptism from John the Baptist. The passage showing to that is clearly written in the Bible, starting from verse 13 through 17 in the Gospel of Matthew chapter 3. When you see this passage written in the New Testament, you must know it as it is and accept it as it is. Just as Zacchaeus had come down immediately when the Lord had told him, "Zacchaeus, come down," as we hear the Word telling us the Lord had blotted out all our sins when He was receiving the baptism like so and had fulfilled all the righteousness, we must believe wholeheartedly like that. We must be able to think, "Jesus took on our sins like so, as He received



the baptism and came up from the water. That is why it is said in the Gospel of John chapter 1, verse 29, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” And also, this is why in chapter 19 of the Gospel of John, it is said that the Lord got nailed to the Cross and shed blood to atone for all our sins as He said, “It is finished!” (John 19:30) Then, He was resurrected in three days after His death. That is how He became our Savior.” Dear fellow believers, we must believe like that in our hearts.

Zacchaeus was a rich man, had fame, and also some handicaps. But through his faith in Jesus being his Savior and in the works that the Lord had done, he came to receive the blessing of going through a change in his heart. Dear fellow believers, like Zacchaeus, I hope that such wonderful blessing will be bestowed upon you as well through your wholehearted faith in the Lord’s gospel of the water and the Spirit. ☒



# SERMON

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CONTENTS



## **Acknowledge Your Sins Before the Lord**

< Luke 19:1-10 >

**“Then Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. Now behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was of short stature. So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, ‘Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house.’ So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully. But when they saw it, they all complained, saying, ‘He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner.’ Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, ‘Look,**

**Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold.’ And Jesus said to him, ‘Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.’”**

### **What Must You Acknowledge before God?**

God visited this earth for He loved us human beings. The God of the Truth threw away the glorious throne of Heaven, visited you and me, saved us from all sins, made us as His children, gave us new and eternal life, and granted us all the spiritual blessings of Heaven as well as all the riches of earth. The Lord has taken on all the diseases of our flesh, the weaknesses, and all our sins. This was precisely because He loves us.



Dear fellow believers, today is the first day of the revival meeting. As I look around now, I see there are many new faces. Now is the time when we truly have to be awake. Now is the time when everyone has to be born again by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Thus, from all throughout Korea as well as from all over the world, many souls are coming to listen to the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit. For God so loves us human beings, He allows this revival meeting to be held and grants us to spread the gospel all over the world as well. And as I see this, I can feel that God still loves us humankind.

Right now, the entire world is in an era of chaos, truly a dismal era with prevailing diseases and ravaging famines. What is worse is that the world is undergoing economic slump and devastating energy crisis. Not only Korea but also almost all the countries of the world are faced by economic crisis as well as many other grave problems. And it seems as though the entire planet earth has entered into a

period of winter, having past the period of fall. However, I am sure that God is granting us this revival meeting because He wants to have souls be born again by the gospel of the water and the Spirit up until the day of His coming.

Among those blessings that God gives us, the greatest blessing is none other than the cleansing of sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. When we hold another revival meeting next month, we will hold it under the same title as this one, and even when we print our newspapers we will use this as the heading. We will also print leaflets with this title and distribute them. For the citizens living in this city, for all the people of this nation, for all the people in the world, I will preach and preach the Word under the title, “The Blessing of Being Born Again of the Water and the Spirit.” And by doing so, many will be able to receive the remission of sins Jesus’ gospel of the water and the Spirit, become the righteous, and gain eternal life before God. In order that they may receive many blessings from God, I



will exert myself in preaching the gospel. Until the day our Lord comes again, we will preach this gospel of the water and the Spirit ceaselessly.

I am truly thankful that God has granted this revival meeting to save numerous souls from sins. Tonight, I want to look into the Word of God together with you, see what He is telling us, and see how one can be born again. In other words, I want to take this time to think together about what kind of conditions are essential for us be born again and about, what is the Word that allows us to be born again. Tonight, tomorrow night, and the night after that, I will preach this Word. As you continue to listen to the sermons as much as you can, you will once again realize the Truth by professing, “This is what Jesus meant when He told Nicodemus to be born again of the water and the Spirit.” If your soul can be born again after having heard the gospel of the water and the Spirit, I believe, through this current revival meeting, you will have fulfilled the purpose for which you have believed in Jesus throughout your

life of faith up until now. I thank you for coming amid your busy schedule, and I hope you will earnestly listen to the Word of God and receive much grace.

## **A Man Named Zacchaeus**

A man named Zacchaeus appears in today’s Scripture passage. This man was really short in stature. He was shorter than normal people. So, even though he had stepped up on a brick and held his heels up, he couldn’t see Jesus well. Zacchaeus heard news that Jesus was passing by his town, so he climbed up into a sycamore tree. Because the sycamore tree didn’t break, I guess he didn’t weigh all that much, either. He seems to have been a really small person. Anyhow, this man named Zacchaeus is the central figure in today’s sermon.

Jesus entered the region of Jericho where this person Zacchaeus was living. This Jericho was where



the very wall that had greeted the people of Israel for the first time as they entered the land of Canaan was. This city was a citadel with a double wall, and therefore, the wall was very large and strong, on top of which an eight-ton truck could pass by. When attacking this wall of Jericho, Joshua, the people of God, and the priests marched around the city once each day until the sixth day. But on the seventh day, they marched around it seven times blasting trumpets, and the wall fell down flat, the inner wall as well as the outer wall. As you read the Bible, you will be able to see this account of God.

Also, this word, ‘Jericho,’ means ‘aroma.’ Aroma, in turn, refers to the world. The world is place where there are aromas. This world is a tremendously wonderful place. This world is a tremendously blessed place. And if the people of this world hadn’t soiled it or put out pollutants, this world would truly have been a place full of aromas. In today’s Scripture passage, it is said that our Lord entered this Jericho. It is telling us that the Lord came down this earth

from the Kingdom of Heaven in order to save you and me who were lost.

In this city called Jericho, lived a man named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector, and he was of great wealth. He wanted to see what kind of a person Jesus was. By the way because of his short stature, he couldn’t do anything but climb up into a sycamore tree to see Jesus. Hearing the news that Jesus was coming to their town, a big crowd gathered on both sides of the wide street. Because of that, Zacchaeus, short in height, had no choice but to climb up into a sycamore tree to see Jesus. And so, in the end, he gets to meet Jesus. Why did Jesus come to this world? He came to save the lost people like Zacchaeus and to save lost souls. Jesus came to find the lost, and although being short could also have been a reason, Zacchaeus climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Jesus because he had so much affection for Jesus and because his longing to see Him was so very earnest.



## **This Man Named Zacchaeus Was a Lost Soul before God**

Before God, you and I are all lost souls. Long ago, our ancestors used to live in the special Garden of Eden God had built. But Satan the Devil, that is, the serpent tempted Eve first and then had Adam eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. They had been cast out from the Garden of Eden for having been tempted by the temptation of Satan. Thus, human beings had originally been the people of the Kingdom of God, but were cast out of the Kingdom. They were people whom the Lord had lost. Jesus came in search of people precisely like that.

And this Zacchaeus was one of such people; he was waiting for Jesus by having climbed up into a sycamore tree. We can see that Zacchaeus was a man of a special heart that yearned to know who Jesus was and meet Him. Like so, we can see that Zacchaeus had climbed up into a sycamore tree not just because his was shorter than others but because

his desire to meet Jesus was greater than others. And I can see that you truly want to meet God, also. Average people say that they believe in Jesus, and they often offer worship in an ordinary way. But rather than being ceremonious like them, I am saying that you are among those souls who have the earnest desire to meet our Lord, that is, who have the heart, truly in want of meeting God all the while going to the Church, receiving the blessing of being born again by the water and the Spirit, becoming the righteous, receiving the remission of sins, receiving the Holy Spirit before God, and meeting our Lord regardless of when He will come again.

Zacchaeus was truly one of the lost souls in desperate search of God, truly wanting to meet Jesus in earnest. You must understand that you must also possess such heart to meet Jesus Christ. You have to harbor an earnest heart that is determined to meet Jesus Christ all the while attending the Church. Our Lord spoke to Nicodemus, *“Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he*



*cannot enter the kingdom of God” (John 3:5).* Therefore, you can genuinely meet the righteousness of God only when you have such heart and hope. We all are the lost before the Lord, but among the lost, only those who yearn to meet the righteousness of God can meet the Lord of righteousness.

Just as Zacchaeus was gazing at Jesus, Jesus said, looking up from right underneath the sycamore tree, *“Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house” (Luke 19:5).* Most elated, Zacchaeus came down. Then, overjoyed, he received Jesus. And like that, Jesus entered Zacchaeus’ house and stayed. Then, Zacchaeus said to Jesus, *“Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold” (Luke 19:8).*

Zacchaeus was someone who had been a sinner. But he invited Jesus into his house. He invited Jesus into his house because he was aware of the fact that Jesus is the Son of God and the Savior and the fact that He is essentially God Himself and not just an

ordinary human being. Then he said, *“I will give half of my goods to the poor.”* These words in turn mean, *“I am a sinner. I am a lump of sin. I have taken much from people by false accusation. I have offered little payment to those higher in rank, keeping much to myself. I’m not just a private thief but a public thief.”* This is what he really meant. He said he was going to give half of his goods to the poor. And he said he was going to restore fourfold if he has taken anything from anyone by false accusation. In short, by receiving the Lord as his Savior, Zacchaeus now became a complete beggar. But our Lord said to him, *“Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:9-10).*

Zacchaeus wanted to meet Jesus. Furthermore, he said he will give half of his goods to the poor and will restore four fold if there had been an instance in which he had taken anything from anyone by false accusation. The only people who can be born again



of the water and the Spirit before the Lord are those who know that they themselves are sinners. People like that can correctly welcome Jesus as the Savior and invite Him into their heart. Our God gives the blessing of being born again by the water and the Spirit to such people. We must realize the fact that if we believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, God will give us eternal things of Heaven, and also, He will bless us with the blessings of this earth in many more folds than we have had up until now.

As for those who believe in the righteousness of God, there isn't a single person who is poor, even from a fleshly perspective. Abraham, Isaac, as well as Jacob, all lead a rich life. Hence, on what must we place our focus? We must place our focus on the spreading of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Becoming poor despite having faith in the righteousness of Jesus is never a will of God. Even when you see our Church, there isn't a single person who has been ruined by having faith in Jesus. Even from a fleshly perspective, none of the saints would

become poor; instead, they would all become wealthy. God gives spiritual blessings for sure, but He also gives physical blessings as well. Then, where must we place our focus? We must focus on spiritual matters like Zacchaeus, and we should possess a heart like that of Zacchaeus.

Let's take a look at Luke 18:9-14, which comes before today's Scripture passage: *“Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: ‘Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.’ And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me a sinner!’ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone*



*who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.’’*

Between a Pharisee and a tax collector, whom did the Lord justify more? The Lord said He had shown mercy on the tax collector who had confessed he was a sinner rather than the Pharisee who was so full of self-righteousness. This is what the Lord wants us to realize. This is why Jesus said, *“Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance” (Luke 5:31-32).*

Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. And at Jericho, He stayed at a certain man’s house. It is said that He gave words of blessing to that man by saying, “You are a son of Abraham.” This Word means that Zacchaeus was the only person, among all those people in the big crowd gathered there, who got to receive the blessing of being born again by the water and the Spirit. All the other people of Jericho were nothing but bystanders. They were bystanders, just like the bridesmaids whose function is to illuminate

the bride, the central figure in a wedding. The Jews have a tradition of using a garment wrapped around their body as clothes. There must have been people who had come out well dressed, wearing nice garments, and there must also have been people who came out in their best clothes. But among them, Zacchaeus was the only person who got to meet Jesus.

Then, we must think about how Zacchaeus got to meet Jesus and receive such a blessing after having met Him. The focus of your faith and mine should be set on this point. And you should have a correct knowledge of how one can be born again of the water and the Spirit. To be born again of the water and the Spirit means to become a righteous person by believing in what Jesus has done for our salvation. That’s it. It doesn’t make any sense that one can be a born again sinner just by believing in Jesus blindly. Now that he believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, what is correct is that a born again saint is



a righteous person who has no sin. I am saying that this is what we must focus on here.

How can we believe that we can be born again from the status of being a sinner? What kind of people will become born again? What kind of people does the Lord want to meet? What kind of people's houses does He stay at? To what kind of people does He say, "You are a son of Abraham"? Is it to someone like Zacchaeus or to people like the bystanders? You must know whether you are like Zacchaeus or like the bystanders. You must think whether you want to be like Zacchaeus or like the bystanders. Rather than saying you don't want to be like Zacchaeus, thinking he is short in stature even though he is rich, you must possess the heart of wishing to be like Zacchaeus spiritually. Only then, will our Lord meet you within the righteousness of God. You mustn't just lead a life of faith with a heart like that of the bystanders.

Some Christians may say, "Worshipping hour usually lasts one hour at the most. As long as this

hour passes by well, it is good. All you have to do is call out 'O, fiery Holy Spirit,' clap your hands well, and then go home. That's it!" Dear fellow believers, such a heart is wrong. You must throw away such a heart. You must discard the heart of a bystander and possess the heart like that of Zacchaeus.

What kind of heart did Zacchaeus possess? First of all, Zacchaeus knew that he was a sinner. When Jesus came to his home, he said, "I'll give half of my goods to the poor." In other words, he had something thrusting into his heart. And so, just as the Lord who is holy came in, he confessed. Then, because of this, did Zacchaeus become complete beggar? That is not so.

## **There Are Several Kinds of People among Christians**

First of all there are the pietists. Pietists are those who think that people who believe in Jesus must lead



a poor but ascetic life. They believe that living well off is in turn a sin and thus to believe in Jesus is to lead a life of poverty. People like that are extremely fearful of becoming rich after having started to believe in Jesus, as if it were a great sin. Even if people like that were to spend their entire lifetime, they will never be rich. People like that have to fast once every three days, and although they say they must share food with others, they always disregard others. They say to themselves, “How can a man like that believe in Jesus? Like me, a true believer has to share what he has and refrain from eating so that he might look spiritual with a thin build and a husky voice maltreated by loud prayers. It’s not like that these days, but at one time in the past, if the pastors had fine presence and if his face seemed to be showing even a little bit of oiliness, such pastors did not have any popularity. About a generation ago, pastors who were very skinny and did not show any oiliness used to be popular.

But even in Korea, a new wind started blowing: ‘If you believe in Jesus, there will be food and fuel.’ Such a Pentecostal movement started to flow. After that tide, Christians liked those who were fat and had a fat stomach. There is the other type of Christians - the Conservatives who are full of self-righteousness. They are the modern version of Pharisees who disregard and demote others unconditionally.

From the passage of Luke 18:9-14 that we read just before, we can find two types of mindset: A broken heart of a tax collector and a conceited heart of a Pharisee. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, “*God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess*” (Luke 18:9-12). He claimed that he fasted twice a week before God. Can you fast? When we skip just one meal, we become weak. People who just rest at home and preach a few times a week without using up energy can do that. People like us would die of malnutrition if we were to fast



twice a week. Anyhow, that Pharisee is really a great man. He said, “I fast twice a week. I do not commit adultery and I am not like this tax collector.” Pointing out the man next to him and with his head high up, said, “I am not like this wicked man who commits thievery, injustice, and adultery.”

But the tax collector wasn’t like that. He must have had committed numerous sins, right? He was a man whose sins have been exposed. Our Lord said, “*But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more*” (Romans 5:20). Also, our Lord said, “*I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners*” (Luke 5:32). Thus, only those who acknowledge how great and how numerous their sins are can meet the Lord. I want you to also realize how numerous your sins are right now. The things you have done until now aren’t important. I am saying that if you truly want to receive the blessing of being born again by the water and the Spirit, you must first realize how numerous your sins are right at this moment.

The tax collector couldn’t even look up to the heavens. He prayed banging his forehead into the floor. The tax collector had prayed crouching down his face for he could not dare lift up his face because of shame. Beating his breast, he said, “*God, be merciful to me a sinner!*” (Luke 18:13) He didn’t confess his sins in detail. Rather, he identified himself as a sinner.

Our Lord told us what a proper mind-set is by showing us these two people. He said, “*I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted*” (Luke 18:14). Truly, we must realize that our Lord looks into the center of the heart to see if a person has sins inside his or her heart. When a person looks at others, the person tends to look at their outside appearances, but the Lord look at the center of their heart. People think that a person must carry out the ‘act’ of adultery to be accused of adultery, but God says that whoever looks at a woman to lust for



her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. God looks into the center of a man's heart and then says what kind of a man he is.

Therefore, we must at least once think about whether or not we really are like Zacchaeus. The tax collector Zacchaeus said, *"I give half of my goods to the poor,"* and what this means is that he will sell half of his wealth and give to the poor with a repenting heart since the way he lives is obvious to the Lord. He has confessed before God, "I am a lump of sin. I am a man headed for hell. Thus, I need You. You have met with me and come to my house. For that, I am confessing myself. I am a man headed for hell."

You and I believe in Jesus. When God looks into your hearts and mine, that is, when He looks at our lives, will we be like bystanders before God or will we be like a brilliant protagonist before God for being righteous? In God's view, are we those who are complete lumps of sin, fully headed for hell, or are we His people who have received the remission

of sins? When God looks at us but if we had not been born again of the water and the Spirit, we should realize that we are merely sinners before God. Presupposing that we haven't been born again of the water and the Spirit, if God were to look at the center of your heart and mine, look at our soul, look at our thoughts, look at our acts, and also look at our lives, we would be sinners before Him. We would be beings who require no other words to describe us. People who can honestly acknowledge that they are sinners and confess it before God will be able to receive the blessing of being born again of the water and the Spirit and meet our Lord.

Do you happen to experience the following? "When I am with the saints, it seems as though I do have faith in Jesus. However, when there is no one, it seems as though my heart is empty, there is no Jesus, there is no Word of Jesus, and I realize that I don't even have the faith of believing in the Word." Are there times when you feel this? When you are clapping hands crying out, "Come, Thou burning



Spirit, Come; ♪Lo! We stretch our hands to Thee♪,” you feel as though you truly do have faith in Jesus. But as you look outside the window during a downpour of rain and look into your heart, when you ask yourself questions such as, “Do I really have faith in my heart, though there seems to be no faith?; do I have the Word of God inside my heart?; what Word do I believe in?; what Word do I have a hold of?; and what Word comes to my mind?” you feel as though your heart is in chaos, hollow, and empty, and your mind cannot come up with any Word of God. Do you happen to find yourself like this?

When you look at yourself, if you find yourself as a lump of all sorts of sins, you have to ask God to cleanse all your sins first. You must first find yourself feeling ashamed before God and people. You have hidden yourself so deep lest someone should find out your sins. You have feared meeting someone that knows you as you move from one neighborhood to another. You have moved frequently to other neighborhoods, but you have committed sins

there also. So, you have felt ashamed to look at people there. You must know your fundamental nature. We must first know what kind of a human being we are and what kind of nature we have, and then we should ask the Lord to give us the blessing of being born again of the water and the gospel.

## **Spiritually, What Kind of People Are We before God?**

Now, we will see just what kind of people we are through the Gospel of Mark chapter 7. Let us read verses 20-23 from the Gospel of Mark chapter 7. *“And He said, ‘What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man.’”* Our Lord said what comes out of a man



defiles a man. And He also tells us in detail what the things that come out of the heart of men are.

Then, let us take a look at what kind of sins come out of the heart of each and every man. First of all, evil thoughts come out of the heart of people. When thoughts are evil, acts become evil as well. There is a debate on which came first, chicken or the egg, but according to God's Word, because He had to create animals in every kind, the chicken surely was created first by God.

Then, does the heart of a man come first or does the act come first? The heart of a man works first. If the heart of a man is dirty, filthy, and evil, then that man's acts are surely evil, filthy, and dirty. Still, even though people are evil, they try not to sin. And even though they do sin, they try to have good heart in whatever way possible and make effort. As for people who do so, the number of times that they commit sins is small and they tend to commit them in hiding, but as for the people who commit sins very

openly they are those that commit sins professionally.

Yet, Jesus tells us that what comes first out of a man is none other than evil thoughts. We are human beings. Among humans, we call some cruel persons as "someone who is worse than an animal." Even wild beasts love their offspring, but there indeed are people who are less than beasts. On the other hand, animals rush about whenever food is given, but people aren't like that. Rather, a human being shares whatever he or she has been eating, if asked by mother or father. It might be different if one's own life is at stake, but clearly, human beings are different from animals.

Evil thoughts inside the heart of men are also sins. That is, having fornications means that one's heart is like that. It doesn't necessarily mean that the person has committed such an act. Even if one imagines adultery only inside one's heart, it means that he has committed adultery in the Lord's view. It is because the Lord said, *"But I say to you that whoever looks at*



*a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart” (Matthew 5:28).* Furthermore, people have the desire to commit thievery and to commit murder. They have the desire to be covetous. They have wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, and foolishness. Human beings do possess things like these. Do you understand clearly now?

Are there or are there not such sins inside your heart? There are. Are they inside the heart of every human being living in this world, or not? They are. Jesus said that there are such sins inside the heart of men. People do possess such heart, and they are born with the twelve kinds of sins inside their heart. Being born with such a sinful heart, they commit sins in due time. Today they commit this sin, and tomorrow they commit that sin. They commit sins like these in turn. They go on committing sins day-by-day and month-by-month. That is just how they are.

The problem for people is that they commit sins without even knowing that they are committing such

sins. That is precisely the problem. In other words, it is a problem that they don't know they are grave sinners. The very thought that they are not sinners so long as they don't carry out such evil acts is precisely the evidence of the fact that they are becoming spiritually blind and that they haven't yet been born again. Therefore, even if you didn't put them into action, you must know what kinds of sins are inside your heart and what kind of a person you are. Socrates said, “Know yourself.” And our Lord made the same remark to the Pharisees.

In Luke 10, our Lord told the parable of the good Samaritan to a certain lawyer. Before He told this parable, this Pharisee asked Jesus, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” So Jesus asked him in return, “*What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?*” The lawyer replied, “*You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.*”



So Jesus said, “You have answered rightly. Do you do that?”

“Yes. I love my neighbor as my body, and I love God the most.”

“Do you live like that?”

“Yes. I do live like that.”

“Can you act like that?”

“Yes. I can do that. Just let me know who my neighbor is. I will love the person as my body.” At the end of this dialog, our Lord came across the thought that this Pharisee was so very absurd. So, He told the parable to him in order that he might know himself.

## **These Twelve Kinds of Sin Are Also inside the Pharisee’s Heart**

Evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, and foolishness—all

these sins were installed inside the heart of the Pharisee. Such sinful desires were all lumped up together in his heart, but this Pharisee, not realizing his essential nature, thought that he had lived according to God’s will. So he proudly asked, “What shall I do to inherit eternal life?”

Just then, Jesus told him the parable: “*A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves*” (Luke 10:30). I’ve told you that the word, ‘Jericho,’ means ‘aroma,’ that is, ‘the world.’ And since Jerusalem is a religious city, it is a place where all kinds of religious men abide. The parable goes like this: A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, he met thieves, and those thieves wounded him, stripped him of his clothes, and left him half dead. Then, a certain priest saw the dying man as he was coming down the same road, but the priest passed by on the other side, likewise with a Levite who also passed by on the other side upon seeing that dying man. But a certain Samaritan discovered this man as he was journeying down the



road. He had compassion for the victim, so he poured oil and wine on the dying man, bandaged his wounds, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. Furthermore, he provided the innkeeper with all the costs, like inn expenses and charges, and left saying, “If more money is spent before I come back, I will repay you. So, take good care of him.”

Jesus then asks the Pharisee, “*So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?*” “The Samaritan.” Jesus says, “Do likewise. If you do so, you will inherit eternal life.” With whom did Jesus identify the Pharisee who had asked Him the question? He identified him with hypocrites like the priest and the Levite. “You only speak glossily, and as you sit high up above before others, you are telling people to do this and that without even stirring a finger of your own. You torment people and speak as if you are a very pious teacher only with words. But, when you meet someone who is truly dying, you are someone who

will run away.” Even though Jesus didn’t say all this, but His heart probably wanted to say so.

Levites are people who are said to be faithful to God. But one of the Levites also turned away from the dying person. Jesus identified this lawyer with such a hypocritical character saying, “You are such a man.”

In the Lord’s view, can we act upright? Are we beings who can live according to the Word of God before Him? No, we are not. As you go around churches in this world, there are certain pastors and deacons, and you may think that those people seem really virtuous and really upright. However, in God’s view, there isn’t a person who is devoid of the twelve kinds of sin.

Then, what was happening here? Jesus rebuked the Pharisees as self-righteous hypocrites. So Jesus scolded them, “You hypocrites, like a whitewashed tomb!” The Jews used to bury a corpse under ground, cover it with dirt, paste some lime powder kneaded with water on top of it, and spread it out smoothly



with hands. Why is a tomb built like that? On top of such a grave, not a single strand of grass will grow. And even though the outside may seem very smooth, inside, the corps will rot away. In other words, Jesus was saying that even though the lawyer's acts seemed upright, the inside of his heart was hypocritical, full of filthy and ugly things. He is saying to such a person, "You sin secretly in your hiding. You are someone who deceives God, your own self, other people, as well as church goers."

About a decade ago, a famous Buddhist priest named Sungcheol Lee passed away. Korean Buddhists as well as Buddhists from other countries revered the monk as a living Buddha. The monk Sungcheol Lee was a man who had practiced the spiritual meditation of wall-facing for ten years. Staying inside a hut, he would receive food through a small window, eat, and give back the emptied meal plates. He would take care of business using a manure pail, giving it back through a small hole when finished. He meditated for ten years like that,

practicing spiritual exercise by facing a wall, and sleeping while sitting down. And so, people called him a living Buddha.

A great number of people admired and respected this monk Sungcheol Lee. Some Buddhists said, "The Great Monk Sungcheol Lee was a living Buddha. Possibly, he might have been greater than Buddha himself." However, he composed a poem just before he passed away. In this poem, he wrote, "Throughout my life, I have deceived so many men and women; My sins have piled up higher than Mount Sumi." Mt. Sumi is a legendary mountain that is known as the highest. By this lyric, he meant, "People tell me that, except for my feces, I would be a living Buddha. But even though they revere me so much, you don't know just how many times I had lewd lusts in my heart when I looked at women."

From other people's viewpoint, the image of this monk Sungcheol Lee might have looked sublime. But even inside the heart of this man, there also were uncontrollable urges of lusts, and his heart was such



that it would wander all over the place, up into the mountains and out into the fields, and then it would settle down once again. That is why he died by saying he had deceived so many men and women. He also said in his last poem, “I would fall into the bottomless pit of hell; And my lamentation will be tens of thousands of threads.” It means that he was worried that he might fall into a bottomless and endless hell like that.

He got to know himself at least that much because he had meditated. The difference between this monk Sungcheol Lee and others is that he knew accurately that he had sins inside his heart and that he will go to hell when he dies. I said lewdness is inside your heart. This is true.

God is the Creator who has made you and me. “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Then God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light.” Do you know who this God is? Jesus Christ who came down to this earth in human flesh to save us is none other than this God. Jesus is the One who

created this universe and every thing in it, and He is the God who has made you and me. So the Bible says, “The Word became flesh and came down among us, and the world was made through Him. But as He came to His own earth, His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name.”

God created us and placed us in the Garden of Eden, but we were cast out from the Garden of Eden in the end because Satan the Devil deceived us into committing sins. And this is why, in God’s view, we are those lost to Him. Originally, human beings were a creation made in the image of God and were the people of God. We had become lost beings like that from God’s perspective. And that is why God came down to this earth in human flesh to rescue us.

God did come down to bring us back to His Kingdom, but there were still many people who did not know whether or not they are those whom God had lost and whether or not they are sinners. And for



this reason, Jesus came down to this earth and said, *“What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man”* (Mark 7:20-23). Do you believe this Word? Do you believe that you and I are like these people? Truly, we are sinners like that, even though others may have told us that we are kind and that we live as upright as a bamboo tree. Inside our heart there are such evils and sins, and we are beings who cannot but commit such sins all throughout our lives in our acts and thoughts. People who admit and confess this are precisely those who are like Zacchaeus. Our Lord will meet with people like that. I am saying we must realize this and accept it.

*“I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold”* (Luke 19:8). These words show

Zacchaeus’ mind set unreservedly. “I am a person headed for hell. I am a complete lump of sin. Yet, how is it that You are coming to my house? I am a lump of sin who just simply cannot invite You in.” Our Lord speaks to sinners who confess like that: “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance. I want to call upon the sinful and cleanse them to be born again by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. By doing so, I want to have them live as God’s people. I will bless them by making them the children of God and the righteous before God.” Therefore, we must believe in this Word.

And furthermore, we must acknowledge our fundamental nature before God. Regardless of whether you have been believing in Jesus for a year, five years, twenty, or even one hundred years, if you were to acknowledge the fact that you cannot but commit such sins until you die, and that you are someone who ought to pay for the wages of sin by



going to hell, our Lord will meet with you without fail. He will meet people who are like that.

***“The Wages of Sin Is Death, but the Gift of God Is Eternal Life in Christ Jesus Our Lord”***

The Lord said that the wages of sin is death. It means that if a person has sin, then that person will go to hell. There are twelve kinds of sin inside the heart of a human, and if one were to bring them out, the fruits of sin will start to grow, just as fruits of a tree grow in due time. It is the same principle as the blooming of flowers in spring, or bearing of fruits in summer, and harvesting of crops in autumn. Our Lord spoke of this by likening a person to a tree, saying, *“Every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit” (Matthew 7:17)*.

If you and I are likened to trees, we must make clear whether we ourselves are a good tree or a bad

tree. We have to be sure of it before we move on. Dear fellow believers, are we a good tree or a bad tree? Being a bad tree when young may be fine, but later on, there will surely be problems. Problems will arise because of the lump of sins coming out from hearts such as evil thoughts in the hearts of mankind, desire to murder, desire to commit thievery, hearts that are lewd, hearts that are lustful, hearts that are blasphemous, and hearts that are proud. Such evil desires bear fruits such as evil acts, wicked acts, swindling, deceiving, coveting and striking people, conflicts, pride, and foolishness.

I saw yesterday a woman was headed to a market, but when her child cries and refuses to follow her, she will curse at the child, saying, “Stupid kid, die or not, do as you wish!” I’ve seen her telling her little son not to cry but then hitting the child as he continued to cry, saying, “Die.” Because there is foolishness inside the human heart, that woman’s pretty face changed to something like that of a witch, and she started cursing. Then, do you think men



aren't like that? We see neighborhoods getting noise just as a man who overflows with chivalry and dignity in normal times. Once he gets hurt in his ego and feels things aren't going his way or whenever he drinks or is faced with a troubling problem, he yells, "Come on, anyone! I am going to kill whoever comes first!" And he will beat his wife relentlessly, saying, "Who are you to interfere?" just as the police arrives. These acts are the fruits of foolishness and madness installed inside the human heart.

Dear fellow believers, like so, each and every human being is a lump of sin, we are all the same. Only those who have been born again by the water and the Spirit are those who have received the remission of sins. People who haven't yet been born again of the water and the Spirit are those who haven't received the remission of sins. According to the Bible, weren't there many Pharisees and people who claimed to believe in God? They were nothing more than bystanders because they hadn't been able to be born again of the water and the Spirit. Among

them, only a handful had received the remission of sins. You must realize that people who haven't been born again of the water and the Spirit can only act as bystanders. Whether or not you agree to this fact is important.

If you want to become a righteous person before God, your heart must first receive the remission of sins rather than trying hard to give heed to your actions. It is said that God looks into the center of your heart first. Therefore, we must have the center of our heart be remedied first. Our Lord said, "*Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also*" (Matthew 23:26). He is telling us to receive the remission of sins first. He is telling us to be born again of the water and the Spirit. He is telling us to receive the blessing of being born again of the water and the Spirit for He will be bestowing that upon us. In order to receive that blessing, you must first become a sinner by acknowledging that you are a grave sinner. And only when you realize who you are, you can



climb up into a sycamore tree and await the coming of the Lord. I mean that you need to be led by predecessors of faith to meet Jesus properly. Only then, while the bystanders desire just to see Jesus, you will be able to meet Jesus face to face with the conviction that you will go to hell if you do not get to meet Him. To see Him is way much different from meeting Him. We have to meet Jesus to gain peace. If we don't, our hearts will be in agony, and we won't be able to go on living in peace.

“I must meet Jesus to solve of the problem of sin. I must receive the blessing of being born again by the water and the Spirit from Jesus. If I don't get to receive that, I will have to go to hell. I believe in Jesus, but because there are sins inside my heart, I will be going to hell. Despite having faith in Jesus, I will clearly be going to hell. I am a person who cannot but only go to hell if Jesus were to come again right at this moment.” To those whose heart is ready like this, our Lord will grant them the blessing of being born again of the water and the Spirit.

Hence, if you want to receive the blessing of being born again of the water and the Spirit, you must first accept that you are as told in the following: “Dear Lord, I have such and such evil thoughts inside my heart. Also, I have lived committing such and such sinful acts. And I will be doing so in the future as well. I am a grave sinner who does all sorts of filthy things when I get temperamental, even though I don't intend to do them.” Dear fellow believers, if you want to be born again of the water and the Spirit, you must commit yourself to God. You must admit that you yourself are a sinner and that you are destined for hell. And you must hope for being born again of the water and the Spirit. With such heart, you must listen to the Word.

I would like to summarize the sermon and bring it to an end. I am saying that to receive the remission of sins, the field of your heart must be tilled first of all. A farmer will not sow on a ground filled with weeds after winter. If he wants to farm his field, he will first plow down that ground. He will pick out rocks and



stones that lie under it by tilling the land. He will completely upturn it, and only then, he will dig up furrows, sow, and cover the seeds up. Only when he does all that, seeds will receive rain and sunlight, sprout, and become lettuces, cabbages, radishes, or tomatoes. You must also upturn your fixed ideas, too. You shouldn't be thinking only with your head whether or not you are such a sinful person. Rather, as you truly think before God, you must realize that you are indeed such a grave sinner and ask God for His salvation.

Perhaps, there may be people who think, "Lord God, up until today, I have lived well, but I don't know who I really am. I think I must dwell on this." If you are someone like that, think carefully about yourself. "Have I truly lived righteously before God? And am I confident enough to live righteously in the future? Can I enter the Kingdom of Heaven without being born again of the water and the Spirit? Jesus said, *"Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the*

*kingdom of God"* (John 3:5). He said that we have to be born again of the water and the Spirit to enter the Kingdom of God and see the Father. Therefore, we must be born again of the water and the Spirit. To be so, we must first upturn the field of our hearts first.

There cannot but be sins inside the heart of those who haven't yet been born again of the water and the Spirit. So, try to upturn your heart first. Are there hidden sins engraved inside your heart? Is your heart swarming with sins? To admit that is the way to have the mindset like that of Zacchaeus.

Zacchaeus said, "I give half of my goods to the poor." This means, "Now, all my goods aren't mine." You must bear in mind that those who honestly admit and confess that they are grave sinners get to receive the blessing of being born again of the water and the Spirit before God.

Just because a man looks slick on the outside make that man a gentleman? A man has to be sinless in his heart to be a gentleman. If there are sins in a man's heart, then that man isn't even a human being.



Is a man whose heart is filled with evil desires of lewdness, committing murder and thievery a human being? Such a man isn't even a beast. Rather, he is less than a beast. He is a sinner destined to hell.

Nonetheless, if we suddenly die tonight, will we go to hell or Heaven? If you aren't born again by the water and the Spirit now, you will be heading for hell. Pray that you'll be allowed to attend the next meeting to hear another sermon. Let us safely pass by tonight and meet tomorrow morning. Until we meet tomorrow, you must take care of yourself. It is because the sermon hours will be at night. Once you hear the gospel, your heart will shine bright, and it will be fully cleansed. The Holy Spirit will come inside your heart and it will be filled with the Word of God. Since you have had faith in Jesus, it will be the first time you will have experienced such state of fulfillment.

Now, I am asking this question to our saints. Are you the righteous, or are you sinners? Yes, you are the righteous. If someone has not been born again of

the water and the Spirit, is that person a sinner or the righteous? Yes, the person is a sinner headed to hell. In other words, people like Zacchaeus get to receive blessings from God. ☒



# SERMON

12



CONTENTS



## The Lord Is The Eternal King

< Luke 19:11-27 >

“Now as they heard these things, He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately. Therefore He said: ‘A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, ‘Do business till I come.’ But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, ‘We will not have this man to reign over us.’ And so it was that when he returned, having received the kingdom, he then commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading.

Then came the first, saying, ‘Master, your mina has earned ten minas.’ And he said to him, ‘Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.’ And the second came, saying, ‘Master, your mina has earned five minas.’ Likewise he said to him, ‘You also be over five cities.’ Then another came, saying, ‘Master, here is your mina, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief. For I feared you, because you are an austere man. You collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.’ And he said to him, ‘Out of your own mouth I will judge you, you wicked servant. You knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow. Why then did you not put my money in the bank, that at my coming I might have collected it with interest?’ And he said to those who stood by, ‘Take the mina from him, and give it to him who has ten minas.’ (But they said to him, ‘Master, he has ten minas.’) ‘For I say to you, that to everyone



**who has will be given; and from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. But bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay them before me.’”**

## **Is the Lord Really the King of the Righteous?**

As we pass the last hours of the year, we should not do so in profusion, but we must really calculate how much we were able to accomplish the work that was entrusted to us and greet the New Year with new resolution. If we check the grade for our spiritual life during the past year, we can give ourselves good marks in some tasks but not in some other tasks, and I want this hour to be a time of contemplating about our own duties through today’s Word.

Through today’s Scripture passage, the Lord said that a certain nobleman had to go to a country far

away to receive for himself a kingdom. That nobleman, the master, counted 10 minas and gave one mina to each of his ten servants. The master told the servants to do business diligently with that money as a startup capital. All the servants obeyed the master, but one servant did not. It seems that the servant had decided to disobey the direction of the Lord from the outset. He probably did not even want his master to become a king. He might advocate the disloyalty of his master’s citizens who hated the master, and sent a delegation after him, saying, “We will not have this man to reign over us.”

However, the king eventually came back after receiving the kingdom. The master who came back from the journey wanted to check how the servants had run the business with one mina he gave to each servant. At that time, a certain servant increased it by ten fold and another increased it by five fold and brought them to the master. And the master praised them for being faithful to the smallest task. And the master gave to each of them the authority to rule over



ten villages and five villages respectively. The master wanted to test the servants with small matter and see how they were faithful with it in order to find out whether they were worthy to be entrusted with bigger responsibility.

However, the servant who disobeyed the master from the beginning just brought one mina that he received from the master. What does such behavior imply? It portrays the heart that says, “I do not recognize you as the king. Your request is unreasonable. You give one mina and expect me to increase it. That is nonsense.” The unfaithful servant criticized the master, “You are a person who collects from the place you have not stored and harvest from the place you have not sown.” Then, the master proclaimed him an evil servant and rebuked him for disobeying his words. The master rebuked him and said that he should have at least deposited the money in the bank and gotten interest if he intended to follow the master’s will at all.

That servant did not want to do anything for the master because he originally did not want the master becoming the king. So, what happened? Eventually, the master took that money from the disobedient servant and gave it to the servant who increased his share by ten fold. In addition, the master commanded them to kill that evil servant who even interfered with him becoming the king.

Through the record here, we could realize that God sees how we are faithful to even the smallest thing for Him. God is saying that a person who has the desire to serve God as his King would be faithful to even the smallest thing that He commands. We must understand the will of God. We must understand that this Word of the parable is spoken to none other than you and me today.

Our Lord is the Savior who came to this world and blotted out all our sins, make us receive salvation, and give us the Holy Spirit in our hearts. And He is the Lord who gives various precious gifts of faith to each one of us so that we could fulfill the Lord’s



work. The Lord gave us the power to serve the gospel and do His work. The Lord gives us all such things and just expects one thing from us: He wants us to expand the Kingdom of God by evangelism according to the gifts that we have received from Him. It is akin to doing business and increasing the money.

As the master returned after receiving the kingdom and rewarded the result that his servants achieved with all their faithful hard work in today's Scripture passage, the Lord will ask us when He comes back, "Have you done business well? Have you followed Me with faith and done My work faithfully?" When the Lord asks us like that, certain brothers and sisters will say happily and confidently, "Lord, look. I have reaped ten from the one gift that you have given to me." And certain saints will bring to Him five that they have reaped.

However, the people who have stood against the Lord like the servant who did not acknowledge the master as the king would not be able to do anything

but shamefully bring Him the one mina that they had received as it is. The difference between a person who just brings one mina that God entrusted to him without doing anything with it and those who bring their money after increasing it five fold or ten fold is not small at all. What is the lesson of today's passage? The size of the gift that God gives is the same for everyone, but there is a big difference in the fruits of that faith depending on whether one has the heart to truly worship God as his King or not.

The different result each servant who received the command of the master reaped depended on whether one served the master as the king or not. The person who increased the money ten fold and the person who increased it five fold truly served their master as their king. It means that they acknowledged the master as their king and the ruler who leded them and had authority over everything. For such faithful servants, the amount of money the master has entrusted them is not important, whether it is one mina or 100 minas. Because that money is the king's



money, and because the king gave him the command to do business with the money, he is absolutely faithful to the command only. It is not that he is more faithful when the master entrusts him with one hundred minas and less faithful when he is entrusted with one mina. Instead, he follows the will of the king with all his heart because it is the king's command. On the contrary, in the case of the servant who absolutely does not acknowledge the master as his king, he cannot help but be unfaithful regardless of how much money the master entrusts to him. It is because such an evil servant only thinks why he should increase the money and bring profit for the master only, and only calculates that the return for himself is too little. However, God not only saved us from sins, but also gave us abilities to fulfill His work. It means that God gave us the abilities to do God's work, the faith of obedience, faith of devotion, and faith that grows properly in the Church.

The corresponding Word in the Gospel of Matthew refers to mina in this passage as talent.

Talent means ability. There are many different talents like the talent to give glory to God through praises, talent to care for children with education and admonishment, talent to take care of other believers with understanding and volunteer work, talent of financial ability and talent to accumulate wealth, and talent to serve the Church.

God did not only allow us the grace of salvation, but also gave us many 'abilities' like these to serve the Lord as we live in this world. God gave us the wisdom to understand the Word properly and the talent to deliver the true faith boldly. The master gave all the servants one mina, that is, one talent, in today's Scripture passage. This means that the Lord gave the fullness of the Holy Spirit to us all who believe in Him. That the master gave one mina to each and every servant means that the Lord basically and equally gave the Holy Spirit to each and every believer. That is because the saints who have received the Holy Spirit have received the abilities to do God's work with the gift of the Holy Spirit.



Then, what is the reason why the servants reaped different results when the Lord distributed the gifts fairly like this? That was the result of whether the servants had the heart of acknowledging and serving the master as their king or not. While the master went to a far country to receive the kingdom, certain servants followed the direction of the master with all their faithfulness, but the servant who did not want to serve the master as his king did not do any work for the master.

Eventually, when the master came back as the king, the fate of the two kinds of servants went separate paths. If one actually considers it as the command of the one he serves as the king and if he regards it as his master's work, then the will and the attitude of the servant who is entrusted with it cannot but be different. It means that the command of the king becomes an absolute command and the word the king has spoken becomes the goal of his life. Therefore, the person who sets the word of the king and the thinking of the king as his goal and is totally

faithful to that goal is the attitude of the person who acknowledges and serves the king.

It is the same in our spiritual life. We must look into ourselves and see whether we truly believe and serve the Lord as the King. He is the Lord who saved us and the Lord who became our King. God is the Lord who created the universe and everything in it, including you and me, and the Lord who gave eternal life to you and me. When you and I fell into sin and we were facing destruction, God who is our Master came, saved us from sins, and gave us new life.

The Lord became our master like that, delivered us from death, and gave us new life. Moreover, the Lord is the master who leads us with much blessing that we can be thankful for. As in the relationship between a king and his subject, which the king does not owe to the subject, but the subjects owe to the king, we also live owing to the Lord. The subjects can live because the king gives the authority and material things, and the subjects do not live with something they can put up for themselves, right?



God, our King, has allowed us the air, warm sunlight, crops and all the things of the world, and proper environment that benefit our life. That is why we can go on living. When we come to realize that God has allowed everything we enjoy like this, then we cannot but confess God as our King. Would we be born from our mother's womb by ourselves, without God? Furthermore, after we have been born from our mother's womb, have we made the air by ourselves, breathed it, made the sun, and received the sunshine? Did we make the other natural environment? All the blessings of the nature have been given to us by the grace of God who is our King. We humans just made our own trivial cultures to live a little more comfortably. However, God, our King, is also the Lord who gives the resources themselves to build the cultures of human beings. Truly, among the things we need to live, there isn't anything we have not received from God.

All humankind can only live with all things they receive from God. Even our thinking and wisdom,

our health and faith also, could not be ours if we did not receive the remission of sins. You have received everything from the Lord — even the Holy Spirit in you, your life itself, and even all the plan and guarantee of happiness of your future. We must always remember that there isn't anything we have not received from the Lord.

## **Then, What Attitude of the Heart Must We Have to Serve God as the King?**

The behavior that appears outwardly differs from one extreme to another depending on whether we worship God as the King wholeheartedly or not. In today's Scripture passage, the evil servant who did not serve the master as the king thought the command of the master was unjust. He thought the master was certainly a robber and indecent person. He thought it was so unfair for the master to entrust



one mina and expect to have five or ten fold returns. That servant did not even think of serving the master as his king and did not even have the heart to be faithful to the master because he did not believe in the master. He just thought the command that the master gave to him was unjust, and did not have faith in the reward and compensation the king would give him when he fulfilled that responsibility.

However, what consequently happened? When the other servants truly believed in the master who entrusted the work to them, regardless of how small the work was, and worked faithfully with all their efforts, the master bestowed on them great blessing and reward, didn't he?

Among the things we enjoy, there isn't anything we have not received from God. Even the relationship between a parent and a child was allowed by God, wasn't it? Moreover, the brothers and sisters, the Church and the ministries in the Church, God's work, the love in Christ, and all other things are given to us from the Lord. When we

acknowledge and serve God as our King, then, we cannot but confess that all the thankful things that we enjoy like this are from God.

## **We Are Inadequate People**

Regardless of the fact that we have been born again by believing in Jesus, we cannot be perfect as long as we are human beings. Even though we always want to do well, we make mistakes from time to time because human beings are weak beings. Human behaviors cannot but be imperfect. If human behavior could be perfect somehow, then there would not be any conflict between people, and people would not suffer from difficulties. However, in contrast to human behaviors, the faith of believing with our hearts can be perfect and complete. Therefore, the Lord looks at our hearts, not our works. If we always leave the space in our heart empty for the King and concentrate our attention on



the will and the glory of the Lord only, then such heart can be accepted as perfect before the presence of the Lord. Anyone who has been born again and wants to serve the Lord inside him can have such heart.

We are all people who have such qualifications and people who can live like that. Even though our behaviors cannot be 100% satisfactory because our flesh is weak, anyone can receive the talent from the Holy Spirit and receive the blessing by doing God's ministry with that talent if he just accepts God in his heart instead of thinking the Lord who saved you and me is the strict and awkward God and keeping distance from Him with fear. However, if someone just becomes weary of God's work and feels that God expects too much and only complains, then such person cannot serve God as the King and hate to do any kind of work for Him.

God owns everything in this world. God willingly gives all such things to us, so we can receive them all in the Lord, enjoy them, and serve the Lord with

thankfulness. We serve the Lord with the Lord's own and we eat, drink, and go on living with the Lord's possessions. We give glory to the Lord and we do God's work with His belongings, and we also share them with our neighbors.

God truly is our Creator and the King. The Lord becomes our King, the King for you and me, when we believe that the Lord has saved us. We just cannot serve Him as the King properly and treat Him as the King perfectly only because our faith is lacking. The Lord becomes our King when we invite the Lord in our hearts wholly. Jesus Christ is the King for us who has received the remission of sins. You and I must definitely believe this fact. The Lord who is our King is the Christ and the Son of the living God. We are not able to serve Him 100% perfectly, but nonetheless, the Lord is our King.

However, when we start to live the spiritual life with the heart that says, "I am so tired and frustrated with unreasonable demands of serving You every day. I have offered so much to You, but You ask me



to give myself to you continuously, and I cannot do that anymore” as we serve the Lord, then the Lord no longer wants to be our King. We must therefore believe that the more devoted we are and the more we do the Lord’s work, the more blessing and reward the Lord will give to us. If we do not have such faith, the Lord no longer remains our King and does not give us the blessing any more.

If we face God with the shaky faith and fleshly thinking instead of the eyes of faith, then God may some day look like a tyrant to us. However, as the master entrusted one mina to each and every servant, we must understand that if we think preciously of the little talent that is given to us and be faithful to Him, then everything turns to grace and thankfulness. We live in this world with the talent that God has entrusted to us.

That talent is not a responsibility. It is not a burden that we must bear laboriously. That talent is the seed of faith that leads us to the heavenly blessings. Everything is a gift that the Lord has given

to us. When we look carefully at the things that are given to us, there isn’t anything that the Lord did not give. The Lord even gave us our life and we would just become a handful of dust if the Lord took that life.

In today’s Scripture passage, the reason why certain servants that received one mina reaped much and certain others did not is not any other reason than the difference of whether one has served the master as the king wholeheartedly and obeyed the master absolutely or not. The servant who reaped five, the servant who reaped ten, and the one who reaped nothing have each reaped such fruit by using their respective ability. As we receive salvation by faith as small as a mustard seed, the result of the work we do with our abilities can be different like that depending on the size of our faith. However, the evil servant that brought one mina intact received the unfortunate consequence eventually because he did not do any work and he did not serve God as the King.



## **The Heart That Does Not Want Jesus as His King Must Repent**

This year is passing by, and as I have said in the beginning, we must not just pass this year meaninglessly, but, we must instead evaluate our faith according to how great or little fruit we have reaped. In addition, I really want you to invite God as your true King in the coming year. Even if we served Him as the King, we could reap little fruit and not do much of the work He has entrusted to us because of our lacking. However, I believe God will fill up our lacking if we just invite God as the King in our hearts. God really chose you and me among many people that number more than the sand pebbles, saved us, and gave us this gospel of the Truth. God caused us to receive salvation by hearing and believing the gospel of the Truth.

The Holy Spirit is in our hearts. It is obvious that God is leading us even though we go astray sometimes because we do not follow the Word of the

Holy Spirit faithfully. Do you have the Holy Spirit, or do you not? You are touched when you listen to the Word because you have the Holy Spirit. You would not be able to sit here if you did not have the Holy Spirit because a person who does not have the Holy Spirit cannot receive blessing from the words of the preacher and it would not touch his heart. We who have received the remission of sins must believe the Lord and believe the fact that the Lord has saved us by receiving the baptism, dying on the Cross, and being resurrected from death. And we should always give thanks to God as we live in this world.

The Lord looks at our hearts, and He does not look at the splendor of our outward appearance. The Lord asks whether we serve Him as the King wholeheartedly or not, and judges us based on that criterion. In the Word from today's passage, the master praised all the servants who increased the money by doing business. It is because they were all faithful servants who acknowledged the master as the king even though there were some differences in the



results they reaped. We cannot have any other thing or any other person as our King. The material things or human wisdom, fleshly pleasures or honor of the world cannot be our King. We must acknowledge and only serve our Lord as the King.

In today's Scripture Word, among many things, the part that we need to see with special attention is the part about the pitiful end of the person who did not want the master to become the king. That evil servant eventually suffered terrible death in the end. That he just held onto one mina unfaithfully and brought to the master exactly one mina is one reason, but, basically, it's probably because he interfered with the master becoming the king because he did not want the master to become the king. That servant said, "For I feared you, because you are an austere man."

God is not a narrow-minded tyrant. The Lord is the Shepherd of love and the almighty God who caresses our situation and our wounds. He is definitely not the Lord who oppresses us even though

He is mighty, and He is the Lord who leads us to the water of life and to a peaceful pasture. He is the good God who causes us to become well-off and able to receive the blessing.

Refusing to serve God as the King is, therefore, the most evil attitude. If there is by chance anyone who has such heart, then he must turn back. We must actively serve God as our King. If you believe that you have received the remission of sins and that you are a precious person, and if you believe that you are a child of God, then you cannot but confess Jesus Christ is the true King and serve Him. The people who do not believe and accept this fact yet must truly serve the Lord as the King from now on. We cannot but be treated like the evil servant if we do not serve the Lord as the King. It means that we will be put in a shameful situation of bringing only one mina if we do not serve the Lord as the King and go against Him and do not do any work for Him. Even though you have received the remission of sins, you lose everything shamefully in the end if you do not accept



the fact that Jesus Christ is your King. Consequently, you will be destroyed.

This year is now passing by, and next year is coming around the corner, and the year after next year will also come soon. But, I want you know that the passing of times does not repeat itself forever and that there will definitely come a time of judgment some day. We must invite Jesus Christ as the true King in our hearts at this very moment to prepare for that day. We must make the decision fast. Jesus Christ truly is our King. Jesus Christ is the Lord who gives everything to you and me. What would be the reason you would not receive the Lord as the King in your heart? What would be the reason to refuse serving the Lord as the King? Only our Lord is our true King.

If we acknowledge the Lord as the King, I believe that the Lord will definitely bestow on us all the authority and blessing that the master in today's Word allowed to his servants. Do you believe? If we just acknowledge the Lord as the King, then the Lord

who is our King will give us the power, the Church, a spouse, works to do, and all things even though we are somewhat foolish and lacking. The Lord is not a tyrant, but a good and wise King.

That the master gave one mina to each and every servant means that the Lord gave the grace of salvation to all in same manner. However, the evil servant who does not acknowledge the Lord as the King cannot but perish in the end. I know that there is no one among us who does not want to serve the Lord as the King. I believe there is no saint who would bring just one talent that he has received before the presence of God because he does not want to do any work for Him. There isn't any evil servant among us. If you all are people who come to Church, follow God's Word, desire always to serve the Lord who is our King even though you are lacking, and confess the Lord as the Christ in your heart, then there is no saint who would end up with such unfortunate result that the evil servant faced. Our



confession is always, as the Apostle Peter did, “*You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.*”

We believe in God who is the Savior, the King, the Creator, and the Lord who gives us everything. Who has such faith? Do you believe like that? The Lord gave such faith to you and me. He definitely gave all things and we have received them. Who else but God would give us the air, give us the good environment, give us peace in our hearts, blot out our sins, and give us food. Only the Lord gives all such things to us. We are just thankful to the Lord.

Even though we are all people who acknowledge that the Lord has become our King, there must have been many shortcomings of ours last year. And we cannot say that we will not have any shortcomings in the future as well. The Scriptures said, “*Do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath,*” and, therefore, we cannot take oath carelessly. And we would not be able to do everything well in the future, too. It means that there is no such guarantee.

However, one thing that we can confess confidently is that only the Lord is the King and God who has saved us. I believe the Lord knows everything about our situation and definitely helps us if we acknowledge Jesus Christ as our King like this. In addition, I believe the Lord will give you the strength to serve the Lord faithfully, bless you, and fulfill everything for you. He will definitely do as such. The Scriptures said, “*Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.*” Who is the Lord that tells us like this and fulfills everything like this? Who is the Lord that works like that whenever we seek and ask? He is none other than Jesus Christ.

Therefore, we must serve and acknowledge the Lord in our hearts. Even though we acknowledge Him as the King in our hearts, there are times when our actions do not coincide with our hearts. Even so, the Lord nurtures us and leads us if we just serve the Lord in the center of our hearts. I pray that the Lord will give you all the faith and precious talent to serve



Him firmly as the King. I pray that the Lord will give you all such environment, material things, and all the blessings for you to give thanks and be faithful to the Lord. I believe God knows our heart and that He will give all things like that.

As we look into our hearts at the time of looking back at this past year, we must confess that we were not perfect in serving and worshipping the Lord as our King. Let's confess again with new hearts and acknowledge the Lord as the King once again. As we pass another year like this, let's have such time and resolve in our heart to serve the Lord as the King even more faithfully even though we are lacking. I want you to believe the Lord's guidance in the coming year too, believe in the Lord's help, and confess the Lord as the eternal King as you live for the Lord in the coming year, too.

I believe we will be able to return glory to the Lord through such resolve. Even though we have not reaped ten talents, I believe we will become people who are faithful to even the smallest things and

devote ourselves to reap even more fruit in the coming year and receive much authority and blessing of the Kingdom of Heaven. I give glory and praise to the Lord who has allowed such a heart and such time to us. ☒



# SERMON

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## **Live the Life of a Servant To Preach the Gospel**

< Luke 19:11-27 >

“Now as they heard these things, He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately. Therefore He said: ‘A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, ‘Do business till I come.’ But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, ‘We will not have this man to reign over us.’ And so it was that when he returned, having received the kingdom, he then commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading.

Then came the first, saying, ‘Master, your mina has earned ten minas.’ And he said to him, ‘Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.’ And the second came, saying, ‘Master, your mina has earned five minas.’ Likewise he said to him, ‘You also be over five cities.’ Then another came, saying, ‘Master, here is your mina, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief. For I feared you, because you are an austere man. You collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.’ And he said to him, ‘Out of your own mouth I will judge you, you wicked servant. You knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow. Why then did you not put my money in the bank, that at my coming I might have collected it with interest?’ And he said to those who stood by, ‘Take the mina from him, and give it to him who has ten minas.’ (But they said to him, ‘Master, he has ten minas.’) ‘For I say to you, that to everyone



**who has will be given; and from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. But bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay them before me.’”**

## **A Certain Nobleman Went into a Far Country to Receive for Himself a Kingdom**

Today we read the Word from the Gospel of Luke chapter 19. The Lord tells us about how He evaluates our life of faith through this passage.

It is written that a certain noble man went into a far country to receive a kingdom. And before he left, he distributed his money to his servants telling them to do business and make a profit with it. That was what the noble master wanted. But as he was leaving after giving away his money to the servants, a crowd said behind his back that they didn't want the man to

become their king. Nonetheless, the master still headed to the far country.

This account refers to the Church and the Lord Jesus Christ. The master entrusted minas to his servants to do business. Likewise, God came down to earth in human form, remitted our sins and saved us from our sins, and He keeps the work of salvation going through His Church. He also gave us talent. In today's passage the currency is mina, but in other Books of Gospel such as Matthew, 'talent' is the equivalent. This 'talent' means ability. So this word also means a person who possesses unusual innate ability in some field or activity. Anyway, the word, "talent" originated from the name of the currency in the Bible. Our Lord saved us and gave us talents so that we can live for the gospel and live by faith on earth. He gave us not only faith, but also ability and talent.

Going back to the Scripture, we see some grumbling people who didn't want the noble man to be their king; regardless of what people think, the



Lord came to this earth for us and saved us through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and blessed us with the ability and talent to live by faith. Even though we all received such talents, one or two out of ten didn't want Jesus to be their king saying, "We will not have this man reign over us" (Luke 19:14). On the other hand, there were people who were serving and following the master. They were faithful in a very little matter that their master entrusted with them as he left for a far place. There were two kinds of people as you can see here.

Likewise our Lord, who is not with us physically, but resides in the hearts of the righteous, will ask us how faithfully we have done our job and He will count our work when He returns to this earth as He promised. He will ask those who have received the remission of sins, "How well have you done My business in this world with the talent, strength and other things I gave you?" Then, we must give an account of our work saying, "I have done this and that with the talents and gifts I received from You."

Everybody will have to sum up his or her work. We will all report to our Master, "You gave me this much, and I did this and that."

One of the ten servants boldly took out his handkerchief and said, "Here is your money," when he was asked to give his account. He unfolded the handkerchief in front of his master and said, "This is what you gave me when you left, and I kept it in the handkerchief and brought to you as it was." This servant was one of the disloyal people who didn't want the noble man to be their king. He was saying, "You are an austere man like a tyrant. You only gave me one mina and expected me to make a profit. I am not a gang member and I don't like you." He might have thought to himself that he should return exactly what he was given. There was the money in the handkerchief. And he said, "*Master, here is your mina, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief. For I feared you, because you are an austere man. You collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow*" (Luke 19:20-21). He boldly said to



the Lord that He collects what He didn't deposit, and reap what He did not sow.

And the master said, *“Out of your own mouth I will judge you, you wicked servant. You knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow. Why then did you not put my money in the bank, that at my coming I might have collected it with interest?”* (Luke 19:22-23) The servant considered the master as a very unfair master, who didn't give him much, but still tried to get much out of him. He complained that his master tried to reap what He did not sow. He thought, “Gosh, how am I supposed to make a profit with nothing basically? What kind of man is this? I didn't want this man to become my king from the beginning.” While everybody was given one mina, he kept the money in a handkerchief and returned it to his master when he came back. In his mind, he didn't do anything wrong. He did what he thought was right. He gave his account shamelessly and said, “You are

a very stern man, and you are trying to reap what you did not sow and get what you don't deserve.”

## **The Lord Told His Servants to Slay the Man**

*“Bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay them before me”* (Luke 19:27). The Lord told them to kill those enemies in front of Him. The judgment on this shameless servant has great significance to both those who received the remission of sins and those who haven't. We need to meditate this passage at least once in our life, and we must check our own faith by examining whether we have such a mindset as that of the evil servant or not. We should contemplate if the Lord really asks us to do something that is beyond our ability, if He really didn't give us anything, and whether He is a good King or a bad King. We ought to find out if we have such complaints towards Him.



When we see things with eyes of faith, there is nothing that is not from the Lord no matter whether we are born again or not. All creatures are what God made and gave to us. We are helpless on our own if God decides to look away and leave us alone even for a short period of time. Human beings are such weak creatures that even a minor bacterial infection can kill us. These days the flu is an epidemic, and throughout the history some hundreds of millions of people have died from the flu virus. There were times when millions of people and even ten million died of the flu in a year. Even as we speak, there are people dying of flu, and Jacob disease, which is originated from mad cow disease; people do not know how the disease was carried into human bodies, but there are countless people who get infected by the disease. Once they get infected, the whole body becomes stiff and unable to move; some people have a sudden spasm and die within a year. Human beings are such weak creatures. If God decides to take our life over night, we can't do anything about it; if God makes

some changes in the climates and lowers the temperature down to 22 degree Fahrenheit below zero (40 degree Celsius below zero), we will all be frozen to death; if God raises the temperature up to 110 degree Fahrenheit (43 degree Celsius) or above, we will all die from the heat.

We are all helpless people without God. God has adjusted the temperature right for us so that we can live; God also has given us everything on earth for our needs. What you have is all talent; even the ability to move your hands and fingers is talent. So is the ability to walk. Do you know how many people there are who have two legs but cannot walk? You will be surprised. And our health is also God's gift. The ability to make money is gift as well.

Not all people have this gift to make money. As you all know, there are so many homeless people and even big companies file bankruptcy. Many CEOs of large corporates become bus boys at restaurants. Not to mention our country, there are people like that all over the world. All of those people lost their talents.



They fall behind in the world of competition. We see many such people everyday.

After all we should know what we have is from God. God gives and takes away. The ability to think is also gift. That is also from God. Do you think we can control our thoughts? Do you believe we can think in whichever way we want? Even our thoughts are under God's control; if Satan pours weird and unhealthy thoughts into us that we feel as if someone is chasing us with a sharp knife to kill us, or we feel we should kill ourselves, we will face death. Those who commit suicide go through such thoughts. Therefore, we should know that we have healthy thoughts thanks to God. Like this, there is nothing that is not from God. We also should know that nothing will be left when God takes away everything He has given us. We should acknowledge that Jesus Christ is the owner of everything.

Brothers and sisters, who is your master? It is God, Jesus Christ, who saved us. He is our God and our Savior. What is He to us? He is our Master and

King. Even though He is the Creator, God, the Master of all life and talents. There are people who refuse to serve Him as their King. We should not be like them. We must acknowledge Him as our King and serve Him. What happens to those who do not recognize Him as their King? They become broken. There are so many beggars. Even in the advanced countries such as the U.S., in the United Kingdom, especially in France you can see many beggars. In the Italy, where the famous coliseum stands and the city of Vatican is. You might think that people there live a very comfortable life since they have famous historical sites. However, most European countries have numerous beggars and places are not so good for living. I heard that France is the haven of pickpockets. When they see tourists count their cash, they follow the tourists and mug them in covert places. They would do so even for small amounts of money equal to US \$20. If you don't give them money right away, you are in trouble. Travel agencies always warn their clients not to take any



cash, and in case of taking some cash without much choice and getting robbed, to give their cash away as quickly as they can; otherwise their lives will be endangered or even killed.

I heard that there are a lot of beggars in Europe. Japan also has a lot more beggars than we can imagine; so, some Japanese make a joke that the beggars don't even catch a cold. What I want to stress is that we can become penniless at any moment when God doesn't help us. Whether or not you are born-again, those who do not acknowledge Jesus as King will go penniless.

Brothers and sisters, you can see a swarm of homeless people at the Seoul Train Station on TV. The government built shelters and lodges where they can sleep and eat, and referred them to employers. The government also has them serve public deities. Among those homeless people there are quite a few decent people. Some people used to run small companies. A lot of them are college graduates and some people even have doctorate degrees. Things we

cannot understand happen all the time around the community. Some homeless people cannot believe what happened to them. They never planned to live such a wretched life, but they were forced to live on streets like that. Rich people and family men lost their jobs all of a sudden and go bankrupt; therefore they cannot bring the bacon home and they don't have courage to go back to their family and so they stay on the streets. Just like this, there are so many homeless people in our country.

Therefore, you have to keep in mind that those who do not acknowledge Jesus as King will be deprived of everything they have, not to mention becoming homeless people or beggars. The master said to those who stood by, "*Take the mina from him and give it to him who has ten minas*" (Luke 19:24). When the servant with ten minas said, "I already have ten minas," the master, who was now a king, said, "*Everyone who has will be given; and from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken*



*away from him” (Luke 19:26).* That was what the king thought and commanded.

What does this parable tell us? It tells us that acknowledging the King for who he is will bring us a great favor. On the other hand what happens to those who do not acknowledge king as king? The Lord says that even what they have is too much for them to have. Even the most basic ability, and general blessings are more than they deserve.

Do you think the king is cold-hearted? Is he really merciless and heartless? You might think that way, but what would you have done if you were the king or the master? Wouldn't you feel like taking away everything from the servant of yours, who didn't acknowledge you as his master? You will feel that way. Our Lord, Jesus Christ, gave us life, saved us from sins, delivered us from hell and destruction, and entrusted us with so many talents. I bet you all have talents. Whether you believe in Jesus or not, the physical talents and thoughts are given by the Lord. There is nothing that is not from Him. Everything is

from Him. Would it then be proper for us not to acknowledge such a gracious Lord as our King? It cannot be proper. The same thing holds true to unbelievers.

Besides, how are those unbelievers when they have been disloyal to the Master? Those who do not believe in God will die right away, but how about those who believe in God? How about those who received the remission of sins by believing in what Jesus Christ has done? What happens to those who do not serve Jesus as King even though they have received the remission of sins through Jesus? How would the King treat those people who don't acknowledge Him? He would take all that they have. He would take everything from them and give to those who already have much. The Bible has so many similar examples.

In King David's days, there was a rich man named Nabal living in Israel. He was a man of great wealth in the area raising cattle and farming as well. David had helped the man a lot. David found out that a gang



of bandits often came down killing people and robbing them in that area. So he sent his army to protect the people including Nabal. But when the man looked down on David, he died right away. After he died, his wife Abigail went with David. She was a woman who served David as her king. When her husband died, she ran to David as fast as she could. From the perspective of morality, what she did seems wrong. We might guess she had hated her husband so much; anyway this is an example. Similar things as this happened a lot to those who did not acknowledge their king as king.

## **Is Jesus Christ Our King?**

Is Jesus our King or not? Jesus Christ is our King. He gave us everything around us even before we were born again. Didn't He? Yes, He is still giving. He is the King, who gives everything to us. Then what are those who do not serve Him as King or

attend Him in their hearts? Those people are no different than those who are not born again. They will not only become penniless but also die spiritually.

Even those who are not born again sing carols around Christmas, "Noel, Noel, Noel, Born is the King of Israel." How did our human history start? It started from Jesus Christ. The English word, 'history' proves it. Human history is 'His story'. What is the dominical year we all use based on? It is based on the time of the birth of Jesus. When did He come to this earth? Historians studied it and set it as a reference point for years, which we use nowadays. This one factor shows us clearly that Jesus Christ is the Master of this universe. Even not-yet-born-again people think and believe so. There is nothing wrong about this.

Every creature has death, gets buried somewhere and awaits resurrection. However, there is no grave for Jesus. He doesn't need one. Death is waiting for all the creatures, but not for Jesus, who doesn't have



a grave. Jesus is the One, who created everything, manages and administers His creation. ‘Jesus’ means the Savior, and ‘Christ’ means the King. We call Him Jesus Christ. This means our King became our Savior.

Those who received the remission of sins cannot help but to acknowledge Jesus as their King. Why is that? Who cannot serve the One who saved them from death, sins, destruction, and the Devil as their King since Jesus bestowed such a wonderful grace? If they don’t serve Jesus as their King even though they know this truth, they are crazy. They are absolutely stupid. If those who are not born again do not acknowledge Jesus as King, it is rather forgivable; but how are those who were born again but still do not serve Jesus as their King? They are really idiots.

If they do not serve Jesus as their King, who else can be their king? Can you find any king whom you respect, admire and follow, who can really help you and lead you the right way? Wouldn’t that be nice to

have a certain king one like that? As a matter of fact, is there anybody other than Jesus Christ who can deserve the kingship over us? No, there isn’t. I am not forcing you to serve Jesus as your king. I want you to contemplate if there is anyone other than Jesus Christ who is worthy of our service to king. In today’s Scripture passage, the servant who didn’t acknowledge his master as his king was deprived of everything and was killed.

The Bible doesn’t contain anything that is not important and every line is the Word of life. This is not just a story. Today’s passage especially is true to everyone, whether he is born again or not. Those who are not born again yet, but acknowledge Jesus as King will accept the truth when someone delivers the message of God if they have understanding. They will eventually come into the household of God and Jesus Christ. Why? It is because he acknowledged Jesus as his King.

Then what happens to those who do not acknowledge Jesus as their King? Everything will be



taken away from them and they will be killed. I believe it will come true as it is written. That is why we, the born-again Christians, should have the attitude to acknowledge Jesus as our King more than anything else. I am not being unreasonable here, am I? Is He not our King? Jesus Christ is the King to those who are born again. He is our Master. He is the Master, who always gives us everything and the Savior who saved us from all sins. Do you believe this?

Thanks to our King, we can live and we have the desire to live. And everything we have is given by our King, Jesus Christ; if He decides to take away what we have, we will be left hopeless and helpless.

We are truly weak and insufficient. No matter what happens, the fact that Jesus is our King doesn't change forever and ever. As we look back over our past one year, there were a lot good things as well as bad things happened; and there is one thing that has never changed in our heart. That is the fact that Jesus Christ is our King. We are glad and thankful that

Jesus Christ has helped His people and took care of us as our King.

I can say boldly that I have no regrets in serving Him as my King and I have never had a second thought about Him. It is because He is truly our King, our Shepherd, who protects us, leads us to the best and blessed way. As we welcome a New Year, I know He will provide us with everything we need. He will allow us everything according to our needs. We should not change this thought. If you have not served Him as your King; if you refused to acknowledge Him as your King, you have to admit your evil way and acknowledge Him as your King even from now on. I strongly believe that He will always help you once you acknowledge Him as your King and come to Him asking for His advice and help. Jesus Christ is the King. He is the King who is with us. He is the King and will be our King till the day this earth ends and till the days when we go to Heaven. Of course, He is also the King to those who are not born again.



Brothers and sisters, we came to know our King, Jesus Christ. Somehow we came to know Him, met Him personally through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, became His people, became residents in His Kingdom, and started to do His work. Those who are doing the royal work for the King, receive special talents for the work just like the man was given a Mina. It is said that those who work for the King, will dine with Him, and He will dine with them. When we do His work, He will take care of us, meet our needs and bless us. Those who are the workers of God's Kingdom are truly blessed. Since they are dedicated to the King's work, the King takes full responsibility to guide them and protect them.

Do not think that showing kindness to people, serving the Lord, and doing His work as waste of your time. Do not think like the servant who kept one Mina in a handkerchief and brought it back to the master, saying, "You are an austere man. You are trying to reap what you did not sow." If you give your heart and serve Him, He will pay you back

multiple times. He is the most generous giver, and He does not fail to reward us for our serving Him. He is not a miser. He is not a creature, either. When we receive ability and strength from Him to do everything, can we become stingy in serving Him with what we are given in return?

As we pass the end of this year, we need to ask ourselves if we acknowledged and treated Jesus as our King for the last year. If we haven't, we can make our New Year's resolution to serve Him sincerely and faithfully as our King. Everything needs to be authorized by God; unless He approves, there is nothing we can do. We serve God and live our life with what God has given us. We also enjoy the things God has given us.

Again, the Master of our life is not us but Jesus Christ. He is our King. However, we often have an illusion that we are the kings of ourselves. Our life becomes miserable when we try to take His place and become the master of our own life. Things then do not go well either. But what happens when the real



Master becomes our King? Our life becomes richer. Why is that? The King Himself is rich, so He blesses us to become rich-hearted in doing good work and to do much of God's work with physical and spiritual blessings from Him. Since Jesus Christ is our King, I hope you will treat Him with all your heart, even though our physical bodies are always weak. I believe you are thinking the same thing.

Let us live a meaningful life year after year. Let's look back and see how much we acknowledged Jesus as our King; if we haven't done enough, let us make up our mind to serve Him right as our King and do it faithfully. I pray that God will give us desire to serve Jesus Christ as our King for our entire life. It is the source of life and blessings. I am telling you this because the heart that is submissive to the King Jesus Christ makes our life blessed. We are insufficient in many ways, but I want you to place Jesus Christ at your heart's throne and to work for Him only.

I hope in your New Year you will communicate with God effectively so that we make good money to

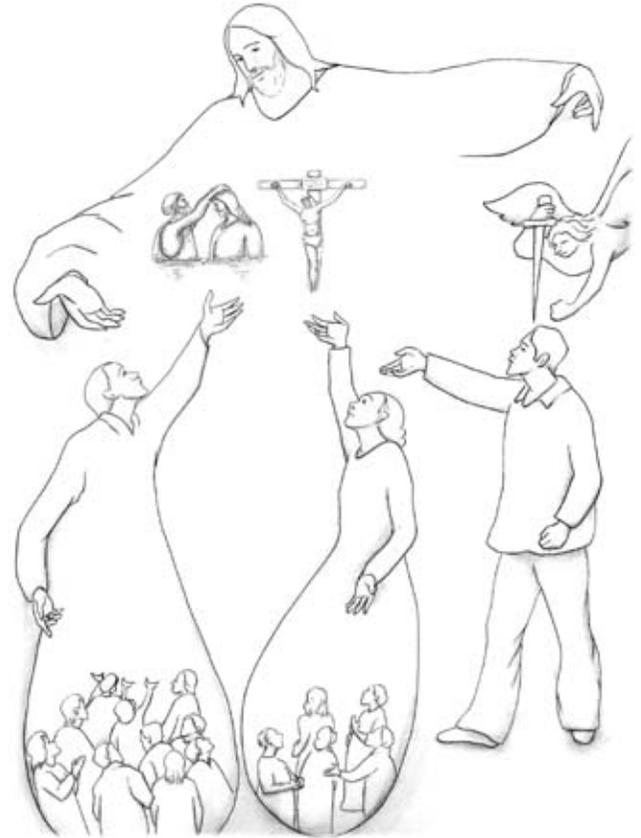
serve Him, to do His work, and to live an influencing life. I pray that God will give such blessings abundantly to us, His servants, the Church, the body of Christ. ☒



# SERMON

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## **The Servant Who Returned One Mina Didn't Serve The Lord as His King**

< Luke 19:11-27 >

“Now as they heard these things, He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately. Therefore He said: ‘A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, ‘Do business till I come.’ But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, ‘We will not have this man to reign over us.’ And so it was that when he returned, having received the kingdom, he then

commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. Then came the first, saying, ‘Master, your mina has earned ten minas.’ And he said to him, ‘Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.’ And the second came, saying, ‘Master, your mina has earned five minas.’ Likewise he said to him, ‘You also be over five cities.’ Then another came, saying, ‘Master, here is your mina, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief. For I feared you, because you are an austere man. You collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.’ And he said to him, ‘Out of your own mouth I will judge you, you wicked servant. You knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow. Why then did you not put my money in the bank, that at my coming I might have collected it with interest?’ And he said to



**those who stood by, 'Take the mina from him, and give it to him who has ten minas.' (But they said to him, 'Master, he has ten minas.') 'For I say to you, that to everyone who has will be given; and from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. But bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay them before me.'"**

## **Who Are These People Today?**

Based on what we have read today, we are going to think about the righteous judgment of our Lord. I will begin with a hopeful prayer that we will all receive the rewards at the end as the Lord promised.

These days I am busy finishing my books. I believe this is serving the righteous gospel of the Lord, too. Once we start something, it is better to finish it as quickly as we can; but there are times we can't do so. We are also going to publish the German

editions of our third book and the first commentary book on Romans. We will also publish a commentary book on Apostles' Creed titled, "The Elementary Principles of Christ." I believe those books will help numerous people around the world to serve the gospel once they are released to the world in different languages.

In today's passage, Jesus tells His disciples a parable. There are verses saying, "*A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas and said to them, 'Do business till I come'*" (Luke 19:12-13). And there is a verse saying, "*We will not have this man to reign over us*" (Luke 19:14). This parable given by the Lord was meant to give us, that is, God's Church a precious lesson.

As it is written, the nobleman gave one mina to each and every servant, asked them to make a profit by doing business, left for a far country and came back. Among them, one servant gained ten minas by



trading; and another servant earned five minas. But one of the ten servants didn't do any business but kept the money in his handkerchief. As he handed the money back to his master, he said, "I consider you as an evil man. So I fear you. You try to collect what you did not deposit, reap what you didn't sow. I have hidden the money in my handkerchief. Just take what you gave me and do not say anything."

Then what action did the master take? He praised the servant who gained ten minas, and gave him ten as his reward; he complemented the servant who had gained five minas saying he was faithful and the master rewarded him with five cities. But to the servant who kept the money in his handkerchief and gave it back to the master, he said, "*Take the mina from him, and give it to him who has ten minas.*"

The man who returned just one mina was the servant who didn't want the master to be his king. What can we find out through this passage? We can see that there are people who believe in Jesus Christ but do not want Him to be their King. They act the

same way as the servant who returned just one mina did and, as a result, they will be punished accordingly.

On the other hand, how about those who trust in Jesus and follow Him as their King? Those people faithfully do businesses and make a lot of profit; as a result, they receive much praise and blessings.

## **What Do People Think of Jesus When They Do Not Know His Righteousness?**

The disloyal servant who returned just one mina didn't consider Jesus as his King or his God. In other religions such as Confucianism, Hinduism and Buddhism, human beings are the kings. In other words, human being is considered as gods. For example, how is the god of Hinduism? They believe that dying to oneself completely can lead to the awakening of oneself. They get to realize that there is



a god within them. That is how they reach supreme enlightenment or *Nirvana*. That is the highest stage where they empty themselves completely and do not feel any ego. According to them, when they do not feel any human emotions and feelings such as hunger or thirst and when they don't even have any thoughts, they can reach the stage of god. They argue that those people at the stage of god will be reincarnated into a wealthy family and become a man of virtue who will do a lot of good work for others. They believe that human beings can become gods if they die to their own thoughts and opinions.

While Hinduism focuses on the next world to come, Confucianism emphasizes on the present world. Confucianism is a religion, which pursues the well-being of human beings in the present life; not getting sick, not doing bad things, educating children well and so on are their main concern. Buddhism is similar to Hinduism, and they argue that those who reach the highest enlightenment and become reincarnated right away will be good people.

According to them, they can be reincarnated in the next world as a good person and reach the stage of god and do good works for people as long as they pay for their wrong doings of their past world by doing the good works.

The common divider of all these religions is “human-centered ideology.” With those religions, human is the king. Human is the god. And human is the center of everything.

However, Christianity is different. We have the Creator, who made everything including you and me. We believe that we are His creatures, and He came to this world for us, received the baptism, died on the Cross to save all human beings. It is our doctrine that God delivered us from sin, death, destruction, curse and the Devil, and adopted us as His children. Whoever believes in Jesus believes this.

However, there are still so many Christians who are like the disloyal servant who returned just one mina. Even though they know that Jesus is their God and King, they do not want to serve Him as their



King. How do they comprehend Jesus in relation to themselves? They think that they are the kings in their heart's throne and that Jesus appears as a king only when they need help from Him. Unfortunately, there are such people even in our Church. Even among those who are born again by the gospel of the water and the Spirit, some people think the same thing.

When we become born-again by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we also receive the remission of sins and the Holy Spirit as a gift; and those who receive the Holy Spirit after receiving the remission of sins become the children of almighty God. Nonetheless, there still are some saints who do not want Jesus to reign over them. Isn't that a problem? Even such people, however, cannot deny the fact that He also is the King to them. It is because the Lord is the King of all humankind, but some people do not acknowledge the fact.

## **We Need to Ponder Who Serves Jesus as Their King and Who Doesn't**

How are the people among Christians who do not serve Jesus as their King? They think of Jesus highly, but they cannot give up their egos. Even as they say they believe the Word of God, and they follow God's will, they have the tendency to get rid of whatever challenges them and hinders them from achieving their goals, since they are the kings to themselves. Those people cannot bend their wills by believing in the Word of God.

People are born with egos. The ego has two sides and the inner side is called self-esteem. Those people like the evil servant have high self-esteem before God. Even after they receive the remission of sins, they cannot be submissive to the King, for they haven't learned to yield themselves. They cannot obey the Lord. That is why they feel resentful and bothersome when they hear the Lord telling them to do something.



Those who haven't bent their wills and thoughts, as they would do to break a stick, are all like that. It is all because they do not have Jesus Christ in their heart's throne. Think about it. If they serve Jesus as their King, why would they have to be so stubborn before Him? Even one word from the King's mouth solves all the problems. Self-rightness can be broken before the King. I want you to experience this. I hope this will actually happen to you.

As we live out our faith, there are times when we feel like this: "It is hurting my self-esteem, and it is humiliating. This is not a decent human life. I can't live a life of faith anymore this way, for I can't live like I am supposed to even though I received the remission of sins." What is the reason for that? The reason is that we didn't acknowledge Jesus Christ as our King. We still have not come down from our heart's throne yet.

Jesus Christ was our King long before we were born. Now we should get down from our heart's throne and give the seat to Jesus. It is our job to

acknowledge Him as our Master, saying, "You are my Lord, my Christ and the Son of the living God. You are My Creator who made me, the Savior who saved me from sins, and You are the Lord who administers my life and death." But some people still think they are the kings to themselves just like the people in other worldly religions. Since they are the kings to themselves, they do not acknowledge the real King, Jesus Christ.

These people are no different from the disloyal servant who returned just one mina in today's passage. Then what kind of person should we believers of Jesus Christ become? We must become people who believe in Jesus as our King from our heart. We should be able to bend our wills and our opinions, thoughts and egos, and so on only if our King is pleased with our submission. We may sometimes fall and become stubborn due to our weaknesses; but we need to strive to become humble people who can give up our self-tenacity before our King. When we become such people, we can serve



our King sincerely, which leads to blessings and we can live faithful life as workers of God's righteousness.

When God assigns us His work, work of His Church, we should consider it as our job. Once we think to ourselves, "Since this is our King's work, this is my work as well," we can work hard as if it is our own work. Even if we suffer some loss, we can work much more diligently, much more faithfully because the result will belong to me as well as to the King.

Then what happens when we do not receive Jesus as our King? Aren't there some uneducated people who shake their legs, spitting on the ground? Whoever doesn't serve Jesus as their King is as insolent as them. They are rebelling against Jesus. They challenge the Lord from their hearts and think, "I am in need indeed, but what a useless talk are You giving to me? You only gave me the salvation, and now You are asking me to give my life to You? That is so sad. It is so pitiful. I should have gone to You

for salvation right before my death." Brothers and sisters, if you are a faithful servant, you will say, "Your Highness, Your grace is so great," no matter what the King says.

Worldly kings become weak and conscious of their servants' opinions when their servants challenge the kings; they eventually give up their thrones. However, Jesus is absolutely the almighty King. He is the Creator God, who made the whole universe.

Nonetheless, He doesn't reign over us with force. He created the universe, saved you and me from all sins, and made us His people. When we challenge Him in spite of the grace of remitting our sins, adopting us as God's children, Jesus will say, "I saved you so. So I want you to live your life for other people. If you feel thankful for your salvation, share it with others." What will happen if we keep challenging Him? Even though Jesus has the power to punish us right away, He postpones His judgment till later. And He will call the next person and ask, "I want something done. Could you do it for me?" If the



person were a faithful servant, he would take the assignment gladly saying, "Thank you for assigning this work to such an insufficient person." Jesus gives them more work to do and blesses them greatly.

He also comes back to those who are disobedient. And He would ask, "I am sorry that I couldn't give the task to you last time. But would you like to do my work this time if I give you another chance?" If he doesn't take it, Jesus will never visit him again. Whenever Jesus tries to give them some assignments, those people feel annoyed and resistant as if Jesus was going to ask them more than they could handle or He was being too nosy in their work, even though they have received so much from Jesus. Jesus would not punish such people directly. He would place such a disobedient person under the control of His servants thinking, "He also is the citizen of My Kingdom, but he has such a high self-esteem. So, it is better for him to be led by My servants." He would say to His servants, "Educate him. If you leave him

as he is right now, he will eventually rise up against Me, and cause self-destruction, right?"

Those who do not acknowledge Jesus as their King; those who haven't give up their egos, are bound to challenge Jesus in the end. Therefore, they need to get counsel or be trained to give up their egos and stubbornness for themselves or with the help of others. Challenging his own king despite his citizenship under the king is like becoming a traitor. It is an act of invitation of curse and death. Challenging Jesus once or twice might be condoning, but if you keep challenging for years, you will surely be charged with rebellion. Challenging the king's authority always brings judgment.

The same is true to our relationship with our God. When we receive the gospel, we should acknowledge and say, "The Word of God is absolutely true." And after we accept the gospel, we need to become a person who can give up our ego and self-esteem if it is God's will. Actually, it must hurt when you try to bend your will. Nonetheless, no matter how much



pain you have to go through to bend your will, you need to do it without hesitation to become a man of genuine faith.

Brothers and sisters, do you know if you have egos? Can you bend yours? If you can bend it, you are at the stage of being a faithful servant with real enlightenment. There is no use in sitting under a linden tree and chant endlessly, "I sincerely believe in Amitabha." Silent prayers facing the wall for 10 years won't do you any good. Only giving up our egos before the Word of God, before the righteous will of God is the way to live our life as the saints of Christ. Such person is a really great and mature person.

Without bending our wills, we cannot become men of character. Those who are not mature, disprove other people's opinions. When we look at our congressmen, they fight all the time; which happens because they do not yield to their egos. They are supposed to bend their will for the benefit of our

country, but they can't do so in reality. There are not many people who can actually do that.

But who are those who can give up their egos? It is the born-again Christians who can do so. Not by legalism, but by the Word of God they control themselves, bend their wills; they can help his subordinates to do the same and to believe the same thing. We the born-again Christians have no choice but to bend ourselves. The Lord said, "Whoever wants to follow me should deny himself."

When we walk on a street, we see many branch roads. We cannot take any routes even if they lead to the same destination. Let's say the Lord tells us to choose the opposite way of what our heart wants. Even if the route looks useless and irrelevant to our journey, we need to give up our opinions if the Lord tells us to do so. Only those who can deny themselves like this are men of character, true servants of Jesus Christ, God's genuine servants and the faithful men who seek the will of God.



Our life of faith also has many branch roads. Even after we choose one road over the other by obeying God's will, there may be a forked road ahead of us. Likewise, we should choose the road that our Lord tells us to go to by giving up our own thoughts and strong opinions. We must obey God's Word. The person who can do so is really a mature person. The person is the man of virtue. Just like the old saying not every strong and husky man can become a general, only those who can deny him can become a man of virtue.

Those who have left the Lord after following Him for some time are the people who couldn't deny themselves. Instead, they would say to the Lord, "You are a hard man. You are a very unreasonable person. How can you ask for something that you have not given me?" But honestly, didn't the Lord give us everything? Is it true that the Lord has not given us anything? Did our Lord give nothing to His children? No, it is not true. The Lord gave us sun, air, light and all kinds of grain for us to live comfortably.

He gave us things we can eat, drink and everything we need until the day we die. What we have is all from the Lord.

What didn't we get from the Lord? Nothing. He remitted all our sins. He came to this earth, received the baptism for us, bore all our sins, took the punishment for all our sins, and saved us completely. He made us whole and sinless. And would you still say that we haven't received anything from Him? What would be a good reason not to bend our will, since we received everything from the Lord? Where can we find a good reason to rebel against God the Almighty?

Some people perceive the world as if what they see is the entire world and, as a result, make their final decisions based on their egos. They feel content with their life and say; "I am good with knowing this much about the world, making this much money, and enjoying my life as I am now."

However, it is written, "*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, But fools despise wisdom*"



*and instruction*” (*Proverbs 1:7*). If we don't bend our wills before God, who created us, saved us from all sins, provided us with all the food we will eat and drink for lifetime, are we being smart? We should admit our weaknesses and follow the will of God at least, do that which pleases Him.

Unfortunately, people have a tendency to just go forward. In doing things people tend to go straight ahead without looking around carefully. You might have encountered such stubbornness as risking the whole possession in a game. They bet on their life for a big shot, persisting on their own thoughts. They do so despite knowing that they would go penniless sooner or later. We shouldn't do that before God. God has shown mercy on us and remitted us for all our mistakes and wrongdoings. Didn't He bear our personal sins and take the punishment vicariously for them? Therefore, we need to serve Him as our King at least. We must acknowledge Him as our King.

These days, there are so many people who are concerned with their self-esteem, singing, “My life

belongs to me!” It is like a child who would not let go of the food in his hands even when someone offers better food. Some people try to keep their self-esteem high until they breathe their last breath. They think they are better than others even when they are about to die. Even when they have no food, they would pour tap water into their pot, pretending to cook something so that other people would think they had something to eat. They would put a nice make-up on their face so that they won't look so pale from hunger. However, we should be honest before God. What can't He embrace as a King? Nothing.

The disloyal servant, who returned just one mina as it was, said to his master, “You are an austere man. You try to receive without giving first.” Then the master said, “Bring the man here, and slay him before my eyes.” What does this imply? It implies that keeping their egos stubbornly to the end will lead to death no matter whether he is born again or not. He will be deprived of Heaven, the remission of sins, and everything else.



Who should we live for? Regardless of what we do, we should choose to live for our King. We are His people. Catholics are different from us. They live for their church hierarchy. They listen to the Pope and obey him no matter what he says. They would risk their lives if the Pope tells them not to give any sacrifices before their dead ancestors. But they now offer sacrifices before their dead ancestors because their church hierarchy has allowed doing so against the Word of the King Jesus.

But we, Christians, should live for Jesus Christ only. When His Kingdom is complete on earth, we will reign with Him as kings in His Kingdom and enjoy the everlasting life with Him. There are many people who have been wandering around without knowing the truth even in God's Church. I am sure that they couldn't give up their egos because nobody taught them about it until today. Now we all know the truth. Then we should at least bend our wills in our hearts even though we may not actually do so 100 %.

When I look around, I can tell who hasn't yet given up his/her ego. But I pretend to know nothing. For it should be seated in the person's heart by the Word of God. It is our own job to break away our egos before God's Word. No one can break our egos instead of us. It must be done by us. There is no exception if we try to follow the Lord.

We all serve Jesus as our King. Isn't Jesus good enough to be our King? Yes, He certainly is. I hope you won't live like the disloyal servant who returned only one mina that he had received from his master before his master left. If you can't become a person like the one who brought back five minas, try to be the man who returned two minas at least. We can all do that, when we break away our egos.

I want you to ponder about yourself right now and give up your egos. You must break away your ego at least once in your life. I hope you can break yourself away, with such faith that professes, "I am nothing before you, Jesus. You are my Savior, my King and my God. There is none like You. You only are my



God, my Master who blesses me and who deserves my service. I will follow You only no matter whether I live or die.” Then Jesus will bless you saying, “Since you are good and faithful in a very little matter, have authority over ten cities”

I earnestly pray that we all could become people like the faithful servant who brought back ten minas to his Master, and I pray the Lord will grant us such faith. ☒





# USER GUIDE



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**PAGING THROUGH THE BOOK**

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# PAGE BY PAGE



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2) Arrow Key

← or ↑ = Previous Page,      → or ↓ = Next Page

- **Acrobat Reader Menu Button**

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## SKIPPING TO A PAGE



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Ctrl + N Key : The number of page you want to go to.

### 2) Acrobat Reader Scroll Bar

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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