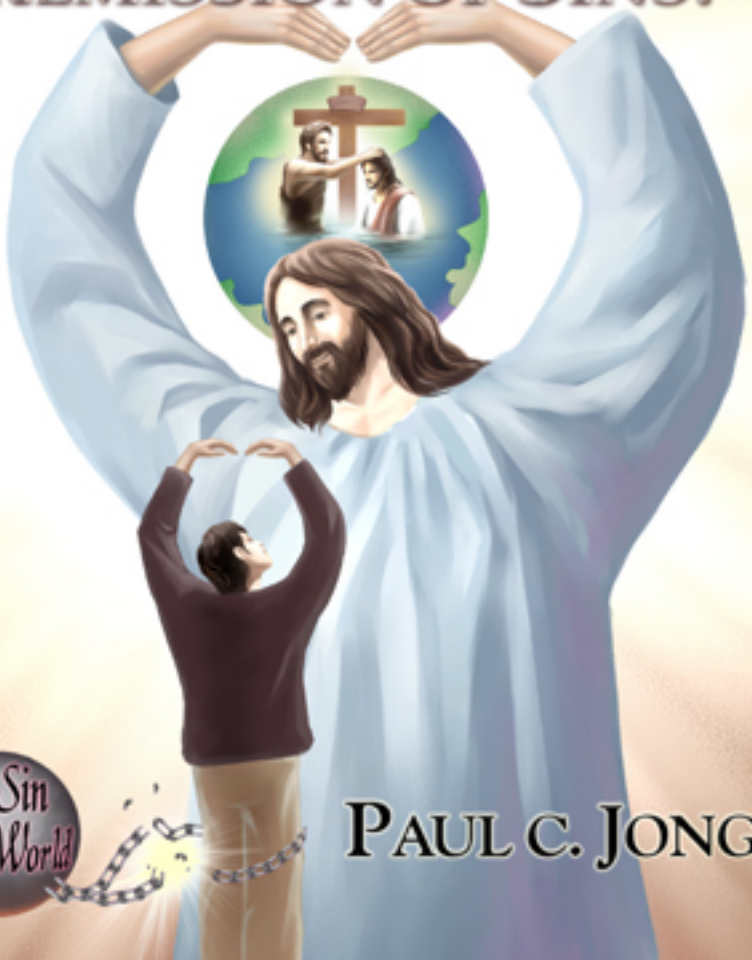
SERMONS ON THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW (II)

# What Did We Believe to Receive the Remission of Sins?



The Sin of the World

Paul C. Jong



WHAT DID WE BELIEVE TO RECEIVE THE REMISSION OF SINS?

Hephzibah

# What Did We Believe to Receive the Remission of Sin?

**This is the title for the second volume of my sermon series on the Gospel of Matthew, and I settled on this title to preach the Lord's will to you. It is very important for all of us to remember that whenever the Lord spoke to us, He always spoke first of the Truth of the remission of sins that constitutes His righteousness. It is only then that the Lord taught us about the principles that should guide our everyday lives. So, I would also like to first bear witness of Jesus Christ who has fulfilled the righteousness of God and thus preach the will of God to you.**

**How much do you think you know about John the Baptist and his ministry? Do you even know that God the Father sent John the Baptist to this earth in order to pass all the sins of the world onto His Son? I would like to admonish you to examine and think carefully about the reason why so many Christians underestimate the importance of the ministry of John the Baptist. It saddens me deeply to see so many Christians paying so little attention to the ministry of John the Baptist.**

**John the Baptist was not a failure. Far from it, he was so indispensable to the Lord's work of salvation that God the Father had to send him to this earth before sending His Son. The ministry of John the Baptist on this earth was all about Jesus Christ's work of salvation, for it was John the Baptist's duty to pass all the sins of the world onto Jesus Christ. For you to grasp this truth, you must have a simple and untainted heart in God the Father's sight like a little child.**

# WHAT DID WE BELIEVE TO RECEIVE THE REMISSION OF SINS?

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# WHAT DID WE BELIEVE TO RECEIVE THE REMISSION OF SINS?

PAUL C. JONG

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

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**SERMONS ON THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW (II)**
***WHAT DID WE BELIEVE TO***
***RECEIVE THE REMISSION OF SINS?***

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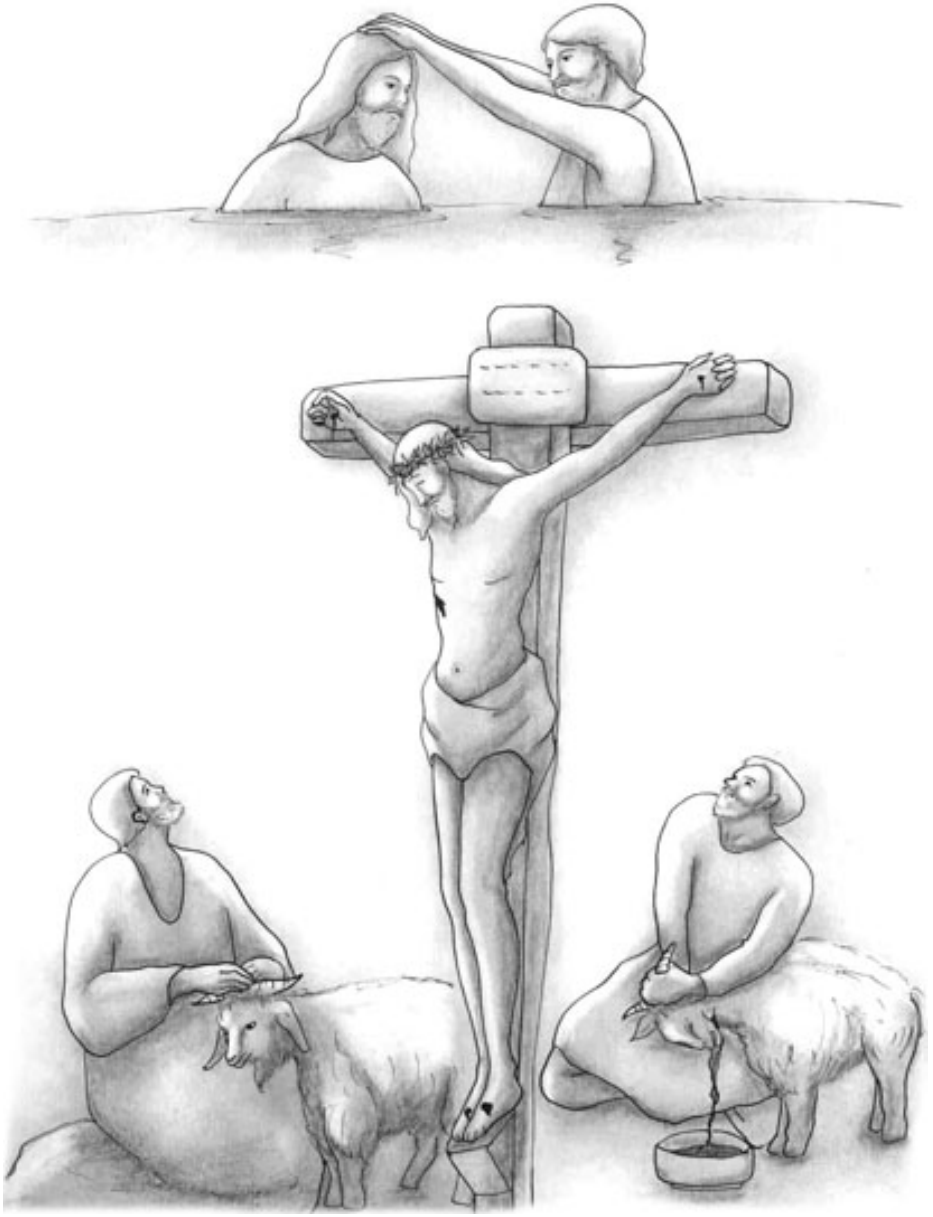
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# Preface

Across the nations, many people are receiving the remission of sin. As a result, we are in need of people to lead them and give them guidance in their walk with the Lord. We should lead those who have received the remission of all their sins into church. I strongly hope that many leaders will rise up in every country of the world. I wish I could dispatch all of my staff workers to go out in the world as messengers of God, as missionaries. However, if they were sent across the nations, who could support the gospel of righteousness here for God's work as the ornamental knobs of the lampstand? I, therefore, hope that God's workers will rise up in every single nation of his/her own country.

This publication is the second volume of my spiritual growth series for the future leaders of the redeemed. As I serve the Lord, I believe that God's people will rise up. In anticipation of the future leaders, I have prepared these sermons on tape, which I present to you now. The sermons, which have been edited and translated for the purpose of training the leaders of tomorrow, will bring the soul-nurturing messages to your hearts.

I believe that these sermons will be spiritual food indeed for all people. Because it is impossible for all of us to have fellowship face to face with believers and God's workers from other nations, I hope that through sharing this book, I can have spiritual fellowship with them, who have already believed in the

gospel of the water and the Spirit. We are all thankful that He made us His workers, by feeding us the Food of Life.

We have, so far, published over 10 books in English. And we have found that many of those who have read the books are thankful for their receiving the remission of sin by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Now, through the sermons for their spiritual growth, I will once again testify to them that the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the only truth that gives life. I am sure they will come to realize all the Scriptures are filled with the Truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, then. And eventually, all people in the world will deeply understand that the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the only Truth. Once they realize the Truth and throw away their emotion-oriented faith, their hearts will be filled with the gospel of the water and the Spirit, that is the only way to the everlasting redemption. And they all will live as the Disciples of Christ; become His instruments that save the lost souls; and do His work for the lost sheep across the nations by placing their faith in the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

As every plant blooms and then bears fruit, I believe the power of the true gospels not only blesses those who believe but also allows them to lead their lives as God's workers. They will be blessed in body and spirit. Now, God's workers in all nations will sow the seeds of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and save countless people from their sins. As we preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we will continue to win. We will bear more fruits of God with the belief in this true gospel. We are living in the time of harvest and we shall have a greater yield

of fruits of salvation. Now, we will believe in His words, be thankful to Him, and glorify Him.

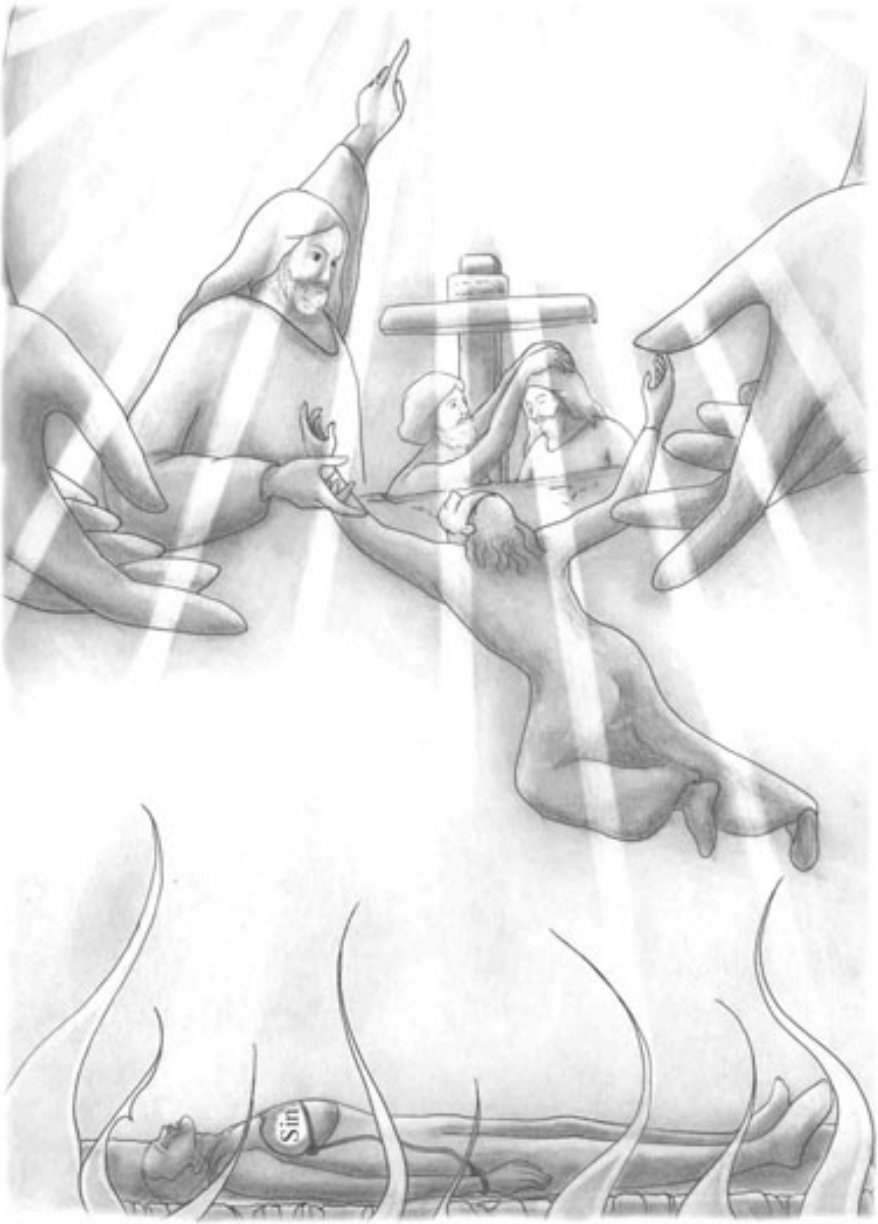
If God permits, we will do these things and more. And I believe He will bless every one of us. May God give abundant spiritual and physical blessings—the blessings of the holy faith of Heaven and the fatness of the earth—to everyone who believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. ✉

**Paul C. Jong**

# CHAPTER

# 9

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# Believe in Jesus Christ Who Came as Our God

**< Matthew 9:1-13 >**

**"So He got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city. Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, 'Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you.' And at once some of the scribes said within themselves, 'This Man blasphemes!' But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, 'Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins'—then He said to the paralytic, 'Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.' And he arose and departed to his house. Now when the multitudes saw it, they marveled and glorified God, who had given such power to men. As Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, 'Follow Me.' So he arose and followed Him. Now it happened, as Jesus sat at the table in the house, that behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to His disciples, 'Why does your Teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?' When Jesus heard that, He said to them, 'Those who are well have no need of a physician, but**

**those who are sick. But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice.' For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.'"**

Through today's Scripture passage, I hope to share God's blessings with all of you. The passage above describes Jesus' healing of a paralytic. When people brought a paralytic to Jesus, He said to him, *"Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you."* At that time, hearing what Jesus said, some of the scribes thought to themselves, "This Man blasphemes! He is so arrogant!" Knowing what these scribes thought, Jesus said to them, *"Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins."* There was no way that Jesus would not know the hearts of the scribes. This is why He said to them, "Why do you think evil in your hearts?"

What, then, is evil thought? It is to disbelieve in the power of the Lord. Not knowing who the Lord is and not believing in Him are precisely what is evil. Jesus has forgiven all our sins except the sin of blaspheming the Holy Spirit, which is the only sin that cannot be forgiven. This sin is not believing in Jesus, and not believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that He fulfilled. Therefore it is impossible for those who commit this kind of sin to become sinless. If we were to speak of the greatest sin of all sins, it is the sin of unbelief. This sin of unbelief is a million times greater than the sins that we commit with our acts.

Not believing in Him is the most evil and greatest sin of all.

As four men brought a paralytic to Jesus, Jesus immediately said to him, *"Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you."* At that time, there were scribes standing by Jesus. The scribes were men of considerable education and training. In today's parlance, they were equivalent to public officials. So these scribes were the public officials of the state of Israel at that time. Hearing what Jesus said to the paralytic, they thought to themselves, "He is so arrogant! He is the most arrogant one among those I have ever seen! How dare one say, 'Son, your sins are forgiven you'? I can't grasp how this Man called Jesus can say such words! He is blasphemous!" They thought that Jesus uttered words that no man should utter. Since Jesus said, "Son, your sins are forgiven you," these scribes, who did not believe Jesus to be God, could not help but think in this way.

## Jesus Is God to Everyone

In this age and time, when we watch TV, we often come across some religious leaders making their frequent appearances and saying, "I have forgiven your sins." Since these people, as mere human beings, are saying such words as if they were God, we can only consider them as being extremely arrogant.

The scribes in today's Scripture passage also thought like this, considering Jesus to be utterly arrogant. They didn't say so in words, but Jesus still knew what they were thinking, and He told them that they thought evil in their hearts. He rebuked their

evil thoughts by saying, "I said this so that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins." And He actually wanted everyone to realize that Jesus Christ who came as the Son of Man indeed had the power to forgive sins.

We say that someone is blasphemous when this person, in his arrogance and pride, does not know his proper place and tries to exalt himself beyond God. The scribes thought that what Jesus said was arrogant blasphemy because they did not believe that He was indeed God Himself and the Son of God. But this was only a reflection of their evilness, for Jesus was in fact God. Jesus is the Lord of all things who created mankind and the universe, and He is the Lord of all hosts, of all things that are found in the domain of this entire universe.

This is who Jesus actually is for us, but the scribes did not realize His standing. Jesus told them that they had evil thoughts because He knew that this was how they thought of Him. So He said, "I said what I said so that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins. If I had instead said, 'Son, rise up, pick up your bed, and go to your home,' and if the paralytic got up, took up his bed and went to his home, perhaps you would have understood this. But this is not the case."

Our Lord explained this by contrasting two different ways that He could have said, asking the scribes, "Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise and walk'?" Which do you think the scribes considered easier? It would have been acceptable for them had Jesus said, "Son, be healed from your paralysis, take up your bed and walk," rather than saying, "Son, your sins are forgiven you." But because Jesus was the

Son of God, the Absolute Being, whose power was far greater than this, He said, "Your sins are forgiven you," so that people may know that the Lord has the power to forgive the sins of mankind. It was to let them know that Jesus had this authority to forgive sins that He said this.

When we profess to believe in this Jesus, we all believe that He is the Creator who made the universe and the Savior who has saved us from all our sins. But actually, there are times when we lower His standing, because for God the Father, Jesus is His Son. However, although Jesus is indeed the Son of God, He Himself is in His essence God the Almighty also. Jesus is God Himself who has the power to forgive mankind's sins, and He is our Savior. And Jesus Christ came to this earth and actually blotted out all our sins with His baptism and His blood on the Cross.

What is your understanding of who Jesus is, and how do you believe in Him in your hearts? Do you not, by any chance, believe in Jesus as the scribes had believed? When Peter believed in Jesus and made his confession of faith, he said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." How do you regard Jesus, and who do you believe He is? Do you really believe that Jesus Christ is the true God Himself? There is God the Father to Jesus Christ, but for you and me, Jesus Christ is the same God.

## Have You Recognized Jesus Properly?

When Jesus came to this world, He was actually denounced

and despised, treated as a negligible person. The Bible says, *"He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him" (John 1:10).* In other words, He who is the Creator and the Lord of all of us came to this world, but the world did not recognize this Lord and failed to receive Him as such. Who exactly did not receive Him? Everyone in this world.

Have we not forgotten this truth, though we have been saved from all our sins by believing in Him through the gospel of the water and the Spirit? Have you not, by any chance, forgotten about who Jesus is, ignoring His honor and dignity, setting Him aside behind your back? There is the Father above Jesus Christ, but for us, "God the Father," the Father of Jesus Christ, is God, and so is Jesus Christ the same God and Absolute One. Why? Because He is our Lord, and because He actually came to this earth and has saved us from all our sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Not only does He have the authority to forgive our sins, but He is also our Lord, and the Creator who actually made us all. He is in fact our Lord, God and the Savior for everyone.

Have you not, by any chance, looked down on Jesus? Are we not, in other words, thinking of Jesus as somehow lower than God the Father, since He is the Son of God, in spite of the fact that Jesus is God Himself? From a human point of view, many people have a tendency to think of Jesus Christ to be one level below His Father. But Jesus is also the true God for us (1 John 5:20). To His Father, Jesus Christ is indeed the Son, but for us He is God. This faith is extremely important.

Jesus is God Himself who must not be ignored at all, the Almighty and Omnipotent One who must not be lowered ever so slightly. Disbelieving in the deity of Jesus is equivalent to committing the sin of blasphemy. The God who has not only become the Savior that has saved us from all our sins, but is also our actual Lord, is none other than Jesus Christ.

Unless we have the faith that knows and believes in Jesus correctly, we are bound to have evil thoughts like the scribes. And we end up despising Jesus. How evil is it for us to accuse Jesus of blasphemy? How wicked is it not to believe in Him? Not believing in Him is the greatest sin of all. It is because people do not believe in Him that they are bound to hell.

You and I must believe in Jesus Christ as our Savior and the Son of God. We must never think of our Jesus as being inferior to God the Father. We must believe in Jesus as God Himself who has no insufficiency. Jesus Christ is God for us. He is the very God who is coequal with the Father.

When Jesus Christ came to this earth, He did so by lowering Himself to an unimaginable extent. It was to save mankind from sin that Jesus Christ came to this earth incarnated in the flesh of man. But, undeserving of His standing, just how little respect did He get, and just how much was He despised? How much suffering did He embrace whenever He was despised beyond measure?

Do we, the born-again, not get angry inside when those who have not been born again boast of themselves, ignore us and despise us? This is because in our hearts we have faith that we are the people of God, and because we indeed belong to Jesus

and will reign with Him. Because we are God's people, we are fundamentally different from those in this world who do not believe in Jesus Christ. We are new creation, while they are old creation, and they are to perish, while we are to enjoy eternal life and reign with Jesus. This is why when we are ignored or mocked by those who are not yet born again, our pride is injured and we feel completely indignant.

So when we ourselves are like this, how would Jesus, God Himself, have felt? We cannot even imagine how insulting He must have felt whenever His own, mere creatures ignored Him, God the Creator.

When four men brought a paralytic before Jesus, He said to him, "Son, your sins are forgiven. Stand up and walk." This was something that Jesus was more than qualified to say. Jesus said this to the paralytic because he truly believed that Jesus was the Son of God and the Absolute One. This paralytic really believed in his heart that Jesus was his Savior and God Himself. He believed, in other words, that Christ came to this earth incarnated in the flesh of man and saved him.

It is because he had approached Jesus with such a heart that our Lord, knowing the center of his heart, said to him, "Son, your sins are forgiven you." It was because the paralytic recognized who Jesus was and believed in Him that he was actually forgiven from all his sins by faith.

This is why it is so important for us to realize who exactly Jesus is when we profess to believe in Him. If we do not have the proper recognition and understanding of Jesus, then all our faith is bound to fall down. It is when we know God correctly

that our faith becomes whole. Unless we know Jesus Christ properly when we believe in Him, our hearts cannot stand on firm faith, even if we have been saved from our sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Those who do not have the correct faith cannot stand upright. Although they have come to know the knowledge that enables them to receive the remission of sin, they do not know how to be led, whom to obey, or how to live. And eventually, they come to abandon their faith.

That's why we have to believe in not only this gospel, but we must live the kind of life that believes in Jesus and follows Him. If we have been remitted from our sins by believing in Jesus Christ, then we have become His people who must obey His will according to His commandments. It is only proper that Jesus would give the remission of sin to and command over not only us the people of God, but everyone in this world.

So what Jesus said was only proper for Him to say, and yet because people did not quite realize who Jesus was, they failed to understand the Word of truth that He spoke.

Jesus Christ Himself, in other words, can forgive our sins. There is no other name by which we can be remitted from our sins. It is written in the Bible, *"Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).* In today's Scripture passage, Jesus Himself also said, *"For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance" (Matthew 9:13).* Only Jesus has such authority.

Actually, what appears quite formidable in our eyes is rather

simple to Him. We must believe in Him from His standpoint. Based on such faith, we call upon God first whenever we pray. By doing so, we confess that He is God, and we call on not only God the Father, but Jesus and the Holy Spirit as well. For us, God the Father is God, as is Jesus Christ God, and so is the Holy Spirit. Because the Triune God is one God, when we call on His name and believe in Him, we should not think of Jesus or the Holy Spirit as the God who is somehow inferior to God the Father. Rather, we must think of them as the same God.

Since the God of Trinity is actually the same God, we must all believe so without fail. God the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit differ from one another only in positions and roles, but for us, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are still all the same God. Therefore, whenever we pray, and whenever we think of Jesus and call on Him, we must believe Him as the truly omnipotent and omniscient God, the God who has the power to forgive mankind's sins and to judge them all.

In our hearts, there must be this faith that believes in Jesus Christ as God, as the Absolute One who reigns over all of us. When we have this kind of faith, we do not get lost and go astray from the righteous way, but we can live in such a way that makes our lives relevant to all the Word of Jesus Christ. Why? It is because Jesus is God, our Absolute One, that we cannot consider what He has done as useless acts, but we accept His works as the absolute Word that must be believed and followed. Therefore, we never react adversely to the fact that Jesus has forgiven our sins, and that Jesus rules over us. It is only natural for us to be ruled and led by Him, and for us, this in

itself is a source of our happiness. Is this not the case for you?

To this very day, the question of whether or not Jesus is God or a man is the issue that has been most frequently argued and contested by theologians, and with no conclusion in sight, there is no end to this debate. Many of them cannot even explain the doctrine of Trinity when asked about it. As a result, though they claim to believe in Jesus as their Savior, their sins still remain intact in their hearts; they say that Jesus has saved them, but they do not know the true remission of sin; and in extreme cases, the religious pluralists even say that there is salvation in other religions as well.

Because they do not know the deity of Jesus and do not believe in it, they have not been saved from their sins even as they profess to adhere to Christianity. And they claim that one can find his salvation and enter the Kingdom of Heaven even through a non-Christian religion, justifying themselves by invoking the need to find peaceful harmony with other religions. This is why they are all bound to perish.

What led these so-called doctors of divinity to say such things? They say these things because they do not know who Jesus really is, and they do not believe that He is God Himself. So while they recognize that He is the Savior who has the power to forgive sins, when it comes to the question of whether He is a man or God, they do not realize that He is in fact God. Their faith is like a house built on sand, and it will fall down all at once in a blink of eye.

## The Ruin of a Powerful Cult Founder

There was a famous founder of a Christian cult that used to be quite influential all over Korea for a while. Before he established his cult, he used be an elder in the Presbyterian Church. One day, an amazing, miraculous power descended on him. Whenever he laid his hands on people in the name of Jesus, they were healed from their illnesses, and so many people began to revere and follow him. He eventually left the Presbyterian Church to establish his own denomination. Wearing white garments and standing before many, he exercised his seemingly miraculous power, and whenever he did so, his followers jumped around, clapped their hands, and shouted out in joy, all together making quite an impressive scene. His followers completely lost their reason, stuffing his treasury with their precious jewelry, from gold to silver. Just by holding a single meeting, he could gather enough precious jewelry and treasures to fill several large bags, and so he became extremely wealthy in no time, buying up huge tracts of land and houses.

Although he had accumulated his great wealth by exercising such wonders and miracles in the name of Jesus, because he did not believe in Jesus as God Himself, nor in God and in the Word of God as well, when he was facing his last days, he ended up cursing and blaspheming Jesus. He then ordered his minions to remove every cross from his churches. In the end, he came to deny Jesus, and his faith crumbled down entirely. Such was the end of one who did not believe in Jesus as God.

The root of our faith that believes in Jesus Christ as our

Savior is the fact that "Jesus is God." Only when we believe that Jesus Christ is God can we believe that He came to this earth incarnated in the flesh of man for us, took upon our sins by being baptized, died on the Cross, and has thereby saved us. It is by believing in this that we can receive the remission of our sins. Only when we believe in the deity of Jesus can we recognize that all the Word that Jesus spoke is true, and follow it.

Unless you believe that Jesus is God, your faith is bound to crumble without fail, no matter how ardently you might believe Him to be your Savior. And in the end, when you happen to face some spiritual troubles while serving the Lord, you are bound to also abandon Jesus and God the Father. Therefore, it is extremely important for us to believe that Jesus is our Savior, the God of creation, and the Lord of judgment as well.

The reason why the scribes in today's Scripture passage failed in their faith despite believing in God is because they did not recognize who Jesus was. In contrast, the paralytic in the passage recognized Jesus as God and believed Him to be so in his heart, and because of this He was told by Jesus, "Son, your sins are forgiven you"—he thus received the blessing of the remission of his sins, was completely healed from his illness, and could now return to his home with a sound body. The scribes, on the other hand, were rebuked, because they did not realize who Jesus was and did not believe in Him. They were not only rebuked, but they also failed to receive the remission of their sins, and they remained bound to the eternal pit of fire.

## The Lord Came to Call Such Weak Ones as Ourselves

Jesus said, "I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance." This is why the Bible also calls Jesus Christ as the Son of Man, who was born unto this earth through the body of a virgin named Mary, seemingly as a son of a man. Because God became a son of a human being, and because the Almighty God came as a son of a man to save us, He is also called as the Son of Man. Jesus, the true God, came to save all humanity as the Son of Man, but while one man, the paralytic, recognized Him, another kind of people failed to recognize Him. Here lies the crossroad that leads everyone either to salvation or to non-salvation.

Therefore, having faith in the deity of Jesus is as indispensably important as for us to have faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. To believe that Jesus is God is the basic foundation of faith, and it is this faith that will sustain our spiritual lives until the very last days.

Theologians and countless people have debated over the issue of whether Jesus is human or divine, and this debate is still not over. But with faith, we can resolve this issue once for all. Jesus is God. He is the Almighty God. Just as God the Father is the Almighty God, as is also the Holy Spirit, so is Jesus Christ.

## Jesus Is Our God the Savior and the Son of God

Genesis 1:2 says, *"The earth was without form, and void;*

*and darkness was on the face of the deep. The Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters."*

The "Spirit of God" here refers to the Holy Spirit. That the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters means that the Holy Spirit was hovering over this atmosphere. God then created everything one by one with His Word. In Genesis 1 to 2, which gives the account of God's creation of the heavens and the earth, it is not just God who is mentioned, but His Son and the Holy Spirit are also mentioned. When God made man, He said, "Let Us make man in Our image." So from this expression "Our," we can see clearly that God is triune.

When God created the heavens and the earth in the beginning, He said, "Let there be light." This passage also speaks about Jesus Christ. The passage, "The Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters," refers to the Holy Spirit. So God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are all one God.

All the three Persons of the Triune God are the same Almighty God. We must not forget that we have been saved by believing in all these three Persons of the Triune God. My dear fellow Christians, do you believe that Jesus is God the Almighty and Absolute, and that He is the Savior? Everyone must believe this truth, for it is extremely important. So we must reaffirm this faith in our hearts over and over again. We must place this truth in our hearts and reaffirm it.

No matter how ardently we believe in Jesus as our Savior, if we do not believe in His Person as the Absolute God, then our faith is bound to collapse. This kind of faith that is bound to collapse and melt away is without boldness, and it makes us unable to realize our status as the children of God and His

workers. As such, it becomes impossible for us to have any pride. People who are in this kind of faith adhere to Christianity merely as one of the religions of the world, and regard Jesus as merely the founder of their religion. As a result, they end up thinking, "So I must have believed in just one of the many religions of the world," and perish away. It is my hope and prayer that your faith is not this kind of spineless faith.

When I understood the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit, I came to realize that the doctrinal faith, no matter how long one might have studied, is all in vain, and is nothing more than leaven. There are various kinds of theology that are no different from the secular knowledge of this world, which must be dumped into garbage cans. Such useless scholarship that has neither the answers nor the truth, but only generates controversies day after day, amounts to no more than leaven.

In particularly, let me warn you that the born-again and those who want to be born again must avoid it. Our Lord Jesus says, *"Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees" (Matthew 16:6).* Why? Because once someone eats this kind of leavened bread, it is hard to be born again, and if the born-again eats such leavened bread, they are bound to die. I am so thankful for this life of faith that I now have, where I have encountered the gospel of the water and the Spirit and am led by Jesus Christ my God.

We must realize and believe that Jesus is absolutely God Himself for you and me. Jesus is the Absolute One. Jesus Christ is the Absolute God. He is the true God who has the same authority, power, strength, and sovereignty as God the Father.

Jesus once said to Phillip, *"He who has seen Me has seen the Father" (John 14:9).* Until now, no one has seen God the Father, but he who has seen Jesus has already seen the Father. This is because Jesus is God Himself. And Jesus also says that He has the power on earth to forgive sins. We must have faith in the Word of God. It is my wholehearted desire that you and I would all hold this faith in our hearts.

While I would really like us to have this kind of faith, in this world, there are many people who are like the scribes. We need to be well aware of this fact. When we preach the gospel, for those who do not believe that Jesus is God, no matter how much we telling them about the gospel of the water and the Spirit, it is all in vain. This is because when such people hear the Word without believing deep in their hearts that Jesus is God, what they hear only turns into a mere doctrine.

If you and I do not want to become such people, there must be faith in our hearts, believing that Jesus who has saved us is fundamentally God Himself. The Word of Truth can work in our lives only when we have faith in Jesus as the God of creation who made the whole universe and everything in it, faith in Him as the Savior, and faith in Him as the God of judgment.

Jesus is alive even now, and He reigns over us as the Absolute God. Having become our Shepherd, He leads us to good places, and He also rules over everyone alike—the wicked and the good, and the believers and the unbelievers. We must believe that none other than Jesus Christ is this God. We must know that this very Jesus Christ whom we believe in and hold onto as our God is running the universe.

## Who Do You Think Jesus Is?

Who do you think Jesus Christ is? Do you think He is God, or do you think He is a sage among humans? Do you think of Jesus as God, and do you believe in Him as God?

Jesus cannot be compared to mere creations, for He, with God the Father and the Holy Spirit, is the One who created the heavens and the earth and everything in the universe from the beginning. Who made and runs this galaxy? Who established order in the universe and runs this entire universe with the utmost precision? It is Jesus Christ.

The name Jesus means the Savior, and the name Christ means the anointed King. This means, in other words, that Jesus is God Himself. Jesus Christ our God is now running this universe and everything in it. Both Heaven and hell are also under the domain of Jesus Christ.

The reason why I continue to emphasize that our hearts must have this faith is because faith springs forth from hearing the Word, just as the Bible says, *"Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17).* Your faith that is based upon God's Word will give you the strength to overcome any persecution or tribulation to come. This is why you must continue to hear the Word and fortify your faith, believing that Jesus Christ is the Absolute God, and that you have been born again through the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

By this concrete faith, you can actually receive God's help in your everyday life. And you can be bold, and your prayers can be answered whenever you pray to God by placing your faith in

Jesus as the Absolute God. Such knowledge and faith is what strengthens the power of your prayers.

Christianity has spread widely throughout the whole world, but in reality, not even its foundation has been laid out solidly. This foundation was built during the Early Church period, but it crumbled down in no time. Regardless of how long the history of Christianity might be, because its foundation was lost, its history had to be rewritten.

Take a look at the famous professors and doctors of theology in this world. Even as they are criticized and denounced explicitly, they cannot say a word in return, and when they are asked to criticize fallacious doctrines or arguments, they are unable do raise any critique at all. All that they try to do is to pick a hole with something else that their eyes can see, but because they know nothing about the Truth, they cannot provide any serious critique. When those who claim to believe in the Word of God do not even understand it, nor believe in it properly, isn't it only obvious that they have no spiritual discernment?

When I first published small pamphlets containing the gospel of the water and the Spirit, some pastors and theologians tried to denounce me, since some aspects of what I wrote seemed to be different from what they believed. But when they compared what I said to the Word of the Scriptures, they could not find anything to criticize, and so they put off the debate for a while. Several years have passed since then, but they are yet to say a single word against me to this day.

Open the Bible. Written in the Bible is the gospel of the

baptism that Jesus received and of His Cross. It speaks of water, which is the baptism that Jesus received from John. We can find the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit everywhere in the Scriptures.

However, because they fundamentally have no fear of God, they don't care about the Word of God, and they even try to attack the Truth with their worldly knowledge, which God said is no more than excrements. It is because Jesus is God that He came to this earth, was baptized, shed His blood to death, and rose from the dead again, all to save us personally. Yet despite this, people who know nothing are propounding and arguing for fallacious doctrines that distort the truth and are completely baseless. Those who believe in God must fear Him, return to His Word, believe in Jesus who is God Himself, and truly believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit fulfilled by Jesus.

Christ is the Prophet, the Son of God, and the heavenly High Priest. This Jesus who came to this earth is the King of kings who bore all our sins and blotted them all out. The King of all is Christ, and the Son of the living God is Jesus.

When Peter confessed, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God," he meant that Jesus is the Absolute God. He is the Son of God and the true God, who created the universe and all things in it, and who has saved us perfectly as well. While He is God Himself, because He has a Father, He is the Son of God the Father. Our Lord is the Christ, the Son of the living God. It was after Peter made this confession of faith that he was approved by Jesus.

As Peter's faith was approved, with Jesus saying to him,

"Your faith is correct," he was so overwhelmed that he stood against the righteous way of Jesus with his carnal thought. When Jesus said, "I must be crucified to death," Peter was so emotionally overwhelmed that without even realizing the reason why Jesus would die, he blindly objected to His death, saying, "Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!" Jesus then said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan!" Jesus did not tolerate that anyone, even Peter, would spoil God's plan overwhelmed by his carnal emotions. That's why He rebuked him harshly.

There are times when we also behave like Peter. At times, even as we have worked really hard for the Lord, God's servants might rebuke us that what we did was not right. It is when we are overwhelmed by our carnal emotions, and when we are overzealous in our desire to serve God, that we often make the mistakes that Peter made.

There are many times when we make mistakes from our failure to discern what is spiritual from what is carnal. In other words, we often fail to discern what is spiritually beneficial to us. For example, in dealing with those who are insufficient, we need to show our patience when patience is needed. But we have to reproach them when spiritual mistakes are made, and they need to be rebuked. What we must realize here is that if we mistakenly think being kind to each other only in the flesh is the same as the true love, and if we behave like this, then this will lead us to our destruction.

At any rate, we must realize that Jesus is God, believe in His baptism and bloodshed, and live our lived led by God. And

sinners really must realize that they absolutely need Jesus, and they must look for Him. The salvation that Jesus Christ, the Absolute One and God Himself, has brought to us through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, is absolutely needed by all sinners.

It is because all sinners need the gospel of water and the Spirit that the righteous who already believe in this gospel must preach it to these sinners. As it is written, *"Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick,"* we have to deliver the true gospel even more to those who really know their sinfulness and therefore are suffering from their sins. Actually, everyone in this world needs Jesus, but there are those who do not realize this need. As a result, they will end up becoming unbelievers in Jesus.

We must believe that Jesus is the Absolute God, that He has blotted out all the sins of the world through His baptism and His bloodshed on the Cross, and we must thank Him for all these things. However, there are many people who do not believe so. Because they do not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, they will all be destroyed in the midst of their sins.

In order for us to receive the remission of our sins and to have concrete faith in God, we have to believe in Jesus as the Absolute God. This is what is truly crucial. You and I must never forget but always believe in the fact that it is because we have been remitted from our sins and truly accepted Jesus as our God that we have been delivered from our destruction.

Indeed, we had been sick from the illnesses of sin, but by encountering Jesus Christ the Son of God, we have been healed

from all our spiritual diseases. This was such an important and precious event. As someone who could not avoid but be cast into the everlasting fire, we had been destined to be destroyed; yet God had so much compassion for us that He revealed Himself to us, among all people, and has bestowed His grace of salvation on us. This is how we have been saved.

Our Lord said, "I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

Who needs the Lord? He is needed by sinners like us who know the diseases of sin and want to be healed. Because He is our Savior and the Absolute God, we who had been spiritually sick needed Him desperately. Were it not for this God, the Absolute One, we could have never avoided but face our destruction. This is why Jesus, God Himself, had to become our own Shepherd. So it is because this God has actually delivered you and me from our sins that we have become who we are now—that is, we are God's own people.

We were such beings that could be saved only if Jesus saved us. Jesus had to embrace us with His almighty power. There is a future for us only if He takes responsibility for our afterlife. He is the Being who is absolutely needed by all of us. Those who think that they have no need for Him may not believe in Him, but you and I believe in Him and follow Him, for we need Him desperately. We need God for every moment and every second.

I know only too well that because I am so insufficient and weak, I have no choice but to believe in Him and rely on Him, and I do indeed need Him desperately. What about you then? Do you also need Him desperately? Or do you not need Him that

desperately? Everyone must in fact need Jesus desperately, and must believe in Him absolutely. We must pray by faith and live by faith.

Since we have become God's children by faith, there is even more reason for us to live by absolute faith. As such, we have become immensely blessed ones in this world. I am so thankful for this. Receiving the remission of sin may not seem to amount to much, but what is hidden in it is truly amazing.

My dear fellow believers, reading this sermon may not seem like such a big deal, but it is in fact an amazing blessing, and while for us to serve the Lord may not appear as something that important, it is in fact the greatest thing in this world, the likes of which are not found in this world.

Does the fact that we have been remitted from all our sins seem unimportant to you? If so, it is time for you to wake up. We, who have received the remission of our sins, are truly great people. We are the extraordinary men and women who have received our amazing salvation, who have become God's own children, and who believe in this majestic God.

It is my sincerest hope and prayer that you would all keep this faith to the end, and serve the gospel in union with God's Church until the day you meet the Lord. Together, let us all believe faithfully, let us serve our God diligently, and let us then meet our Lord in joy.

I give all my thanks to God. I admonish each and every one of you to believe that Jesus is the Absolute God.✉

# Jesus Who Came to Save Us, the Spiritual Paralytics

**< Matthew 9:1-13 >**

**"So He got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city. Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, 'Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you.' And at once some of the scribes said within themselves, 'This Man blasphemes!' But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, 'Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins'—then He said to the paralytic, 'Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.' And he arose and departed to his house. Now when the multitudes saw it, they marveled and glorified God, who had given such power to men. As Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, 'Follow Me.' So he arose and followed Him. Now it happened, as Jesus sat at the table in the house, that behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to His disciples, 'Why does your Teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?' When Jesus heard that, He said to them, 'Those who are well have no need of a physician, but**

**those who are sick. But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice.' For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.'"**

In today's Scripture passage of Matthew 9, there comes a paralytic who was healed from his paralysis by Jesus. Through this passage, I would like to share with you our Lord's blessings, contemplating on this disease of paralysis and explaining how the Lord has saved us.

Everyone in this world is a spiritual paralytic before God. A paralytic is someone who, while retaining his mental faculty, is physically disabled as his members are paralyzed. This paralysis renders him unable to move certain body parts. So when someone becomes paralyzed, he cannot move his body parts freely according to his mind's wish.

One such paralytic was brought in bed to Jesus by his friends, and Jesus, seeing the faith of this paralytic and that of those who brought him, remitted away all his sins and healed him from his disability as well. Our Lord then told him to take up his bed and go home.

When the Bible talks about healing, it is in fact talking about the remission of souls' sins. So when the Bible describes all these sick people who were healed by Jesus, it is actually talking about the remission of our sins.

Let us, first, think about who we really are before God. Let us consider here whether we have been saved from our sins even though we were not spiritual paralytics, or we have received the

remission of our sins as we had indeed been seriously paralyzed—whether, in other words, we have been saved from our sins by having the same faith in the Lord as the paralytic from today's Scripture passage had. First of all, we need to think about whether we had been spiritual paralytics. And then we need to consider if everyone is a spiritual paralytic.

There is no doubt that you and I had been spiritual paralytics. There are certain things in which our bodies do not follow our thoughts, and this is owing to our basic sinful nature. But how much have we all desired to live according to the will of God? While we have sincerely yearned to do so in our thoughts and minds, what has been the actual result? In our flesh, have we really followed the Lord with perfect deeds and lived our lives as He wanted us to live? No, we have all failed to do so. This is why you and I were in fact suffering from serious cases of spiritual paralysis. While we had thus been spiritual paralytics, we have still been saved from our sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

I know myself well. Can I really do everything that my heart desires? I can honestly confess to you that I am not capable of achieving this. My heart truly desires to follow the will of the Lord 100%, and to live according to how He wants me to live. But more often than not, I fail in this endeavor. There are many times when my deeds do not follow my heart's wish. But I still believe, "Even though I am truly a spiritual paralytic, the Lord has saved me from all my sins."

I believe that you are like this also. You, too, had been spiritual paralytics who could not do what you wanted to do

owing to your disability, but I believe that our Lord has saved such people like us from all our sins by the gospel power of the water and the Spirit. Are you perfect in both body and spirit? Are your flesh, thoughts, hearts, and deeds perfect and whole? No, of course they are not perfect! You and I are all insufficient, just like this paralytic.

Just how many shortcomings do we have? Because we are insufficient, the Lord could not but come to us. And by doing so, He thus had to save us from all our sins. Through the baptism of Jesus Christ and His bloodshed, we have been able to be saved from all our sins. When we realize that we are truly insufficient, we can receive the salvation and all the blessings from God. Therefore, all of us must admit our insufficiencies before God, and live in His grace in thankfulness.

When do you recognize your insufficiencies? It is when we fail to live according to the will of the Lord, and when we fail to do the righteous deeds as He wants us to, that we come to admit ourselves as insufficient beings. We come to discover this fact in reality, not in mere theory. And our hearts are then humbled and become meek.

My dear fellow believers, we are insufficient and paralytics, and yet the Lord has saved such people like us from all our sins. We must therefore never forget the blessings of God, that He has saved us from all our sins for our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. When we recognize our fundamental insufficiencies as they are, we cannot but be thankful for His salvation that has saved us from such a spiritually fatal condition. Only then can we humbly and gratefully keep the Truth that the

Lord has saved us from all our sins by the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

However, as we carry on with our lives of faith before God, we often forget our own insufficiencies, thinking that everything is okay now that we have received the remission of our sins. And there are many times when we know very well about the shortcomings of other people, and yet we do not acknowledge our own insufficiencies.

When a woman caught for adultery in the very act was brought to Jesus, He had told those around her who sought to stone her, "He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first." When Jesus said this, no one could cast a single stone.

As a matter of fact, we, too, are like this woman who was caught for adultery in the very act, for all of us also sin, just like this woman. We are in no place to comment on whether others have blemishes or not. Each and every one of us is a spiritual paralytic, and we all are insufficient. It is because this is who we really are that our Lord has saved us from our sins with the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and all that we have done is that we have accepted this salvation from our sins by believing in this Truth.

Among the righteous, no one is better or worse than anyone else. It is far better for us to have little abilities and thus nothing to boast of than to think arrogantly that we are somehow better than others. While those who know their own insufficiencies will find and believe in the God-given gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit, those who don't recognize their own

insufficiencies will end up rejecting the true gospel that can wash away all their sins. Therefore, knowing ourselves correctly is critically important to us, for if we fail to know our fundamental insufficiencies, it is impossible for us to rely on the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Our Lord also said in today's Scripture passage, *"I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance."* It is not right for us to fail to realize just how weak and insufficient we are, and yet instead assign all faults to others and judge them. It is a marked human tendency to come up with all sorts of excuses, claiming that it is not because we are inherently evil, but because the others are evil that we are also wicked. So consequently, we fail to realize that the problem is not found with the others, but with ourselves, and that it is our own insufficiencies that explain the problem.

Even after receiving the remission of our sins, we still remain insufficient. We may have worked the whole day doing the works of God, but is there anything that we can really boast of? No. Only a few hours are actually spent productively for the works of God, and the rest are often simply wasted away. Those who believe that God has saved the truly insufficient one from all their sins by the gospel power of the water and the Spirit—none other than these are the blessed.

My fellow believers, do not flaunt your own righteousness before God or before man. You may think, "I am not like this. I am different from him. I am really good. I am not insufficient. As days go by, I am perfected even more." It is because you think like this that you are deceiving yourselves on your own.

This is why you cannot come before the salvation of the Lord. This is why, even if you are saved, you are unable to run toward the salvation of others' souls by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

At all times, we must confess to the Lord, "I am like the paralytic, Lord." This truth is not a hypothetical conjecture, but it is real. As we carry on with our lives of faith, we must realize before God that we are always insufficient in our acts. Only then can we tolerate our own insufficiencies and the insufficiencies of others as well.

What happens if we say that we are not insufficient but the others are? Our hearts are prone to become arrogant as if we are their judges. But who can stand upright before the Law of God? Do you watch TV? What do you see in the news? We see that even the powerful who had exercised great influence on political circles are branded as criminals when they turned out to have broken the law. When a criminal is brought to the Public Prosecutor's office, he has to stand right at that spot that is reserved for criminals. Reporters then take pictures of him, and he has to subject himself to the investigation. He then has to stand in the court as the accused and be sentenced to his punishment.

So regardless of how powerful anyone might have been in this world, if he committed a crime and broke the existing law, not only is his pride ruined, but also his reputation and status are all destroyed. All that power this person had is but only a dream, as he crumbles down and falls apart—this is the portrait of a criminal. Even before the secular law of this world, anyone who commits a crime is turned into such a pathetic figure.

We also cannot avoid becoming such a pathetic figure, if we apply the Law strictly to ourselves. But, from the Law we must see our sinful selves, and by placing our faith in the baptism that Jesus Christ received from John and in His bloodshed as our own remission of sin, we must be remitted from all our sins. We can then be bold and confident by this faith of ours that knows and believes in the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Jesus Christ has saved us from all our sins as the righteous Savior. We must have confidence placing our faith in this Lord.

Were it not for this faith in the gospel power of the water and the Spirit, who could ever stand before the Law of God? My fellow believers, the hypocrites who sought to stone the adulterous woman were self-righteous only because their sins were not revealed yet, but had they stood before the Law of God honestly, could they have dared to raise a single stone?

As you and I stand before God, it is only by believing in the gospel that holds His righteousness that we can enter Heaven. Everyone is a sinner and will forever remain so unless he believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Sinners are nothing at all before God. Were it not for our faith in this gospel that holds the righteousness of God, we would not have been able to live by faith like this to this day. Even if one had said, "I am completely guilt-free and I have nothing to hide," without the powerful mercy of God, he cannot be saved from his sins.

The paralytic here was brought before Jesus by his friends. Jesus then said to this paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven you."

My fellow saints, how many sins could a paralytic possibly have committed? Would he have committed more sins than those who are healthy and normal? Why, then, did Jesus say, "Son, your sins are forgiven you"? This means that each and every human being is a born sinner because sin entered into the world owing to our common ancestor Adam (Romans 5:12). Put differently, we are born with sin because we inherited sin innately from our parents. As such, this paralytic had inherited his sinful nature from his parents, and therefore he also had to be forgiven from his sins. As it is written in Matthew 26:41, *"The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak,"* both our hearts and deeds have not been whole.

From the very moment we were born from the womb of our mothers into this world, we have inherited all the sins of this world, all the twelve kinds of wickedness, and as such we were born as sinners from the very beginning. Therefore, from this very day on we have been spiritually paralyzed. It is because we came into this world with sinful hearts from the day we were born that we have been unable to do what our hearts desire. And because we have failed to live according to the will of the Lord, as our hearts so desired, we have come to realize that fundamentally, there is sin in our hearts.

The Apostle Paul also confessed his sinful nature as it was: *"For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin. For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that it is good. But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in*

*me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice. Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me" (Romans 7:14-20).*

You need to realize here that Jesus did not say so because the paralytic had somehow committed more sins against God than we have. The very paralytic was you and I who had to be forgiven from all our sins. Therefore, those who have not yet received the remission of sins must first admit the truth that they are mortal sinners before God, and must be anxious to be saved from all their sins. They must first lament their predicament just as Paul cried out, *"O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?" (Romans 7:24)*

Who has delivered you and me from this body of death? He is Jesus Christ. That we have been remitted from all our sins, and that we are to enter the heavenly Kingdom of God, all depend on the baptism that Jesus Christ received, His bloodshed, and His power. If we realize how Jesus Christ has blotted out all the sins that we commit throughout our entire lifetime out of our insufficiencies, and if we believe in this gospel Truth with all our hearts, we can indeed be saved from all our sins. The Bible tells us that no one can enter the Kingdom of God unless he is first born again by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit (John 3:5).

My fellow saints, our remission of sin, too, has been made possible only by believing in the gospel power of the water and

the Spirit. For us to follow the Lord and do His works is only possible when we believe in the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit that our Lord has given us. Our spreading of this gospel of the water and the Spirit is also made possible only by the power of our God.

In the last chapter of Hosea, it is written, *"Who is wise? Let him understand these things. Who is prudent? Let him know them. For the ways of the LORD are right; The righteous walk in them, But transgressors stumble in them" (Hosea 14:9).*

My fellow believers, how could we stand upright but only by our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit? How could we overcome Satan's schemes but only by our faith in this gospel of power? It is absolutely impossible for us to do so unless we place all our faith in the gospel power of the water and the Spirit. This is why the passage from Hosea declares that only the righteous can follow the ways of the Lord.

Every Sunday, you go to your church and stand before God to worship Him, but can you really come before His presence and worship Him only with your acts, without the power of your faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit? No, this cannot be done! Our spreading of this true gospel is also impossible without placing our faith in the Lord.

Could anyone whose acts are upright and who has committed no sin in this world really spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit? Such people who think their deeds are upright cannot believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, nor can they preach the righteousness of God. In our flesh, furthermore, we can never do the righteous works.

Can you live even a day without committing any sin? Do you now realize that you and I are insufficient before God, and that God has saved such people like us, who had been paralytics? Do you acknowledge the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit?

Though we are this insufficient, God has still saved us from the sins of the world. Therefore, we cannot but confess like this: "Lord, Your are the Christ and the Son of the living God. You are the true God. You are the King of kings. You are the Lord of creation who made the universe and all things in it. Lord, You are truly the Son of God, and came to me as my Savior." Through Romans chapter 7 and 8, we can see that the Apostle Paul believed in Jesus as his God and his Savior. And we, too, believe in Jesus just like Paul had believed.

My fellow saints, in times like these when the world is darkening even more, sin is widespread, and selfish individualism abounds in it, we must walk on the righteous way of the Lord boldly by placing our faith in the gospel power of the water and the Spirit. In this age and time, if we want to live in God's Church until the end of the world by believing in the power of this gospel that holds the righteousness of God, we must realize that we are insufficient, and we must live our lives before God by faith, by believing in the gospel power of the water and the Spirit. Placing all our faith in this gospel power of the water and the Spirit, we must praise God and run toward Him.

My fellow believers, could any of us really stand before the presence of God with our own merits? You should never nod to

such an erroneous claim! If some of your brothers and sisters are insufficient in your eyes, do not try to judge them. Who can judge whom, and who can condemn whom? To be quite honest, could pastors know all the difficulties that the laymen are facing? Can anyone who has not worked know the hardship that the working people face? Can junior pastors understand all the difficulties that senior pastors must take care of? All that we know is only superficial, some glimpses of what appears outside, and we do not really know all the difficulties that the others are facing. Therefore, you need to stand before God by placing your faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and you must do His works in humility, rather than judging others.

How tiresome is it to live in this age? Words cannot describe all the stresses that we are facing on a daily basis. The whole world is moving against the will of God, but we, the minority, are going against this tide. Hence, the stress and the hardship that are accrued from this are only too palpable for us. Do you think we are walking the way of the Lord because we do not know how to go with the flow of this world? No, it is because we live clothed in the gospel power of the water and the Spirit that we have put the flow the world behind us, and we obey only the will of the God and are running toward Him.

My fellow saints, if someone around you is going through a hard time, you should try to understand him, rather than judging him. “So this is why he is having such a hard time.” This is how you should think. All of us really need to sympathize with our fellow saints. As we serve the gospel of the water and the Spirit, there are many joyful things that happen to us as well. What I

am saying here is to live by placing your faith in the power of the gospel before God.

In all honesty, I, too, had been a paralytic spiritually, but the Lord has saved me from all my sins. And frankly, you had also been paralytics, but the Lord has saved you from all the sins of the world. There is no one among you whom the Lord has saved from sin even though he was fundamentally perfect. Hasn't our Lord saved us with the gospel of the water and the Spirit, even though you and I alike had been just like the paralytic?

It is not only with our words that we admit that we are paralytics, and that we are insufficient. Are we not actually insufficient in our flesh? Of course we are. Do you have any idea how much time it takes for a person to know his true self? It is not easy at all for one to truly know oneself. So anyone who knows his fundamental nature well is quite a remarkable person.

If we admit that we are paralytics, then, we have to walk by faith from now on: We must live by faith, spread the gospel by faith, defend our heart by faith, stand before God by faith, overcome this world by faith, and treat one another in faith. What else do we have but our faith? There is nothing remaining in you if your faith is taken away.

The basic human faculty actually amounts to nothing. We are no one without the power of the gospel. What greatness is there to mankind? We are as ephemeral as morning mists and as fragile as grass. It is written, *"All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, and its flower falls away, but the word of the LORD endures forever" (1 Peter 1:24-25).*

It takes a lot of time for plants to grow, but the time they take to blossom flowers and for these flowers to wither is very short. Just take a look at a flower vase in your own home. The grass adorning the flowers may be firm right now, but leave it for a couple of weeks and see what happens to it. It will wither away. The same thing will happen to the flowers, whose beauty is only ephemeral, for they, too, will wither away. We humans are just likes these withering flowers. Life is just like this. Just as blossoming flowers wither in no time, our true human reflection is such that we, too, will wither away like them.

Even though we are mere ephemeral beings, we now have the everlasting Word of God that has made us the people of faith and God's children who will not perish. As a matter of fact, it is because we have faith in the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit that we have become righteous by this faith, and that we can live for the righteousness of God on this faith. It is because we have placed our faith in Christ as our Savior, and because we are preaching the gospel, that we remain in this world, and there is no other reason but this.

God has thus made us His people of faith. But there still are too many souls in this world that are dying from their ignorance of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. As there are still many souls in this world who will be saved from their sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, I would like to admonish you to preach this gospel to them. I am not demanding you to become holy saints. I just want to encourage you to spend the rest of your lives for the gospel of the water and the Spirit. There is nothing else that I want from you.

I easily get into a temper over nothing when I am very tired. I am this insufficient. You and I know very well that we are all insufficient. Even so, we have the responsibility to preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit throughout the whole world, to the very last day. It is because of this duty that you and I are living. We are not living for any other reason. Though we are all insufficient, we know that it is because we have things to do while remaining on this earth, to preach this gospel throughout the whole world, that we are carrying on with our lives.

Do not demand anything else—a good temper or a virtuous manner, for example—from one another. Preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit and having fellowship of faith with one another, these are all that we have to do in our every waking moment. If we do not spread the gospel power, who will ever do this?

Just how many people in this world are suffering without the gospel of the water and the Spirit? We can see many wretched Christians who are trying so hard to live according to the will of God through their prayers of repentance and their own determination. In fact, they are doing so because they are demon-possessed. Do you not feel compassionate for them? Indeed, there are so many people in this world who have not even heard the gospel of the water and the Spirit that if I were able to spread this gospel to them, I will have no more want. It is because of the gospel that my eyes are all bloodshot; it is because of the gospel that I shed tears, and it is because of the gospel that I am doing all these different works. I would never have put up with any of these things were it not for the gospel.

Had I not dedicated my life to the spreading of the gospel, I would be working hard everyday for my own ends. But since this is not how we are living, but we are in fact living for the gospel, all of us are indeed doing truly precious works. God has entrusted us with such extremely precious works.

There are times when our brothers are ordained as the workers of God and sent out to their places of ministry. In such times, I see some of them having doubts and thinking, "Why am I being sent there, instead of sending me here?" I then used to say to them, "Why do you care about where and how you live, when you are living to spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit? What is more precious work than this in the whole world? You may go there and find yourself spending the whole day not doing much, but if you preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit to even just one person, the Lord would approve you! How would you do this truly precious work in the world? Were it not for God's Church, where else would you do such precious works?" I believe that all of us, who are serving the gospel, from our ministers to you and I, are extremely precious to God. By believing in the power of this gospel, we have all become God's own people.

Because Satan has sowed his lies throughout the whole world, people are drowning in such lies without realizing the true gospel of the water and the Spirit. All that we have to do is spread the Truth of the water and the Spirit throughout this earth that is filled with lies, and go to the Lord when He comes back for us. If the Lord does not return in our lifetime, then let us just continue to preach the gospel.

There are times when we volunteer to do difficult jobs for this gospel. But there are also many moments of joy that we experience while serving the gospel by faith. God gives us consolations and new strength whenever we yearn for His help.

My dear fellow believers, I yearn to preach the power of this gospel until the day our Lord returns. If I can't preach the gospel myself because of my weak body, I at least want to fulfill my role as a supporter of the gospel. I, too, must serve the gospel with my prayers until the day our Lord returns, and so must you.

Let us hold each other, help one another, and trust each other, so that each of us may achieve this. I believe that even if we do not edify ourselves to a particular level of sanctification in this world, if we would just preach the gospel of power throughout the whole world, the Lord will be pleased by us. Let us live for the spreading of the gospel, and let us go to our Lord after preaching this gospel to our ends. If people do not accept the gospel even after hearing it, leave them unsaved and let's preach the gospel to the others. And if no one accepts it no matter how much we preach it at last, then let us, too, stop preaching it and just wait for His return.

The paralytic in today's Scripture passage received the remission of his sins by encountering the Lord and believing in His power. It was because he was insufficient that he received this remission of sin by faith—by believing, in other words, in the power of the Lord. Had his deeds been without blemish, he might not have come to Jesus asking for His salvation, and eventually, could not have been remitted from all his sins by believing in the Lord's power.

My fellow believers, before God, only those who know they are extremely deficient in their deeds can receive the remission of their sins by believing in the power of the Lord's gospel. Do you think that it is by practicing asceticism, as if we were Buddha, that we can be remitted from our sins? It is those who know themselves as the piles of sins that can be remitted from all their sins by believing in the gospel of power, that Jesus came to this earth and has blotted out their sins with the water and the blood.

I thank our Lord for saving us from all our sins. Amen. ✉

# Religious Faith vs. Faith In the Gospel Power of The Water and the Spirit

**< Matthew 1:18-25 >**

**"So He got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city. Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, 'Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you.' And at once some of the scribes said within themselves, 'This Man blasphemes!' But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, 'Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins'—then He said to the paralytic, 'Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.' And he arose and departed to his house. Now when the multitudes saw it, they marveled and glorified God, who had given such power to men.**

**As Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, 'Follow Me.' So he arose and followed Him. Now it happened, as Jesus sat at the table in the house, that behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to His disciples, 'Why does your Teacher eat with tax**

**collectors and sinners?' When Jesus heard that, He said to them, 'Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice.' For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.' Then the disciples of John came to Him, saying, 'Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but Your disciples do not fast?' And Jesus said to them, 'Can the friends of the bridegroom mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast. No one puts a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; for the patch pulls away from the garment, and the tear is made worse. Nor do they put new wine into old wineskins, or else the wineskins break, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined. But they put new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved.'"**

## How Should We Lead Our Lives of Faith?

How should we lead our lives of faith? Should we do so by placing our faith in our own thoughts? Or should we place our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit? These are the questions that I would to address in today's teaching.

What we need to realize here is that those who are faithful only to their thoughts are no more than religious practitioners. So when Jesus was on this earth, the Pharisees, being such religionists, also attacked Him and His disciples over ritualistic

issues. The disciples of John the Baptist also questioned Jesus in doubt, "Why is it that we fast often, but Your disciples do not fast?"

Unfortunately, most Christians still remain as such religious practitioners. In contrast, what Jesus really wants us to pursue is absolutely different from it. As is manifested in the first part of today's Scripture passage, Jesus is the true God who can give us the remission of sin. Hence, He could say to the paralytic, "Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you."

Which is easier, to say, "Your sins are forgiven you," or to say, "Arise and walk"? Both would have been easy for our Lord, but they are likewise difficult for us. Everyone and every creature may say such things, but fundamentally speaking, no man has such power. All these things were impossible to be done by creatures, but only by our Lord.

What could someone who seems to be religiously pious do to blot out his sins? All that he can do is give prayers of repentance, and resolve himself to never sin again; beyond these, there is nothing that he can do. But Jesus wants to give us the remission of sin that is in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. All that He really wants us is for us to have faith in Him and in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Though today's Scripture passage, Our Lord teaches us the difference between our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and mere religions. When we believe in the Lord as our Savior, should we be filled with our faith in the Word of God, or should we be filled with religious doctrines? The Lord God is telling us to choose one.

## Religious Christians Must Deny Their Thoughts and Believe in God's Word of Power

Our faith in the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit is fundamentally different from man-made, ritualistic and doctrinal faith. Our true faith in the righteousness of God and the faith of the worldly religions are not the same. Placing our faith in the Word of God is to look toward what God has done for us, to follow it, and to believe in it with our hearts; in contrast, placing one's faith in the religious doctrines of this world is to make an object of one's devotion on his own and to trust in it according to his own thoughts. But such religious faith is not the faith that believes according to the Word of God.

To be faithful to the worldly religions is to be faithful to one's own thoughts. Therefore, if anyone who had been faithful to the religions of the world wants to believe with his hearts in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, through which Jesus has saved us, then he must first deny his own thoughts. This is because God's gospel of the water and the Spirit is different from the doctrines made of one's own thoughts. Because of such people who follow and believe in the Jesus based on the false doctrines of their own making, countless people are dying spiritually.

God is teaching us that when we believe in the Lord as our Savior, we must do so by placing our faith in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, for this gospel Word of the water and the Spirit is the very Word of God. Here, we must make a clear choice between two; whether we would believe in Jesus as our Savior based on our own thoughts, or based on the gospel of the

water and the Spirit that is made of the Word of God. God is clearly telling us that it is based on the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit that we must believe in Jesus.

My fellow believers, the faith of the religiously devoted is fundamentally different from the faith of those whose devotion is based on their faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

When we read the same account of the paralytic in the Gospel according to Mark (Mark 2:1-12), it is written that when Jesus preached the Word in a house, so many people had gathered together around Him that there was no longer room to admit them, not even near the door. To this packed house four men brought a paralytic on a bed, but they could not come near Him because of the crowd. But instead of give up their attempt, they uncovered the roof of the house, and they lowered the bed on which the paralytic was lying to Jesus. In other words, because the place was filled with so many people and the paralytic and his four friends could not even set a foot inside, they had to take special steps to approach Jesus, or otherwise they would not have been able to take the paralytic in bed to Jesus.

Like this, when we come before God, we can meet Him only if we take special steps; that is, by placing our faith in the Word of God. We must believe in the Word of God, that Jesus came to this earth and has blotted out all the sins of mankind through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. If we truly have this faith in the salvation of God, that He has saved us from our sins once for all with the gospel of the water and the Spirit, then we can indeed be freed from all our sins. Whoever believes in this true gospel can become one of God's own people. It is only when we

are filled with our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that we can go and stand before the majestic presence of our Lord. Only then can we come before the Lord and praise Him, and only then can our hearts be filled with thankfulness.

My fellow believers, when you come before God, you may think that it is most important to approach Him with some kind of merits of your own or with your utmost sincerity. But that is not the case. That is just your own thought. On the contrary, we must cast aside the beliefs of our own thoughts, and we must believe only according to the Truth written in the Word of God.

Let us imagine here for a moment that Christians are standing in two lines, and that on one line stand those who believe in Jesus based on their own thoughts, and on the other line are those who believe in the Word of the water and the Spirit, which is our salvation. On which of these two lines should you stand? If you stand on the line of the religionists, you will lead your lives following only your own thoughts. It will then become impossible for you to meet Jesus Christ, who has come by the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Why? Because such religionists are faithful to only their own thoughts and are devoted to only their own emotions. As the Apostles warned, still many Christians desire to make a good showing in their flesh (Galatians 6:12). It is because they have no interest in the Truth about the gospel of the water and the Spirit, nor in how God has completely blotted out their sins, but they are only faithful to their own pious devotion. But no matter how people devote themselves in their own thoughts, they still remain far too insufficient to come and stand before the presence of God.

This is why those religious Christians cannot properly meet Jesus the true Savior. When someone is devoted to only his own religious piety, he pays no attention to the Truth of salvation, the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit, and instead ends up devoting himself to his own thoughts, emotions, and dedication.

But those who are well aware of their insufficiencies seek first the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, and grab it by faith when they hear it by any chance. Such people can be saved from all their sins by placing their faith in this Truth, and give thanks to God for the Truth of salvation that He has fulfilled.

Our remission of sin does not depend on what and how we do with our acts of the flesh. On the contrary, it lies in our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Therefore, we, the saved, pay far more attention to the fact that Jesus has saved us from our sins once for all with the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and we have faith in this. Those who have confidence in the Word of God can reach an even more profound understanding of the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit by faith. It is only by faith in Jesus Christ who has saved us through the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit that we can receive the remission of our sins and stand before God. We can then come to swim in the ocean of God's grace and live blessed lives.

## The Lord Was Needed Only to the Sinners Facing Their Destruction

My fellow believers, our Lord did not come to save from sin

those who believe in their own thoughts. He said, *"Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice.' For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance."*

Whom did our Lord say He came to call? He said that He did not come to call the self-styled righteous ones, but sinners. Who, then, are sinners before God? They are the descendants of Adam who had left God and who had been bound in sin. Our Lord did not come to call the righteous. This is because there is none who is righteous for himself (Romans 3:10). And, it is right that our Lord came to this world to save the sinful, to make them sinless, and to turn them into God's own children.

What Jesus is saying to the Pharisees in today's Scripture passage is to cast aside their own thoughts, come before Him, and believe in His Word. But since these Pharisees came before Jesus with their own thoughts filled with their own emotion, it was not to call such people that our Lord came. Our Lord did not come to save from sin those who are superficially upright and hypocritical, but He came to save those who are poor in spirit, who are honest and frank enough to confess themselves to be sinners, who are saddened by and mourn over their sins, and who listen to the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit and believe in it.

Our Lord came to this world to save sinners from all their sins and iniquities. Everyone's insufficiencies are eventually revealed, for he commits transgressions everyday as he lives in this world. It is to call such people and to deliver them from all

their sins as well, that our Lord came. Our Lord, in other words, came to deliver sinners from all their sins and iniquities by giving the gospel of the water and the Spirit to them. We need to realize here that our Lord was not interested in the Pharisees and scribes who were devoted to their own faith made of their own thoughts.

Therefore, when we come before the presence of God, we must place our faith in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit. The gospel of the water and the Spirit tells us that the Lord has delivered us from all our sins by being baptized by John and crucified, and shedding His blood on the Cross. And it tells us that the Lord will come to take away those of us who believe in this gospel, and that He has prepared the Kingdom of Heaven for us. For our Lord told us that He has blotted out all our sins with the gospel of the water and the Spirit, He has set the law of salvation for the entire mankind to be saved, so that no one may come before God without faith in this gospel. We must first realize and believe which gospel God has given us, what faith He wants from us, and how much of our sins He has blotted out.

## We Must Forsake Our Own Will and Instead Believe in the God's Truth of Power

As you gather together to worship God and hear His Word, do not be misled to think that you can somehow please God if you swear yourselves on your own will to serve Jesus well and

to never commit sin again. For you to try to please Jesus on your own is to be ignorant of yourselves and to flaunt your own determination. If this is how your lives of faith have been until now, then you had not known the faith that Jesus really wants from all of you.

Our Lord said, "I desire mercy and not sacrifice." Having compassion for us, He was baptized by John the Baptist to take upon all the sins that we commit in our entire lifetime, and indeed bore all our sins. Just as the Lord had healed the paralytic from his affliction with His Word of power all at once, He has healed us from all our sins once for all with the gospel power of the water and the Spirit.

Given the fact that our God wants us to believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit and be saved from our sins, it is not fitting to the will of God for people to worship Jesus with the devotion of their own determination that is based on their own thoughts. Can any paralytic walk just because he has an extremely strong will to do so? My fellow believers, although such determination and will are commendable, what we must actually do is know ourselves before God, come humbly before His presence, believe in His gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, and thereby draw His compassion. We must believe that God has blotted out all our sins with the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, and we must become His children by this faith. If we do not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the gospel of God, and instead come before Him with the faith of our own will, saying, "Lord, this is what I will do for you," then we will end up just confused, believing in our own

thoughts, and becoming completely irrelevant to the Lord.

By placing our faith in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, we must have full confidence in our salvation. We must be filled with this faith that believes in the gospel Word telling you that God has blotted out all our sins. To be so, we should not be making doctrines for God based on our own thoughts and minds, nor should we come before Jesus by placing our faith in such man-made doctrines. If we are faithful to only our own thoughts, our devotion will wither away in time, and in the end, we will die not knowing the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

My fellow believers, it is only when you and I have strong faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that we can really have true fellowship with Him. Today's Scripture passage is telling us to believe in the power of the Word of our Lord that healed the paralytic. Isn't this what God is saying to us? If your faith is not one that believes wholly in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, you will end up dying in sin.

Many people are prone to believe the Word of God through their own understandings and perspectives, and this has been the origin of the prevailing Christian doctrines and teachings. So when they read the Word of God, they only draw moral lessons, saying, "Oh, so this is what I should be striving to emulate." They even have confidence in their salvation upon such man-made doctrines and teachings. But they are actually burying the Truth of the Bible under confusion with their own carnal thoughts. Such faith is a fallacious product of their own thinking.

In contrast, the Bible never says that such man-made doctrines are where our true salvation is based. We must now

realize how Jesus has blotted out all our sins, and we must recognize this power. Aren't we the kind of people who commit personal sins until the very day we die? Yes, we are. However, our Lord is speaking to us of the salvation that has washed away, with His gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, all the sins that we commit until we die. This Word of the water and the Spirit is the Word of God that brings the whole remission of sin to us.

This is why, my dear fellow believers, we must place our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit when we come before our Lord. We should not come before His presence only with religious faith, nor be filled with such religious teachings, but just as the Bible tells us to be filled with the Spirit, we must saturate ourselves with the Word of the Holy Spirit.

My fellow believers, what is it that our minds should be captured by? Should we be enthralled by our own religious devotion? Or should we be captivated by the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the gospel with which God has saved us all? Shouldn't we be mesmerized by this Word of salvation? God is telling us that He has blotted out all your sins. We must be devoted to the good work of spreading the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and it is for this work that we must run. Which faith should captivate us? Where our minds belong is critically important here.

Do you or do not you commit sin until the day you die? Of course you do. Do you realize this clearly, beyond any doubt? If you know that you are no more than piles of sin, then by faith, you can receive your salvation through the gospel of the water

and the Spirit. And if you know that Jesus has saved you from all your sins with the water and the Spirit, then you have now reached the way of perfect salvation, and you will therefore enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

Many people do not know that they are bound to sin until the day they die. In fact, it is because too many people do not realize this that so few are seeking the Truth, or otherwise they would all have looked for the gospel of the water and the Spirit. So put differently, this means that those who do not know the gospel of the water and the Spirit are of those who do not realize, even until their life is extinguished, that they are sinners who commit all kinds of iniquities.

Some people climb up a mountain to pray, and in their prayers they promise, "God, I will never sin again." There are so many people who pray every night, making a fresh determination not to commit any sin again. Take a look at all the religions of this world. The founders and leaders of all these religions only teach their follower to live virtuously. But how can such piles of sin ever live virtuously? It is because they do not realize that they are simply incapable of living in this way, and that they are living in all these lies and hypocrisy. They do not know that everyone is no more than an insufficient human being who sins all the time. And because they do not know this truth, they are trying so hard to live virtuously and yet are in fact living only hypocritically, and defrauding their followers in the process.

But everyone, my fellow believers, commits sin until the day he dies. The fragility of human will is just like cycling up a hill.

When you step on the pedals, you climb up the hill, but the very moment you get exhausted and stop pedaling, you end up sliding back and falling down. Such is the will of man. No matter how one resolves himself to never sin again, swears by it, bites his tongue, writes out his determination with his own blood, gives his prayers of repentance, trusts in Jesus, and vows his allegiance to Him, everything is futile in the end, for he is bound to sin.

Didn't Peter and the other disciples resolve not to sleep when the Lord said them, *"My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me"? (Matthew 26:38)* But what happened? They all fell asleep. One may determine himself to never sleep again, and put match sticks on his eyelids to keep his eyes open, but he will still fall asleep even as his eyes are open. Hence, the Lord, who knew the weakness of our flesh so well, said to His disciples, *"The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Matthew 26:41).*

One may resolve himself to never sin again with his tongue, and he may even tie his tongue with a rubber band, but he is still bound to sin with both his tongue and heart. Everyone sins with his heart, and the Bible says that such sins we commit with our hearts are the same ones as we commit with our flesh. We humans are to continue sinning until the very day we die, until the very moment we take in our last breath. This is the fundamental human nature. You should know yourselves.

You may then wonder, "What should I then do?" The solution is simple: You should seek mercy from God and believe in the gospel power of the water and the Spirit. Put

differently, you should confess to God as the following: "God, I am a man who is bound to sin until the day I die. Teach me how You have saved me from my sins with the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Help me to have faith in this Truth and to be born again." This is how you should ask for God's help. This is what you must all do.

There is a saying, "A drowning man will catch at even a straw." If you really admit yourselves as such desperate beings, then you should surely grab the gospel of the water and the Spirit with your whole hearts. You must first admit your sinfulness, and then listen carefully to what God said about our remission of sin. You, too, will then be told, "Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you," while you listen to the hidden meanings of today's Scripture passage, because how God healed the paralytic actually speaks about your own remission of sin. By thus believing in this way, you must be filled with the joy of salvation. You must be full with the joy of faith.

## We Must Know Full with the Power of the Gospel by Knowing and Believing in It

My fellow Christians, paralytics are sound in their minds, but they cannot move as their hearts desire. Just like this, those among us who have sin in their hearts cannot overcome the power of sin, and as a result they are incapable of not committing sin. We humans are imperfect sinners who cannot do as our hearts desire. Our own hearts' lust for sin is something

that is beyond our control. Anyone who has sin cannot live virtuously no matter how much he wants to, and when his circumstances or someone provokes him, he cannot help but sin. This is why the Bible tells us that everyone is like the paralytic in today's passage.

Therefore, we must believe that God Himself took upon our sins of the world once for all by being baptized by John, and has washed them all away. We must be delivered from our sins by believing in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit with all our hearts. Our Lord shouldered the sins of the world by being baptized, carried them to the Cross, and paid off all their wages.

We must be full with this faith. We must be full with our faith and belief in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. We must believe in what God has done for us, in the Word of God telling us that God Himself was baptized and shed His blood for us and has thereby blotted out all our sins. Only then can our hearts have everlasting life by faith, and only then can our souls be brought to life. We should not be filled with religious doctrines or our own emotion.

What God first demands from us is to be filled with faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. He wants our hearts to follow the gospel of the water and the Spirit faithfully with our whole hearts. Even if you are insufficient and weak in your acts, and even if you have nothing to boast of, when you are filled with your faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, you can please God, and you can also bring true salvation to others.

Do you know what those who are filled with only their own religious emotion say to the born-again believers? They say,

"You are blasphemous! Who do you think you are, you arrogant blasphemers? Do you have no sin? Who are you to say so? Are you God, that you claim to have no sin?"

When those who are filled with religious emotion look at those who are truly born again of the water and the Spirit, they think there is something wrong with the born-again, even though there is nothing biblically unsound in the faith of the born-again. Their assessment could not be further from the truth. On the contrary, it is these people, who make judgments without knowing the gospel of the water and the Spirit, who are mistaken.

Such people say to the believers in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, "Who are you to speak of the remission of sin to us?" When a paralytic was brought to Jesus, Jesus immediately said to him, "Son, your sins are forgiven," something that was utterly shocking. You may have no idea just how often Jesus said words that infuriated those filled with religion. For the religionists, what Jesus said was too radical. So those full of their own religion thought, "Wow! You are crazy! Are you God? Only God can forgive sin, and so who are you to forgive sin?"

In complete contrast, my fellow believers, those who are filled with the gospel of the water and the Spirit say to Jesus, "Lord, You are My Savior, the Christ, and the Son of the living God. You are the Creator who made the whole universe. You are God Himself. And you are the Savior of mankind who came to save me from my sins. You came to this earth incarnated in the flesh of man, accepted all the sins of us mankind by being

baptized, was crucified and shed Your blood, rose from the dead again in three days, and has thereby saved me perfectly from all my sins. You are the One who came to this earth, lived for 33 years, and has saved me from the sins of the world. But you are fundamentally God Himself."

When those who are full with the gospel of the water and the Spirit see this Jesus, they see no flaw whatsoever, and they accept His love of salvation into their hearts. But when those who are only filled religious doctrines and teachings see Jesus, on the other hand, He appears as the head of all heretics.

But how were the paralytic and his four friends? Did they not come before the presence of the Lord by placing their faith in Jesus as the Son of God and the Savior? They indeed did so. They truthfully believed in Jesus as God Himself. So, when Jesus said, "Your sins are forgiven; rise and walk," the paralytic indeed rose up and walked. When so many countless people were surrounding Jesus, it was only the paralytic and his four friends who actually brought their real problem of sin to Jesus and got it resolved by believing in Him with all their hearts.

My fellow believers, those who are religiously filled do believe in Jesus in their attempt to keep their morals and ethics, but they consider His essence to be only human. To such people, Jesus is merely one of the great sages in the world history. So they do not entrust Him with their intractable problem of sin, nor can they get it resolved. This is because they do not believe in Jesus as God.

But those who are filled with the gospel of the water and the Spirit believe, "Jesus is God Himself, and He is the Savior of

mankind. So if I come before Him, my soul's problem of sin will be resolved. All the sins that I have committed and will ever commit until the day I die will be solved away, and I will be remitted from all of them. The curses of my flesh will then also depart from me. My Lord will solve away all my problems. He will bless me." It was because the paralytic and his friends had this faith that they brought him to Jesus.

My fellow believers, as you have come into the Christian faith, do not rely the fullness of your own religious emotion. This is only to believe in a worldly religion, not to have true faith. To truly believe in the Lord is first of all to get your problem of sin resolved. When you have sin, you can be resolved from this problem of sin only when you lay down this problem before Jesus, and when you have the other problems of the flesh, you can also be resolved from these problems only when you lay them down before Jesus. None other than this is the true faith that believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. By placing your faith in Jesus as your Savior, you can be resolved from all your problems. For us to believe in Jesus, in other words, is to place our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Jesus is fundamentally God Himself, and when we pray to this Lord, He will hear us and answer us. Our faith lies in the Truth that the Lord, by being baptized in the Jordan River and shedding His blood on the Cross, took care of all our sins, all our shame, and all our curses.

My dear fellow believers, as you carry on with your lives of faith, I admonish each and every one of you to place your faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. I ask you all to have

full faith in this gospel. I hope that each of you would be filled with the Holy Spirit by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. It is my sincerest desire for all of you that you would truly have strong faith in this gospel.

Though we cannot be perfect in our deeds, we can still be filled with the Holy Spirit by faith. We can be filled with our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that has saved us from all our sins. It is written in the Hymnbook, "♪I cannot tell thee whence it came, ♪this peace is in my breast; But this I know, there fills my soul, ♪A strange and tranquil rest." We can be full with faith wherever we are, even if we are in a washroom, for our Lord has blotted out all our sins with His baptism and blood. We are truly grateful for this.

My fellow believers, how the worldly people view you is not the problem here, but what Jesus said to you is what is important. The Lord has told you that He loves you, that He has blotted out all your sins, that you are God's children, that He will be with you until the end of the world, and that He will bless you all. To keep these things that God has said to you in your hearts and to believe in them is to the true fullness of faith.

Are you only leading religious lives, where you are compelled to go to church just because another Sunday has come around, where you offer some alms, sing a few hymns, pretend to be holy, go through all the ritualistic formalities, greet the congregation, and then turn around and come back home? To live this kind of religious life and to be faithful to religious formalism are not the faith that Jesus wants from you. You must be filled with your faith in the gospel Truth of the water and the

Spirit. Your lives of faith must be faithful to the Word of God first of all.

My dear fellow saints, we must become the ones who are filled with our faith in the Word of God. You must be full with the Word of God. In the hearts of those who are filled with the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, there is the invincible conviction that the Lord has blotted out all their sins and that He indeed loves them. No matter where they are and what they are doing, those who are filled with faith in the Word of God are trouble-free. But for those who are not filled with such faith but only with religious doctrines, their faith is all futile, no matter what they do.

Those who believe in our Lord, cherish Him the most, and are pleased by Him are the ones who come before the presence of God by believing in the Word of the Lord with their hearts. It is such people of faith in whom God is pleased. And it is to such people whom God gives the blessing of salvation and all other blessings as well. To these people, God gives faith upon their faith, and blessings upon their blessings. Do you not also want to become like them? How, then, should we live our lives of faith? We must be filled with the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit while living our lives of faith.

This is the message of today's Scripture passage. Even if we didn't discuss the passage verse by verse, we know and believe that it was because the paralytic was full with faith that he got the problem of all his sins resolved.

What about you? Are you not also like this paralytic? Do you not have the problem of sin? Have you been remitted from all

your sins in your hearts? Do you believe that the Lord has blotted out all your sins with the gospel of the water and the Spirit? To believe in this, my fellow believers, is the true faith, and none other than this is your salvation. Are you filled with the Word of the Lord, who loves you? This is the very fullness of the Holy Spirit. We must always keep it in our hearts and believe in it as we carry on with our lives.

While I cannot do much on my own, I still believe in the Word of the Lord with all my heart. So it is my hope and prayer that you would also believe with all your hearts, to be filled with faith, to be blessed for your faith, to cast aside the fullness of religious formalism, and to instead have the fullness of faith in the Word of God.

Jesus blotted out not only the paralytic's sins, but He also healed him from the infliction of his flesh. What does this tell us? It tells us that those who have received the remission of sin in spirit are also blessed in body by our Lord.

All parents love their children. Who would hate his own children and curse them? Jesus, who has saved us and made us His own children, loves us beyond description. If we really believe in our God, let us then all believe that our God loves us and blesses in His time, for He has saved us from our sins with the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Now is the time for you to have this faith in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, and to solve away the problem of all your sins

It is my hope and prayer that you would all live the rest of your lives by faith, by having full faith in the gospel of salvation, and to escape from the religions of this world. ✉

# God's Workers

**< Matthew 9:35-38 >**

**"Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, 'The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.'"**

All of us, who have become the righteous, pray to God and do His work. So we pray to Him, "Lord, there is much to harvest, but the laborers are few. Please raise Your workers who can spread Your gospel." Let us, in fact, begin today's Scripture lesson by praying together.

"Dear Lord, the age of tribulations has indeed begun in this age and time, and countless sinners are lost and wandering in their sins. Lord, we ask that You would enable each of us to preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit that can save all these lost souls from their sins. Dear Lord, raise Your workers who can save these souls and who can testify Your gospel to them. We ask that You find these workers and raise them for us."

"Our Father, we pray that you would give us the strength to save sinners. Though we are few in number, let this year be a year when we testify Your true gospel Word in this age of the end times, and we ask You to work among the righteous so that many servants of Your righteousness may arise to bear witness to Your gospel. Raise these workers for us and send them to us. We pray that You would continue to save souls, and to anoint them as Your workers. To all the righteous who has already been born again, inspire their hearts to serve You and make them Your workers, so that through these servants of Yours, Your gospel would be witnessed to all over the world, Your Word would also be testified, and Your will would be fulfilled as well."

## Only the Righteous Can Become God's Servants

Who among the righteous can become God's workers? First of all, it is those who definitely believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the Word of our Lord, and whose souls have been born again by this gospel, that can become the workers of God's gospel. Those who can spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit to others are the righteous who have been born again by first believing in the Lord and the true gospel. Only they can preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

We can confirm this truth in Acts 1:8, which states, *"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you;*

*and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*

It is only when one receives the remission of his sins and the Holy Spirit comes into his heart by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that he can become God's worker. When we truly believe in the perfect gospel Word of the water and the Spirit and thereby are remitted from all our sins, we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit into our hearts (Acts 2:38). If one can witness that his sins has been blotted out and that he now has no sin in his heart, this is the evidence of the fact that the Holy Spirit has come into his heart. It is because the Holy Spirit in our hearts guarantees our witness that we have now become sinless by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Our Lord said, "You shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." This means that He will make the believers in the gospel of the water and the Spirit His witnesses to the whole world. Therefore, when the righteous deny themselves, trust in the Lord and obey Him, the Lord Himself then entrusts them with His work. Because the Holy Spirit dwells in the born-again who have received the remission of sin by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the Holy Spirit in their hearts leads them in every step. So the righteous who have been remitted from their sins preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit at every opportunity they get.

If you face an opportunity to preach the gospel to someone, of course, you may feel nervous about or be afraid of it. But it is ultimately the Holy Spirit who really works in your lives. The

Holy Spirit gives you the right words to say for the right times: *"For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you" (Matthew 10:20).* Therefore, it is only right for us to trust in the Holy Spirit, to boldly preach the gospel by faith at every opportunity, and to do the work of our Lord. Let us all have confidence that the Holy Spirit indeed works in our hearts!

On the contrary, anyone who does not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit is not qualified to become God's worker. Why? Because sinners cannot bear witness to the righteousness of God, and because no one can be washed from his sins but only through this gospel of the water and the Spirit, for the Lord took upon all our sins through the baptism that He received. As such, all those sinners whose hearts have retained their sins cannot be used by the Holy Spirit as His instruments.

If anyone claims to have become God's worker without even believing in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, he is someone who has become a worker all on his own —and a false one at that—and is not someone who was really called by God to become His true worker. No matter how hard such sinners do the work of God—to be more exact, *think* that they are doing His works—everything is in vain.

We see many such people all around us. There are many sinners on this earth who suffer from such bizarre delusions. One of their defining characteristics is that even as they are oblivious to the gospel of the water and the Spirit, they are still devoted to what they are doing so much. Hence, I sometimes wish our born-again saints would be as devoted to the true gospel as these people are.

## The Second Qualification to Be God's Workers: To Love the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit

I have told you that the first qualification of God's workers is to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. In other words, only the righteous can be called as His workers. But you must know that all the born-again are called as His workers. Among the righteous, it is only those who have compassion for the souls of sinners and whose hearts desire to save them, that can become the workers of God's gospel. This is the second qualification to become His workers. They may not be particularly gifted, nor articulate, nor have anything else that is even remotely remarkable, but the righteous whose hearts desire every soul to be saved are qualified as God's workers.

Among the righteous, those who love other souls, even though they themselves have no power, still desire others to be saved; and because these souls must be saved, they rise to meet the challenge despite their insufficiencies, and they are willing to do anything to save these souls. It is precisely such righteous people, who love other souls, that are qualified to become God's workers.

Is there, however, anyone who says, "Yes, I have such a heart, but I am still too insufficient to become God's worker"? But this cannot be a reason for you to be disqualified as one of His workers; whatever you may lack can be filled by faith and be taught by God's Church.

My fellow believers, the righteous who have this caring heart that loves the gospel of the water and the Spirit and other souls

need to be trained in all things, from the art to how to handle a soul, and to the knowledge of the Word. If only our hearts truly desire to serve God's gospel and to spread it, all that we have to do is just receive all abilities through our faith. Therefore, what is needed for you to become His workers is this fundamental heart that desires to serve the gospel of the water and the Spirit, that loves other souls, and that wants to dedicate yourselves to God. Only when our hearts desire to serve the gospel can we do the work of God in all its variations.

It is not easy to save life, whether spiritually or physically, and so proper discipline of faith is really necessary. Before a doctor becomes a specialist, he must go through an arduous period of extensive training as an intern. Just like this, before the righteous become God's expert workers, they all should go through a period of apprenticeship. My fellow believers, we must discipline ourselves until we all become experts at preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

When souls meet intern workers, they frequently become the object of research for the spreading of the gospel. Also, there are many times when someone who is about to receive the remission of his sins is averted from doing so, and ends up going home only with a injured heart, just because the one who bore witness of the gospel to him has not been trained enough. This point is particularly more relevant when it comes to the training that is provided in our Mission School that belongs to God's Church. When people meet the immature workers of God, it is quite possible that even those who were about to receive the remission of sin would not be able to do so. Even those who had

opened the doors of their hearts may end up closing them down again.

I said that those whose hearts love other souls are qualified to become God's workers of the gospel. But they must be filled with God's Word to serve the gospel and to lead souls. God's workers can have spiritual fellowship with those whom they are trying to save only when they listen sufficiently to the Word of God and they themselves have the spiritual knowledge of the Word and strong faith in it.

However, this training cannot be attained on one's own. We must be inside God's Church and hear the spiritual Word that the Holy Spirit speaks to His workers through the Church. No matter how much understanding one may reach of the Word of God on his own, this in itself cannot turn into a spiritual sword. Only when we hear and learn the Word through God's Church can our knowledge of the Word turn into our spiritual weapon. It is then that when we just barely touch others with this spiritual sword, they will come to be saved from their sins and be healed from their spiritual illnesses of sin.

At issue here is whether or not there is a burning love for the gospel of the water and the Spirit in our hearts. Even if we are not particularly gifted, all that we need to be qualified to become God's workers is a heart that loves the gospel. So the question to ask is this: Do our hearts love other souls, or do they love the world? It is the righteous who have this loving heart for other souls that are qualified to become the workers of the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

## Even Now, God Is Looking for the Workers of His Harvest

Even now, at this very moment, God is still looking for the workers to send them into His harvest of the lost souls. You don't have to be experts in theology and doctrinal issues. You don't have to be good at handling the secular affairs of this world, either. If you teach the gospel of the water and the Spirit accurately to the sinners who have not received the remission of their sins yet, and thereby you vanquish away, with the Word of God, Satan's evil schemes that had imprisoned these sinners; and if you help such souls to receive the remission of their sins from hearing and believing in God's gospel Word of Truth, then you are indeed God's good workers. God is looking for such workers for harvesting even now. You don't even have to be good at nurturing souls. God Himself, through the leaders of His Church, will take care of all such nurturing of souls.

In the movie "Superman," there comes a Jack of all trade who solves all the difficult problems on his own. But God is not in need of such a single super-worker. Rather, God is looking for many workers who would be faithful to each of their callings, preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and live by faith.

The leaders of the Church, who are your shepherds, and the workers of the gospel have different tasks assigned to each of them. All that the workers have to do is be faithful to their assigned tasks, but the leaders have to do more than this, for they must manage the workers as well.

Saying that the harvest is plentiful but the laborers are too

few, God told us to pray to Him to send us more workers to harvest. Having said so, our Lord is also telling us, "You who are praying should go." Those who pray to God to send His workers are asking this precisely because their hearts yearn to do God's work. They pray for this because they have compassion for all the lost souls. This is why our God is telling us that we who are praying for this should ourselves go out there as His workers. This is what God is telling us.

What we all need to realize here is that God's workers do not just drop from the sky. First, we must pray to God to send us laborers, and second, we ourselves, who are praying for this, should go as such laborers. God will then entrust souls to His workers for harvesting.

## This Age Needs God's Workers All the More

This age needs God's workers all the more. We must pray to God and ask Him to send us His workers. And we ourselves, the very ones who are praying, must go as His workers, too. Saying amen at the end of our prayers is not the end of all.

My fellow believers, the righteous who are praying for this must first go out to the fields as God's workers. It is because our hearts' desires lie in the work of God that we have prayed in this way, and it is because we know His work that we have prayed for this mission. Those whose faith precedes that of the others not only pray but they themselves go out to the fields to do God's work. And as they actually do God's work, they gain yet another

laborer of God. My fellow believers, this age desperately needs God's workers. There are still many people throughout God's Church who are more than qualified to become His laborers.

My fellow believers, let's pray to God: "Lord, please save all these souls. They must be saved from their sins before it's too late, before Your return. Deliver them from the hands of the liars, Lord. Just as You have saved me, please save these souls also." This is how we should all pray. And we ourselves must become God's workers and head out to His harvest fields.

God wants us to go out there and proclaim the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Will God's work be done if we just sit around and do nothing? Don't just sit there and think all day long about what you should be doing, but stand up in the name of Jesus Christ and step into the field. This is the way for you to become God's workers. There are still many righteous men and women in the world who are called upon to become God's laborers.

God is telling us to pray to send us His workers and to go ourselves. Do you believe this? Amen. Don't just come up with excuses, saying that you are too insufficient to go out to the field, or whatever else you might think of as an excuse to just sit around. Whatever you may lack can be filled with learning. What is really important is that you love the gospel of the water and the Spirit and are able to see the condition of other souls, and that you believe in the coming of the end times and the age of tribulations as prophesied in the Word of God—it is those who have such faith that are so needed. And it is such people who must rise up as God's workers. God's wise workers must

arise. In the end times also, we need the workers who can lead the people of God and nourish them with the bread of life according to the times.

## In the Days of Noah's Flood, Everyone Only Drank and Ate to Perish in the End

All sinners are on the road to perdition. It is our responsibility to deliver them from the liars. We need such workers who can lead these souls to receive the remission of sin by preaching the true gospel to them and nourish them with the Word of God that is appropriate to the times.

Will you fixate your minds on the things of this earth that will perish eventually, as if you were to live for thousands of years? This world will not last forever.

A few years ago, an earthquake devastated the Japanese city of Kobe. As its residents built their houses and carried on with their lives, none of them expected that they would be struck by a disaster of such magnitude. They had decorated their homes, planted beautiful trees around the city, and spruced up the landscape, all wishing to live happily for never-ending years to come. But an earthquake struck them and the city of Kobe was devastated in the twinkling of an eye.

Where is the guarantee that our own homes would not be struck by such an earthquake that struck Kobe? Do not think that you are safe from earthquakes, just because it hasn't happened yet. We are all living under the same condition. Nor should you

think that the prospect of nuclear war is no longer relevant to you, now that the Cold War is over. On the contrary, it is as close to us as it has ever been. What I am trying to tell you here is not to be so complacent and self-satisfied that you ignore these dangers and remain completely insensitive to them, as if you had turned into self-content pigs. Rather, like the hungry Socrates, you must know where you came from and where you are headed, why you live, and for what purpose you should live, and you must live your lives preparing to stand before God.

My fellow believers, let us not place our hope on this earth, as if we were to live on it for thousands of years. If the righteous have enough to eat and drink, if their basic needs are all met, then you, as such righteous men and women who are living on the verge of the end times, should be on the vanguard as the workers of the gospel. If you really believe in His warnings about the Last Days, then you must rise up and work for God, just as Noah had built his ark of salvation. We need God's workers who labor with us and stand on God's side, not on the side of the people of the world who mock us and are laughing at us.

Throughout our Church, there are many workers. God has sent us many. I have always prayed to God to send us laborers, and so God has answered my prayers and indeed sent us many workers. My fellow believers, now is the time when you should respond to God's calling. God is calling you as His workers. Humbly reply to His calling, saying, "Yes, Lord. Though I am not gifted and far too insufficient, I will go in obedience. Send me, Lord." It is such workers whom God is calling.

Is there anyone among the righteous who thinks that he

cannot become one of God's workers because of his weaknesses? Do you love the Lord with all your hearts? And do you love the gospel of the water and the Spirit? Do you believe that this age is nearing the age of the Great Tribulation? You then must answer God's calling.

There must arise many workers who can devote their entire lives to serving the Lord, and who can also serve Him with their material possessions. My fellow believers, do you not want to work with God's Church? Do your hearts desire to do God's work with His Church? Then, let us all do God's work together. This work of the Lord is never, ever in vain. If we would labor only a little, if we would dedicate ourselves to the Lord only a little, and if we would just try a little, we can gain, by faith, many souls that are far more precious than the whole world. And when these souls are grown up and they themselves go out to preach to other souls, yet more souls will be gained. Such spiritual works will bring you far more satisfaction, by thousands and millions of fold, than any earthly work that you ever do.

Before God, the wisest servants in the last days, the wisest saints in the end times of tribulations, are none other than those who preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit to every human being, who was created in the likeness of God's image. And they are the ones who feed souls with spiritual food. They feed them with the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, the Word of nourishment, and the Word of truth. It is such saints who are the wise. And our Lord is looking for such saints in these end times.

Especially in this age and time, when the coming of our Lord

is near, our Lord is looking for such souls. God is looking for workers who would answer His calling. When our Lord returns and sees the workers who are doing His work faithfully, He will command us as "good and faithful servants," entrust us with more works, give us great rewards, and bestow His grace on us.

However, if anyone says, even as he knows that the end is near, "But it will surely take some more time before the Lord actually returns. People have been saying all the time that the Lord's return is imminent, but it hasn't happened yet, and so I am sure His coming is delayed," and if he busies himself with his friends to only drink and eat, even as the Lord is near, when our Lord indeed returns, He will call upon this wicked servant and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. The Lord said, *"So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth" (Matthew 13:49-50).* He surely will separate the wicked one from the righteous and cast him out of the Kingdom of God.

This is not just my own word, but it is the very Word of God. Let us all turn to Matthew 24:44-51 to see this: *"Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect. Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods. But if that evil servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,' and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, the*

*master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of, and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."*

Our Lord defines 'a faithful and wise servant' as one who faithfully provides His people with spiritual food in due season while the Lord made him the steward over His household. Blessed are the servants whom their Master, when He comes, will find them feeding the flock with the Word of God. The Lord will give Heaven to such good and faithful servants.

In contrast, He defines an evil servant as one who doesn't believe in His imminent coming, and therefore not fearing his Master, begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards. But the Lord will surely come on a day when he is not looking for Him and at an hour that he is not aware of, and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. And the evil servant will be cast out into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

There is no one who is more wicked before our God than those who, even as they have been born again, do not take care of other souls, but instead mingle with the world, eat and drink with it, and are intoxicated by it. Those who do not live for the gospel even as they have received the remission of sin are more wicked than those who have not received the remission of sin. The Lord will cut them in two. He will say to them, "Get out of here! I don't need you. You deserve to be cast into hell. Such wicked people like you can never live with Me." He will then cast them all out.

My fellow believers, once sinners receive the remission of their sins and become righteous, there is a reason as to why the newly born-again must live for this gospel of the water and the Spirit. Do you believe that the times of the Great Tribulation are near us? If you believe, then you have to know that there will surely arise many workers who set aside their things of the world. It is these people who will become God's workers. It is to become wise servants before God that they believe in the nearing of the end times, set aside the things of the world, deny themselves, and come before the Lord.

But I am not saying here that you should dispose of all your worldly affairs right now. Among the born-again, only those who want to dedicate their entire lives to God's work must do this. If the righteous truly believe in the Word, then they believe that now is the beginning of disaster when famine and earthquakes abound, when nations clash against nations and states war against one other. And if they truly believe in His imminent coming, they will voluntarily want to become God's workers who spread the gospel in this last age.

Do you have such faith? Then you should dispose of your worldly connections. Seek counsel from your spiritual leaders and then let go of your worldly attachments. But you must do this by faith, *"for whatever is not from faith is sin" (Romans 14:23).*

My fellow believers, even as your hearts desire to live for the Lord, and you have the material means and healthy bodies to do so, are you still hesitant, thinking, "But I still need my material possessions, even more so now that the end times are nearing, since I have to prepare for these times." But you can never enjoy

all your material possessions. Set aside some for your use, and then give the rest to the Lord.

You may wonder, "I thought Rev. Jong would never say something like this. How can he say this so bluntly?" But my fellow believers, I still admonish you to give your treasures to the Lord. God will accept them in joy. And He will use them as His precious instruments. Ordinarily, this is not something that I say to you. But if you ask me to honestly tell you what is really in my heart, then I will say, "Dispose of your worldly attachments." But I will also add an important precondition here, namely, that only those who want to serve the Lord should do so.

Those of you, who hold jobs, work diligently. The righteous who do not go out to the harvest field as the full-time workers of the gospel should work diligently at their jobs and support the ministry with their produce. You should back the Church with as much material support as possible so that it can spread the gospel. Be faithful in this endeavor with all your life, as it is written; *"Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life" (Revelation 2:10).*

And those who want to devote their lives entirely to their ministry and to wholly live for this gospel, let the deacons take care of the material needs, and dedicate your entire selves to the spreading of the Word and the preaching of the gospel. If you want to become such workers, consult with your spiritual leaders, and if permitted, dispose of your worldly affairs. When I refer to 'your spiritual leaders,' I am sure that you will not confuse them with the pastors of this world, who do not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and hence, have not yet

been born again.

If you ask me, "How should I live properly?" this is what I would like to tell you honestly, for it is what would benefit you immensely. And I believe that it is such people who will be greatly commanded by the Lord, and that they are the ones who are living the most fruitful and worthy lives in these end times.

It is the Word of God that I trust and believe. I cannot trust myself. So I never trust myself, but instead I deny myself.

My fellow believers, is this age and time not the age of tribulations? It indeed is. This then means that we are now approaching the inevitable conclusion of the world. We must live according to this time and age. We the born-again saints must adjust to the flow of the age.

Everyone says that we have entered into the age of globalization. But just throwing away your old blankets is not adjusting to this new age of globalization. Now that environmental protection has become a paramount concern, separating your garbage into the disposable and the recyclable is not living a new life. Only when you live for the gospel do you become new people fit for this new age. When the times have changed and the age of tribulations is upon us, we must not place our hearts in this world as before, as if we were to live for thousands of years.

We must become the workers who harvest. It is time for you to dispose of your worldly attachments. To repeat, I am not saying here that everyone should do this. Rather, I am admonishing that those of you who truly love other souls and yearn to devote their entire lives to the work of the Lord should

dispose of their worldly relations. And when you do so and serve the Lord, your lives will truly be the most fruitful and worthy of all.

My fellow believers, do not be worried about your children. Your children will not suffer hunger just because you serve the Lord. Have no worry whatsoever. Let me make this clear here: I am not telling you to forsake your own children and homes. Rather, I am telling you to first serve the gospel and take care of God's Church. I am asking you, in other words, to live for the gospel in these times of tribulations until the very day our Lord returns. Our Lord also admonishes us with encouragement, saying, *"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you" (Matthew 6:33).* I believe that if you truly believe that we are not entering into the age of tribulation, many such workers will rise among you.

God is looking for faithful and wise servants. He is looking for the workers who would faithfully preach the gospel. Jesus said, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few." This is why our Lord told us to pray to send such servants, and that we ourselves, who prayed for this, should go out to the harvest fields.

I give all my thanks to our God. I give my thanks to the Lord of the righteous who enables us to discern the times, teaches us and leads us all, so that we would serve the gospel in these end times. Let us pray to God to send us His workers. Let us ask Him to allow us to work with them together.

Let us ceaselessly pray to God to send us these laborers, and let us do His work by faith. Hallelujah! ✉

# CHAPTER

# 10

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# The Power to Heal All Illnesses Is Found in The Gospel of The Water And the Spirit

**< Matthew 10:1-16 >**

**"And when He had called His twelve disciples to Him, He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease. Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus; Simon the Cananite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him. These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: "Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give. Provide neither gold nor silver nor copper in your money belts, nor bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor staffs; for a worker is worthy of his food. Now whatever city or town you enter, inquire who**

**in it is worthy, and stay there till you go out. And when you go into a household, greet it. If the household is worthy, let your peace come upon it. But if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. And whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet. Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city! Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves."**

## Our Lord Who Has Given Us the Power to Heal All Illnesses

Our Lord gave the power to heal all kinds of sicknesses and diseases to His disciples. This then leads us to wonder how come today's faithful servants of God do not practice such miraculous power. It is not only to the disciples of the Early Church that our Lord gave such abilities. If our God is the God of truth, then these abilities must be manifested by His servants of today also. It is entirely true, of course, that during the Apostolic Age, such gifts were held by all those who had joined the discipleship of Jesus. What is curious here is why this does not seem to be the case today; that is, why is it that we, who after all believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, do not seem to have such power today? With the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit, let us then shed some light on this issue.

Let me first list some of the key questions that motivate our exploration. Why is it that today's disciples of Jesus do not seem to have the healing power that our forefathers of faith had in the Apostolic Age? Is it because today's disciples have not received this healing power? Or is it because they do not pray enough? Is there any difference in the power of the old servants of God from that of today's servants? If yes, what are these differences? Why, in short, are we unable to exercise the power of God that was so patently manifested in the Earth Church period? Approaching these issues with the light of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, let us now examine these questions in detail and find their clear answers. All these nagging questions can be solved in all clarity when we approach them with the faith that believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Before we dive into a full discussion, there is one thing that all of us must do first—that is, we must first clear our confused thoughts beforehand by applying our faith in the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

The first thing that we must realize is that had Jesus Christ the Son of God not come to this earth and not performed His miracles and signs, no one would have been able to recognize Him as the Son of God, nor as the Savior. The miracles and signs that Jesus performed were in part to show His divinity, so that the people of His time, including His disciples and followers, would be able to recognize Him as God Himself (John 2:11). This is an imperative point that all of us must understand clearly. Had Jesus not performed these miracles and signs, even His own disciples of the Apostolic Age would have

found it very difficult to believe Him as the Son of God and the Savior.

What about the power of the disciples then? The same logic applies to their case also—that is, there had to be miraculous signs and wonders seen by people's own eyes during the Early Church period because without such signs and wonders, the people of that time would hardly have recognized Jesus as the Son of God.

You may then wonder: Since the Apostles had the power to heal the sick, shouldn't today's Christians also have this power to heal the illnesses of the flesh? What we must realize here is that the power of God was manifested differently in the Early Church period from how it is manifested today. It was given, in other words, in a different form to the disciples of Jesus from how it is given to us now. As mentioned, miracles were performed during the Early Church period as a sign for its people to see the power of the gospel and believe in it.

But this is no longer necessary in today's age, because the believers of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, with their faith in its power, can make the Truth of salvation be revealed for all to see without such aids. Put differently, while we may not be able to walk on the water and raise a crippled man on his feet as Peter did, we are still healing the spiritual sicknesses of today's people, which, after all, was the primary purpose of the demonstration of such miraculous power in the first place. Therefore, there is nothing strange in the fact that these miracles and signs of the Early Church period are no longer performed in today's Church.

The key to answer our questions, in other words, is the realization that it is through the power of the believers in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that God is healing today's sicknesses. To today's people of faith who believe in the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, God has given them the power to heal all the illnesses of sin. By giving us the faith that believes in this true gospel, the Lord has enabled us also to heal the diseases of sin. We have to realize that the power of physical healing was not the only way in which the disciples of Jesus exercised their faith during the Early Church period. Rather, we should know that the Apostles' healing miracles were intended to preach the gospel of the remission of sin (Acts 2:6, 38; 3:19). We need to realize that even now, in today's age also, our Lord has empowered us to heal others from the sickness of their sins, to perform His miracles and to exercise His power, all through our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. It is our Lord who has given us all these abilities, and it is in the gospel truth of the water and the Spirit that His power abides in.

In Matthew 10:7, our Lord said, *"And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'"* What we need to realize here is that the Kingdom of Heaven has already come into the hearts of all those who believe in the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and that by this faith we must all preach this gospel of the water and the Spirit. The Kingdom of God is actualized on this earth as everyone's sickness of sin is healed through the power of faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Therefore, we, today's evangelists, also have to preach that the Kingdom of God is at hand, delivering this

gospel power of the water and the Spirit to the lost souls. Just as the disciples of Jesus had healed all the illnesses of the flesh, and preached the gospel of the Kingdom during the Early Church era, today, so must we heal all those suffering from the spiritual illnesses of their sins with our faith in the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

## The Truth That We Must Know Clearly in Doing The Works of God

As our Lord had gathered together His twelve disciples and given them the power to heal all illnesses, so has He enabled today's believers to exercise all power by giving them the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. What we need to realize here is that while there was a greater need to heal the illnesses of the flesh during the Early Church era, today's situation is far different from those days: For the hearts of today's people, the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit that can heal the sicknesses of their hearts is more urgently needed than any such power to heal their physical sicknesses.

Today's age, in other words, is an age when everyone can be healed from the illness of his sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Indeed, this is what we the believers of this true gospel have been practicing by preaching its power throughout the whole world. In fact, there is even a greater need in today's age for everyone to have this faith that heals all who are willing to hear the gospel and believe in it.

If we were to devote ourselves only to the healing ministry, we would not be able to obey the Great Commission that the Lord has given to His Church, for everyone would be asking us to heal only their physical sicknesses. Such healing ministry, however, is not what fulfills the will of God the Father in Heaven. Like the proverb that says, "Danger past, God forgotten," if we were to heal only the illnesses of the flesh, people would of course flock around Jesus. But as the above saying illustrates, once they are healed, they would all end up leaving Him. They are also bound to pay little attention to what actually matters, taking scant interests in the work of our Lord that has healed the illnesses of their souls. In fact, among those who seek to get the problem of their flesh solved by believing in Jesus as their Savior, few try to solve the much more urgent problem of their souls, that is, the problem of their sins and of the remission of these sins.

Many people consider it strange that we the believers of the gospel of the water and the Spirit do not actually heal the illnesses of the flesh. But what you and I must realize is that by giving us our faith in the gospel power of the water and the Spirit, the Lord has enabled us to wash away all the sins of mankind. Why do people believe in Jesus as their Savior? To be healed from their physical diseases only? No! The first reason they have to believe in Him is to solve the problem of their sins, and to achieve this, they must believe in the gospel power of the water and the Spirit without fail. They must place far greater importance to this task of solving the problem of their souls' sins than solving the problem of their illnesses of the flesh.

Our Lord told us to rejoice always. When He said this, He meant that we should all rejoice for the remission of sin that our souls have received. We need to recognize that in this age and time, God has enabled those who believe in the power of the God-given gospel of water and the Spirit to wash away even more sinner's iniquities and do His will. God has given this calling to all of us who believe in the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

While the healing power of the Apostles was manifested in the bodies of the sick during the Early Church era, in today's age, this power is manifested in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that heals the illnesses of sin for all souls. So the difference between the Early Church era and now is that now, it is not so much the sicknesses of the body that is healed, but the sickness of the soul. Nonetheless, we are still speaking of the same power here. In those days, God's power was made manifest through people's actual bodies, but today, for those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, it is made manifest as the remission of their sins. During the Early Church era, to demonstrate that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, it was necessary for the Apostles to show such power that people could actually witness with their own eyes. But in today's age, the power of God is revealed as the gospel of the water and the Spirit that washes away everyone's sins, and as the preaching and spreading of this gospel. In other words, it is to the believers of the gospel of the water and the Spirit that God has shown the power to wash away mankind's sins.

Because Jesus shouldered the sins of the world by being baptized by John the Baptist, died on the Cross, rose from the dead, and has thereby given the remission of sin to all of us who believe in this, today, God's power is now revealed spiritually. We are therefore even more thankful. You and I who have been born again of water and the Spirit can heal, with our faith in the gospel power, all sinners' souls throughout the whole world who are dying from their sins. God has given us, the believers of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, in other words, the power to heal the illnesses of sin for everyone.

## The Gospel of Life from God

Let me now give you a short testimony about a certain lady who was healed from her heart's illness that had tormented her by the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

This happened when our students at the Mission School went to a hospital to witness Jesus. There, in a room on the third floor, they met a certain lady who was hospitalized. Sharing the room with a few other patients, she was crying day and night. So our students asked her why she was crying so much, and then all of a sudden she begged them not to send her back to the fourth floor, where the psychiatric ward was located. So they got to hear her story.

This woman had been hospitalized in the psychiatric ward on the fourth floor, and apparently this very fact, that she was put under psychiatric care, was too depressing for her, and so she

kept crying day and night. Her doctor then promised her that he would do anything for her if she would only stop crying, and so she asked him to send her down to the third floor where general patients were put. But this lady, even after being sent to the third floor, still kept crying. Hearing this, one of our students prayed for her, and before coming back, left her with a book of sermons entitled, "Receive the Remission of Your Sins."

But then, something unexpected happened: As soon as the woman began to read this book, she stopped crying. By coming to believe in the gospel power of the water and the Spirit, this lady was washed from all her sins, and there was no longer any sin left her heart. She was remitted from all her sins, in other words. And having thus received the remission of her sins, she then was able to live a healthy and productive life, always thanking God for His abundant grace that saved and healed her from all her sins first and all her diseases.

This was actually the fulfillment of Psalms 103:2-3 on her.

*" Bless the LORD, O my soul,*
*And forget not all His benefits:*
*Who forgives all your iniquities,*
*Who heals all your diseases."*

As this story illustrates, today's age is the age of grace when everyone can be washed from all his sins by hearing and believing in the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. We need to realize here that if we had been unable to wash away our sins by not recognizing this gospel power of the water and the Spirit and not believing in it, we would have lost our most important and only opportunity to be remitted from all our sins.

Yet among today's Christians, there are quite a few believers who are trying to heal only the illnesses of the flesh—they need to realize that what they are doing is actually contrary to the will of God.

Our Lord has given us the power to wash away people's sins by the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. It would be nice, of course, if we could heal both the illnesses of the body and of the soul well, but since it is beyond our ability to do the former in this age, we must at least do the latter—that is, we must concentrate our capability to heal the illnesses of sin. This is how we must do the will of God. Had we been able to show the supernatural power of God and heal people from their illnesses of the flesh, we would no doubt have drawn countless multitudes into our fold, but we need to understand that this is no help at all when it comes to obeying the will of God, which, now as before, has always been to wash away people's sins.

The reason why our Lord had given the power to perform miracles and signs to His disciples and to the saints of the Early Church was so that by seeing such miracles and signs, many would come to believe in Jesus as the Son of God and the Savior. The actual, underlying purpose behind all those miracles, so to speak, was for all sinners to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and thereby be washed from their sins and become the children of God.

In today's age, medical skills are highly developed and advanced. Since God has given mankind such well-advanced medical facilities so that they may treat and cure their illnesses of the flesh, we need to let the medical experts and professionals

take care such sicknesses of the flesh. Therefore, our duty as Christians in this age and time is not to heal the illnesses of the flesh, but it is to heal the illnesses of the soul, and it is to this that we must devote all our efforts. Put differently, we must preach the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit that holds the righteousness of God. If there are those in this age who are poor in spirit, who thirst for the true remission of sin, and who are seeking for God to be clothed in the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, God will surely enable such souls to know this gospel power of the water and the Spirit, to believe in it, and thereby be healed from all theirs sins.

But if people just want to be healed from their illnesses of the flesh alone, then in the end, the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit will ultimately remain out of their reach. If you and I refuse to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit until the end, we will never be able to wash away our souls' sins. Anyone who does so is actually committing the sin of blasphemy.

Even as many Christian loudly proclaim that they believe in Jesus as their Savior, many of them seek after not the gospel that washes away sins, but their own carnal lusts, and trapped by Satan, they are actually being devoured by him. Despite professing to believe in Jesus as their Savior, all their faith is in vain, for they have completely misunderstood the will of God (Matthew 7:21-23). This is why so many of today's Christians, misunderstanding the will of God, are pursuing obsessively the healing power, seeking after signs and miracles. But before God,

such faith is all in vain and completely useless. This kind of faith can be found in any religion of the world.

Those whose faith is truly right before God can defeat the works of Satan by believing in the power of the Truth, the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and wash away people's sins with the Word of truth. But if they were to devote their efforts only to heal the illnesses of the flesh, what benefit would this bring to their souls and the souls of others? This would bring absolutely no benefit at all. Rather, what is really important is for them to heal the sicknesses of sin in the heart, to help others so that they, too, would come to accept the gospel of the water and the Spirit into their hearts and be delivered by God from all their sins.

More often than we realize, the Devil deceives many people by actually giving the power to heal the sicknesses of the flesh to those who do not know the gospel power of the water and the Spirit. 2 Thessalonians 2:9-10 makes it clear that Satan deceives people with such false miracles and signs. You might as well go to one of these false prophets claiming to be able to heal the sicknesses of the flesh, and test their power. And then, you can see for yourselves whether it is real or not. Would you really be healed from your illnesses? You may feel briefly as if you were healed, but you'll realize in no time that you were not actually and wholly healed.

Nor would you be washed from your sins by such means, for in today's age, as it has always been the case from the very beginning of the Church, it is only through the gospel power of the water and the Spirit that one can wash away all the sins of

his heart. God has ensured that no one would ever be washed from his sins unless he has this faith that believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Therefore, for those who do not believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, there can be no true remission of sin.

However, even as we speak now, those who claim to be able to heal the sicknesses of the flesh perform countless false miracles and deceptive signs throughout the world. Such people have turned into Satan's servants, and all that they are trying to do is to rob many souls and their material possessions. They lay their hands on their poor, misguided followers and pretend to pray for them, but the fact of the matter is that they are only seeking after their ulterior purpose, which is to steal their souls and raid their pockets. Just how often so many people around the world have been deceived by them? What we need to remember here is that it is not just the deceivers that will be judged by God, but the deceived as well, for God will treat them both equally. Deceived or deceiving, they will all end up in hell.

## The Servants of Satan

As Jesus Himself said in Matthew 7:21-23, when the Judgment Day comes, many Christians will claim to have cast out demons and done many wonders in His name, but our Lord will neither approve nor acknowledge the works of such people. On the contrary, He said that He would rebuke them and cast them out for having practiced lawlessness. Those who seek to

heal their sicknesses of the flesh in the name of the Lord, as well as those who try to exercise such a power, all have no interest whatsoever in the real faith—that is, the faith that believes in the power of the God-given gospel of the water and the Spirit. Each and every one of them is doing in fact no more than practicing lawlessness before God.

What is this lawlessness before God? It is the very act of ignoring the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and of not believing in it. Such people who practice lawlessness are living their lives of faith all in vain, trying to heal only the sicknesses of their flesh in the name of Jesus Christ. But anyone who fails to wash away all his sins by not believing in the gospel power of the water and the Spirit is actually committing the greatest sin of all against God, the sin of blasphemy that rejects His love.

What we must actually do, in contrast, is to glorify God, and we can do so only by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and thereby being forever washed from all our sins once for all and becoming God's own children. The right thing for all of us to do is to dedicate all our remaining lifetime to God and live our lives for the spreading of the gospel. Healing the sicknesses of the flesh, speaking in tongues, seeing visions, or otherwise claiming to have the same supernatural power that the Apostles of the Early Church had shown—these are all indicators of false faith that is fatally flawed before God. To have and cling to this kind of faith, in other words, is to be deceived by the evil schemes of Satan, and to ultimately end up turning into his servants.

We have many partners in Christ throughout the world. One of them recently told us that the pastor of his church proposed to teach his congregation how to speak in tongues, telling them to follow his instructions and imitate after him. So, he could no longer remain in such a church, and could not but left it, because he had already read our books and knew that this kind of faith that only sought to speak in artificial tongues and heal the sicknesses of the flesh alone was wrong. He did the right thing, for it is indeed gravely flawed for any Christian to seek after such a supernatural power only. The purpose of our Christian faith is not to speak in tongues, nor to heal our sicknesses of the flesh, nor to see vision and hear the voice of God in our dreams, but it is to wash away all our sins and attain our salvation.

When we bear witness to people about the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we often encounter those whose minds are possessed by demons. Such people invariably reject the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit and refuse to believe in it. When do they do this? More often than not, they refuse to hear the gospel Word when they are told about the passage from Matthew 3, about the baptism that Jesus received from John the Baptist. We can see that the Devil confuses their minds and incites them to stand against the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

For such people, it may seem like it is impossible for them to accept the gospel Word of power into their hearts, no matter how much we preach to them. However, no matter how obstinately they might stand against the true gospel, we should not stop witnessing Jesus to them. Rather, we should preach the

gospel more powerfully by believing in the invincible power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. If we persist in patience, at least some of them will eventually come to believe in the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Our first attempt is often not enough to elicit their response. But if we fail the first time, then we must try again for the second time, and if we fail the second time, then we must try again for the third time, and on and on until they finally come to believe in the true gospel. Once someone comes to understand this gospel of power, Satan can no longer reign over him, and as soon as he is born again. The devil is constrained to leave him alone, for he cannot be with anyone who believes in the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

So when the preachers of the gospel of the water and the Spirit stand against Satan in the name of Jesus Christ and continue to spread the gospel, Satan is bound to flee and souls are to be washed from all their sins. So long as people understand and believe in the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, from this moment on, Satan will lose all his strength. But if they do not accept God's gospel until the very end, then ultimately, they can never escape from Satan's trap. Also, those who are not interested at all in being remitted from their sins end up rejecting the remission of sin that the Lord has given them freely.

Sometimes, they seem to be healed from their diseases through their charismatic faith, but they become mired in a more serious situation later. The Bible says, *"When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest; and*

*finding none, he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when he comes, he finds it swept and put in order. Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first" (Luke 11:24-26).*

Such people are pitiful souls enslaved under the yoke of Satan, and yet despite this, they even laugh at those who hear the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit and believe in it. They say to us, "Dream on! Do you think I'll ever listen to what you are saying to me? You are all foolish buffoons!" This is because in the hearts of such people who have not received the remission of their sins, it is evil spirits that reign them.

My dear fellow Christians, if you want to be washed from all your sins by God, then you must believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit. And if you want to believe in the power of this gospel of the water and the Spirit and become God's children, you must first fight against the evil thoughts that arise in your minds, overcome them all, and surrender yourselves to God. You must fight your own spiritual battle; this battle is not waged by anyone else but yourselves. Fight against evil spirits in you. Only then can you avoid ending as Satan's servants, be freed from his trap, and become God's people. But those who are seized by Satan do not fight against their evil minds and surrender themselves to God. Therefore, they end up turning against God. They may not actually want to stand against God, but influenced by Satan's evil schemes, their hearts are hardened against God, rejecting His Word and standing against Him. With reason, we must overcome the evil thought that is originated

from Satan, and obey the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit, which is none other than the very will of God.

In the hearts of those who have received the remission of sin, it is the Holy Spirits that is found, but in the hearts of those who have not done so, there is only their sin of standing against God. So whether one is ruled by Satan or not entirely depends on whether or not he believes in the gospel power of the water and the Spirit.

This is why when our Lord spoke about the eight blessed, he spoke of those who mourn: *"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted."* We must mourn over our disobedience to God's will and our failure to surrender ourselves to it. Our Lord also said, *"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."* Our hearts must truly thirst after the Word of God and want to know His gospel truth of the water and the Spirit, and if we indeed want this, then we must stand against the reign of Satan. Because Satan rejects the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, people should have the more strong faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. When they have chance to hear the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, they must all believe in it.

We must stand against Satan positively. It is then that we can believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit before God. But when someone does not reject evil spirits, then no matter how a spiritual man comes to him and preaches the gospel power of the water and the Spirit to him, all such efforts are in vain. This is because he is more obedient to Satan's words than to the Word of God. This explains why some people's

hearts react so strongly against the gospel power of the water and the Spirit and reject it, while others accept it willingly. Therefore, one must reject evil spirits himself and prepare his heart to accept the Word of God as the absolute truth. To each and every man, it is to his own free will that God has left the decision as to whether to receive the Word of God or reject it, giving him the right to make this decision.

What we must do then is to accept the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, believe in this gospel of power, and thereby receive the remission of our sins. This God-given remission of sin is brought about by one's own will to believe in the gospel Truth. But if someone rejects the Word of God on his own and instead accepts the thoughts of Satan, then he cannot receive the gospel power of the water and the Spirit, nor can he obey it.

There are many people in this world who are possessed by evil demons. Even among the ministers, there are many who are demon-possessed. The same prevalence is also found among other church leaders such as elders and deacons.

But to the true disciples of Jesus, our Lord has given the power to cast out demons. In what has He given this power? He has clothed us with such power in the faith that believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. If we continue to preach this gospel of the water and the Spirit, and if those who hear us try to understand and repeatedly hear us, even if this is hard for them, then the evil spirits in them are all bound to leave. So if one accepts the gospel of the water and the Spirit, then he is bestowed with God's blessings of salvation and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

To those of us who believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, God has given us the power to heal all kinds of spiritual illnesses and all kinds of diseases. We who believe in the power of this gospel have received the power to save the souls that are dying from their sins and spiritual illnesses, and to heal them from all the weaknesses of their hearts. When we preach the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit to people, they can be freed from all the hazards of the evil spirits. For enabling us to do this, I give my boundless thanks and all glory to God.

## The Commandment That Jesus Gave to His Twelve Disciples

Matthew 10:2-4 lists the names of the twelve disciples. As it is written, *"Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus; Simon the Cananite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him."*

Who is the disciple that is most familiar to us? It's probably Peter. The second disciple mentioned in the above passage, Andrew, was Peter's brother in flesh. The next two disciples mentioned, James the Son of Zebedee and John, were also brothers. And the list continues: Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas,

Matthew, who wrote the Gospel of Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Cananite, and Judas Iscariot. Notice that Peter was also known as Simon, and yet there was another disciple whose name was Simon as well. Simon was Peter's original name, and the name Peter, meaning "rock," was given to him by Jesus. At any rate, the reason why when our Lord called Peter He addressed him as "Simon the son of Jonas," is because there was another Simon, Simon the Cananite, among His disciples. The same was true for James as well; there were two disciples whose names were James, and they, too, were called by attaching the names of their fathers to differentiate between the two.

We do not know everything about all the twelve disciples of Jesus. We know very well of some disciples, but for others, our knowledge is quite limited. Everyone, of course, knows Peter, since he is so famous and widely mentioned in the Bible. His brother Andrew appears in the Bible passage that describes the miracle of five loaves and two small fish that Jesus performed. The one who brought the boy's lunch was Andrew. And it was this Andrew that first led Peter to Jesus.

We can find out about John by reading, of course, the Gospel of John, which he wrote. We are also familiar with the name Thomas, since his name has become synonymous with doubters—he couldn't believe that Jesus rose from the dead until he actually put his hands on Jesus' hands and see the holes that were made from His crucifixion. The name Matthew is another name that is quite familiar to us; he was a tax collector before he was born again as a disciple of Jesus. However, our

knowledge of other remaining disciples such as Bartholomew and Thaddaeus is still limited. We know they were also Jesus' disciples, but we know very little about what they actually did, as not much is written about them in the Bible.

At any rate, in today's passage, we see that Jesus had called all His twelve disciples to Him, and sent them all out to preach throughout Israel. He commanded them, *"Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matthew 10:5-6).*

What is meant by "the way of the Gentiles" here? It means not to go to those who worship idols and believe in other false religions. It is quite useless, in other words, to preach to those who are entrenched in their idolatry.

Jesus also told His disciples not to "enter a city of the Samaritans." Why did He say this? The Samaritans were a mixed race, descendants of intermarriage between the Israelites and the pagan tribes around them. When Jesus told His disciples to avoid Samaria, He did not say this because of this mixed racial quality of the Samaritans, for such a thing is no basis of judgment at all, but because their religion was a mixture of various different religions of the time. Spiritually speaking, in other words, the Samaritans here refer to those whose religious beliefs are all mixed up with all kinds of different religions, and to whom, as a result, the gospel power of the water and the Spirit cannot enter. Like the Gentiles that Jesus mentioned first, the Samaritans are also saturated in their idolatry. And like the Gentiles, it is hard for the gospel of the water and the Spirit to

make its way into such people.

To whom, then, did our Lord tell His disciples to go? He told them to "go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Who are the lost sheep here? They refer to those who do not know the true gospel of the water and the Spirit. They can be found among the Gentiles, the Samaritans, and the Israelites. The lost sheep of today are none other than the Christians who, though they professing to believe in God, have lost their hearts and despair from their failure to encounter the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and who, despite this, are still trying to find the truth. It is to such people that God has told us to go. It is to these people that He has told us to preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

If we were to preach the Word of God to someone who already is a devoted and faithful believer of a worldly religion that is different from the true faith in God, our lips would only tire and our hearts would only be frustrated. They are not the souls that are looking for God, for if they were such souls that are truly looking for God, they could not find relief in such an untruthful religion. This is why we must preach this gospel of the water and the Spirit, the gospel of salvation, to the truth-seekers. And when we do so, they will be remitted from all their sins by their faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, be healed from all his spiritual illnesses, and be blessed abundantly by God.

Through today's Scripture passage, our Lord is teaching us not to preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit to just anyone. For instance, the Samaritans, who believe blindly and

arbitrarily in the teachings of any religions they want to find relief in, will not believe when the gospel power of the water and the Spirit is preached to them. To such people, we must first try to help them realize how empty their lives are, what the reality of their sins is, and what the consequences of these sins are. Put differently, before we sowing the seed of the true gospel, we have to plow the field of their hearts sufficiently. The gospel should be preached to them when they ask us to help them to be delivered from their sins, or at least when there is some indication as to how ready they are to accept the gospel. Preaching to them blindly is of little use.

On the contrary, such a blunt strategy is bound to backfire, leading them away from the truth even more. Today's Samaritans will simply say, "I see what you are saying. Maybe I should believe then. After all, I believe in no less than five religions, including Buddhism and Hinduism, and so I suppose it wouldn't hurt me to add another religion." It is not to such people, in other words, that we should preach the gospel. All that they would do after listening the gospel is treat it as worthless.

To whom, then, must we approach to preach the gospel? It is to the lost sheep of the house of Israel that we must go. And when we go to them, we must preach to them, *"The kingdom of heaven is at hand."* We must preach to them that this world is not everything that there is, for the Kingdom of God will come to this earth also, telling them, "If you believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, then you will be remitted from all your sins and enter the Kingdom of God. How long would your life

on this earth last? Wouldn't it last only 70 or 80 years, at most 100 years? Wouldn't even this pass away in no time? So don't you have to prepare now for the next world to come?"

Jesus continued to tell His disciples, *"Heal the sick."* My dear fellow believers, just how many people are suffering from the illnesses of their hearts? How many people are saturated in their sins and living their lives as servants of Satan? Such people whose hearts are weighted down by their sins are none other than the sick that Jesus spoke of here, the ones who are spiritually ill. We must preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit to them and deliver them from all their sins. By what can we deliver them from their sins? We can deliver them by the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Our Lord also told His disciples to *"cleanse the lepers."* Because people are bound to continue to sin, they are constantly tormented by their sinful acts and deeds, which is beyond their ability to control on their own. We must help them to be cleansed from this leprosy of sin once for all by clothing them with God's righteousness, which is in the gospel power of the water and the Spirit. Turning the sinful into the sinless is the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Countless people are suffering from the spiritual leprosy, the illnesses of sin that cannot be cured by themselves, and to those among them who want to be healed from such illnesses, it is our calling to preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

*"Cast out demons."* When we preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit, wicked demons are cast out from people's hearts.

Jesus also said, *"Freely you have received, freely you give."* By believing in the gospel power of the water and the Spirit, we have been delivered from our sins freely. Since we have received this power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit freely from our predecessors of faith, we, too, must give it freely to others. Our own selfish interests should not be what motivate us to preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

I was told that, especially in the churches of the Evangelicals, many church leaders are seeking their own interests and gains when they are about to preach 'their gospel.' In fact, their gospel is different from the true gospel. By the way, for some of them, for instance, the first thing that they want to find out from a new member in their congregations is how rich—or poor, for that matter—this new member is. If he is poor, then they just let someone else preach the gospel to him, but if he is rich or powerful, then they want him all for themselves, saying that they will personally explain the gospel to him and no one else should interfere. Why do they do this? Because they want to maintain their control over him and exploit him for his money. Simply put, they are preaching their gospel for their own gains.

But what did our Lord really say to such people? He told them, "Freely you have received, freely you give." Through our Lord, we heard the gospel of the water and the Spirit freely, and by believing in it, we have received the remission of our sins and the gifts of God, all freely. The Lord has taught us the gospel power of the water and the Spirit freely, and when we believed in this power of the gospel, He has freely clothed us in His grace that has turned us into God's own children.

Now that we have received this powerful gospel of the water and the Spirit freely from God, our Lord is telling us to give it to others freely. To those who are truly in need of this gospel, we must indeed give this gospel power freely. After we do so, in some cases, they may want to give us something in return or do something for us to thank us for telling them about the true gospel. This could be a simple invitation to dinner, a gift, a favor, or any other such token of thanks. Yet we must be careful in how we respond to this. They may do this thinking, "Since I heard this amazing truth from you, I'll treat to something nice in return." This may be another way of saying not to interfere with them anymore, since they paid us back. "You have given me something good, but didn't I also give you something good in return? So don't interfere with me anymore and don't show off yourself at me." If this is what they are thinking, then this only means that they do not want to be nurtured in faith.

However, even if someone heard and believed in the gospel, if he is not continuously nurtured by the predecessors of faith, then his faith may wither away. What is important is that we have to nurture continuously such people freely, just as Jesus told us to give freely, as we have received freely from God. All that we have to do is obey this command—once we do so, we can all realize why this is the case. So if someone thanks us for helping him understand the true gospel, then what we should say to him is, "See you again; we will share the gospel with you and teach you more about the true gospel," as we must indeed meet him again and continue to nurture him in faith. In other words, we must lead them continuously so that their roots can be firmly

planted in God's Church and be nurtured by the predecessors of faith, for only then can his soul live.

And we must do all these things freely, without expecting anything in return. If we otherwise accept something from him without any careful consideration, then when he wants to leave the Church, he will do so with little hesitation, saying to us boldly, "Since I have both received something good from you but also given you something good in return, I've fulfilled my moral obligation to pay you back." We must not permit this to happen. This is why we have to give freely, for we have received freely.

We are spreading the gospel of the water and the Spirit throughout the whole world. Because we have received the power of this gospel from our Lord freely, we are fulfilling our duties as His servants and sharing the power of the Holy Spirit with others as a free gift for them. That we are giving freely is the right thing to do. Even though our Lord said that a tree is known by its fruits, it is tantalizing to see that some registered partners of our mission have asked us too much money for their services. Surely, they can hardly imagine how faithfully we, the staff workers of The New Life Mission, are devoting ourselves to the gospel of the water and the Spirit. But we are different from them. Since we have received freely from the Lord, we do not ask for money, nor do we demand anything in return, but we give freely, serving the gospel day after day in complete obedience to the Lord's command.

In verse 9, Jesus said, *"Provide neither gold nor silver nor copper in your money belts, nor bag for your journey, nor two*

*tunics, nor sandals, nor staffs; for a worker is worthy of his food."* The money belts here are today's wallets, and gold and silver mean money. In the old ages, there was no paper money; it is only relatively recently that money began to be printed on paper. In the ancient, primitive times, shells were used as currency, and later on, in Jesus' time for instance, coins made of precious metals were circulated as money. So basically, here in verse 9 Jesus told His disciples not to carry any money in their wallets. He also told them not to carry bag for their journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor staffs. What we would consider to be essential needs for any journey, in other words, were not to be carried by the disciples.

How, then, must we understand this passage? Does this mean that today, as we preach God's gospel throughout the world, we should carry neither money nor any essential needs of our journey? This is not what Jesus meant. Rather, what He meant is that if we are indeed God's workers, and we are indeed entirely devoted to serving Him, then it is a foregone conclusion that we should preach the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit freely without expecting anything in return, for it is God Himself who provides for our needs. It is only natural, in other words, that the servants of God would be fed and clothed by God Himself, and that all their needs would be met by Him. It is not for us to seek these things and take them for ourselves from others, but it is for God to feed and cloth His workers. This is what is meant by verse 9.

Those who want to devote their lives entirely to the spreading of the gospel can preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit

throughout the world from their own resources, just as Paul did so—Paul, being a tent maker, financed his ministry from his own labor and sweat. What Jesus said in verse 9 is that if we boldly and entirely devote ourselves to do the works of God and live for His righteousness, then it is only right for God Himself to feed us, clothe us, and provide us with a roof over our heads. We can live entirely for God, for the Lord will provide us with all our needs on His part. He is not telling us here not to even carry extra tunics when we are witnessing the gospel, but to devote our lives and commit ourselves entirely to Him, for He will fill all our needs if we do so. Put differently, He is saying to us, "If you devote yourselves entirely to My works, I will feed you and clothe you, and all your needs will be provided by Me. So live your lives like this—to serve God, to preach the gospel, and to devote yourselves for the spreading of the Kingdom of Heaven."

## Find out Who Is Worthy to Be Preached of the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit

In verse 11, Jesus said, *"Now whatever city or town you enter, inquire who in it is worthy, and stay there till you go out."* In the past, not a few went on evangelical tours audaciously without money by relying this passage. Of course, it would be not bad as a training course for God's workers, because they come across many affairs and needs to experience His help.

In today's context, this passage is telling us that we need to find those who are worthy to be preached of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. We should not approach just anyone and start preaching the gospel to him. Indeed, anyone who preaches the gospel must be able to discern people, above all other circumstances. The first question that we should ask ourselves is, "Is this man really someone who would accept the gospel of the water and the Spirit? Or will I just end up wasting my time?" The gospel needs to be preached, in other words, to those who are worthy of being preached at.

The needs of the disciples were also met through such worthy people. Because the disciples were sent out empty-handed, they would have starved to death had no one provided them with a shelter and food. But God promised that He would feed all those who do His works. This is why He told them to find those worthy of preaching the gospel to, as it was also through them that their needs were provided for.

Jesus continued to say, *"When you go into a household, greet it."* The Lord commands us to pray for peace over the household you come to visit to share the gospel. If our greetings of peace are rejected, then this peace that we wished for others will come to us. If the household is worthy to receive it, God will bless this household and protect it. This passage is the Word of promise, that if the people and servants of God come to a household, pray for it and its peace, and its members accept it in faith, then God will indeed bring peace upon the household.

Jesus also said, *"And whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off*

*the dust from your feet."* If you talk to someone about God's Word of truth and yet he does not accept this, then our Lord is telling you shake off the dust from you feet and leave him. There is no need for you to say any more words to such people who simply refuse to accept the Word of God into their hearts. For them, there await disastrous plagues that are so terrifying that the last judgment day of Sodom and Gomorrah would be more tolerable in comparison. Such people will inevitably and surely be condemned for each and every one of their sins.

Sending out His disciples to bear witnesses to the gospel, our Lord also said, *"Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves."* Our Lord said this because He was sending out His disciple into such a wicked world. This is why He added, *"Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves."* We can now understand what our Lord meant when He said these things. The people of God are truly pure and innocent, but this world is filled with the wicked, robbers, liars, and evil ones. We must therefore pray at all times. You, too, must pray, and the elders of faith must also give their prayers of faith for the flock. This is the basic principle for the nourishment of faith, and the guidance that we must provide for the younger believers.

Do you have many worries and concerns? Are your hearts burdened by them? Then pray to God. To pray to God is to ask our Lord to take away all our worries, and to be freed from all such concerns by believing that the Lord will indeed take care of all our concerns. The Bible promised us that if we pray to God ceaselessly and at all times, His peace, which transcend all

understanding, will indeed keep our hearts and minds in Jesus Christ (Philippians 4:7).

## If We Trust in the Lord and Pray to Him, We Can Overcome All Problems

If we have any worries, we must pray to God by trusting in Him. The Lord will surely answer our prayers, give us peace, and solve whatever problems we may have. This is why we must pray at all times without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

Preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit is not such an easy thing to do. The ability to articulate the gospel alone is not enough, but one must live wisely and by faith, and devote himself as an ornamental knob of the gospel, all of which make it that much harder for us to fulfill our duties to spread the gospel. If we the righteous do not pray to God, it is more than likely that we would lose our strength, our God-given power would wither away, and everything would just decay. We must take care of each other, help each other, and pray for each other, so that we may serve the gospel faithfully. When we live our lives by trusting in God and fulfilling our role as the ornamental knobs of the gospel, our prayers must accompany us at all times.

My dear fellow Christians, now that you have been remitted from all your sins by believing in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, do you still worry about how you would make a living, and how you would meet the ends? Then what I would like to say to you is to think about Lazarus the beggar. Lazarus

was a destitute beggar who lived at the gate of a rich man's house, so that he might eat what fell from the rich man's table. Though this beggar believed in the Lord, while on this earth, he lived as a beggar, surviving on the table crumbs of the rich man. But although he had lived such a wretched and miserable life in this world, when he died, he was embraced into the arms of Abraham and was welcomed into Heaven, all according to his faith. In contrast, all that awaited the rich man who had lived in luxury while in this world was everlasting sufferings, mourning forever from such a terrifying thirst that he longed for even a drop of water.

My beloved brothers and sisters, it is only natural for us to worry about what we would eat and how we would be clothed even after receiving the remission of our sins. To us, the Bible says, *"And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content" (1 Timothy 6:8).* If you decide to live your lives for the Lord, and trust the Lord that He will provide you with all your basic needs, then you have nothing to worry about. However, when you attempt to live your lives on your own, you will come across many worries. It is because of our worldly greed that we have many worries.

But, once we abandon our greed, once we decide to be satisfied with what the Lord provides us to enable us to serve the gospel, once we dedicate our lives to serve the works of God without being distracted by the glittering materialism of this world, and once we decide not to compromise with this world for a few, spiritually meaningless gains, then we can actually live our lives freed from all our worries. But if our hearts lust

after the things of the world, we cannot live our lives of faith properly, for we will be filled with worries. So what would happen if we continue to worry about what to eat, what cloths to wear, and how our needs would be met? Our worries will grow more and more to eventually quench our faith, and we will end up leaving the Church.

My dear fellow Christians, I cannot emphasize enough just how important it is for us to pray at all times. There are so many things to pray for, and there are so many things that we must do for God. Is this not the case? It may seem that once something is done, that would be the end of our work, but there continues to arise more things to do and more tasks to complete. Accompanied by our constant and ceaseless prayers, each of us must faithfully carry out all these works.

For instance, the publication of our books is an on-going, continuous process of works that require the dedication of not just myself, but of many others. The gospel of the water and the Spirit is not preached by just one person, but by all those who believe in it and are faithful to our Lord's command to spread it throughout the ends of the earth. For me to write these words and put them in books, there must be people behind the background who pray for this ministry, financial resources to meet the required expenses, and the dedication of a great number of people. We must pray for all of them, for their health, for their well being, for their faith, for our God to keep and protect them all, so that the gospel of the water and the Spirit may continue to blossom around the world and reach all its corners. We must pray for our partners, for our brothers and

sisters, for our workers, for other souls, for our circumstances—there are so many things to pray for and so many needs that must be met by faith that we cannot count them all here. What is clear is that all these needs must be met in God through our prayers and by the power of our faith.

If only we could preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit and serve it while on this earth, and if only our basic needs are met, then there is nothing more that we can ask for. It is with such a content heart and firm faith that we must live. That we have received the remission of all our sins, and that all our basic needs have been met—this alone is enough reason for us to thank God over and over again. If we do not lust after the things of the world, and if we are contented with having food and clothing, then this world is more than livable for us, the workers of God.

What we need to remember here, in addition, is that our Lord said, *"A worker is worthy of his food."* This means that if we devote our lives to the works of God, God Himself will feed us and clothe us, and He will meet all our needs. It is only proper for us to receive and feed on what God provides us. This is what is meant by the passage here.

If you have any worldly worries, what may explain this? Why do you worry about the things of the world? You worry about them because you do not want to be laughed at by others. But this is only a reflection of your carnal lust. In other words, it is because of the lust of your flesh that your souls are burdened with all these worldly worries. You worry because you want more than what is required to sustain your lives—when, in fact,

all that you have to do is meet your basic needs, carry on with your lives of faith, and serve the gospel. This, the lust of your flesh, is the root of all your worries. If you insist that you have to be better off than your friends, that you have to be higher than someone else, and if you constantly compare yourselves to others, then isn't it only a matter of course that so many worries would continue to arise? One falls into such worries, fretting over what to eat, what to wear, and how to meet the ends, because he maintains his lust for the things of the world.

Quite frankly, I myself have no such worries about what to eat and drink. But this was not who I was before. Before, I, too, was someone who had so many worries about the things of the world, but now, my mind has been transformed completely. My worries have changed. Before, it was about myself that I worried, but now, it is for someone else that I worry. I have become such a happy man due to the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

The workers of faith who serve the gospel of the water and the Spirit do not worry about the meaningless things of the world. Actually, those who lived the lives of faith in God lived for His righteousness only.

And when we preach the gospel to someone, we have to see if this person is really looking for the truth, and if so, then we should tell him that all he has to worry about is for him not be prepared for the future life. And when we precede our explanation from the topic of the vanity of our lives to the eternal judgment, the truth seekers would probably listen with strained ears to our witness. Then, if we preach the gospel Truth

to such prepared souls, they would accept it by faith and become God's own children.

When you preach the gospel to a person, don't deliver it all at once. Of course, sometimes, we cannot but do so inevitably, but doing so is not good for common people to be saved. Wisdom is essentially needed in preaching the gospel.

Today's Scripture passage of Matthew 10:1-16, which was spoken to His disciples when Jesus sent them out to bear witness to the gospel, is now fulfilled over us by faith.

Do you have any worries or anxieties? Then, pray God with the faith that believes in His Word. Worries or anxieties arise when we do not pray to God for help. Just believe in Him while praying with faith. Then, He will surly answer your prayers.

We have to live by faith in God's Truth, the gospel of the water and the Spirit. And I cannot thank God enough that He enables us to heal the spiritual diseases of people by giving us the gospel power of the water and the Spirit. Hallelujah! ✉

# Let Us Live as God's Workers

**< Matthew 10:1-8 >**

**"And when He had called His twelve disciples to Him, He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease. Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus; Simon the Cananite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him. These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: 'Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.'"**

Jesus called His twelve disciples, and He decided to spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit throughout the whole world through these disciples. But one of these disciples, Judas, ended up betraying his own Teacher, for he did not believe that Jesus was the

Son of God and the Messiah who came to this earth as the Savior of mankind. Judas sold out Jesus for money. But later, he came to regret when he recognized that he had actually betrayed the Son of God. We need to remember here that as we follow Jesus, if we betray the gospel of the water and the Spirit that the Lord has given us, we will also end up like this Judas. Unfortunately, there are way too many Judas-like Christians on this earth.

If none of us wants to face spiritual death, we must all believe in and spread the God-given gospel of the water and the Spirit wholeheartedly. For us to walk such a righteous way, we must place our faith in the divinity of Jesus and His ministries of the water and the blood, and of the Spirit.

This world is a spiritual battlefield for Christians. There are many evil spirits in the world. These spirits are looking for every opportunity to devour even those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. So even if one believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, if he falls into the lust of his flesh, he will end up facing his spiritual death.

We should not allow the deceivers to do everything to their hearts' content. Rather, we, the true Christians must stand against them by exposing the vanity of these liars' faith. They will then leave us alone. Otherwise, if we fail to make our stand, we will end up being devoured by them. This is why we must live our lives as God's soldiers after believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Anyone who has received the remission of sin by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit must become a true Christian solider who preaches the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Am I then saying here that every believer should become a minister? No, that is not what I am saying. It would be even better if every believer can indeed become a minister, but what I am saying here is that all of us must do the work of the Kingdom of God according to the gifts that God has given to each of us.

You need to realize that if you do not become the army of God that serves His gospel, you will end up being devoured by the army of Satan. There are those among us who think, "Well, since I am not a minister, I think my faith in the Lord is fine just as it is." But my dear fellow believers, you must not think like this. You must realize that Satan does not discriminate in his attacks, and that he is intent to slay all those who do not work for God's Kingdom and are instead beholden to the lust of their flesh, regardless of whether they are laymen or ministers.

Therefore, every Christian must cast aside the three lusts of the flesh (1 John 2:16). The first lust that we must cast aside is the lust of pleasure; we must cast aside all our desires that go beyond the bounds of what God has permitted us. Second, we must cast aside the lust of the eyes. Third, we must cast aside the desire for the pride of life. You should engrave it into your hearts that only then can you love the Lord and follow Him.

If, by any chance, you follow the lust of your flesh, thinking, "It's okay, since I've received the remission of all my sins," then you will ultimately die. Because you have received the remission of your sins, it is only natural that Satan would not leave you alone, but would be even more intent to knock you down, looking for every opportunity to achieve this objective.

Therefore, for us not to be slain by Satan, we must be on constant guard, and we must wage our spiritual battle against him by faith. Only those who win this battle can survive. And to do so, we must believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit even more. To grow our spiritual strength, we need to fight against the liars in these spiritual battles. It is when Christians engage in spiritual battles that they come to realize the extent of their faith, and it is when they fight against their enemies by the power of the Word of the Lord that they can win souls.

If we do not continue to believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit in our hearts, we, too, will lose not only our spiritual strength but also our material possessions and even our own life. How would we lose all of God's blessings? By failing to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, for this world is a spiritual battlefield, and therefore Satan does not leave the faithless alone.

## Our Lord Commanded Us to Look for the Lost Sheep of God and Preach Them the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit

God's workers must always do His work. God's laborers must go out in search of His lost sheep. Our Lord took twelve men as His disciples while working on this earth. And through these disciples of Jesus, many people came to receive the remission of their sins, and they also were able to live as the

blessed army of God and come before His presence.

It is written here in today's Scripture passage, *"Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'"* We must look for innocent souls, not the spiritual Samaritans.

The Samaritans were partly related to the Israelites, but they were not of pure blood. They were the descendents of mixed blood, originating from some Israelites' intermarriage with the Assyrians during their Babylonian captivity. Therefore, the Israelites did not accept them as their people from then on.

Spiritually speaking, it is to the lost sheep of Israel whom we must go. We should examine every soul, asking ourselves, "Is that person really a lost sheep to God?" There are some on this earth who are desperately thirsting for the Word of God.

It is when we actually do God's work that we are molded into Jesus' good disciples who are fit for God's use. God is turning us into the well-trained soldiers of Jesus and using us as His instruments. As we do the work of God as His laborers, there are times when we have to break up our self-respect of the flesh. By doing so, our thoughts are transformed before God, and we are molded and made into good vessels that God can use as His instruments. If we want to live the life of the discipleship of Jesus, as God's workers, then our Lord will turn us into His good vessels. Those who are too meek and timid are turned more rugged and stronger, and those who lack faith in the Word of God become the people of faith who have strong faith in

God's Word. Strong faith is absolutely essential to God's workers, because we can only carry on His work by our faith in His power. It is not by our own strength that God's work is done, but it is only by the power of God that it is done.

Sinners are prone to persecute the disciples of Jesus who are living on this earth doing God's work. Jesus said, *"A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. It is enough for a disciple that he be like his teacher, and a servant like his master" (Matthew 10:24-25).* He said that it is enough for a disciple to be like his teacher.

Jesus is the very teacher of all of us who believe in Him. When our Lord came to this earth, he was despised and scorned by many people. Since our Lord Himself was persecuted, we should accept it as only natural that we, who have become His disciples, would also be persecuted. For those who have become Jesus' disciples, it is enough that they are able to endure persecution, just as our Lord had done so. And since our Lord followed the will of God the Father while suffering severe persecution, we should, as His disciples, also follow the will of our Lord, and endure persecution as nothing. The disciples of Jesus must indeed know how to take it as their joy to be persecuted by the liars. And even in the midst of their persecution, they must know how to follow the Lord wholly. In addition, the soldiers of the Lord must also know how to wage spiritual war.

Everything will be revealed according to the Truth of God. So we need to realize here that every iniquity that people commit hidden from the others will ultimately be all revealed,

for our Lord said, *"There is nothing covered that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known" (Matthew 10:26).*

## God Has Made Us Fearless

I believe that God is alive. Our Lord said to the workers of God, *"Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matthew 10:28).* What we need to realize here is that the One who has authority to throw sinners into hell is God, the One who has saved us from our sins is also the same God, and the One who has given us eternal life is this very same God. Death does not mean the complete end of our existence. Everyone is born once, and once dead, everyone will be brought to eternal life again. This is what we must know and believe. Those who, through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, believe that Jesus has become their Savior have indeed been saved from all their sins, but those who do not believe in this true gospel will be cast into hell by God.

There are huge differences between reincarnation and resurrection. Reincarnation is the notion that when a life ends, it is reincarnated into a different life form, and that this cycle continues on. Simply put, a soul that is born as a grasshopper will be born as a rabbit tomorrow, and then as a chicken the following day. But this is absolutely nonsense.

My fellow believers, we the true Christians must not fear the anti-Christians. If those who have not been born again do not

want to share fellowship with us the born-again, then all that we have to do is not share fellowship with them. You may then wonder if we are not too lonely. But what is there to feel lonely, when there are so many righteous people of God? The righteous abhor to be with sinners. There are, after all, many people of God with whom we the righteous can work together. It is with the people of God with whom I want to live, and it is God's Church with which I want to work.

What we need to realize is that no one will die unless God first permits him. Jesus said, "Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin?" When a sparrow is sold for a dime, it may seem as if it is being sold and bought by people, but even this is possible only when God permits it. When this is the case, just how much care would God have for the righteous? Our own death, too, will never come unless God permits it. When God does not permit this, we will not die just because someone is trying to kill us. We will die only when God permits, and nothing can come about without God's permission. Our life, in other words, is in the hands of God. We are far more precious than the sparrows in the air.

Our Lord said, *"Whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 10:32-33).*

My fellow believers, if we believe in the baptism that Jesus received and in His bloodshed on the Cross as our salvation, He will surely accept us. In contrast, if we fail to believe so, Jesus will also deny us. Because of our sins, He was baptized by John

the Baptist and condemned, and has thereby saved us from all our sins. If we deny this Truth, then we are denying Jesus.

Our Lord said, *"Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God" (John 3:5).* 'To be born again of water and the Spirit' is to receive the remission of sin by believing in the Truth, that Jesus has saved us from all the sins of the world by coming to this earth, taking upon our sins once for all with His baptism, and dying on the Cross. My fellow believers, among Christians, those who have truly been born again are the ones who have received the remission of all their sins by being born again of the water, the blood, and the Spirit. No one can be born again unless he has faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Do you still think that Jesus failed to take away all your sins? When the grandmother of a sister in my church was hospitalized, the pastor of this grandmother's church came to see her and said, "Try to keep saying the prayers of repentance. Jesus took away your original sin, but He did not take away your personal sins." Do you believe that He took away only our original sin, and that our personal sins were not taken away? If one believes that Jesus took away only his original sin but not his personal sins, then he is denying Jesus the Savior. What we must know is that Jesus has perfectly saved all of us from all our sins by receiving His baptism and shedding His blood.

But if one denies this Truth of the water and the Spirit, Jesus will also deny him. Jesus will say, "You said that you did not know Me. You said that I did not take away all your sins. I don't know you, either then. Go away. I will send you to the hottest place!" If we do not believe in the baptism and bloodshed of

Jesus, then so will Jesus deny us, and if we believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, then we will be permitted to enter Heaven according to our faith.

Our God is the God of justice and equity. Jesus is the God of Truth. God's gospel of the water and the Spirit is His righteousness, not a lie. If our Lord were to just approve anyone who tries hard to believe in Him somehow, why would He have given us the gospel of the water and the Spirit by sacrificing Himself so much? It was precisely to save us from all our sins that He sacrificed Himself and gave us the gospel of the water and the Spirit, but only if we believe in this gospel. He does not say, "Well, since they profess to believe in Me and are trying so hard to live as Christians, how could I say that I don't know them? They don't have the right answer, but I should still approve them on a compassionate ground." Therefore, if one does not know the gospel of the water and the Spirit, then he has not been saved from all his sins.

Our Lord said, *"Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword" (Matthew 10:34)*. Our workers must never misunderstand this. It is not proper for the righteous to be amicable with sinners and to live in peace no matter what this entails, but they must preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit that reconciles these sinners with God. Our Lord is saying to us, "So will you believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit or not? I have blotted out all your sins. Will you believe this or not?" If we believe, then He will save us, but if we do not believe, then He will destroy us.

The Lord said that He did not come to bring peace, but to

sow conflict. He came to this earth to set daughters-in-law against their mothers-in-law, fathers against their sons, and grandparents against their grandchildren. Jesus is at once both a spiritual Warrior and the King of peace.

Although Jesus has blotted out all the sins of the world, He cannot save those who still do not believe in the Truth despite this. My fellow believers, if you believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, then you will be reconciled with God, but if you do not believe in this gospel, you will remain as God's enemies. The born-again may very well find their enemies in their own household—that is, your own family members who have not been born again may become your enemies.

From time to time, we visit hospitals to preach the gospel, and some of the stories that we have heard from the patients there are rather hair-raising.

"Hello, how have you been? By the way, where is the other patient? Did he go somewhere?"

"Actually, he died yesterday."

People speak of human death so easily. Of course, it's not they who died but someone else, but still, sometimes they speak of it too lightly, as if it's only a trivial affair. Feeling no sadness, they simply say, "He has passed away."

People who have not received the remission of sin are in fact heartlessly unloving and unmerciful (Romans 1:31). They remain indifferent even as one of their own sisters and brothers dies. They are saddened but only a little. They look grieved while they attend the funeral ceremony, but they forget all about it as soon as they head back to their homes in their cars.

My fellow believers, the born-again are not heartless. They really keep the weak in their hearts. It is heartbreaking for them to be unable to help because of their inability. We may have said some nasty things to one another in our quarrels, but in the hearts of us the righteous, compassion for the others always remains. We always have concern and care for our fellow believers, wanting them to prosper in both body and spirit.

It hurts our hearts to see those who still have not received the remission of their sins, because we all have compassionate hearts for them fundamentally. We actually have compassionate and merciful hearts for them, hoping that they would prosper. It is our wish that wherever they go, they would go to God's Church that preaches the gospel of the water and the Spirit, receive the remission of their sins, faithfully attend God's Church, and be blessed. Yet it saddens me deeply to see that there is no mercy of God in many people's hearts.

If someone goes out to the world and dose not live any longer as God's worker in His Church, it is very easy for him to lose his born-again heart, no matter how firmly he is determined to live with the gospel.

## He Who Loves God the Most

True Christians love God and do His work. Our Lord said, *"He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me" (Matthew 10:37).*

My fellow believers, think about this once again. If you want to live your lives as God's workers, you should have the heart that loves God the most. Only when you love God more than anyone or anything else in this world can you become His good workers.

We cannot actually love God more through our own efforts, just by trying to love Him more. On the contrary, it is by abandoning our trust in our flesh and by casting aside the lust of the flesh, by placing our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and thereby by letting the love of God reign our hearts, that we can live as the true disciples of Jesus Christ. Just as our hearts receive the remission of our sins, God simultaneously becomes the loveliest One to us all.

Our Lord said, *"He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me."* This passage does not mean that we should not love our parents, but that we should realize that God is more worthy of our love and respect than our parents are. This is what our Lord is saying to us. In other words, because God is far more honorable than our parents of the flesh, and because He has given us far better things than our parents, we should love this God the most, and in this love of God should we also honor and love our parents of the flesh. Our Lord is far more lovable than our own wives, children, land, wealth, money, reputation, pleasure, ourselves, or anything else in this entire world. There is nothing in this world that is more lovable than our Lord.

My fellow believers, though we love ourselves, when we compare ourselves to the Lord, we cannot help but confess that the Lord is far more lovable and precious than us. Just as Peter

confessed his faith by saying, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You," we, too, cannot avoid but make the same confession of faith. Our Lord is truly majestic and truly lovable to us. There is no one in this world, in the entire universe and for eternity, who is better than our Lord. No material can ever be better than our Lord. Nor can any pleasure ever be better than the Lord.

God's workers love the Lord the most and serve Him. In fact, it is only such people who can become God's laborers. And God also loves first the workers who always think of Him. Let me make it clear here that you and I must indeed live as such workers.

Sometimes, being parents, we may show more care for our children than the Lord, but we still believe in the center of our hearts that even our own children can never be more precious than the Lord Himself. Can you understand what I am trying to say here? If we were to compare our own children to the Lord and estimate their worth, our Lord is far more valuable than even our own children. It is not because we do not love our children that we love the Lord more, but we do so because our Lord is worthier than even our children. And to care for and cherish our children in the love of our Lord is true love. When I say that we love God more than our parents and children, some of you may mistakenly think that I am telling you not to love your children and parents and to abandon them, but this is not what I am saying here. I am not telling you to abandon your own children and parent, but to love God first.

Remember what the Lord said here, *"He who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me" (Matthew*

*10:38).* A true worker of God is someone who can follow the Lord even amid hardship. You and I must be able to follow the Lord even as we face difficulties and hardship.

This is something that is actually very hard to practice. Having said, *"He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me,"* our Lord then added, *"And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me."* What He is telling us as a whole here is that we must love the Lord more than ourselves.

Every worker who follows God is bound to have his own cross. In other words, those who believe in Jesus and want to serve Him are bound to face hardship and suffering. And it is those who, even as they find themselves in the middle of this suffering, still trust in the Lord, persevere and endure, and still follow our Lord, that are the true workers of Jesus. In other words, those who follow the Lord not just when they are comfortable, but even as they face hardship, are the real workers of God.

It is through such workers of God that Jesus is fulfilling His will. My fellow believers, if this is indeed true, then you and I must all become God's workers as well. We should not be satisfied at just being His saints. We must become His faithful workers. We must live our lives as His workers. Only then is God's will fulfilled. Only when we live as His workers can we avoid our spiritual death and receive and enjoy all the blessings that God bestows on us.

My fellow believers, take a look at the brothers and sisters

who have only recently received the remission of their sins. We see that because they have not been led to become God's workers, too many of them are living without any purpose, even as they have become new creatures. When so many people are dying, and when so many souls are heading straight to hell, anyone who believes just by himself and does not spread the good news to others is a wicked one. Such people are like the servant who was given a talent, who will be selected out in the end (Matthew 25:28-30).

## The Vine

God is telling those of us who have received the remission of our sins to become His workers, regardless of whether we are insufficient or not. He is telling us to live as such workers who spread the gospel and whose lives are devoted to it. If we live our lives as these workers who serve the gospel, God will help us in countless ways. Why would He help us? Because it is only proper that the Father would give us more nourishments, so that we, as the branches of the vine of Jesus, would bear more fruits.

But what will happen if branches grow from the vine and yet they just sit there and do not bear any fruit? God will cut off from the main vine all such branches that remain fruitless no matter how much nourishment they receive. When the fruitless branches are cut off, new buds will sprout in their place. The old branches will then supply these new sprouts with nutrients and nourishment from the root, so that they may flower and bear

grapes. When the predecessors of faith supply the new buds with the Word of God, the new branches will soon bear fruits.

Those who first have received the remission of their sins must travel around and spread the gospel, while the predecessor of faith continue to supply these newly born again people with nourishment. In this way, more people come to receive the remission of their sins. So it is through these old branches, and through the brothers and sisters who have just received the remission of their sins, that the gospel continues to be spread. As you spread the gospel, you need to teach people how they should live after receiving the remission of their sins.

If you and I do not serve the gospel after receiving the remission of our sins, we will fall apart from God's Church. Anyone who has become a new branch must bear fruits and multiply; if he is lazy at this, the Lord will cut him loose. Therefore, if you have really received the remission of your sins, you must pray to God to give you stronger faith. And you need to listen to the Word of God diligently, and act according to the Word even though you are not good at practicing the Word. As we preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit according to the written Word of God, if we ever find ourselves at a loss for words, all that we have to do is pray and receive renewed strength.

My fellow believers, it is when you become God's workers that you receive His blessings. If you have become righteous, then only when you live as God's workers will He continue to supply you with endless nourishment. From this nourishment, you will then come to bear more fruits; and so that you would continue to bear even more fruits, God will continue to supply

you with the sufficient nourishment that is needed for it. The branches that are thus nourished by faith are bound to grow into thick and large branches, and when these branches sprout even more buds and new branches grow out of them, they will become even larger and stronger. This is the desirable life of the righteous.

A vine tree is empty inside. None other than we ourselves are the vine branches. We who have decided to live as the workers of our God must empty out our hearts. And we must fill these emptied rooms of our hearts with the Word of God by believing in it. It would be nice if emptying our hearts were as easy as emptying a garbage can, but it surely is not the case: Emptying our hearts requires enormously difficult task of self-denial. Nonetheless, God's workers know very well that the greater their suffering and hardship are, the more occasions there will be to use their faith, and the thicker and stronger the branches will get.

I would like to admonish all of you who have received the remission of your sins to become God's workers, for God Himself, for the souls of the whole world, for your families and relatives, neighbors and friends, and for the sake of yourselves alike. Become the workers who serve the gospel, the workers who preach the gospel; become such workers of God. God will then bless you all.

It is my most ardent hope and prayer that you would all become God's workers above all else, lest you should be preyed upon by the Devil. When you set your hearts upright before God and live as His workers, you will see yourselves that God indeed gives you more faith and helps you.

May God bless and guard you all! ✉

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# CHAPTER

# 11

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# John the Baptist Was Not a Failure

**< Matthew 11:1-14 >**

**"Now it came to pass, when Jesus finished commanding His twelve disciples, that He departed from there to teach and to preach in their cities. And when John had heard in prison about the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples and said to Him, 'Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?' Jesus answered and said to them, 'Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me.' As they departed, Jesus began to say to the multitudes concerning John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. For this is he of whom it is written:**

**'Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You.'**

**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 to Understand the Ministry of John the Baptist

Exactly what ministry did John the Baptist fulfill before Jesus? Many Christians today do not understand John the Baptist properly, and so they all need to take another look at him to understand him and appreciate his ministry properly. All of us need to have the correct understanding and appreciation of the relationship between the ministry of Jesus and that of John the Baptist. By properly understanding this relationship, you need to get the first-hand experience of receiving the remission of your sins by faith.

In today's Scripture passage, Jesus Christ said to the disciples of John the Baptist, *"Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them."*

In fact, the blind who met Jesus had their eyes opened, the lame could stand up and walk, the demon-possessed could be set free from their demons when they encountered Jesus, and the gospel of Heaven was preached to the poor in spirit.

What we need to realize first here is that the ministry of Jesus

included the work of opening the eyes of the blind. In this age and time, in other words, our Lord has given us the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the true gospel that opens the eyes of sinners who are wandering in darkness.

Before encountering Jesus Christ, everyone had sin in his heart and was spiritually blind before God. We, too, had not known the authenticity of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, nor understood who Jesus really was, and we all had been unaware of our own sins and our fatal consequences owing to these sins. And we had no interest in the true gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, the Truth of salvation that Jesus has given us.

However, many people have now heard the powerful gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, and by placing their faith in this gospel Word, their spiritual eyes have been opened and they have discovered the Truth that enables them to be saved from all their sins. Those who know and believe in this genuine gospel have now discovered the Truth of the remission of sin that they had not known before: Their eyes of faith have been opened, and they have come to do the work of God. As it is with our eyes of the flesh that we see everything in this world, we now can see the spiritual world brightly after our spiritual eyes were opened by our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. This is how one reaches the understanding that the ministry of Jesus is all for the ministry of the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Because of our sins, you and I had been spiritually blind and lame, able to neither see the God's ministry nor do His work. In

other words, we had also been sinners who were bound to be condemned to hell. However, Jesus Christ came to this earth, was baptized by John the Baptist, shed His blood on the Cross, and thereby fulfilled the works that remitted away all the sins of the world. Therefore, whoever believes in this Truth can experience that all his or her sins are completely washed away. Jesus Christ has washed away all our sins by actually coming this earth, being baptized by John the Baptist, and shedding His blood on the Cross. Even now, such works of God continue to unfold magnificently in the hearts of all who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. With the gospel power of the water and the Spirit, our Lord has opened the spiritual eyes of His believers, and He has made us, who had been spiritually lame, to rise and stand up on our feet.

We need to realize here that if we try to do God's work without even having faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, there will be absolutely no benefit whatsoever for both our bodies and spirits. Those who still have not received the remission of their sins constantly think, "I should live virtuously. I must be good to everyone." But no one is even remotely capable of achieving this, of doing what is good and virtuous.

Before we came to know the gospel power of the water and the Spirit, we had sin in our hearts and therefore we had all been sinners, and consequently, we could not know what God's righteous work is like, nor do it. However, because our Lord accepted all our sins once for all through His baptism, and because He washed them all away with the blood that He shed on the Cross while shouldering the sins of the world, we were

able to be saved from all our sins. It is because Jesus Christ has saved us from our sins by the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, that we are now able to live according to the will of God. We are now capable of enabling everyone else to also taste the power of this true gospel and be saved.

By bringing new life through the Truth of salvation to you and me who had been spiritually lame, Jesus Christ has enabled us to be saved from all our sins and all our curses. What Jesus said here, that "the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up," has now also been fulfilled in all of our hearts that believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Before, as we had been sinners, we had also been spiritual lepers. At that time our hearts clearly had sin, and we could not be cleansed from all our sins, unless we placed our faith in this true gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Our Lord also said that the deaf would hear. When we had been sinners, we could not understand the Word of God even when we heard it. But now, because we have been clothed with the gospel power of the water and the Spirit by placing our faith in it, we can understand the Word of God, grasp its true meaning, and believe in it wholeheartedly.

Everyone throughout the whole world is now living under spiritual starvation and thirst. They suffer from their spiritual deafness and lameness. But the Lord is still giving them the chance to be healed all at once by letting us preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit to them. We must have pity on them. We need to remember that when we did not know this gospel of salvation, the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we had no

satisfaction whatsoever, and that we also could not help but live with all our sins remaining in our hearts. We should not forget His merciful grace that has turned sinners into the righteous.

As such, what our Lord spoke to the disciples of John the Baptist about the wonders that He actually exercised was to let them know that Jesus is the Son of God, the real Savior and the Messiah to come.

Some may say that while John the Baptist was imprisoned, he was tempted and became doubtful as to whether Jesus was the Messiah to come, and that this is why he sent his disciples to Jesus. But this is absolutely not the case. Who was John the Baptist? He was the greatest of all those born of women. He was even greater than any other servants of God. In other words, it was not because John the Baptist did not believe in Jesus that he sent out his disciples to Him and had them ask, "Are You the Coming One?" On the contrary, he was now educating his disciples, so that they would know who Jesus really was.

John the Baptist already knew and believed that Jesus was the Savior and the Son of God; moreover, he had heard the testimony of God the Father when he baptized Jesus Christ in the Jordan River (Matthew 3:17), and he himself had also been a witness who had been testifying Jesus. It was because some of his disciples did not know Jesus properly that John the Baptist sent them to Jesus, in order to teach them that Jesus Christ is the Savior to come. In fact, after John the Baptist knew that Jesus Christ was the Messiah to come, he tried to retreat his ministry and send his disciples to the Lord. In order to reveal Jesus to Israel, John even said, *"He [Jesus] must increase, but I must*

*decrease" (John 3:30)*. For example, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, had been clearly John's disciple, but he followed the Lord after hearing John's witnessing of Jesus (John 1:40).

Yet today's critics of John the Baptist are saying all kinds of nonsense, even as they do not even know him, claiming, "John the Baptist was a failure. He fell into temptation and failed to believe in Jesus. His faith crumbled down while he was imprisoned."

But my fellow believers, you must not doubt the faith of John the Baptist. John the Baptist and Jesus had their own duties that they had to fulfill together in the providence of God the Father. This was to baptize and to be baptized, the ministries that were to fulfill the righteousness of God. This is why Jesus and John the Baptist testified each other's ministry.

Matthew 11:7-9 states, *"As they departed, Jesus began to say to the multitudes concerning John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet."*

Jesus said here, "Why did you go out into the wilderness? To see a prophet? If so, you are right. I say to you that John the Baptist is more than a prophet." Jesus then explained John the Baptist by referring to Malachi 3:1 in the Scriptures.

Matthew 11:10 is a passage that cites Malachi 3:1. In it, Jesus said, *"For this is he of whom it is written: 'Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before*

*You.'"* Referring to the passage written in Malachi 3:1, in other words, Jesus Himself testified that John the Baptist was the very messenger of God who would be sent before Jesus Himself.

Who is God's messenger that is written in Malachi 3:1? It is none other than John the Baptist. Malachi 4:5-6 also point out that the messenger in Malachi 3:1—*"I send My messenger"*—refers to no one else but John the Baptist.

In Matthew 11:11, Jesus said, *"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."*

Why did our Lord say this to us? Why did He say that John the Baptist was the greatest of all those born of women? Jesus is telling us here that John the Baptist was the very messenger of God that was prophesied in the Old Testament, and that he is the representative of mankind.

This passage continues on with another difficult phrase: "But he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." Many false teachers are judging John the Baptist as a failure by this phrase. They say, "Because John was doubtful about Jesus' being Messiah, he was evaluated as the least one by the Lord." But this is absolutely nonsense.

Rather, what Jesus is actually saying here is that although John the Baptist was the representative of mankind, spiritually speaking, he was a lowly man who could not be compared to those who have become God's own children. In other words, although John the Baptist was the representative of all human beings in the flesh, he could not be compared to the born-again.

Actually, John was the greatest one from a human point of view. He was raised as a Nazirite, and lived an ascetic life in the wilderness eating locusts and wild honey. From the viewpoint of human righteousness, he surely was the greatest one. But this human righteousness is of no use when it is compared to the righteousness of God, which is given to everyone who can enter His Kingdom by faith. And because those who have become the people of the Kingdom of Heaven by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit have received the righteousness of God, they are greater than anyone who only relies on his own righteousness. One may become the representative of mankind on this earth in the flesh, but he is smaller than those who have become God's people by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Therefore, when Jesus said, *"And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force,"* He said so because John the Baptist had baptized Him at once and thereby passed the sins of the world to Him. As such, John the Baptist was the last High Priest and prophet of the Old Testament, and his ministry ended when he baptized Jesus and bore witness to Him. Jesus is telling us, in other words, that everything of the Old Testament ended with His own appearance and the appearance of John the Baptist, and with John's ministry of baptizing Jesus.

Put differently, from the time when John the Baptist and Jesus came to this earth, all the righteousness of God was fulfilled. It is because Jesus came to this earth and was baptized by John that the age of the New Testament was opened from

then on. This age of the New Testament is the age of the gospel of power, and it is an era in which whoever believes in this gospel of the water and the Spirit can receive the remission of sin and become God's own child. As the age of the Old Testament lasted until the days of John the Baptist, when Jesus Christ came to this earth, took upon the sins of mankind with His baptism, shed His blood, and remitted away all our sins, henceforth the gates of Heaven have been flung open to all who believe in this Truth.

As Jesus took upon all the sins of everyone on this earth by being baptized, the age of the New Testament was then begun. All the Old Testament's Word of prophecy were fulfilled through John the Baptist and Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ accepted all the sins of mankind once for all by being baptized by John the Baptist, shed His blood on the Cross, and has thereby blotted out all the sins of this world. This is why our Lord said that from the days of John the Baptist until now the Kingdom of Heaven suffered violence.

It is because Jesus accepted the sins of the world by receiving His baptism from John the Baptist that whoever believes in this Truth can now enter Heaven by faith. Put differently, it is because John the Baptist passed mankind's sins to Jesus through this baptism that Jesus took upon all the sins of the world once for all. Because John the Baptist was born of the descendants of the household of Aaron the High Priest, he could fulfill his role of passing the sins of the world to Jesus as the last High Priest of the Old Testament.

That anyone who believes in this Truth can now enter

Heaven by faith is because John the Baptist had passed all the sins of the world to Jesus by baptizing Him, and it is because Jesus took upon these sins of the world that the age of the salvation of mankind has now dawned upon us. With this greatest historical event, the age of the Old Testament ended, and the age of the New Testament started. And Jesus fulfilled His ministry as our Savior to perfection by taking upon all our sins of mankind with His baptism, shedding His blood, and rising from the dead again. Therefore, a new age has opened for all those who believe in the baptism that John the Baptist gave to Jesus, in which the Kingdom of Heaven suffers violence.

The Kingdom of Heaven cannot actually be taken by force with the strength of the flesh. What, then, is the spiritual meaning of this passage? It is this: Jesus is telling us the mystery of Heaven, that because He accepted all the sins of this world when John the Baptist baptized Him and when He in turn received this baptism, and because He was crucified, shed His blood, and rose from the dead again, anyone can now make Heaven his by believing in this gospel.

Our Lord said, *"All the prophets and the law prophesied until John."* In other words, the prophecies of the Old Testament lasted until the days of John the Baptist. Of course, it is more accurate to say that the age of the Old Testament lasted until the birth of Jesus. But it is exactly when John the Baptist baptized Jesus that the prophecies of the Old Testament were spiritually fulfilled.

## Elijah to Come Was None Other Than This Man, John the Baptist

Jesus said in Matthew 11:14, *"If you are willing to receive it, he is Elijah who is to come."* This passage tells us that the very messenger of God written in Malachi 3:1 and 4:5-6 refers to none other than John the Baptist. Since John the Baptist was the representative of mankind, the greatest of all those born of women, this means that he was greater than all the prophets of the Old Testament. John the Baptist was a servant of God who was greater than any other servants of God such as Moses, Elijah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel.

When he came to this earth, he fulfilled his role as a prophet, and as the representative of mankind, he also fulfilled his role as the last High Priest of the Old Testament. It was because John the Baptist baptized Jesus in the Jordan River that all the sins of mankind were passed onto Jesus once for all. All the prophecies of the Old Testament, in other words, were fulfilled once for all through the ministry of John the Baptist and the ministry of Jesus.

Therefore, we must all realize and believe that the role of John the Baptist was absolutely indispensable to the work of the salvation of humanity. It was the ministry of John the Baptist that played the assisting role when Jesus Christ was fulfilling the gospel of the water and the Spirit. All of us must realize that it was by receiving His baptism from John the Baptist that Jesus fulfilled the prophecies of the Old Testament.

Insofar as God's providence for the salvation of mankind is

concerned, we must all know and believe, without fail, how profound this Truth is. What I am explaining to you here is the relationship between the ministry of Jesus and that of John the Baptist. By necessity, these ministries of Jesus and John the Baptist had to fulfill the will of God the Father in union. And had John the Baptist not testified Jesus as the Savior, and had he not passed the sins of the world to Him by baptizing Him, Jesus could not have fulfilled His ministry that blotted out all the sins of the world.

It is because Jesus was testified by John the Baptist as "the Lamb of God who carries the sin of the world" that we could have been saved from our sins by believing in it. This is how you and I could have been cleansed from all our sins today by placing our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

We can believe in the true gospel wholly when we believe wholly in the Scripture passage that describes who John the Baptist is. To do so, we should open the Bible to Malachi 3:1, confirm this passage with our eyes, and then believe that this messenger of God was none other than John the Baptist. Only then can we also confidently preach and explain the role of the John the Baptist and that of Jesus when we testify the gospel power of the water and the Spirit to everyone else.

Malachi 3:1 states, *"'Behold, I send My messenger, And he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, Will suddenly come to His temple, Even the Messenger of the covenant, In whom you delight. Behold, He is coming,' Says the LORD of hosts."*

Who is the messenger here in this passage? The Lord of hosts

said here that He would send His servant to this world, and in Matthew 11:10 in the New Testament, Jesus Himself bore witness of this passage of the Old Testament. When we compare these two passages with one another, we can see clearly that God's messenger is none other than John the Baptist whom Jesus Himself testified. Who do we think John the Baptist was? The very messenger of God, whom He had promised to send to us in the Old Testament, was the John the Baptist.

## The Ministry That Was Absolutely Indispensable to Blot Out the Sins of This World

Let us read the latter parts of Malachi 3:1 again: *"And the Lord, whom you seek, Will suddenly come to His temple, Even the Messenger of the covenant, In whom you delight. Behold, He is coming."* The Messenger of the covenant prophesied here refers to Jesus Christ. So the prophecy of the Old Testament was to be fulfilled by John the Baptist and Jesus Christ as they were sent to this earth according to the will of God the Father. This passage is related to another prophesy that says, *"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14).* Elsewhere in Isaiah 53:5, it is written*, "But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed."* This tells us that Jesus Christ, the Son of God promised in the Old Testament, would come to this earth and cleanse away all the sin of mankind as white as snow.

God continued to say in Malachi 3:2-3, *"But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner's fire And like launderers' soap. He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, And purge them as gold and silver, That they may offer to the LORD An offering in righteousness."*

Just as God had promised us with this passage, "He will purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer to the LORD an offering in righteousness," this Word of promise has actually been fulfilled now.

In the New Testament, as Jesus Christ took upon all the sins of this world by being baptized by John the Baptist and shed His blood, He accomplished our salvation from all our sins. This passage speaks of the power of the remission of all the sins of mankind that Jesus Christ actually fulfilled by being baptized by John and shedding His blood.

God said in Malachi 3:2, *"But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears?"* Who could stand against Jesus Christ when He came to this earth? Who could prevent Him from fulfilling His ministry that remitted away all the sins of mankind by coming to this earth, being baptized by John, and shedding His blood?

Once, people had seized Jesus and tried to kill Him by pushing Him over a cliff, but He went His way with great dignity passing through the midst of them (Luke 4:28-30). We have to know Him as the Magnificent God Himself.

Our Lord took upon our sins once for all by the gospel power of the water and the Spirit, blotted them all out with the power

of this gospel through His crucifixion, and will come back to take away those who believe in this. Who among the unbelievers, then, could possibly stand before God in this Day of Judgment? It is written, *"Who can stand when He appears?"* Only those who have received the remission of their sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit can stand before Him. No one else can stand before Him. If we stand before Jesus Christ on this day with all our sins remaining in us, we will all be destroyed.

Malachi 3:2 says, *"For He is like a refiner's fire And like launderers' soap."* Who is He here? It is Jesus Christ the only Savior who has blotted out the sins of mankind like a refiner's fire and launderers' soap. This passage is prophesying, in other words, that Jesus Christ would wash away everyone's sins by being baptized, and that He would cleanse everyone's heart by shedding His blood.

My fellow believers, when our Lord came to this earth, He took upon all the sins of mankind once for all by receiving His baptism from John the Baptist. And He carried these sins of the world to the Cross, was crucified, died on the Cross, rose from the dead, and has thereby saved us from the sins of the world and their condemnation. This is how Jesus Christ has blotted out everyone's sins. Jesus is the Savior who has at once cleansed away all the sins of everyone who believes in God, like launderers' soap. Just as our clothes are thoroughly cleansed when we wash them with soap, anyone who believes in the gospel power of the water and the Spirit can wash away all his sins, and he can be delivered from all his condemnation of sin.

Everyone who believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit will be remitted from all their sins to complete perfection.

Yet despite this, countless Christians still have sin in their hearts even though they profess to believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior, for they do not know the gospel power of the water and the Spirit.

Not all the nuggets of gold on this earth are pure gold. To turn them into 100% pure gold, they must first be refined. To do so, the gold nuggets are placed in a furnace and heated up with raging fire below. When the nuggets are thus completely melted, all impurities float above. Only when these impurities are removed with appropriate tools do the nuggets turn into pure gold; if they are not removed, then it is not pure gold. Likewise, just as these gold nuggets go through the refining process that removes all the impurities, it is because Jesus took upon all the sins of the world by being baptized by John and shed His blood for us that all our sins of the world were completely blotted out. It is by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that all of us can have our sins blotted out.

Malachi 3:3 goes onto say, *"He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, And purge them as gold and silver, That they may offer to the LORD An offering in righteousness."* This tells us that the Lord has purified the sons of Levi from their sins. Spiritually speaking, the sons of Levi here refer to the saints who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

The people of Israel were composed of twelve tribes: Jacob had twelve sons, and the descendants of these sons constituted

the twelve tribes of Israel. Among these tribes, the descendants of Levi were especially chosen to serve God as the priests who were entirely devoted themselves to the duties in the Tabernacle. So only these descendants of Levi could become priests before God. And God first cleansed their sins through the sacrificial system of the Tabernacle.

Likewise, in today's age also, God has enabled His believers to serve Him by first washing away all the sins of their hearts with the gospel power of the water and the Spirit, as gold is refined and as clothes are washed with soap to turn perfectly white.

God said in Malachi 3:3, *"They may offer to the LORD An offering in righteousness."* Our Lord came to this earth and together with the assistance of John the Baptist, He accepted our sins by being baptized, shed His blood, and has thereby blotted them all out. John the Baptist passed all the sins of the mankind to Jesus at once by baptizing Him, and Jesus Christ, by accepting these sins once for all by receiving this baptism from John the Baptist, dying on the Cross, and rising from the dead again, has perfectly washed all the sins of mankind. Everyone in this world who believes in God and in this gospel power of the water and the Spirit, irrespective of whether he is insufficient or not, can be completely remitted from all his sins by the power of the baptism and bloodshed of our Lord.

Because Jesus was baptized and shed His blood for us, He could wash away all our sins to perfection. By being baptized by John and shedding His blood, Jesus has washed away mankind's sins as if they were bleached out. Our Lord has washed away all

our sins as white as snow, just as clothes are washed with soap. Our Lord, in other words, has cleansed away all our sins once for all with the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Our Lord came to this earth and took upon our sins by being baptized by John the Baptist. To believe so does not imply that John the Baptist is another Savior to us. John the Baptist was the last prophet of the Old Testament and the representative of mankind, and he was the last earthly High Priest who was sent to this world to fulfill all the Old Testament's Word of prophecy, and especially the prophecy about the Elijah to come.

As John the Baptist, who came to this earth six months prior to the coming of Jesus Christ, gave baptism to Jesus, all the sins of this world were passed onto Him. Therefore, all the prophecies of the Old Testament about Jesus were perfectly fulfilled with the appearance of John the Baptist, the baptism that he gave to Jesus, and through the crucifixion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. When Jesus came to this earth, He perfectly blotted out all the sins of mankind by accepting them through His baptism. By taking upon the sins of the world, dying on the Cross, and rising from the dead again, Jesus has become our perfect Savior. Now, whoever believes this Truth can be saved from all his sins. And by thus becoming our Savior, Jesus fulfilled the will of God the Father to perfection.

We must all know the truth that it was through the assisting role of John the Baptist that Jesus took upon the sins of the world. All of us must realize just how indispensable of a role the ministries of John the Baptist and Jesus played for our remission of sin, and we must believe in this. Moreover, we also need to

recognize and believe that it was to blot out all the sins of mankind that Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist. We must believe that it was because Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist that He could shed His blood on the Cross, and thereby wash away all our sins. In the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the fulfillment of the prophecies of the Old Testament, and the providence of salvation that fulfilled the will of God the Father is found.

The gospel of the water and the Spirit entails the indispensable role of John the Baptist, and this gospel embodies the Truth that through this role of John the Baptist, Jesus accomplished all the Word of the Old Testament, and has thereby become, once for all, the perfect Savior for all who believe in this. Together with this role of John the Baptist, in other words, Jesus Christ fulfilled all the promises of the Old Testament. We must believe that Jesus, by being baptized, has washed away all our sins of the world and completely bleached out everyone else's sins, as white as snow.

My fellow believers, do you believe this? Do you believe that Jesus Christ has cleansed away all our sins of the world by being baptized and shedding His blood? Jesus indeed accepted all the sins of mankind and washed them all away by receiving His baptism from John the Baptist. With this baptism, Jesus accepted each and every sin of this world, leaving none behind whatsoever, washed them all away, and was condemned for all of them.

When Jesus came to this earth, He did not work all alone by Himself, but to take upon the sins of the world in fulfillment of all the Word of the Old Testament, He was baptized by John the

Baptist, the earthly High Priest. By receiving this baptism He accomplished all the prophecies of atonement in the Old Testament with His own body. It was by being baptized to accept the sins of mankind, shedding His blood, and rising from the dead that Jesus has forever washed away all our sins once for all. This is the very gospel of the water and the Spirit.

With this gospel of the water and the Spirit, Jesus has wiped out all the sins of every true believer clean. Through His baptism, Jesus accepted all the sins of this world without any exception whatsoever, carried them all to the Cross, and shed His blood to death to be condemned for these sins, rose from the dead again, and has thereby washed away all our sins as white as snow once for all. Do you all believe this?

In Matthew 11, when John the Baptist had sent his disciples to Jesus, He answered their question and sent them back to John, and then said the following to the crowd: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed? A man clothed in soft garments? Or a prophet? Yes, you will see My prophet whom I sent. He is none other than John the Baptist. He is the greatest of all those born of women. He is the representative of mankind. But he who is least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he. John the Baptist is the representative of mankind, but if he comes before God only with his righteousness, he is lesser than anyone of the born-again."

Jesus then said, *"And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force."*

From the days of John the Baptist until now, the Kingdom of

Heaven has suffered violence, and our Lord continued to say, *"The violent take it by force."* This passage does not mean that the mighty would beat up the guards of Heaven, open its gates, and force themselves in.

Now is the time that the gospel of the water and the Spirit has to show its full power. No one can enter the Kingdom of Heaven except the born-again who have cleansed all their sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit (John 3:5). Put differently, we can enter the Kingdom of God only by believing in this gospel ministry of the water and the Spirit.

This is why Jesus said that the time to enter Heaven began from the days of John the Baptist. Because John the Baptist passed all the sins of mankind to Jesus by baptizing Him, Jesus indeed accepted them all, and because of this, our Lord accepted all our sins, washed them all away, and bore all their condemnation on the Cross. Anyone who believes in this Truth will receive the remission of his sins precisely because he believes so, and he will enter Heaven by this faith.

What Jesus said here by no means implies that Heaven is a place where only the mighty in the flesh can enter. Far from it, He meant to tell us that only the people of faith who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit can enter Heaven.

People who do not know the gospel power of the water and the Spirit are doubtful of the passage from Matthew 11:12, which says, *"And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force."* They are perplexed by it, thinking, "Aren't the violent plunderers?"

When it says here that the Kingdom of Heaven suffers violence, this refers to our bold faith in the righteousness of God that enables us to take Heaven as ours. It is telling us, in other words, that those who have faith in the gospel power of the water and the Spirit can make Heaven theirs. It is by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit before God, and only by this faith, that we can turn the Kingdom of Heaven into our own. We cannot enter Heaven with our own righteousness. If we are to stand before God only with our own merits and demerits, none of us can stand upright there. However, when we put on His perfect righteousness by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we can then be bold enough to enter Heaven and stand before God (Galatians 3:27). Everyone who believes in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit can make Heaven his.

What about you then? Do you not want to make the Kingdom of Heaven yours, by placing your faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit? Have you believed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit until now? Have you believed in the ministry of Jesus and the ministry of John the Baptist to make Heaven yours?

Anyone who has not made Heaven his own has failed to do so precisely because he has not placed his faith in the gospel power of the water and the Spirit. You must believe in this Truth. The Truth that enables you to enter Heaven is none other than the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Faith in this gospel of the water and the Spirit is the essence of the Christian faith, for we are justified by faith and faith alone.

This tells us that because John the Baptist passed all the sins of mankind to Jesus by baptizing Him, and because Jesus

accepted all these sins through John the Baptist by receiving this baptism, He has blotted out the sins of all who believe in Him, just like clothes are washed with soap and bleached out. By being baptized by John and shedding His blood, our Lord has completely and perfectly wiped out all our sins, like they were bleached out. This is why everyone who believes in the role of John the Baptist and the baptism and bloodshed of Jesus as the Truth of the remission of sin is cleansed of all his sins by faith and can enter the Kingdom of Heaven. This Kingdom of Heaven belongs to the violent of faith, the possessors of bold faith.

The remission of sin is received through faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. And we can enter Heaven by believing that Jesus is God Himself, that He is the very God who created us, that He is our Savior, and that He has completely and perfectly blotted all our sins by being baptized. It is by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that we become God's children and sinless. Jesus and John the Baptist are the very ones who have made it possible for us to enter the Kingdom of Heaven by faith. Do you believe this?

For those who have sin in their hearts now, it is because they have no faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that they remain sinful. By and large, they not only refuse to acknowledge the gospel of the water and the Spirit, but they also deny the very existential significance of John the Baptist.

We need to realize here that to fail to know John the Baptist who worked with Jesus to pass our sins to Him, or to regard him as a failure, is actually the same as to deny Jesus and reject salvation. Such people still retain their sins even as they profess

to believe in Jesus, and they still believe in Jesus as their Savior only blindly. These sinners whose hearts still remain sinful believe according to their own subjective thoughts, and this is why their hearts have not been cleansed, and why they continue to struggle with their sins.

A while ago, I was once approached by a Christian group that denounced John the Baptist as a failure, all based on today's Bible passage. Their argument was that since John the Baptist sent his disciples to Jesus and asked Him, "Are You the coming One, or do we look for another?" this could only mean that John the Baptist doubted that Jesus was the Savior. They could not avoid but completely misunderstand John's words because they considered him to have failed, and this is why they made such a claim.

If one does not understand the role of John the Baptist and just how important his ministry was, he is bound to end up with such a misunderstanding. Had these people had even the slightest understanding of the Old Testament, and had they known that the ministry of John the Baptist was prophesied and written in detail in the Book of Malachi, they would not have reached this fallacious interpretation. The same goes for us, too. If we had not properly understood the role of John the Baptist and the ministry of Jesus, we could not have understood the gospel of the water and the Spirit, either. If this were indeed the case, just how gruesome would its consequences have been?

Some disciples of John still did not believe in Jesus as their Messiah to come. That's why John the Baptist had sent his disciples to Jesus so that they themselves would see who Jesus was, hear His Word with their own ears, and believe in Him and

follow Him. If one does not understand the ministry of John the Baptist, he cannot understand the true gospel, and if he does not understand this gospel properly, he cannot know Jesus properly, and as a result, he will ultimately drift far away from the Truth and end up incapable of believing in any truth at all.

This is why the passage in Malachi is so important. Of course, every passage in the entire Old Testament is important, but the Book of Malachi is particularly significant, because it prophesies the coming Jesus and the coming of John the Baptist, God's servant who would baptize Jesus. It is with this Book of Malachi that the prophecies of the Old Testament end.

After the Prophet Malachi, no servant of God appeared for over 400 years. It was after this hiatus that John the Baptist made his appearance. Where did he appear? He made his appearance in the wilderness. Having thus shown himself, John the Baptist shouted to the Israelites of his time, "Repent, you brood of vipers!" He was a servant of God who was clothed with camel's hair, and ate locusts and wild honey. John the Baptist was a true messenger of God.

All of you must have a firm grasp of the fact that John the Baptist fulfilled his role, which was to baptize Jesus. The prophesies about John was written in the Book of Malachi and the Book of Isaiah. Citing Isaiah 40:3, Matthew 3:3 states, *"The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the LORD; Make His paths straight.'"* As we have seen in these prophecies, it is written that John the Baptist would come to this earth, and that He and Jesus Christ would together blot out all the sins of this world.

Our Lord said in Malachi that He would purify the sons of Levi. This means that He would completely and perfectly blot out all the sins of all those who believe in the gospel ministry of the water and the Spirit. Our Lord was prophesying, in other words, that this is how He would make us give the offering of righteousness to God, and that He would make us take and offer this faith of ours, the very faith in the Truth that God has blotted out our sins, as our own offering for Him.

Jesus Himself said in Matthew 11:13, *"All the prophets and the law prophesied until John."* The prophecies of the Old Testament lasted until the role of John the Baptist was completed. The Old Testament prophesied how Jesus would come to this earth and how He would take upon our sins, and this Old Testament lasted until the days of John. As this John baptized Jesus and Jesus received this baptism, He took upon all the sins of mankind and has thereby saved us from our sins. As Jesus actually took away all our sins to fulfill all the prophecies of the Old Testament, the New Testament began to unfold. Therefore, it is when we believe in this Word of both the Old and New Testaments in one that we are saved.

Jesus continued to say in verse 14, *"And if you are willing to receive it, he is Elijah who is to come."* The Prophet Elijah whose coming the Book of Malachi had prophesied is none other than John the Baptist. There can be no doubt then, but it is only crystal clear, that we have to be rejoiced to accept the Word of this prophecy, the Word of the fulfillment of this prophecy, into our hearts.

Some people might then ask, "Where is this Elijah

specifically mentioned in the Old Testament's prophecy?" Let us turn to Malachi 4:5-6 for its answer. *"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse" (Malachi 4:5-6).*

When it says here, "Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD," it means 'before the arrival of the Day of Judgment.' So God said here that He would send this Elijah before the advent of the Day of Judgment, and in Matthew 11:14, on the other hand, Jesus said, "And if you are willing to receive it, he is Elijah who is to come." Both passages are speaking of the exactly same Elijah to come. Who is "he" that Jesus spoke of here then? It is definitely John the Baptist.

The Old Testament is all about the Word of prophecy and promise, and the New Testament is all about the fulfillment of this Word of prophecy and promise.

Just as God had promised to send Elijah, John the Baptist was born on this earth six months before Jesus was born. What is more, he was born by the amazing work of God's providence. John was not just born into an ordinary family, but he was born into the house of the High Priest. His father, Zacharias, was a descendant of Aaron (Luke 1:5). This means that John the Baptist himself also belonged to the house of Aaron the High Priest. Our Lord is the God who actually fulfills everything that He promises to His servants exactly according to His promises, and true to His faithfulness, He began His work of salvation

with the birth of John the Baptist, just as He had promised in the Old Testament.

In the Book of Leviticus in the Old Testament, God had promised the people of Israel that He would forgive their sins when the High Priest passed their sins onto the sacrificial animal by laying his hands on its head, cut its throat and drew its blood, put this blood on the horns of the altar of burnt offering and poured it on the ground, carried the blood into the Most Holy of the Sanctuary of God, and sprinkled it to the east of the Ark of the Testimony (Leviticus 16). God had promised that this is how He would forgive the sins of mankind.

Exactly according to this prophecy, Jesus Christ indeed came to this earth, accepted our sins by being baptized by John the Baptist, was condemned for our sins by dying on the Cross, and thereby blotted all our sins clean. By doing all these things, He has become our Savior.

"What did you go out into the wilderness to see? To see a reed? A man clothed in soft garments? Or to see a prophet? You are right if you went out to see a servant of God. There in the wilderness is the representative of mankind, and in this wilderness you will be able to see John the Baptist, the greatest of all men. He is none other than Elijah. I had promised to send you My servant Elijah, and this Elijah is John the Baptist. It is John the Baptist who fulfills Elijah's role. John is God's servant who enables all to enter His Kingdom by gathering them all to Me and testifying to them all, 'Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Savior who accepted all the sins of mankind, died on the Cross, rose from the dead again, and has thereby

saved mankind from their sins. He is the Messiah.'"

When John the Baptist came to this earth, he fulfilled two important ministries: He passed our sins to Jesus Christ, and he bore witness to our Savior. How amazing are these ministries? Through the assistance of John the Baptist, Jesus was able to fulfill the Word of promise. We can now realize that it was through John the Baptist that Jesus fulfilled all the Word of the Old Testament, that John's testimony confirmed just how Jesus could fulfill all this Word of the Old Testament, and that God has truthfully completed our salvation through the ministries of Jesus and John the Baptist. Through John the Baptist, we can grasp that he and Jesus fulfilled the promise of God. Do you believe this?

This is why when we preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we cannot leave out the role of John the Baptist. If anyone says that John the Baptist was a failure, or underestimates his importance, then he is neither a servant of God, nor one of His people.

My fellow believers, by being baptized and shedding His blood, Jesus has blotted out all our sins clean. You all probably know what is meant by bleaching, especially if you are women. When you do your laundry, what happens if you use bleach to wash your clothes? They turn sparkling white. This is called bleaching.

In pre-modern Korea, people used lye to wash heavily stained clothes. In those days, Koreans wore only white garments, so much so that Korea was called as 'a nation of white garments.' These white garments, of course, got soiled in time and turned

rather yellowish. They would then put these garments into a huge pot with some lye as bleach and boil them. After this, they would take out the garments, and wash them again with soap, beating them with a paddle. The garments would then turn as white as possible.

Like this, Jesus has blotted out all our sins as completely as possible, all thanks to the fact that He took upon our sins by being baptized by John the Baptist, and died on the Cross for us. He has wiped them all out, so that there is nothing more to remove. He has blotted out all our sins perfectly and forever.

This is how Jesus has become our Savior. It is what the extremely important passage from Matthew 11:1-14 is all about. When we actually testify the gospel to other souls, we often skim through this passage in a cursory manner, but I believe that you must have a detailed understanding of this passage for your faith to be strengthened even more in your hearts.

This faith that you and I have is truly precious. It is not just a handful of people in a couple of countries who have been born again through this Word. There are many souls throughout the whole world who have received the remission of their sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. All these people and we have likewise received the remission of sin by believing in the ministries of John the Baptist and Jesus. You never have to be ashamed of this faith. On the contrary, this faith is so dignified and honorable that we can all preach it without the slightest hesitation.

I can proclaim this Truth to everyone throughout the whole world with the utmost confidence. I can shout it out in a loud

voice to every pastor and every theologian in this entire world: "Everyone, no matter who, must know the gospel power of the water and the Spirit and believe in it."

We the born-again are not perfect in our flesh, but spiritually, we are the most righteous in this entire world. I believe in this. I believe that our faith is the greatest faith in the world and it has absolutely no defect. I believe that we are the spiritual Levites, and that just as the Levites had cleansed the whole nation of Israel by faith, we the righteous have become the High Priests and are giving the offering of righteousness to God to cleanse all the people of the world with the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

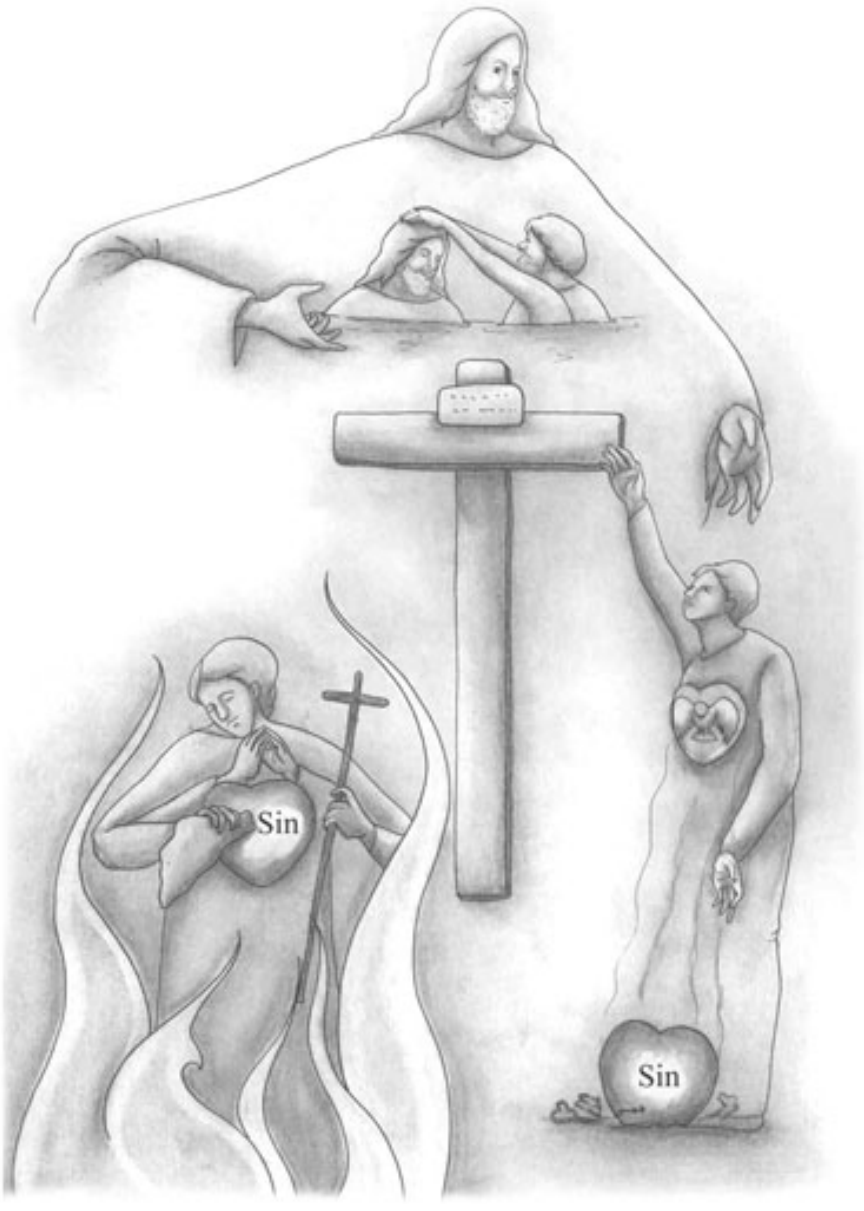
My fellow believers, do you really believe in the gospel power of the water and the Spirit? To offer this true faith to God is to offer Him our proper and pure offering. This faith in the gospel power of the water and the Spirit is the very faith that enables us to take Heaven as ours; it is this faith that can turn us into the instruments of righteousness; and it is this faith that makes it possible for us to become God's workers. This kind of faith is the very proper offering to God.

I give all my thanks to God for giving us such faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. ✉

# CHAPTER

# 12

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You can download Rev. Paul C. Jong's Christian Books to Computer, Tablet or Smartphone.

# Jesus Said That He Desires Mercy and Not Sacrifice

**< Matthew 12:1-8 >**

**"At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. And His disciples were hungry, and began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to Him, 'Look, Your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath!' But He said to them, 'Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him: how he entered the house of God and ate the showbread which was not lawful for him to eat, nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests? Or have you not read in the law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless? Yet I say to you that in this place there is One greater than the temple. But if you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."**

## Is the Sabbath Such an Important Day for the Religious?

Jesus' disciples were hungry on the way, and so they plucked heads of grain and ate them on the Sabbath. Seeing this, the

Pharisees denounced Jesus and His disciples. Their accusation was that Jesus and His disciples broke their regulations about the Sabbath. But the Lord said to them, *"Have you read what David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him: how he entered the house of God and ate the showbread which was not lawful for him to eat, nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests?"* And He continued to rebuke their flawed thoughts, saying to them, *"Or have you not read in the law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless?"*

The Pharisees needed to listen to the Lord's rebuke and had to turn around their way of faith according to what He told them. The Lord said to them, *"If you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless."* What our Lord said here is that He desires us more to seek God's mercy and the right faith than to have zeal for any religious rituals.

For the Jewish people, the Sabbath was an extremely important religious day. Just as Christians keep the Lord's Day, the Jewish people kept the Sabbath from the sunset on Friday to the sundown of Saturday. Keeping this day was very important for them, for to do so was to obey the will of God and His commandments. So as they thought that Jesus and His disciples took the Sabbath lightly, which they themselves considered it so important, they came to accuse them of unlawfulness. But the Lord said, "I desire mercy and not sacrifice." He said, "If you had known what My will is, you would not have denounced My disciples."

Regardless of how important the Sabbath might be for the Jewish people, how could it be such a great sin for the Lord's disciples to pluck grain heads and eat them out of their hunger? Although the regulations about the Sabbath were strict, how could it be wrong for someone to work to save the dying on the Sabbath day? We can all regard this as nothing wrong, for if we see from God's perspective, His mercy is greater than His Law. Is this not the case?

When David was fleeing and hiding from King Saul, there was a time when he was so hungry that he ate the showbread in the Tabernacle of Meeting, which only the priests were allowed to eat. The priests that served in the Tabernacle at that time gave the showbread to David to eat. As such, the Pharisees should have known that in God's domain, His mercy prevails over the commandments of the Law. They shouldn't have forgotten that the priests had worked for the remission of their people's sins even during the Sabbath. They should have also known, therefore, that when the priests worked in the Tabernacle during the Sabbath, this did not mean that they profaned it. Jesus told His accusers that even though the priests failed to keep the Sabbath in the Tabernacle, they were still blameless. Given this, Jesus argued how they could condemn His disciples as sinners for plucking heads of grain and eating them on the Sabbath. They surely could not do this. Our Lord's will is to bestow the mercy of God on everyone. It is not sacrifice, in other words, that our Lord wants from us.

Of course, that the Lord does not desire sacrifice does not mean that He does not want us to worship Him. In the age of the

Old Testament, giving sacrificial offerings was fitting, but now in this age of the New Testament, our Lord is saying to us, "Instead of having zeal for the religious rituals and commandments, you must believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit to stand before My presence. I have saved you from all your sins out of My mercy with this gospel." The faith that the Lord wants all of us to have is for us to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit given by Him, and thereby be remitted from all our sins and receive eternal life.

Our Lord has never, ever wanted legalistic faith from us, for He wants to bestow God's merciful love on us. We need to correctly understand the meaning and purpose behind what our Lord said, that He does not desire sacrifice but mercy, and believe in His Word properly. What the Lord is saying to us here is that He is more pleased by the faith that desires the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the God-given gospel of mercy, than any worship that is bound by religious, ritualistic, and dogmatic necessities. The Lord does not want us, in other words, to give religious and ritualistic sacrifices, but He wants us to receive the remission of our sins by hearing and believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and this is what pleases our Lord more. Therefore, by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we must receive the remission of our sins, become righteous, and live the kind of life that glorifies God.

Giving us His salvation through the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the gist of God's will toward us. The Lord does not want to receive something from us, but He wants to bestow His mercy on us. What the Lord spoke to us about is not legalistic

faith, but the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit; He is pleased more by the faith that believes in this gospel Truth; and, furthermore, this is the fundamental will of God. Our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the Truth of salvation that the Lord has given us, is what He wants from us and what pleases Him more than for us to faithfully keep the Lord's Day. This means that we must accept the love of God even more willingly, believe in it more, and be more thankful for it. The Lord's will is not for us to have zeal for legalistic faith, but for us to have the faith that believes in the great love that God has bestowed on us. We must realize that our Lord is more pleased by this faith.

The purpose of our lives of faith cannot be to keep the Law of God. Our Lord is pleased when we place more importance to believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit through which He has washed away all our sins. The Lord is, in other words, much more interested to see that everyone receives the remission of all his sins, and that all become God's own children. Put differently, the Lord is telling us to believe in God's love and mercy that have blotted out our sins through the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit. He is saying that this kind of faith is the blessed faith that believes in God's merciful love. This is the faith that pleases God. The Lord wants to bestow God's great love of mercy on us, and He also wants us to have the faith that believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the faith that remits us from all our sins and brings eternal life to every one of us.

## Would the Lord Be Pleased If All of Us Keep the Lord's Day Faithfully?

No. Had we been capable of keeping the Law of God to perfection even for a single day, the Lord would have said so. But this is not who we are; none of us could ever achieve this. Can you and I be confident that we would keep the Law of God faithfully? None of us has this confidence.

What is your understanding of the purpose of the Law? Did He give us the Law so that we would keep it faithfully? Or did He give it to us so that through His Word of the Law, we would recognize our sins and realize that we are grave sinners, and so that by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that saves us from all our sins, we would be remitted from all our sins? How have you been taught?

Fundamentally speaking, we are nothing more than masses of sin who were born with all the ingredients of sin through our parents of the flesh, and who are always and constantly committing countless personal sins (Mark 7:21-23). God gave us His Law through Moses so that we would recognize our sins (Romans 3:21-23), and by doing so He has led us to Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:24).

In short, the purpose for which the Lord gave us God's Law is so that we would believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, the very manifestation of God's mercy, and thereby receive the remission of our sins into our hearts. To lead us into the gospel of the water and the Spirit is where the purpose of the Law is found. Our Lord took so much pity on us that He came to

this earth to blot out our sins, was baptized by John the Baptist, shed His blood on the Cross, and by thus fulfilling all righteousness. It is by giving us the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit in this age and time that the Lord has washed away all our sins once for all. God is pleased, in other words, by those of us who have received this remission of our sins from Him through our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

## Our Lord Said That He Desires Mercy and Not Sacrifice

Jesus said, *"I desire mercy and not sacrifice."* We need to understand this passage properly and believe in it properly within the gospel truth of the water and the Spirit. Do you and I now have faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that the Lord has given us? We must believe in this true gospel, and we must love Him sincerely from the depth of our hearts. We need to realize, "The Lord has truly blotted out all our sins with the gospel of the water and the Spirit!" and thank Him for it. And we must believe in this forever.

All of us had been the kind of people who could never, ever keep the Law of God no matter how much we wanted to do so. So we were always insufficient before God, but for such people like us, the Lord has given us the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, and He has clothed us in His great love of mercy. Given this, how could we then insist on holding onto legalistic faith? Constantly ruminating the gospel of the water and the

Spirit, we should give thanks to the Lord more and more. Our faith must always rejoice in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. That the Lord has delivered us from our sins is God's great love of mercy. By saying *"I desire mercy and not sacrifice,"* the Lord is telling us that God is pleased with those who have strong faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, but dislikes those who only have zeal for their legalism. Now, because we have been remitted from all our sins thanks to the merciful love of our Lord, we are profoundly thankful from the depth of our hearts. This is why we the believers of the gospel of the water and the Spirit are also happy to serve this gospel.

Does this then mean that Jesus told us to neglect to keep the Law of God? Not at all! Rather, this means that Jesus told us to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. When we had fallen into our sins and could not avoid but be bound to hell, our Lord had so much compassion for us that He Himself bore our sins by being baptized by John, shed His blood on the Cross, and has thereby forever saved us from all our sins. This is why you and I need to have the kind of faith that realizes God's great love of mercy and thanks Him for it. This is the very faith that is clothed in God's mercy. And having such faith is what pleases God.

However, many people's faith is like that of the Pharisees, believing in Jesus neither as the Son of God, nor as the Savior who came by the gospel of the water and the Spirit. As such, like the Pharisees armed with only legalism, they stand against those who believe in God's mercy, and they live their lives of faith without even realizing that their faith is flawed. Nor do

they know what Jesus Christ truly wants from them, but instead they think that all that they have to do is just keep the Law of God literally, remaining oblivious to the fact that they are actually living their lives of faith in complete vain.

But Jesus did not say that everything would be okay if only everyone would just keep the Ten Commandments, such as keeping the Sabbath holy and honoring parents, and the 613 statues of the Law. Instead, by giving us the Law, our Lord has enabled us to recognize our sins and the result of our sinfulness. And to wash away everyone's sins once for all, the Lord has given us the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and He has clothed us in God's great love of mercy, for in His eyes, no one could ever keep His Law, nor was anyone fundamentally capable of achieving this.

Therefore, all of us must realize and believe that God wanted to bestow His great love of mercy on us, and by indeed bestowing this love on us, He has saved us perfectly. The Lord wanted, in other words, that we would be remitted from all our sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. This is how those who believe in the gospel love of the water and the Spirit have become the ones who believe in God's great love of mercy. And our Lord has accepted those with such faith in His love and made them God's children. It is those who come before God with such faith that our Lord is pleased in, and it is those with such faith whom He has made His own people.

To give us salvation, our Lord has given us the gospel of the water and the Spirit. I thank our Lord for His power: He has remitted away all our sins with the gospel of the water and the

Spirit, and has enabled us to serve our Holy God wholly. He has made us spread this gospel throughout the whole world. We must therefore remember this beautiful gospel that enables us to come before God, worship Him, praise Him, and glorify Him with joy and clean hearts.

## We Must Not Come Before God with Our Deeds Alone

If any of us were to come before God with his deeds alone, he would be no more than a hypocrite just like the Pharisees, turning into a sinner who would perish in the end. We must come before God with our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and with our confidence that He has given us the everlasting remission of sin. By believing in God's great love of mercy, we must accept the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit into our hearts, and by believing so, we must return our love eternally to God.

We must be always rejoiced to believe in the salvation of the remission of sin that God has brought to us. It is not from keeping the Law of God that we should be rejoiced. And you and I must remember that fundamentally, we cannot keep the Law of God, and we must hold onto only the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit as the gospel of our salvation.

You need to realize that there are many Pharisees-like legalists among today's Christians. Some Christians, even after believing in Jesus, try to establish their own righteousness

continuously by practicing legalistic faith, and are proud of it, just like the Pharisees. But the faith that the Lord actually wants from all of us is not like this. He is pleased, in other words, when we come before the presence of God by believing in the great love of mercy that the Lord has bestowed on us through the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

All that our God wants from us is to accept His mercy by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, receive the remission of our sins through it, and praise Him and glorify Him for the love that He has given us. We must all remember this Truth, and we must all believe in it.

The righteousness and love of God revealed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the mercy that He has bestowed on us. When this is the case, would the Lord be more pleased when you keep the Law than when you believe in this Truth? Of course not. We must understand the mercy of God properly, and by believing in Him, we must truly please our Lord. Between legalistic faith and the faith that believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we need to discern which one really pleases God. To have legalistic faith or to believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit—which of the two, in other words, is it to believe in God's mercy?

God is telling us that to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit is to believe in His mercy. He is pleased with those who believe in His mercy. Because the Lord's mercy is fully embodied in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, when we believe in this gospel Truth, we come to have the faith that believes in the Lord's mercy.

Every Christian in this world must reach the correct understanding of today's Scripture passage and believe in it properly. Each denomination may pursue its distinct purposes and faith, but the mercy of God must be believed by all. The Pentecostals seek after the signs and miracles that were manifested in the Early Church era, but this is all in vain, if it were not for their faith in God's mercy. Such faith withers away as soon as emotions pass away. So God demands spiritual faith from us, not humanistic faith that is based on our carnal thoughts and emotions. He is telling us that instead of being drawn to carnal faith, we must devote ourselves to believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, which is the embodiment of His mercy. You need to realize what kind of faith our Lord God demands from us, and you need to know and believe in His mercy. We must believe in the love of mercy that the Lord has bestowed on us, realize that God is pleased when we come before Him by this faith, and believe in His righteousness with our hearts.

Therefore, you and I must keep the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit deep in our hearts. The Lord said that the Sabbath is His day, and that He is its Lord. By giving us the true remission of sin to our hearts, the Lord has given us true rest. It is by the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit that the Lord has given us whole rest. Our Lord has given true rest to His believers, for He has truly blotted out all our sins by coming to this earth, taking upon the sins of the world once for all by being baptized by John the Baptist, dying on the Cross, rising from the dead again, and thereby washing away all our sins and

bearing the condemnation of all these sins. It is by our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that we can receive true peace of mind.

All of us must devote ourselves not to what our denominations seek after, but to the faith that believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, God's gospel. You must believe in this gospel Truth with your hearts, for faith is always personal.

We should not ignore the Law of God itself just because the Lord said that He does not want sacrifice, for the Law of God is also the Word that He spoke. While the Law itself cannot be the subject of our faith, it is God's standard that enables us to discern what is good or evil before Him. Therefore, we can recognize our sins whenever we stand before His Law, and need to remember the remission of all our sins to keep realizing the mercy of God that is embodied in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. As such, when we recognize the truth that we simply cannot keep the Law to perfection, and when we believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we can all be saved from our sins.

We were all bound to hell for our sins, and yet the Lord took so much compassion on us that He has saved us from all our sins by the gospel power of the water and the Spirit. By coming to this earth, being baptized, dying on the Cross, and rising from the dead again, the Lord has washed away all our sins and delivered us from them all. Therefore, it is by believing in the gospel love of the water and the Spirit, the mercy of our Lord, that we can boldly come before God.

If you still have sin in your hearts, then you must confess your sins before Him and profess your faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, saying, "Lord, I am a grave sinner destined to hell. But I believe that You want to bestow Your mercy on me in Your merciful love. By giving me the gospel of the water and the Spirit, You have washed me from all my sins, and I, in turn, also desire Your mercy." This is the only way for you to receive the mercy of God, and to live a blessed life by faith.

Our Lord has become our propitiation by coming to this earth in the flesh of man, taking upon all our sins by being baptized, dying on the Cross, and rising from the dead, and He has thereby saved us from all our sins. This is the very love of mercy that our Lord has bestowed on us. With this love of mercy, the Lord has made us sinless. By being baptized by John the Baptist and shedding His blood, our Lord has saved us perfectly from all the curses of His Law, and our destruction. We must desire God's merciful love by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The Lord Himself wants to bestow His merciful love on us and save us from our sins, and only when we believe in this love of mercy wholeheartedly can we unite with Him thoroughly.

It is my sincerest desire that you would all now come to know the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit and believe in it with your hearts. The Lord said to us, "I desire mercy and not sacrifice." Do you now understand what He meant by this, and do you believe in it? You must know and believe. God wanted to bestow His merciful love on us, which is embodied in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. By giving us the faith that

saves us from our sins, and by making us believe in the everlasting righteousness of God, our Lord has turned us into God's children. God wanted us to prosper in all things and be in health, just as our souls prosper (3 John 1:2). It is when you believe that the Lord has saved us from all our sins by the gospel power of the water and the Spirit that you can be truly saved. And by doing so, we can now become those whose faith is worthy before God.

What kind of gospel do you believe in it? Most Christians do not even realize that the gospel they have is different from the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Therefore, they can never figure out what the mercy of God is like.

What do you think the merciful love of God is? That God has bestowed His merciful love on us is as the following: According to the Law of God, we must all be sent to hell for our sins and suffer forever in its eternal fire, and yet despite this, God took so much compassion on us through the gospel of the water and the Spirit that He has clothed us with His mercy of salvation, which is far greater than the punishment of our sins. This is the merciful love of God. It is not because of our own merits that we have been saved from all our sins, but it is because God has clothed us with His boundless mercy of salvation. God has clothed us with true salvation through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, for He took so much pity on us. To believe in this Truth is the faith that enables us to receive God's merciful love. To believe in this mercy of God is only possible when we have faith in the gospel power of the water and the Spirit. And to believe in this power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit is

to believe in the true mercy of God. Yet in today's world, there are so many people who do not believe like this. There are way too many Christians, in other words, who do not understand today's Scripture passage even after reading it, and who are still mired deep in their legalistic faith.

## Unless People Believe in the Power of the Water and the Spirit, They Cannot Truly Recognize God's Merciful Love and the True Remission of Sin

Unless we know the power of this gospel of the water and the Spirit, we cannot know God's love of mercy. Unless we believe in the merciful love of God and trust in it, we can never be washed from all our sins. However, we see that many of today's Christians are still running toward Jesus Christ only to satisfy their carnal lusts. We see that they are thereby becoming the more grave sinners before God as days go by. And we see that their hearts have never been perfectly washed even for a single day, and that by coming before the Lord everyday while still remaining as sinners with their sinful hearts, they are hurting the Lord's heart. Therefore, we have to first believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and must never, ever forget God's mercy embodied in this true gospel, not even for a second.

It is my desire that everyone throughout the whole world would come to reach the proper understanding of today's Scripture passage, of what Jesus meant when He said, *"I want mercy and not sacrifice."* So I am telling you here that to reach

an understanding on this truth properly, you must believe in the gospel power of the water and the Spirit.

We must come before God by always believing in His merciful love. Because you and I are always insufficient, we must come before God by our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the love of mercy that He has bestowed on us, and we must praise Him, give our thanks to Him, and serve Him. We therefore need to realize that it is by believing in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit that we must come before God.

*"You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).* It is not because we have done something that the Lord has blotted out our sins. It is only because we have accepted the God-given gospel of the water and the Spirit into our hearts that we have become His own children by our faith in His works. We must never be deluded into thinking that we can pretend to be righteous by keeping the Law faithfully. We have no confidence in our flesh (Philippians 3:3). We must never trust in our own flesh or front our own righteousness before God. However, those who have not been born again all front their own righteousness before God, 100% of the time.

Let me illustrate this point with a story. There was a certain man in a country in Africa. This man was a Christian. His wife got pregnant, but his joy lasted only a short while, for he was told that there were some serious complications with his wife's pregnancy, and that both his wife and his baby could die as a result. So when the doctor began to perform surgery, he sat next to his wife and prayed to God, "God, if You would only save my

wife and my daughter, I will flog myself every year just like the Lord was flogged on His way to Golgotha." So he promised to do this for no less than 20 years. He made a vow before God, in other words, if God would only save his wife and daughter.

Miraculously, His wife and daughter both survived. The wife had given birth without any complications. So as he had promised, whenever the Passion Week came around every year, he took off his shirt and flogged himself on his back with a whip attached with sharp metal pieces. Piece of his flesh flew around as he whipped himself all over his back, with blood pouring out, until he reached a memorial place of the Lord's suffering. He had promised to do this every year for 20 years, but one year, he found it too hard to bear, as he bled too much and could not tolerate the pain, and so he gave up in the middle and returned home, failing to keep his promise.

So he then told God that since he failed to keep his vow, he would like to right this wrong by being crucified like Jesus when the next Passion Week comes around, and that he would thus fulfill his promise. And when the next Passion Week came around, he indeed crucified himself with nails, though they were not too thick, and bore the suffering, keeping his promise this time. He believed that his wife and daughters were safe because of what he did, and that if he were just to keep his vow for a few more times, he would be able to fulfill the promise he had made to God.

Such faith, however, is that of those who do not know the mercy of God. They try to strike a deal with God, saying, "God, if You do this for me, I will do that for You." This kind of faith

is flawed. Is God pleased by such faith? No, of course not. Is God pleased by something that we do for Him? Nor is this the case. Is God then pleased by the faith of those who believe that He has washed them from all their sins entirely on His own, or is He pleased by something that we do for Him? God is more pleased when we believe that He has washed away all our sins with the gospel of the water and the Spirit all on His own than when we do something for Him. God is pleased, in other words, when we accept His mercy in thankfulness and gratefulness with the faith that believes in the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit.

Of course, our virtuous deeds would please God more than not doing any of them. But we must believe that God is pleased by the faith that yearns for the love of mercy from Him by believing in the gospel of salvation. Trying to do something on our own without doing so, without even believing in the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit, is arrogance and pride coming from our flesh.

We must always believe in God's mercy, which is embodied in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, rely on it, and praise God for giving it to all of us. Though we have received the remission of our sins, we must always live our lives of faith in God's mercy, within the faith that believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Our Lord said that He is more pleased by our faith in the mercy of salvation that He has bestowed on us than by our keeping of the Law. It was to tell us this that He said to the Pharisees who had criticized His disciples for not keeping the

Sabbath, "It is not by keeping the Law that you can please God, but it is by believing in the merciful love that God has bestowed on you that you can please God." We need to understand what our Lord said in Matthew 12:1-8, that He wants mercy from us, not our motions of religious rituals. We must clearly abide in this gospel Truth and believe in it. But the Pharisees-like religionists are prone to emphasize God's Law only in their teachings time after time.

The Bible is like no other book, and so one cannot understand it unless there is the Spirit of God in his heart. There are people who have read the Bible for hundreds of times and have even memorized it in its entirety, but few of them really understand its meaning and have faith in His Word. Though they are good at memorizing scriptural passages, they have no idea what these passages are actually saying, and are completely oblivious to the true faith that is approved by God. But if they believe in the true gospel of the water and the Spirit, they can all reach a correct understanding on every passage in the Bible.

My dear fellow Christians, let us remember the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit that the Lord has given to all of us, and let us have faith in His boundless mercy in this beautiful gospel. By spreading the beautiful gospel of the water and the Spirit throughout the world, we must let everyone know about the mercy of God.

Hallelujah! I praise God who has given His boundless mercy through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. ✉

# Do You Want to Find out What the Blasphemy Against the Holy Spirit Is?

**< Matthew 12:9-37 >**

**"Now when He had departed from there, He went into their synagogue. And behold, there was a man who had a withered hand. And they asked Him, saying, 'Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?'—that they might accuse Him. Then He said to them, 'What man is there among you who has one sheep, and if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not lay hold of it and lift it out? Of how much more value then is a man than a sheep? Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.' Then He said to the man, 'Stretch out your hand.' And he stretched it out, and it was restored as whole as the other. Then the Pharisees went out and plotted against Him, how they might destroy Him. But when Jesus knew it, He withdrew from there. And great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them all. Yet He warned them not to make Him known, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying:**

**'Behold! My Servant whom I have chosen,**
**My Beloved in whom My soul is well pleased!**
**I will put My Spirit upon Him,**
**And He will declare justice to the Gentiles.**

**He will not quarrel nor cry out,**
**Nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets.**
**A bruised reed He will not break,**
**And smoking flax He will not quench,**
**Till He sends forth justice to victory;**
**And in His name Gentiles will trust.'**

**Then one was brought to Him who was demon-possessed, blind and mute; and He healed him, so that the blind and mute man both spoke and saw. And all the multitudes were amazed and said, 'Could this be the Son of David?' Now when the Pharisees heard it they said, 'This fellow does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons.' But Jesus knew their thoughts, and said to them: 'Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand. If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges. But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house. He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad. Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men. Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks**

**against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come. Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by its fruit. Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.'"**

## What Is the Sin of Speaking Words against the Son of Man?

From Matthew 12:9 and onward, we see a controversy emerging, triggered by Jesus' healing of the sick on the Sabbath. Prior to this event, we saw how the disciples of Jesus were denounced by the Pharisees for plucking heads of grain and eating them on the Sabbath. But in spite of their criticism, Jesus went ahead and healed many sick people even on the Sabbath.

The Lord healed a man who had a withered hand, and He also healed a demon-possessed, blind and mute man on the very day. As a result of this, He came to be treated as the ruler of demons by the Pharisees, as they accused, "This fellow does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons." The

Pharisees were indeed foolish men, for they did not recognize the ministries of Jesus Christ, as they did not realize that the Son of God would come to this earth as a man and heal the illnesses of both body and soul. This is why the Pharisees denounced Jesus as demonically possessed.

However, our Lord said to the Pharisees, *"If I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you,"* and He continued to say, *"Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men. Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come" (Matthew 12:31-32).* Jesus said that all the sins of everyone in this world can be forgiven, but the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit cannot be forgiven. The common theme underlying both verses is that "if anyone blasphemes the Holy Spirit or stands against Him, he cannot be forgiven in this world, nor can he be forgiven in the next world to come."

What, then, is the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit? We need to have a clear understanding of what this sin of blasphemy against the Spirit is, and we must make sure than we do not fall into this sin.

Jesus our Savior is the Son of God. This Jesus came to this earth incarnated in the flesh of man and has saved all sinners perfectly from all their sins and destruction, but we have a choice as to believe in Him as our Savior or to reject Him. It is possible for some to say, "I do not recognize Jesus as the Son of

God." And it is also possible for them to not believe in Him. Some may make an issue out of His birth and denounce Him. Moreover, there also are those who, because they do not believe in Jesus, do not hesitate to blaspheme Him. These sins are the sin of speaking against the Son of Man with words. But even all such sins can be forgiven if one would turn back from his sinful way of life, come to recognize Jesus as the Son of God, and believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

## What, Then, Is the "Blasphemy and Speaking against the Holy Spirit"?

Let me give you the correct answer first. The blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is not to believe in but to blaspheme the works of salvation that Jesus has fulfilled for us—that is, refusing to believe that Jesus came to this earth incarnated in the flesh, and that to save mankind from sin, He was baptized by John the Baptist and shed His blood. Those who deny or refuse to believe this Truth are committing the sin of blaspheming the Holy Spirit, and therefore they will not be ever forgiven. We must then recognize just how terrible this sin of blasphemy against the Spirit is. When our Lord was on this earth, He fulfilled all His works of the gospel of the water and the Spirit; anyone whose heart does not believe in what He has done for us and instead stands against Him is committing the terrible sin of blaspheming the Holy Spirit. Therefore, those who refuse to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit forever fall into

this sin of blaspheming the Holy Spirit.

Our Lord Jesus was born on this earth incarnated in the flesh of man through the body of a woman called Mary. When He turned 30, He was baptized in the Jordan River by John the Baptist, the representative of mankind, and through this baptism He accepted all the sins of mankind once for all. He then went to the Cross and was crucified to death, thus fulfilling all righteousness. By doing all these things, He has washed away all the sins of this world.

When He was about to be baptized, He said to John, *"Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness" (Matthew 3:15).* It is because Jesus actually accepted all the sins of the entire mankind when He was baptized by John the Baptist that those who believe can be washed from all their sins. It is because Jesus came as the Savior of sinners that He took upon all the sins of the world by being baptized by John the Baptist. Therefore, this Jesus who was baptized by John the Baptist shouldered the sins of the world, was crucified, and has thereby fulfilled all the righteousness of God once for all. This is the gospel of the water and the Spirit that God has given to us.

I said that "not believing in this true gospel" is the very sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. The reason for this is because the Triune God's salvation of mankind from their sins was achieved through this gospel of the water and the Spirit, and therefore not believing in this gospel constitutes the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. As such, those who do not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that we are preaching today,

but instead stand against it, are the ones who have committed this blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. The blasphemy against the Holy Spirit lies in the sin of not believing in what the Triune God has done for us. This sin is related to the kind of faith that does not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and therefore to the evilest deed. Such a sin is a mortal sin that can be forgiven neither in this world, nor in the world to come.

In Jesus Christ, God the Father had planned the salvation of mankind from their sins even before the foundation of the world, and He made Jesus carry out this plan. And as Jesus Christ the Son of God was born on this earth, and as He was baptized by John the Baptist to accept all the sins of this world before being crucified, He became the Lamb of God that carried the sins of the world. As this Lamb of God who bore the sins of this world, Jesus Christ has saved us through the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Today, even among those who profess to believe in Jesus as their Savior, we still come across many who commit the sin of blaspheming the Holy Spirit. They are so stubborn and foolish that they dare to reject the gospel of the water and the Spirit even after they hear this true gospel. But if they don't believe in this gospel Truth because they do not know it or have not yet heard it yet, then they still have a chance to be saved. The sins that people commit from their ignorance of the real truth of salvation belong neither to the sin of blaspheming the Holy Spirit nor to the sin leading them to death (1 John 5:16). By believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, all the sinners of this world can receive the remission of all their sins by faith.

But those who do not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit even as they know it cannot be forgiven from all their sins, for they have committed the sin of blaspheming the Holy Spirit. This is because only the gospel of the water and the Spirit has the power to wash away all their sins. If one does not believe in but rejects what Jesus Christ the Son of God has done for us when He came to this earth—that is, the fact that He bore the sins of the world by being baptized by John and shed His blood on the Cross—and if he not only rejects but also prevents others from believing and stands against the true gospel "even after hearing the Truth," then he is committing the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit that can be forgiven neither in this world nor in the world to come. In short, the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is the sin of willfully rejecting and denying the true gospel even after receiving the knowledge of the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit (Hebrews 6:4-8, 10:26-29).

## To Be Born Again of Water and the Spirit, What Truth Must We Believe in?

In John 3, Jesus said to Nicodemus, "When one is born again of water and the Spirit, he can enter the Kingdom of God and see the Father also. But unless one is born again, neither can he enter nor see the Kingdom of Heaven."

As it was to deliver sinners from their iniquities that God the Father sent His Son Jesus Christ to this earth to fulfill His will: God the Father had Jesus be baptized to take all the sins of the

world, and let Him die on the Cross while carrying the sins of the world, rise from the dead again, and ascend to Heaven. After completing the ministries of this gospel of the water and the Spirit, our Lord ascended to Heaven, and thereafter God has allowed the Holy Spirit to come into the hearts of those of us who believe in Him. Now, the Holy Spirit dwells in us, and leads us forever.

Like this, our Lord has given the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit to all sinners, and He has delivered all believers from all their sins. By doing so, He has given the gift of the Holy Spirit, along with the remission of our sins, into the hearts of those of us who believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit. All these ministries of truth are the ministries of the water and the Spirit, and they are the truth of the remission of sin that is condensed into this gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit.

As such, people must realize that unless they believe in the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, they can neither receive the remission of their sins, nor escape from the sin of blaspheming the Holy Spirit. They must avoid this by faith. It is because people do not believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit and disobey it that they are forever unable to receive the remission of their sins. This is because the Holy Spirit and Jesus are also God to us as the Farther is. It is because while this Triune God has come to us through the ministries of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, He is still the same, one God for us. Because God planned our salvation to deliver us from our sins, and because He fulfilled and completed His

works as He had planned to blot out our sins, anyone who rejects these works of salvation even after hearing about them is committing the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, and he can therefore never, ever be freed from his sins.

The Gospel of Matthew records what a disciple of Jesus called Mathew saw and heard as he followed Him around. For us to see the ministries that Jesus fulfilled, we need to read the Four Gospels first. Reading these Four Gospels, I am once again reminded of just how utterly amazing the Word of Jesus is. I realize, "The Word of the Four Gospels is truly amazing truth. Not only what Jesus did is recorded in them, but it is only when I try to understand them based on the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit that I can realize what Jesus really meant."

Unless one knows and believes in the gospel truth of the water and the Spirit, he can never grasp the will of God. Jesus said to Nicodemus that only the born-again could both enter and see the Kingdom of God. This means that unless one is born again by believing in the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God. To everyone in this world, I will continue to preach this gospel of the water and the Spirit, and to explain what kind of sin the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is.

Our Lord came to this earth and actually bore all the sins of the world by being baptized for our sins. Through His baptism, Jesus accepted all our sins, leaving none behind, and has washed them all away. All at once, He carried to the Cross all the sins of everyone who believes in Him, leaving not even the smallest of all sins. He was then vicariously condemned by being crucified

once, rose from the dead again, and has thereby become our eternal Savior once for all. However, those who do not believe in this gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit even after hearing it, end up forever falling into the sin of blaspheming the Holy Spirit.

## Healing the Illnesses of the Flesh Is Not God's Ultimate Purpose

Listen closely to what our Lord said that He would declare to liars in Matthew 7. He said that when many say to Him, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?" He said He would then declare to them, "I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!"

What is the greatest work that the Lord did when He came to us humans, and what is the greatest purpose of this work? It is His righteous act that has blotted out all our sins as white as snow with the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit to make us God's own children. This is the will of God. And the faith that believes in this is the faith that accords with the will of God. God's will is to wash away the sins of mankind and to blot them out with the gospel of the water and the Spirit, not just to heal the illnesses of the flesh. What is, after all, such a big deal about healing one's physical sickness?

A while ago, someone from abroad came to Korea to test the authenticity of the faith of those who claim to be able to cast out

demons in the name of Jesus and to perform signs and miracles. Putting up a million dollars as the prize, he promised to give away this money to anyone who could truly demonstrate his supernatural power. He made this promise publicly on a TV program. He had done this in the United States and Britain also, and now he had come to Korea to do the same thing.

When this man came to Korea and challenged all those who claim to hold supernatural powers to prove their claims, he was effectively saying to them, "Come out! Let's settle this issue once for all on a public arena. If you can really heal the sick and open the eyes of the blind by laying your hands on them, I will give you a million dollars in no time!" But the people who used to claim to perform so many miracles fell completely silent. In the end, no one rose up to the challenge.

Do you know the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit? Do you believe in it? The only true gospel that our Lord spoke of is the gospel of the water and the Spirit. However, so many Christians today profess that they can go to Heaven as long as they believe in Jesus as their Savior, even if they do not know the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit. Such faith is of the self-made gospel forged with the thoughts of mankind.

What the Bible talks about is the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and therefore if anyone says that he has received the remission of sin into his heart even as he does not know this gospel of the water and the Spirit, then he is only lying before God. The evidence for this is the fact that his sins remain intact in his hearts. Such people, no matter how they may claim to be able to heal the illnesses of the flesh with the power

of God, are all false prophets. Of course, they can do these as they want, and people may think that their works are the works of the Holy Spirit. However, God Himself will never approve their faith, but call them as hypocrites. Because their sins are still in their hearts, what they do is not the work of the Holy Spirit, but the work of Satan.

According to today's Scripture passage, what is the sin of blaspheming the Holy Spirit, and what is standing against Him, both of which are discussed in the passage? If anyone blasphemes the Holy Spirit and stands against Him, he can never be forgiven. This unforgivable sin is as the following: God Himself, our Lord, came to this earth, and by being baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan River, He accepted all our sins, all the countless sins that we commit throughout our lifetime, as many as the stars in the sky, as widespread as the morning mists, and as thick as the dark clouds. He then was crucified to shed His blood to death, rose from the dead again, and has thereby saved us all. The sin of not believing in this Truth is the very blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.

By thus being baptized by John the Baptist and thereby taking upon the sins of the world, by being crucified and shedding His blood to death, and by rising from the dead again, Jesus has perfected us to become God's own people by believing in this. It is those who believe in the baptism, death, and resurrection of Jesus whom God calls as His own children. And as the proof of the fact that God has saved all those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, He has given them the gift of the Holy Spirit. But before giving the remission

of sin, our Lord never gives this gift of the Holy Spirit into anyone's heart.

When Jesus Christ the Son of God came to this earth and fulfilled the ministries of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, if we do not believe in what He has done for us, but instead disobey Him by blaspheming His works or standing against Him, then we will forever be unable to receive the remission of our sins. This is why our Lord said, "Why do you not believe, when I came to this earth to give you the way of righteousness?" When Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist, He bore all the sins of the world. And by being crucified and shedding His blood on the Cross, He fulfilled all the righteousness of God.

It is written in Matthew 3:15, *"Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness."* Here, the word 'for thus' is *'*οὕτως γὰρ (houtōs gar)*'* in Greek, which means 'just in this way,' 'most fitting,' or 'there is no other way besides this.' And the words "all righteousness" in Greek is 'πάσαν δικαιοσύνην (pasan dikaiosune)*,*' which means the fairest state that has no defect at all. These words mean that Jesus took the sins of humankind onto Himself irreversibly and most properly through the baptism He received from John the Baptist, and that Jesus has given us the perfect righteousness through His baptism.

He is saying, "If, in spite of this, you do not believe in but reject this gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit, that I have blotted out all your sins, saved you from your sins, and made you God's children, then you will forever be unable to receive the remission of your sins. So never, ever, commit this sin of not believing in this Truth or standing against it."

## The Relationship between the Law and Our Sin

We need to consider here the reason why God gave the Law to us humans. Why did God give the Law to the people of Israel in the Old Testament, and why did He give the Word of the Law to today's Christians? He gave us the Law to play a mirror-like role, so that you and I would come to recognize our sinful nature and know the sins that are found in our hearts.

Our Lord commanded to all of us not to kill, and this means that we have murderous hearts. In Mark 7, Jesus said that out of the heart of men proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, and foolishness, and that human beings are born with these sins from their very birth.

David, after being rebuked by a prophet for sleeping with Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah, confessed in Psalms 51 in the following way:

*"Against You, You only, have I sinned,*
*And done this evil in Your sight—*
*That You may be found just when You speak,*
*And blameless when You judge.*
*Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,*
*And in sin my mother conceived me" (Psalms 51:4-5).*

This passage means, "I was conceived in sin and born in iniquity. But Lord, though I am such a man who cannot avoid but sin throughout my entire lifetime, if You say that You have blotted out all my sins, then I am sinless, and if You say that I have sin, then all my sins remain intact."

In Romans 3:20, the Lord said, *"By the law is the knowledge of sin."* The reason why God gave us the Law is so that we would come to know our sins.

The people of Israel escaped from Egypt led by Moses. As they followed Moses for a month to the land of Canaan, they came upon the Wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai. Then the whole congregation of the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness, and as they disobeyed the will of God, they suffered much in this desert. When they arrived at the Wilderness of Sinai in the third month since they departed from Egypt, God called Moses to the Mountain Sinai, and gave him the two stone tablets of the Law. And He made Moses read the Law to the people of Israel. These commandments of God and the statues that they had to keep were 613 clauses.

Why did God give the Law to the people of Israel through Moses? The Israelites had forgotten God during over 400 years of their slavery in Egypt. They did not really know the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. So by giving the Word of the Law, God had enabled the people of Israel to recognize and know Him. In other words, God gave the Law so that the people of Israel would know their sins.

What else did God give just after He gave the Law? He gave the sacrificial system of the Tabernacle. When a sinner committed iniquities and recognized the sin before the Law, he had to first bring a sacrificial animal to the Tabernacle to be cleansed of the very sin. He passed his sins to this offering of sacrifice by laying his hands on its head, cut its throat to draw its

blood, and then gave this blood to the priests. The priests then put this blood on the horns of the altar of burnt offering, cut the flesh into pieces, placed the flesh on the fire on the network of bronze of the altar, and offered it as a burnt offering. God then accepted this offering in pleasure. The Bible says that God was pleased to accept such sacrifices only when they were offered according to the sacrificial system that He had given.

To make them His own people, God had to first make them recognize their sins, and when they realized their sins, God gave them the sacrificial system in order for them to be washed of all their sins and become His people. The sacrificial lambs had taken and blotted out all their sins when they laid their hands on the heads of the lambs and the lambs were killed in their stead. As such, when we know our sinfulness before the Law, we can also receive the remission of sin by believing in the Lamb of God that has blotted out all our sins. This is the will of the Spirit of God.

## In This Age and Time, God Has Given Us the Gospel Word of the Water and the Spirit

Christianity must now return to the faith that believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit given by our Lord. Anyone who rejects or denies Jesus Christ without realizing Him through the true Gospel can be forgiven in some day. But those who do not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit but stand against it, even as they know who Jesus is, and how He has

become our Savior by taking upon the sins of mankind through His baptism and shedding His blood, are all committing the sin of blaspheming the Holy Spirit. Therefore, anyone who professes to believe in Jesus must believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. To reject this gospel is to perish.

Our Lord came to this earth, took upon our sins through His baptism, bore the condemnation of our sins, and has thereby blotted out our sins as white as snow, and turned us into the people of God. Now, all those who reject the gospel of the water and the Spirit even after hearing it are standing against God. We need to realize here that all such people will forever be unable to receive the remission of their sins.

If we were not to follow the gospel of the water and the Spirit, but to follow miracles and signs, then this in itself would be disobedience to the will of God. God would allow such signs and miracles when we were in need of them. But they are not all of the ministries of the Holy Spirit. Many Christians wrongly think that they can feel convinced of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit by experiencing extraordinary phenomena in their bodies—for example, having sudden fever or vibration in their bodies. However, the Holy Spirit does not work like this. Such clamorous phenomena, which have nothing to do with the remission of sin, are surly the works of Satan. The Holy Spirit works quietly according to the Word in the hearts of the believers in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

My dear fellow believers, in this age and time, with the gospel power of the water and the Spirit, we are healing everyone's heart from the illnesses of sin. Long ago, our

brothers once visited a hospital to bear witness to the gospel. On the third floor, where the general ward was located, they came across a woman crying in a room. When they greeted the patients in the room, they all said to them to preach the Word of God to the woman who was crying. So our brothers asked this patient, "Why are you crying so much? Is your heart hurt?" Still, the woman kept crying.

So, our brothers recognized that she had been in a serious spiritual problem, that is, in a situation of demonic possession. They prayed silently for the woman patient, "Dear Lord, please touch this sister's heart, caress it and heal it. Wipe away her tears and bring peace into her heart." When she became calm, the brothers asked why she was crying so much.

She then told them, "I used to cry so much at home that I was hospitalized for psychiatric treatment. Even after being hospitalized, I kept on crying for several days, and then my doctor told me, 'Please don't cry so much!' So I told him, 'If only you would send me to the general ward, instead of putting me in this psychiatric ward, I will stop crying.' This is how I came here."

Our brothers talked to her about sin, the vanities of our lives, God's merciful salvation, and eternal life God bestows on us. After praying again for her, they gave her a book of sermons that contains the gospel of the water and the Spirit and left the room. But when some of them returned to that hospital the next day, they saw something amazing. The woman told them that although she couldn't quite understand what the book was saying in its entirety, once she began to read it, her mind began

to clear up. She said, "When I read other books, I had such a bad headache. But when I read this book, I felt happy and my mind was at ease for the whole day."

Our brothers explained to her the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit again. She came to receive the remission of all her sins by hearing and believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. After a few months of spiritual nourishment, she testified just how happy she was to be out of the hospital, how her mental illness was completely cured, and how she was now healed from her sickness that had brought so much confusion to her and caused her to cry all night long.

My dear fellow believers, in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, there is the power to blot out people's sins. Whenever your minds are at unease, you should also try to listen to taped sermons that preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit, or read the books that contain this gospel. Your minds will then calm down. While you ruminate over how the Lord took upon our sins and how he washed them all away when He came to this earth, your minds will recover tranquility, and peace will return to your hearts.

The Bible says that the Holy Spirit comes as a gift into the hearts of those who have received the remission of their sins. It is written in Acts 2: 38, *"Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."* So, you have to know that the Holy Spirit is the gift that comes into the hearts of those who have received the remission of their sins. If, in contrast, you believe that the Holy Spirit would descend on you

just through your prayer or fasting, then you are only following a completely futile faith.

If you really understand the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit and believe in it properly, you will receive the remission of your sins at the same moment you believe in it. You will be given a new faith in this Truth, experience the transformation of your heart automatically, and your acts and deeds of preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit will also follow in due course. If we instead try to be good with our acts without even understanding the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, it becomes even more difficult for us to achieve this. You may think that it is somehow good for you to just attend church and give as much tithes as possible, even if this requires you to go into debt. But this can bring no benefit whatsoever to your souls, for this is not what the true faith really is.

Those who do not know the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit have sin in their hearts. They have no idea how to solve the problem of their sins. So they cry before God, give their prayers of repentance, fast, practice acts of penance, or try to do good deeds on their own. Deceptive, fraudulent pastors say to them that they should pray to God for their sins, and they keep insisting them to have blind faith in His unconditional forgiveness. But, frankly speaking, all these are to compensate the guilty sense in their hearts.

But without explaining the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, how could anyone be freed from his sins? True pastors are always preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit so that their congregation may have strong faith in the gospel Truth.

Once they come to believe in the true gospel, every spiritual question is then resolved on its own, and then the believers come to serve God and thank Him.

My fellow Christians, do you know what is truly behind speaking in false tongues? The false prophets actually *train* those who do not speak in tongues, as if one can somehow *learn* to speak in tongues. They teach their followers how to move around their tongues, insisting that they keep trying time after time, to utter 'Hallelujah' time after time. Once people continue to do this, their tongues eventually get all tied up, and they are no longer able to pronounce properly. Based on such mispronunciations, the false pastors then claim that their trainees have now received the gift of speaking in tongues. But this is nothing more than a lie. Anyone who had imitated to pray in tongues knows very well that it was all a lie, and that it was not a result of the Holy Spirit working. He knows that it was but an artificial product of his own self-deception, where he in fact only pretended to speak in tongues.

Is this the work of the Holy Spirit? When the Holy Spirit is, by definition, holy, how could He come into a sinful heart? When our Lord came to this earth, did He fail to blot out all our sins by being baptized and shedding His blood? He indeed blotted all our sins, and yet many people, even as they have the Word of the Bible right in front of them, neither know the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit, nor believe in it—this is why they are still lost in their sins. Many Christians do something really off the wall and deceive others and themselves, but you must know the Word clearly, be freed from such liars,

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

No one must commit the sin of blaspheming the Holy Spirit before God. This sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is the sin of not believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit even after hearing it. It is also the same sin to reject and disturb those who are preaching the Truth that our Lord came to this earth and has concretely blotted out all the sins of everyone, of the entire mankind in this world, by being baptized, shedding His blood, and rising from the dead again. None other such acts are what constitute the act of standing against God, and all such people will never be remitted from their sins, for by not believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, they have disobeyed the Holy Spirit. So we must never, ever stand against the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Now, many people throughout the world know the gospel of the water and the Spirit, believe in it, and are following the Holy Spirit properly. Many of them have come to join us as the volunteer co-workers for this beautiful gospel. They are fully aware just how they had been deceived by liars, and are determined to never be deceived again. But for many of them, God's Church cannot be found in the vicinity of their residences, and as a result they don't know what to do. Now, it is time for you who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit to gather together and to worship God together. God will then surely lead you all.

Be of good cheers! We will supply you the bread of life incessantly. This is why I started to write this spiritual growth series recently. First of all, I would like to explain to all of you

throughout the world what exactly each and every chapter of the Gospel of Matthew is saying to us. I will keep on with this precious task by writing sermon books on each and every Book of the Bible. And I want to have our books that hold the gospel of the water and the Spirit translated into all the languages of the world, to share them with everyone throughout this whole world and to nurture all believers. This is not something that I alone can do all by myself, but it is something that we must all do together with our partners.

To those who still do not know the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we must be like the watchmen who blow the horn. What do you think the true watchmen did before God? The Prophet Isaiah said,

*"Now it shall come to pass in the latter days*
*That the mountain of the Lord's house*
*Shall be established on the top of the mountains,*
*And shall be exalted above the hills;*
*And all nations shall flow to it" (Isaiah 2:2).*

It will come to pass that many people would come to know the gospel of the water and the Spirit, realize that this gospel is the real Truth. They will return to God, leap like a deer from thanksgiving, preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit with their lips from joy, serve the Lord in happiness, and praise Him from their overflowing gratefulness. If the Lord says that this is what will come to pass in the last days, then this will indeed come true without any doubt. And God is now working through us to bring these things to happen.

The Lord said, *"You shall know the truth, and the truth shall*

*make you free."* Here, the Truth is none other than the gospel of the water and the Spirit, that is, the gospel of our salvation (Ephesians 1:13). Living a life of faith without even knowing what the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit is saying is not living the true life of faith. If one devotes oneself to the religion called Christianity without even knowing the gospel of the water and the Spirit, he is committing idolatry unwittingly.

Throughout the world, there are many partners of our mission who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. I give my thanks to God for teaching us the Truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. We must all thank our Lord for enabling us not to commit the sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, for allowing us to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and for forever saving us from all our sins.

Halleluiah! ✉

# The Unforgivable Sin and The Responsibility of The Born-Again

**< Matthew 12:31-32 >**

**"Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men. Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come."**

What I have explained to you in my writing so far may have its limitations, but all that I have tried to explain in my books is the gospel of the water and Spirit. And I am sure that whoever believes in this gospel Truth will most certainly receive the remission of his sins. Our Lord said in Romans 10:10, *"For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation,"* and He also said in Romans 10:17, *"So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."*

Whoever believes in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit will be saved from all his sins and become righteous, without any exception. If you still have doubts about this faith in

the gospel of the water and the Spirit, then I admonish you to open your hearts once again and believe in it. All who really want to be cleansed of all their sins should first set aside their own thoughts and believe in the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit. All the sins of the world have actually been eliminated, because Jesus Christ took them all away by being baptized by John the Baptist.

Today, I will explain the sin of blaspheming the Holy Spirit. My fellow believers, it is precisely those who do not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit but blaspheme it, that are of those who commit this sin of blaspheming the Holy Spirit. This sin is so mortal that the Lord said that it would never be forgiven in this world, nor in the next world to come. So we must all have the proper understanding of this blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.

1 John 3:9 states, *"Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God."* This passage means that those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the gospel of power and of the remission of sin, do not commit the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.

In contrast, however, it is written in Hebrews 6:4-8, *"For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame. For the earth which drinks*

*in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God; but if it bears thorns and briers, it is rejected and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burned."*

It is also written in Hebrews 10:26-29, *"For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?"*

All these passages warn us that if anyone, even as he knows about the baptism that Jesus Christ received from John and His bloodshed on the Cross, denies and rejects this gospel, he is voluntarily turning himself into someone who blasphemes the Holy Spirit. When the Bible speaks about the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, it is the sin of refusing and rejecting to believe that Jesus Christ has saved every one of us through His baptism and bloodshed. Therefore, anyone who commits this blasphemy can no longer be remitted from his sins in any other way. Such people do not believe that the laying of hands on the heads of the sacrificial offerings and their bloodshed in the Old Testament were the same as the baptism that Jesus Christ received from John the Baptist and His bloodshed on the Cross. That is why they cannot receive the remission of their sins.

It is written in 1 John 5:16, *"If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin which does not lead to death, he will ask, and He will give him life for those who commit sin not leading to death. There is sin leading to death. I do not say that he should pray about that."*

The sin leading to death here is none other than the sin of unbelief that one commits by not believing in the baptism that Jesus Christ received from John the Baptist and His bloodshed on the Cross as his own remission of sin. In other words, this sin of disbelieving the gospel of the water and the Spirit is what constitutes the very blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.

Those who truly fear God all believe that Jesus Christ took and solved away all the sins of this world with the baptism that He received from John the Baptist and His bloodshed on the Cross. The Bible is warning that if you forsake this faith that is placed in the baptism and bloodshed of Jesus Christ as the Truth of the remission sin, you will suffer unimaginable pain and sorrow.

Even now, Satan is misleading countless people not to believe in the baptism and bloodshed of Jesus Christ, but you must not give up your faith in this Truth. The Devil is deceiving people with all kinds of trick so that they would not believe in the baptism of Jesus Christ. This is why the Bible says in 2 Peter 3:17-18, *"You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever."*

This passage is admonishing us to hold onto our knowledge of the gospel of Truth, that Jesus Christ took upon all our sins by being baptized by John the Baptist and bore our condemnation of sin by being crucified and shedding His blood on the Cross, and to thereby receive eternal life. Therefore, we must be very wary of all other faiths that reject the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit as the Truth of salvation.

What, then, must we do, once we receive the remission of our sins, to overcome Satan's deception and keep our true faith?

It is written in 2 Corinthians 6:14-16. *"Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: 'I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people.'"* Congruent to what we see in this passage, it is also written in 1 Corinthians 6:19 that the bodies of the righteous who have received the remission of their sins are the holy Temple of God.

In short, the righteous who have received the remission of their sins must not engage in the work of God together with the sinners who have not been remitted from their sins, nor can do they this. The reason for this is because the Spirit of God is not pleased by it. The righteous who have been remitted from their sins should gather together separately only with the righteous, and it is in this fellowship of the righteous that they should lead

their lives of faith, preach the gospel, and defend their faith.

We should not allow ourselves to mingle with sinners. For example, if people wearing white garments were to work in a coal mine, wouldn't they all turn black in no time? Like this, if the righteous try to serve the Lord's gospel with sinners, they will end up corrupting the real Truth of the remission of sin. If this happens to us, we will lose the gospel of the water and the blood, and deceived by Satan, we will fall into confusion once again.

Satan watches for every opportunity to make a prey of even the born-again when they are separated from their churches and their leaders. For example, as we've often seen in nature documentaries, when some predators stalk a herd of herbivorous animals, it is always those that fall behind or otherwise separate themselves from the herd that fall prey and ultimately succumb to the predators' attack. Just like this, it is those who fall away from the gathering of the righteous that will end up perishing.

This is why God the Father has established His Church on this earth by gathering those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Regarding God's Church, it is written in Matthew 16:16-18, *"Simon Peter answered and said, 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.' Jesus answered and said to him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it."* We must pay close attention to the fact it is on this faith in Jesus Christ as the true Savior that God's Church has

been established, just as Jesus Himself said to Peter.

Elsewhere in 1 Corinthians 1:2, the following is also written about God's Church: *"To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours."* The Apostle Paul defined God's Church as the gathering of the saints who have received the remission of sin. Put differently, God said here that His Church is the gathering of those who have been remitted from all their sins by their faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

And God also said in Jeremiah 3:14-15, *"'Return, O backsliding children,' says the LORD; 'for I am married to you. I will take you, one from a city and two from a family, and I will bring you to Zion. And I will give you shepherds according to My heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding.'"*

Just as God promised to us here, He has raised the born-again servants whose hearts are in accord with His as the leaders of the Church, and He has made them work in many ways, so that they would nourish the born-again children of God. Just as God said here, there indeed is His born-again Church in this world, and there also are His born-again servants. It is God's will toward the born-again that He puts up His shepherds in His Church to nourish and to take care of the saints who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit with the Word of Truth. This is how the saints grow strong in the Truth.

The Apostle Paul testified to his calling before King Agrippa, saying, *"I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as*

*from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me" (Acts 26:17-18).* God wants to deliver all sinners from all their sins through His Church and His servants so that they can inherit the Kingdom of Heaven and all His blessings by faith.

To become members of God's Church is the privilege of the saved. And we now have another privilege to preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit throughout the whole world in union with God's Church. When we are faithful to these privileges, we can lead the entire mankind to the way of new life. ✉

# Where Does Satan Want to Dwell?

**< Matthew 12:43-50 >**

**"'When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest, and finds none. Then he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when he comes, he finds it empty, swept, and put in order. Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. So shall it also be with this wicked generation.' While He was still talking to the multitudes, behold, His mother and brothers stood outside, seeking to speak with Him. Then one said to Him, 'Look, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, seeking to speak with You.' But He answered and said to the one who told Him, 'Who is My mother and who are My brothers?' And He stretched out His hand toward His disciples and said, 'Here are My mother and My brothers! For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother.'"**

## It Is Because the Religionists Have Sin That Demons Dwell in Their Hearts

In today's Scripture passage, Jesus said, *"When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest, and finds none. Then he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when he comes, he finds it empty, swept, and put in order. Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. So shall it also be with this wicked generation."*

Our Lord drove out demons from the demon-possessed and healed the sick. But here is the truth that those who do know the gospel of the water and the Spirit must realize. Demons can rest and dwell in the dry places, that is, the hearts of those who have sin. Those who don't have the Word surely have sin in their hearts. Therefore, when a demon is cast out of a demon-possessed person, he roams around dry places—that is, he roams around in the hearts of those who have not received the remission of sin—and then he returns to where he had been before, back to the heart of the sinful again, seeing that his heart still has sin and is all arranged to accommodate him.

In other words, the demon returns to and dwells in the heart of the man in whom he had entered before. Jesus also said that when this demon comes back into his house, he brings with him seven other evil spirits more wicked than himself, thus the last state of that man is worse than before.

In one of my past sermons, I had told you that some people

are puzzled, asking us, “Isn’t it your duty to cast out demons from the demon-possessed? Why then do you not drive out demons?” But we need to realize here that it is completely futile for us to drive out demons from anyone who does not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. As far as those who do not believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit are concerned, casting out demons out of the demon-possessed is absolutely useless, for these demons will not only return later on, but they will also bring in even more demons, and thus the possessed will end up suffering even more.

Therefore, it is absolutely indispensable for everyone to first believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit. If one comes to believe in this true gospel, he comes to receive the remission of sin, and to simultaneously receive the gift of the Holy Spirit as well. Only then will demons be no longer able to come near his heart, nor enter into him, for this heart now belongs to God the Almighty. But if people do not believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, demons can easily enter into their hearts and turn them into their own houses.

In these days, it is a common sight to come across someone performing exorcism on TV. But demons can enter into the hearts of the sinful at any time. Wherever there is someone who has not received the remission of his sins, if a demon decides, “I will turn this man into my house,” he can easily do this. Resistance is completely futile. Satan only laughs at him, saying, “How dare you to reject me?” He then slides into his heart and torments him, commanding, “Now you shall do my bidding!”

Demons are real beings. They are the servants of Satan, and

just love to dwell in the hearts of the sinful. So if the believers in the gospel of the water and the Spirit only cast out demons from the demon-possessed without first solving their fundamental problem of sin, it is no use whatsoever.

Just as we read in today's Scripture passage, our Lord said that if demons are simply cast out in the name of Jesus Christ, they will return once again. When a demon, after taking someone's heart as his own house and living in it, goes out for a short while and returns, he will bring in even more demons, and this time they will settle in this person for good. Conquered by evil spirits, this possessed man will turn insane, and unable to live as a human being, he will live in misery and futility for the rest of his life, only to die in the end.

Therefore, what we must do as the believers in the gospel of the water and the Spirit is not casting out demons from the demon-possessed, but it is to first preach the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit to them and enable them to be washed from their sins. Of course, this is not an easy job, and so we should gradually teach them about the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit when they are mentally stable. When we preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit to them, we need to explain it to them step by step with proper respect for them. Once the gospel Truth thus enters into their hearts, they will become God's children, for all the demons that had tormented them before will inevitably leave them behind and the Holy Spirit will begin to work in their hearts instead. In the hearts of those who have received the remission of sin, there is peace, for the Holy Spirit dwells in them from then on.

Yet despite this, those who have not even received the remission of their sins are trying to cast out demons from the demon-possessed. Claiming to have received power, they perform all kinds of things to cast out demons, but what they do amounts to nothing else but a show.

You should realize that for everyone, as long as he has sin in his heart, it is completely useless to cast out demons from him. For you to never again be deceived by liars, you have to hold onto this knowledge of the Truth and have strong faith in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit. Unless you have such faith and knowledge, you will end up being possessed by evil spirits.

## Demons Go through Dry Places, Seeking Rest

In whose hearts do demons work? They work in the hearts of those who have not received the remission of their sins. Put differently, it is in those who do not have the gospel of the water and the Spirit in their hearts that demons are now working. If your hearts are occupied by demons and you want to be freed from them, believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit with your hearts. Surely, Satan will then no longer be able to rule over your souls, and the Spirit of God will instead reign in your hearts.

Do you have faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit in your hearts? If yes, the Holy Spirit dwells in your hearts now. But in all those who do not believe in this gospel, there is

neither the Word of God that has remitted away their sins, nor the Holy Spirit, even though they may profess to believe in Jesus. This is the difference between those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and those who do not. The difference between those who have the Holy Spirit in their hearts and those who do not is the result of whether they believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit or not.

This is why demons are able to enter into those who don't have the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit. As evil spirits can enter into the hearts of those who have not received the remission of sin, they can take them as the instruments of their evil work. As demons are controlling the thoughts and will of sinners, we can see and hear much about the evil works that are perpetuated by demons in the people of the whole world.

I told you that my mind was possessed by a demon before. At that time, my heart had no faith in the gospel of Word of the water and the Spirit. Back then, I had known and believed in only the blood of the Cross. So through my personal sins, a demon was able to settle in my heart. He could come into me even as I rejected him. Of course, he failed to rule over me completely, but he was able to control me to a considerable extent. I drove this demon out, saying, "In the name of Jesus Christ I command you, get out Satan!"

But what we need to realize here is that before believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, no one could be freed from Satan. One must therefore know and believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Unless people receive the Holy Spirit, the Almighty One, demons will return back into the hearts of

sinners. And when they return, they will bring in even more demons, and this time they will occupy their victims completely, turn them into Satan's servants, make them do insane things, and end up ruining them totally. This is Satan's work.

## Who Is Dwelling in the Hearts of Those Who Believe in the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit?

What is so great for you and I who now believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit is that as long as this gospel is found in our hearts, we do not have to be messed around by such demonic schemes. We the believers in the gospel of the water and the Spirit may be insufficient in our flesh, but we are not toyed around by demons. How fortunate is this? We are indeed all extremely blessed. The difference between those who have the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit in their hearts and those who do not is that while the former do not have to be preyed upon by demons, the latter fall prey to them.

If the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit is in your hearts, then you are sinless, for the Word with which our Lord has blotted out all our sins is found in you. And because you are without sin, the Holy Spirit can come into your hearts, and you can also live in the midst of God's love and blessings as His own children. In contrast, if the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit is not in your hearts, then there is no remission of sin, nor can you become God's children, nor is there Holy Spirit in your hearts, but only demons. If you do not have faith in this

true gospel, then you are turning yourselves into empty houses without owners that can be entered and dwelt by anyone. Demons can enter such empty houses and turn them into their own houses.

How can we then have God's gift of the Holy Spirit in our hearts? Your hearts are vessels that can hold everything. As vessels, you may hold good things, or just as equally you may hold bad things also. But for us to put the Spirit of God in our hearts, we must first receive the remission of our sins by believing in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit. We who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit are vessels that can hold the Spirit of God. You need to realize here that everyone is a vessel that can hold the Spirit of God by receiving the remission of his sin. Therefore, if we want to invite the Holy Spirit into our hearts, then our hearts must have faith in the Word of the water and the Spirit.

When our Lord came to this earth and was baptized, He took upon all our sins once for all. Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River for our sins, and we must believe that when He received this baptism all our sins were passed onto the head of the baptized Jesus. And our hearts must have the Word of God, which is telling us that Jesus shouldered the sins of the world, shed His blood and died on the Cross, rose from the dead, and has thereby forever saved us from all our sins. This gospel of the water and the Spirit is the powerful gospel that disables Satan from threatening us. This is why those who have the Word of the water and the Spirit in their hearts are happy, while those who do not have this Word are bound to be seized by Satan.

We see that many Christians in this world believe in Christianity only as one of the many religions of the world, and as a result, they have been captured and enslaved by demons. When demons are cast out of the demon-possessed, they sing praise in joy. But what happens when time goes by? We see that the demon-possessed end up with even more demons. Surprisingly, there are many more demon-possessed people among Christians.

## We Must Realize That It Is in the Hearts of the Sinful That Demons Dwell

Therefore, we need to examine our hearts to see whether or not we really believe in the Word of the water and the Spirit, and we must all believe in this true gospel. Surely, we should have faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit in our hearts. You need to realize that it is when you do not have this faith in the gospel Truth that you can be possessed by demons. Remember that if you do not have this Word, even as you profess to believe in Jesus, sooner or later you will be captured by demons and do their bidding. You don't want this to happen, do you? If not, then believe in the Word of the water and the Spirit.

However, for those whose hearts do not have the Word of the water and the Spirit, demons may leave them, but they will eventually come back in again. Jesus said that demons seek dry places for their dwellings. The dry places here imply the

deserted hearts of sinners who don't have the Word of God.

My fellow believers, you are safe if the Word of the water and the Spirit, the Word of the remission of sin, is found in your hearts. But if this Word is not there, demons can take your hearts as their own houses. Such demonic acts cannot be stopped. The Lord therefore said that everyone in this world would all be possessed by demons later on (Matthew 12:45). He said that everyone except the believers in the gospel of the water and the Spirit would be subjugated by demons.

Do you know what is spiritual? For you to be spiritual is to have faith in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit. Uttering gibberish to pretend to speak in tongues is not being spiritual. Healing illnesses and speaking in tongues is not to be spiritual, but it is those who understand the Word of God, know and believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, pray to the Lord whenever they need help, and live their lives for the righteousness of God that are truly spiritual people. Do you now realize this?

Do you believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit wholeheartedly? If your hearts have no faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, then you have to repent, and believe with your hearts that this gospel is the only Truth.

If you are possessed by demons, you have to do all their biddings; you'll have to get naked if this is what they command you to do. Do you find this hard to believe? The demon-possessed cannot help but do exactly what their demons command them to do. They must do the demons' bidding because it is the demons that are their masters. The weak cannot

avoid but do what the strong command them to do. Therefore, if you do not want to be subjected to such humiliation, you must hold onto the gospel of the water and the Spirit with your hearts, and you must believe in it.

Can you see God with your eyes? God is unseen by our eyes, but anyone can still believe in Him. Even the demon-possessed believe that God is alive. But they are still possessed by demons because they do not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, even as they believe in God.

As Jesus said here in today's Scripture passage, it is into the hearts of those who do not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that demons enter. This is why we must all believe in the Word of God. You and I must hold the gospel of the water and the Spirit in our hearts. We must hold the Word of God in our hearts, and we must always reaffirm that God has blotted out all our sins with the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Whenever Satan accuses us of our insufficiencies and torments us, we must stand firm by professing our strong faith in the Truth, saying, "The Lord has saved me through the gospel of the water and the Spirit." We must confess that we believe that our Lord came to this earth, took upon all our sins by being baptized by John the Baptist, carried the sins of this world to the Cross, shed His blood and died on it, rose from the dead again, and is now sitting at the right hand of the throne of God the Father. And we have to rebuke Satan for his trickery whenever he tries to destroy our faith, saying, "When the Lord has saved me from all my sins, how dare you to accuse me! I command you in the name of Jesus Christ! Away from me, Satan!" We

must all have this kind of faith.

No demon can enter into anyone who holds the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit in his heart. It is when you do not hold this powerful gospel in your hearts that demons can enter into your hearts. This is why we must spread the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit.

Many of you may have thought that simply casting out demons from the possessed is good in and of itself, but you must realize for sure that such an act is absolutely useless. It is completely useless to just cast out demons when they still remain unable to receive the remission of their sins, because demons will return to them at any time.

Even the possessed do not always go into seizure. Put differently, they are sane all day except when they go into seizure from time to time. Therefore, we can teach the knowledge of the gospel of the water and the Spirit to the demon-possessed while they are mentally sane. When the demon-possessed thus accept the Word of God and believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, they will be finally and completely freed from their tormentors, for demons can no longer stay in the hearts of those who have been born again of the water and the Spirit, no matter how hard they might try. Moreover, Satan can never again enter into their hearts, ever again.

We have seen two truths in the Word of God. We have seen the work of demons that is actually unfolding in this age, and we have seen the powerful work of the God-given gospel. God has told us and enabled us to know how we should minister against

the trickery of Satan.

It is my hope and prayer that you would all become the saints who remember the Word of God, hold onto the Word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit in the heart and believe in it, and wait upon the Lord's return. ✉

# CHAPTER

# 13

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# The Parable of The Four Kinds of Fields

**< Matthew 13:1-9 >**

**"On the same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the sea. And great multitudes were gathered together to Him, so that He got into a boat and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying: 'Behold, a sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them. Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth. But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them. But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!'"**

Today's Word of God comes from Jesus' parable of a sower. I would like to explain this passage by focusing its message on the believers in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

There comes a series of parables in Matthew 13. The parables that our Lord told explained the spiritual realm by illustrating it with practical physical matters, so that it may be easier for

people to understand. With His parables, Our Lord, in other words, mainly explained the mysteries of His Kingdom in connection with the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

In today's Scripture passage, four kinds of fields are mentioned: the wayside, the stony places, the thorny field, and the good ground. The parable says that a sower went out to sow, and that the seeds fell upon these four kinds of field.

## The First Thing to Consider Is the Seed That Fell by the Wayside

What does it mean when it says here that some seed fell by the wayside? This means that the Word of God fell on the hearts of the religionists, and that God's gospel Word of the water and the Spirit has become utterly insignificant for all the religionists of the world.

People worship the gods of their own making. They have made gods, but they have come to be subjected to such man-made gods later. Countless people living in this world are worshipping the objects of their idolatry that they themselves have made. We call this weird realm of human culture "religion."

Especially in ancient Eastern culture, pantheism is the main institutionalized religious form. Those who hold this belief turn everything into the objects of their worship on their own, and so every creature can be a deity under this belief. In fact, such phenomena can be found in almost all primitive cultures.

Friedrich Nietzsche insisted that the origin of religion was "the fear of death." As far as the realm of religion is concerned, his assertion seems right. Humans have made whatever they fear as their gods. Whatever is big, strong, mystical, or long lasting could be made a god by the mortal human beings. In other words, they just take whatever looks great or mysterious to them as the object of their worship. Sometimes, animals or plants are given various significances, and they are frequently considered to be worthy of worship. So even a large boulder can become one's object of worship, not to mention big trees, the sun, the ocean, or anything else that God ever created.

This is because humans were created to worship God, their Creator. But after the fall of Adam, they were separated from God and lost the knowledge of how to worship Him properly. Because all human beings have been separated from God, they all have a desire to rely on something supernatural, and to return to God. This is why when they see the sun, they believe in it as the object of their worship, and they make their wishes on it. And some people also believe in the ocean as a divine object. When tidal waves and storms ravage in the seas, people think that the god of the ocean is angry, and so they take it as the object of their adulation and worship it.

All things in the entire universe are no more than the creation of God's making. Yet despite this, people have not ceased to take every creature as the object of their worship and serve it, regardless of what age they are living in. We can all realize from this just how feeble and corrupt man's thoughts are. It is written in Romans 1:21-23, *"Because, although they knew God, they*

*did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man--and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things."*

Because people's minds are so confused by religion, they remain unable to draw any benefit for their souls from the God-sown Word of Truth. The Word of life that fell by the wayside brought no benefit to them. Before we met Jesus Christ, we, too, had taken everything as the object of our idolatry and practiced this idolatry. People are capable of taking anything as the object of their worship and place their faith in it, whatever it may be, as long as they think that it would benefit their flesh. It is because these superstitious people have been steeped deep in their own religious beliefs that they consider everything as the object of their worship.

Even today, there are nations full of such superstitious religions, and one of them is Mongolia. I actually had a mission trip to this country. In my travel there, I visited a professor's home, and there I saw a portrait of the crucified Jesus on one wall, and on the other wall I saw another portrait of Buddha meditating. In other words, the same house had both a portrait of Jesus and a portrait of Buddha hung on its walls. This man was not an uneducated man; on the contrary, he was an intellectual who taught at a university as a professor. Yet despite this, he believed in both Christianity and Buddhism. This episode illustrates just how deeply so many of today's people are steeped in the culture of idolatry.

## The Seed That Fell on Stony Places

Continuing with His parable, our Lord said that the second batch of seeds fell on stony places. Our Lord said, *"Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth. But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away."*

A field must have plentiful soil. Seeds fall on stony places cannot take roots deep in the ground because of the stones, and will ultimately wither away in no time for the buds cannot be nourished by their roots. Therefore, what our Lord found problematic with the second field is stones. The stones that were in this field were great obstacles for the seeds to grow.

Those of us who do not recognize that they were the seeds of evildoers will all end up like this. When the seed of life is sown in the field of our hearts, we must accept the Word of God, acknowledge the truthfulness of this Word, and thereby be saved from all our sins. However, that the seeds fell on stony places means that the gospel of the water and the Spirit fell on the hearts of those who are filled with their own carnal thoughts. This passage tells us that what leads our souls to death is our carnal thought that prevent the Word of God from planting its roots deep into our hearts. Therefore, as there is no depth of earth, they end up withering away.

It is difficult for you and I to reach an understanding of our fundamental nature. We are prone to be ignorant of who we really are. It is very hard for us to realize that we are *"a brood of*

*evildoers" (Isaiah 1:4).* The Lord said that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually (Genesis 6:5). Put differently, nothing from our thoughts has any worth at all. The seeds that fall on stony places show us that those who fail to admit their true selves cannot be delivered from their sins in the end, for they cannot accept these seeds deep into their hearts due to their ignorance of their true selves.

People are inclined to trust in and rely on their own thoughts (reason) than in the Word of God, rather than placing their fundamental faith and trust in God's Word. They assign more weight to their own religious and personal experiences than to believing in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit. Before God, to rely on our own thoughts constitutes the sin of standing against Him. If people want the seeds of the gospel of the water and the Spirit to be sown in the field of their hearts, they must honestly admit their evil and hideous selves before the Word and accept the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit into their hearts.

Even among us, the born-again, there are many who don't deny their own thoughts that stand against God's Words. We must acknowledge the reality of our thoughts. We can then break and cast them aside from our hearts and come to place our faith more on the Word of God.

This passage also reminds us what our spiritual condition had been at that time when we first heard the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit. At that time, most of us had the hearts of stony places. We didn't know enough what evil beings we were.

And we had our own righteousness and standards instead. But, once we admitted our sinful nature and confessed our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we came to know gradually how evil we were. However, our hearts' condition can likewise be stony places even after the Lord gave us the gospel of the water and the Spirit, if we have not broken our hearts' righteousness.

Now, as the way for you and I to live, we must fully acknowledge our true sinful selves and accept the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit into our hearts by believing in it. However, if we don't admit that we are fundamentally the brood of evildoers, it is useless even if the gospel of the water and the Spirit comes to us. In other words, we must realize that we are piles of sin, and that we are sinners bound to hell; and we must hold onto the gospel of the water and the Spirit by faith to be saved from all our sins.

We need to once again reflect upon how our hearts were when we first believed in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit. As I said before, many of us didn't know enough what evil beings we were when we first met the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Among the believers in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, there are many who consider themselves to have innocent and good hearts, and yet they come to be astonished at their evil aspects and fall into despair whenever they discover this in time. Even so, they would have been safe had they kept on holding onto the gospel power of the water and the Spirit by faith.

But because they did not realize their own evilness and did

not fully recognize the gospel power of the water and the Spirit from the very beginning, they couldn't receive the remission of sin. Because they thought that their own righteousness was better than the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit given by the Lord, they did not surrender themselves to the righteousness of this gospel. Those who do not know their own evilness hold themselves to be more righteous than the Lord, and so they cannot follow Him. That's why they became the nominal Christians whose faith cannot be approved by God.

When a farmer plows his field deeply, the stones in the soil expose themselves on earth. Likewise, a gospel preacher must first plow the field of people's hearts deeply with God's Word in order to let them know how evil they are. Everyone can admit himself as a seed of evildoer only when he is taught what the Bible says about his fundamental nature. If preachers fail to let people know their evilness, it is then of no use to preach them the gospel of the water and the Spirit. If so, they are unable to admit that the salvation of our Lord is more powerful than their own wickedness. This is why they are unable to discover their own evilness and ultimately end up with their dead faith.

Therefore, a sower must first plow the field of the heart sufficiently, and then sow the seeds of the gospel of salvation in these plowed hearts. Paul said, *"But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more" (Romans 5:20).* What does this passage mean? This means that one comes to realize God's grace to the extent that he knows about his evilness. Therefore, if people acknowledge this gospel without knowing their wickedness nor admitting it, the true gospel will be turned into nothing in their

hearts.

Therefore, all of us must admit that we could not avoid but sin from the day of we were born to the day we die. Is this not the case? From the moment we were born in this world, we inherited sin and have been sinning ever since then.

Yet despite this, thanks to the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we can still say before God that we have no sin by faith. This is because we have clearly realized our own wickedness first, and along with this realization, we have recognized that the gospel power of our Lord is far greater than our own evilness. Even now, those who know their own wickedness can be clothed in the God-given remission of sin by placing their faith in the gospel power of the water and the Spirit. As such, everyone who believes in Jesus as his Savior must first admit that his true self is fundamentally wicked, insufficient, and unclean, and then he must always acknowledge the power of the gospel Truth.

We must never forget that the evilest of all is he who does not admit his wicked self before God, flaunts his own righteousness, and therefore, does not believe in the gospel Truth of salvation. Everyone must first admit all his wickedness and acknowledge himself as a pile of sin and a seed of evildoer from the moment he believes in Jesus.

Before we first heard the Truth of atonement that has enabled us to be remitted from all our wickedness and sins, we had to admit our hideous selves and all our sins. But, because most people failed do so, and did not place their faith in the love and salvation of God, they could not but fail to attain their salvation.

In other words, anyone who does not admit to God that he is a pile of sin eventually come to reject his salvation, hold onto his own goodness, and ultimately fail to trust in the righteousness of our Lord and to follow it.

If we really want to have faith in the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit, we must first admit to God that we are piles of sin, and place our faith in this powerful gospel that declares all our sins have been blotted out through the baptism and the bloodshed of the Lord.

However, there are many people who, despite professing to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, are only too disappointed when they see their sinful selves being revealed after believing in Jesus. In fact, we should give our thanks whenever we see our insufficiencies for the gospel power that has blotted out even such sins.

Those who do not acknowledge that their wickedness has all been remitted away by the gospel of the water and the Spirit given by the Lord are unable to thank God for His righteousness and instead end up drifting away from Him. This means that they are unable to be freed from their sins, for they do not admit their evil selves, nor do they truly believe in the powerful gospel Word of the water and the Spirit. This is why some people begin to doubt their own salvation, thinking to themselves, "I can't possibly be a saint. Sure, I believe in Jesus, but this does not mean that I have been saved from my sins." Burdened by the weight of their sins, they end up suffocating themselves.

Such people are actually practicing wickedness before God by not believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The

evilest deed of all before God is to fail to admit one's own wickedness and to refuse to wholeheartedly believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit given by the Lord. This is what constitutes the greatest sin before God.

Such people place more faith in the uprightness of their own thoughts than in the gospel power of the water and the Spirit. We must all realize that all those in this world, who fail to acknowledge this true gospel until the end and therefore eventually abandon it, are actually standing against the goodness of God with the goodness of their own hearts. Consequently, there is no way for them to be freed from all their sins.

This is why we must always admit the wickedness of our flesh by placing our faith in the written Word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Only then is the righteousness of God revealed in even greater exaltation, and only then can we reveal His glory.

If you did not properly understand your own evilness from the very beginning when you first heard the gospel of the water and the Spirit, you must reach this understanding even now and believe in the power of God's gospel on this recognition. Put differently, you have to plow the field of your hearts even from now on, and accept the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit with your humble hearts that recognize your own evilness to the full extent.

To know the gospel of the water and the Spirit only superficially and to understand the real Truth of salvation only theoretically can only mean that you still have not admitted your hideous selves. But it is not too late even yet. Now, by truthfully

recognizing your evilness and by believing in the true Word of the water and the Spirit, you must be delivered from all your sins. Having thus been reached your deliverance, whenever your evil selves are revealed, by placing your faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, you can give even more thanks and glory to God.

Whenever we recognize that we have committed sin, we have to confess our evilness before God and give thanks to Him by reaffirming the gospel Truth in our hearts. Just like the confession of David, we must all confess, "I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me. Against You, You only, have I sinned. But, You have blotted out even this sin with the gospel of the water and the Spirit." Confessing our sins like this, we must come before God with our faith in the beautiful gospel. If we believe in the gospel power of the water and the Spirit, we can have the faith that can perfectly save us from all our sins.

We must always acknowledge the God's gospel Word of the water and the Spirit in our lives. We must all realize that such a life is the kind of life that glorifies God. We must also know that it is when we admit our evil selves and accept God's Word of salvation into our hearts that we can be saved from all our sins.

How is everyone saved from all his wickedness? By reaffirming our faith in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit that we can be saved from all our sins and wickedness. Everyone must plow the field of his heart first, know his own evilness by turning it over, and then believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit. It is because people have no faith

that acknowledges the Word of God, even as they have such evilness, that they end up standing against God and drifting away from Him.

Those who are burdened by their own sins are of those whose hearts have no faith in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit. All of us must really examine what the Word of God has told us, and we must all acknowledge the Truth of this Word of God itself just as it is written.

What kind of seed did our Lord sow in our hearts? He sowed the seed of His Word, the gospel of the water and the Spirit, which has washed away our hearts' wickedness and sins. Through this gospel Truth, the Lord has taught us how sin came into our hearts, how grave sinners we are, and to what extent He has blotted out our sins with this gospel.

Whenever we realize our evilness in our lives, we must first ruminate on the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit in depth, and we must believe in it. When we truthfully believe that God has washed away all the sins that we have committed out of the wickedness of our hearts and with our acts, we will surely be saved.

Our Lord is telling us clearly here that when the sower sowed his seeds, some fell on stony places. "Stony places" here imply the hearts of those who do not recognize their evilness and sinfulness. All of us are a brood of evildoers, but not many of us recognize this truth. As the Lord said, *"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" (Mark 2:17),* it is only those who come to admit their sinfulness and evilness that

can receive the remission of sin. Anyone who acknowledges his evilness to the full extent and accepts the gospel of the water and the Spirit as his salvation can receive the remission of all his sins.

However, most of you might not have been able to reach your real self-recognition when you first heard of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. This is why the power of this true gospel does not work strongly in your hearts, even though you believe in it somehow. This is why the powerful gospel ends up as a mere knowledge in your hearts. If your spiritual state is like this, even now, you must admit your evilness and believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit all over again. If you realized your own wickedness in your lives even after a long time went by since the first time you heard the gospel of the water and the Spirit, then all that you have to do is reaffirm your faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit on the basis of your real self-recognition.

## The Third Field of Thorns

The third field is a field of thorns. What is the spiritual meaning of this field of thorns? It refers to the evil hearts that lust after this world. Jesus is telling us that while those who have such hearts acknowledge that the gospel of the water and the Spirit is right, their faith is so weak that they may forsake the true gospel if it seems to be an obstacle to their worldly success. The faith of those who have such lusts is such that they end up

renouncing their effort to follow the Lord because of their lust to possess the things of this world. They are the ones who are serving two masters. Their faith is of the unclean animals that do not have cloven hooves (Leviticus 11:2-8). Such people's hearts have more desire to live for their lust than faith in the Word of God, and as a result, they end up renouncing their faith in the righteousness of God.

The seeds that fall among thorns do sprout, at least at the beginning. But the thorns cover them up, blocking them from the sun and killing them off. This refers to those who, because of their lust for this world, end up renouncing their faith in the Word of God and leave Him.

Even though we have become righteous, how could our hearts not love this world? This is more than possible for all of us. But still, if we have this faith that enabled us to be baptized into Jesus Christ, die with Him and be resurrected with Him, and only if we have this faith, we can realize that such lusts of the flesh are ultimately futile, and by this faith, we can dwell and live in the real Truth. In other words, though we cannot avoid but continue to live in our flesh, we must still live by our spiritual faith.

However, those who do not have this true faith that enables them to die with Jesus Christ and live with Him will end up dying chocked under the weight of their lust of the flesh. Their hearts that love this world, in other words, will block their love for the Lord, and will ultimately let their souls die. This is why you must have the faith that enables you to die with Jesus Christ and live with Him. And you can sustain such faith only when

you hold onto the gospel of the water and the Spirit wholeheartedly.

In the end, the three fields of the four fields that the Lord spoke of tell us that those whose hearts are like these fields are all bound to fail, for they all stick only to their own righteousness, thoughts, and lusts. But still, what we need to realize here is that there is another field that can yield a crop by a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

## The Fourth Field of Good Ground

What kind of field do you think is the good field that today's Scripture passage speaks of? Jesus said that when the seeds of life fell on a good field, they yielded a crop by a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

Does this then mean that whether one would be a good field or a bad field was already determined from his birth? No. It is not the case that someone is born as a good field, while someone else is born as a stony field or a thorny field.

The good field that the Bible speaks of refers to the hearts of those who have faith in His Word. They couldn't have such faith from their birth. Rather, they came to have strong faith in the true gospel by recognizing that they had fundamentally been wayside fields, as well as stony fields and thorny fields. They came to have their hearts washed from all their wickedness by placing their faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

What we need to realize is that everyone is born into this

world as a sinner and dies as a sinner. Of course, there might be marginal differences in each individual's behavior patterns, but as far as their fundamental nature is concerned, humans are all the same, in that everyone could not avoid but be born as a wayside field, a stony field, and a thorny field. Therefore, everyone was born as a sinner, and as such, everyone must be born again by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

It is absolutely indispensable for you to realize that only those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit can become good fields. Put differently, it is when we place our faith in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit that we can become good fields. A good field is a heart that desires to follow God by trusting in the His Word.

The Lord has blotted out all our sins once for all, and we have become God's children by believing in the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit. However, some people among us sometimes doubt their salvation, thinking that they have not been saved from all their sins. They can profess their faith in the true gospel, God's Church, and their being His children, but once the waves of doubt beat upon their weak faith, they come to think that they are not really God's own people, nor the righteous.

Among those who have come into God's Church, if anyone thinks like this and doubts his own salvation from sin, even as he heard the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit preached by God's Church, then this can only mean that he still has many problems with his faith. It is no exaggeration to say that this person is yet to become a good field, and that he still belongs to

either a stony field or a thorny field. This is because he did not first admitted his evilness before he placed his faith in the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit.

The salvation from one's sins depends on whether one acknowledges his wickedness and then believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. His remission of sin is contingent upon this. But if someone thinks, "I can't say to this anyone, but I think there is something wrong with my salvation," then this person may very well have still remained as a stony field. This is why he must first admit his own wickedness to the full extent.

Do you know when we can be saved from all our sins? It is when we acknowledge our wickedness and wholeheartedly hold onto the God-given gospel Word of the water and the Spirit that we can be delivered from all our sins. When we believe in the Word of God with our hearts and confess them with our lips, we can then be righteous and receive our salvation. If anyone believes in the Word of God with all his heart, he will admit all his wickedness and stick to the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and he will therefore be saved from all his sins.

Before, we had lived only religious lives, and so we had not even realized our true selves, that we were wicked. We had not realized that we were all heading straight to hell in accordance to the Law of God. Therefore, we had to first acknowledge, without fail, this Law of God that declares the wages of sin to be death, and place our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit to be saved from all our sins.

We all need to confess our weaknesses before God:

"Lord, I had been truly wicked and indescribably corrupt.

Before, I had led only a religious life, believing in anything as my god. I had so much lust for this world; my flesh itself was so wicked that I just could not follow You, and my heart was truly filled with piles of unrevealed sins. I was so wicked that I could not even tolerate my own evilness. But despite this, Lord, You came to this earth incarnated in the flesh to save me from all my sins, and to do so, you took upon all the sins of mankind by being baptized by John. And not only this, but you also carried the sins of the world to the Cross, died on it, and rose from the dead again. By doing all these things for me, You have forever saved me from all my sins."

"Lord, although I am this insufficient before You, I still believe that You have saved me from all my sins with the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Dear God, I was no more than these three wayside, stony, and thorny fields, someone who could not avoid but be accursed. I had actually thought I wasn't such a bad person, but now I came to know my wicked self to the full extent. Now, I admit to You that I am a filthy, completely worthless worm. But even so, Lord, You still came to this earth for me, blotted out all my sins, and made me a child of God. I place all my faith in this, and I give You all my thanks. You have surely saved me from all my sins with the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Lord, I believe in this salvation that You have given me."

Our faith must be like this. This is how we can become good fields. No one was born as a good field. We were all born as stony, thorny and wayside fields, and as the seeds of evildoers. No one among us, not even one, was born as a good field. It is

only because God has turned us into good fields with the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit after plowing the field of our hearts with the Word of His Law, that we have become such good fields by the Lord.

Our Lord said that when He went out to sow His seeds, there were four different fields, but He did not say that there were some fields that were inherently good. For us to become good fields before God, we must acknowledge that in our hearts, there are all three elements of the bad fields, and we must accept the gospel of the water and the Spirit into our hearts. Whoever admits that he himself had been such bad fields will turn into a good field and bear the fruits of salvation before God.

Such a good field can simply accept the seed of God's Word like a child, saying, "Lord, are You saying that You took away all my sins by being baptized? Thank You, Lord! Did You shoulder the sins of the world and die on the Cross for me? Thank You! Did You rise from the dead again for me? Thanks You, Lord!" When God Himself is telling us that He has saved us in this way, all that we have to do is thank Him time after time, and believe in what He is saying to us. This is how we can ultimately become good fields. Can you now understand this?

As we have carried on with our religious lives, there were times when we had been wayside fields, as well as stony and thorny fields. But by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we were able to turn into good fields. When we had still been wayside, stony, and thorny fields, God sowed the seed of the gospel of the water and the Spirit in our hearts. This is how the remission of sin came into our hearts. When we came across

the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we came to experience the remission of sin in our hearts. It was from then on that we have been able to properly understand and make sense of the Word of God whenever we heard it. The voice of salvation that washes away our sins with the gospel of the water and the Spirit came to dwell in our hearts.

The hearts of stony and thorny fields are like this: "I have too much lust for this world to keep up with my life of faith!" To have this kind of faith is to stand against God. Therefore, we should instead make the following confession of faith: "Lord, even though I am this wicked, You have still saved me from all my evilness. The gospel Word of the water and the Spirit that You have given me is all correct and true. Now, I am a new creation; old things have passed away; and all things have become new (2 Corinthians 5:17). Even though I am insufficient, all these blessings have been given to me because You have become my Savior."

Only when we have this kind of faith can we say that we have been wholly delivered from all our sins. It is those who have such faith that are the people of good fields who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Only those who truly believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit in this way can live their consecrated lives from this world, and only they can overcome their weaknesses by faith and follow the Lord also. Why? Because they acknowledge that they themselves are insufficient. By believing that Jesus has saved them from all their evilness with the gospel of the water and the Spirit, they have now been perfected by this faith.

Before, our faith had stood neither on the side of God, nor on the side of the world, but on the fence. However, when we then came to know our true selves and recognized just how sinful we were, we could not but thank the Lord for saving us from all the sins of the world through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and our hearts then turned to His side. Even as we had followed our lust for this world, when we realized that we were heading for destruction for our sins, we came to believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, and we were thereby saved from all our sins. And we now acknowledge that it is right for us to unite with God's Church and to serve the gospel for the rest of our lives.

## We Must Turn around from Our Religious Lives and Believe in the Gospel Word of the Water and the Spirit

When your hearts had been like wayside fields, you became aware of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and because this gospel seemed to be right, you said that you believed in it. But what happened then? With passing time, haven't the birds devoured the seeds of this gospel that were sowed in you? Even though it seems like you have the knowledge of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, you do not have this faith in it, nor the Holy Spirit. In other words, even those who do not have the Holy Spirit have turned into Christians who profess to believe in Jesus as their Savior, at least outwardly.

This is why our Lord told us this parable. In the beginning, we had been wayside fields, thorny and stony fields, and it was only when we turned into good fields that we were able to yield the crops for a thirty, sixty, and hundredfold. A good field is a heart that has accepted the Word of God by first admitting that it had been these three bad fields. It is when we admit that such was our hearts' condition, and believe that God has perfectly saved people like us with the gospel of the water and the Spirit, that the fields of our hearts can be turned into good fields. Only these good fields belong to God, and yield the spiritual crops for Him for a hundredfold, a sixty and a thirty fold, at least.

If you had believed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit as you kept your heart in the state of a wayside field, you would have turned into a religionist by now. This is because you would not have had God's Word of the water and the Spirit in your heart. What, then, must you do? You must hear the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit once again, and must admit to God that you had been a grave sinner.

If any of us had accepted the true gospel while not renouncing his former religion, he must believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit all over again. He must first realize that the religious faith that he had so far had all been wrong. For example, Buddhism teaches its followers to do virtuous deeds, and this only seems so reasonable. Confucianism, on the other hand, seems particularly suitable for dealing with human relationships. So some of you may have believed in either one of them. But as God tells you that this is not your salvation, you come to realize that you must believe in Jesus to be saved from

all your sins. If you abandon your former religion, and begin to believe in Jesus, you then become the one whose heart is turned from a wayside field to a stony field.

Once your heart becomes a stony field, you must overturn it with the Law of God to make it a good field. It is with the Law that God reveals all the sins of mankind in clarity. However, people do not recognize how sinful they are even before the Law. They may admit that they are sinners, but they do not recognize and believe that they are bound to hell for their sins. Put differently, they only reached a superficial understanding of their sins and accepted God with only such a cursory understanding.

But as they carry on with their lives, they come to know that they still commit hideous sins. And as they are unable to tolerate themselves, they thus are turning themselves into hypocritical religionists. Such religionists might say with their lips, "I am someone who believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit with the heart. And I want to follow the Lord. And I do in fact follow Him."

But how is the reality? It is because their hearts do not really acknowledge the Word of God that they just say that they believe and then stop there. But in the end, they all end up turning into hypocritical religionists. It is because their hearts actually reject the guidance of the Word of God and stand against it that they end up turning into religionists. The religionists pretend to believe in the Lord and to follow Him only in form, but because their hearts cannot really agree with His Word, they cannot follow Him by faith. It is because people

fail to believe in the Word of the water and the Spirit with their hearts that they are not remitted from their sins and perish.

My fellow believers, as you carry on with your lives of faith, there are times when your hearts are hardened. Are your conditions not, by any chance, that of stony fields? Or are they that of thorny fields? You couldn't possibly be wayside fields, are you? Wayside fields are even worse than stony fields. The stony fields at least accepted the Word of God, but seeds were not even planted in the wayside fields, but were instead devoured by the birds.

If your hearts are still like wayside fields, then you must repent and believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. At the least, the stony fields have some earth, and therefore seeds can be sown. In these stony fields, because there is some earth among the stones, when the seeds fall there, the rain comes and the sun shines, the seeds come to sprout. This means that the stony field at least does not fail to believe. It means that some Christians have believed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, although they did not realize their own wickedness.

Put differently, because their hearts just could not admit the fact that they were evil, the gospel of the water and the Spirit could not be planted deep in their hearts. The stony fields imply the state of hearts of those who cannot accept the fact that their hearts are piles of sin. As a result, they just cannot obey the Word of God and His guidance, and consequently they end up leaving God. But even so, they have evil thoughts, asking, "Who dare to condemn us for not being God's people? We also believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit."

However, they still have not been saved. My fellow believers, you must admit your evilness to God as soon as possible. You must clearly admit to Him that you are filthy seeds, that you are the seeds of evildoer. Only then will this gospel of the water and the Spirit be planted deep in your hearts.

On the thorny field also, the gospel of the water and the Spirit was planted and the buds of life sprang forth. But the thorns covered up the buds of life, blocked the sun, and eventually made the buds wither away.

This tells us that if we have too much lust for this world, we cannot unite with God's Church, nor with our brothers and sisters and the servants of God. Their lusts for this world, their own desires, covered up their souls and consequently killed off their young faith. When such people are spiritually dying, they ask themselves, "I don't understand why my faith withered away when I believed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit."

If your hearts begin to doubt your salvation, you must overcome all such doubts by reaffirming and holding onto the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit. Those who are truly saved from their sins are the people of faith who believe that the Lord accepted all our sins by being baptized by John the Baptist. Such faith can be completed by our confession of faith that professes, *"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16).* When the Apostle Peter confessed this, he meant to say, "Lord, even though I am such a hideous pile of sin, I believe that You have saved me from all my sins with the gospel of the water and the Spirit. From now on, You are my Master. You are the God who made me, the Savior who has

saved me from sin, and my God."

Those who have been saved from sin completely and wholeheartedly acknowledge both their wickedness and the goodness of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. As well as admitting their evil selves, they believe that God has saved all human beings like them from their sins and given them new life. When we acknowledge that the Lord has truly saved us from our sins by taking upon our sins with His baptism and by bearing condemnation for us on the Cross, we come to receive the remission of sin by faith. It is when we recognize that the Lord has become the true Savior for people like us and saved us from all our sins that we can accept this Lord as our own Lord and become one with Him. As our Lord has given us the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we have become one with the Lord. Although our flesh is still weak, the Lord has still delivered us from all our sins. This faith enables us to serve Him, to follow Him, to live with Him and to die with Him.

In Luke 15 appear three parables that are of the lost sheep, of the lost coin, and of the lost son. What these parables imply is that we had lost our Master. But you and I have now found our Master after losing Him. What is more, this Master is a truly good Master. He is the Lord who made us; who came to us when we had fallen into sin deceived by the Devil and become such worthless and useless beings; and who washed away all our sins on His own, gave us salvation, embraced us in His arms, and blessed us to live with Him forever. It is such a Master whom you and I have encountered.

My fellow believers, as we carry on with our lives of faith,

there are times when we find it difficult to unite with the Lord and His Church even though our hearts yearn to do so. In times like this also, we must truthfully acknowledge the gospel of the water and the Spirit and all the Word of God: We must admit all our sins whenever the Law points them as sins; we must admit that we are piles of sin who were born with such sins; we must consent to the statement of the Law that says, "The wages of sin is death"; we must recognize that Jesus Christ took upon our sins once for all by being baptized; we must accept that He carried the sins of the world to the Cross, died on it, and rose from the dead again; and we must acknowledge that Jesus Christ is our Savior. If we admit all these things, then we have been saved.

However, what is important is what was the state of your heart when you heard the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit, whether it was a wayside field, a stony field, or a thorny field. Your faith would not last long if you didn't plow up such a bad field with God's Word before you believed in the true gospel. Even if some of us heard the gospel of the water and the Spirit in such conditions, there still are, of course, innumerable cases where people are perfected later on while hearing the Word again and again. This is why most people are saved after a considerable period of time since they first heard the gospel. If this is your case, then you are still fortunate.

If someone accepted the gospel of the water and the Spirit while not plowing up the bad condition of his heart, his salvation could not be completed in reality, but it was realized only in the realm of his thoughts. Put differently, if one did not

accept the gospel Truth properly into the center of his heart, but only understood it on an intellectual and theoretical level, he has not been saved yet in fact, no matter how strongly he professes his faith in the gospel with his lips. If, as a result, this person has kept this spiritual condition, then it is by examining his fruits that we can realize the fallacious condition of his faith.

Those who have not yet been saved completely cannot yield good fruit. Apart from the good field, all the other three fields cannot unite with the Lord, nor obey Him. Such people hate to obey the will of God and of His Church, and they also find it difficult to do so.

If this happens to you, you may be astonished at your disobedience, and say, "Oh, my God! Doesn't this mean that I have not yet been saved?" But, I admonish you that you need not make a fuss over yourself. Every time we are like this, you and I must reaffirm and admit God's Word one by one: We must admit that it is our fundamental nature not to acknowledge the Word of God, but to disobey Him, to be wicked, and to be no more than piles of sin. We have to admit to the Lord that we have sinned, but at the same time, we have to remind ourselves that the Lord has still saved us from all our sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

We should not just understand this Truth, that our Lord has saved us from sin with the gospel power of the water and the Spirit, only on a theoretical level, but we must accept it and believe in it with all our hearts. It is useful for us to visit by faith the place where the Lord was baptized by John the Baptist. It might be more useful for you to open your Bible and to read the

passage of Matthew 3:13-17 word for word. By doing so, you can definitely reaffirm the Truth that it is because Jesus was baptized that all our sins were passed onto Him.

You should also confirm the fact that Jesus indeed shouldered our sins, by reaffirming John's testimony that says, *"Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).* And you also confirm the truth that Jesus carried the sins of the world to the Cross and was crucified to death there, just as He said at that time, *"It is finished" (John 19:30).* By reaffirming the Truth in detail again and again like this, you can have a stronger faith in the Truth that He has fulfilled all righteousness.

If we reaffirm the Truth in detail as far as we can, we can become God's children by faith. This is the heart that unites with Jesus Christ.

Like this, when we examine our hearts to see whether or not we really believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we can then realize what kind of fields our hearts are. If we find ourselves unable to bear spiritually good fruits even as we want to, then we must once again place our faith in the Word of God. We must hold onto God's Word in our hearts, believe in it and acknowledge it: We must first admit our hearts' sins and our personal sins, and we must acknowledge as well that we are the seeds of sin bound to hell for our sins. In addition, we must also recognize that the Lord came to us and has saved us from all our sins with the gospel of the water and the Spirit. When we thus acknowledge all the Word of God, our faith will come to have healthy roots, and we will come to have the faith that actually

saves us from our sins.

Is there anyone among you who has led his life of faith for a long time, and increasingly doubts his own faith with the passing time? If you are like this, then you must acknowledge all the Word of God as soon as possible, saying, "I accepted the gospel while I kept my heart as a wayside field, a stony field, and a thorny field, but even so, the Lord has still saved me." If you admit wholeheartedly before God that you are a grave sinner who deserves to go to hell, and place your faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit again, then the Lord will receive you as God's child.

It is written in the Bible, *"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)*. If you believe in the Word of God, your soul will be saved from all your sins. Even if you are insufficient in your acts, if you admit your wickedness and believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, God will give you the ability to live by faith.

Fundamentally speaking, we had been worthless beings just like the three bad fields, but the Lord has given us the spiritual Word of Heaven, new power, and holy faith. By giving us such thoughts and hearts that enable us to do His holy work, the Lord has enabled us to live according to the will of God. Every time we hear the Word of God, He gives us faith to obey it, and as the Holy Spirit dwells in our hearts and works in our lives, He leads us to the way of righteousness. This is how our God blesses us and works in us.

My fellow believers, who is our sower? It is the Lord. When

our Lord came to this earth to save us from our sins with the water and the Spirit, didn't He fulfill everything? He indeed achieved everything.

When our Lord has thus completed all our salvation, did you and I believe in this from when we first believed in Him? Our hearts were that of the religionists at that time. I myself had switched several times from one religion to another. Everyone has had more than one religion during his lifetime.

Every ethnic group has its own particular religions. Furthermore, in today's cultural tendency of becoming a multi-ethnic society, many people are used to identifying themselves with two or three religions at the same time. For example, in my country Korea, not a few Christians still visit shamans or the Buddhist temples to have their fortune told whenever they come to face crises of their lives. People ordinarily saddle another religion on top of another. Some people might end up having more than 10 religions.

You and I have to admit that although we had all been like these people, the Lord has still saved us with the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Unfortunately, however, there are people who claim to be believers, even as they have the vestiges of some other secular religions in their hearts. In other words, there are a certain type of people who think that they believe in God, even as there is no Word of God in them, for they did not hold onto this Word and believed in it with their hearts. This is such a tragedy. It is because they try to follow the Lord even as they remain like this that they find it so difficult to achieve.

However, actually everyone goes through this process, until

he comes to be wholly saved by the gospel of the water and the Spirit. It is because the good fields also admitted themselves as wayside fields, stony fields, and thorny fields that when the sower came and planted seeds, they accepted the seeds, and it is because of this, and by the Word of God, that they became good fields and God's children. Unless we admit our evilness and accept the seeds, it is completely useless. No matter how good a field may be, if there is no seed, there is no work of life.

We must all admit as often as we can, "I had been evil like this, but the Lord has saved me from all my sins." At this hour, whoever admits his evil nature as it is and accepts the seed of life into his heart can become a good field and God's child. No matter how good the fields of our hearts may be, if we do not accept the seed of life, all our faith is in vain. We must accept the Word of God as the Truth. We must also accept the Word on the Law, on the condemnation of sin, and on the righteousness of God as well. If we thus accept into our hearts the gospel of the water and the Spirit that the Lord has given us, we will become sinless before Him. It is by faith that we become God's children, the people of His Kingdom, and the workers of His righteousness who bear the fruits of righteousness.

Before I came to know this gospel of the water and the Spirit, I had continued to live only a religious life. Even after I was born again by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, I was worried over my future and my religious identity, that is, whether I had to leave the worldly Christianity or not. Put differently, there were times when I, too, had foolish thoughts, thinking that I would have been quite successful in this world,

had I remained in the denomination that I had been in. Wasn't this heart of mine a thorny field?

But, the Lord has sustained me with the powerful gospel of the water and the Spirit, lest I should lose His righteous way and die on it. I have confirmed my faith again and again: "Lord, You are God Himself and my Master. To save me, my Lord came to this earth, took upon all my sins by being baptized, died for me, and rose from the dead again. You, my Lord who has saved me, is truthfully my Master. You are my Savior." As I believed in this way, my heart grew in faith and became whole, and the Word of God held me so that I would neither be shaken nor stumble even if someone came to me and preached a similar but false gospel to me.

My fellow believers, as we have continued on with our lives of faith, there were times when we did not have good fields, but only fields that were unworthy of approval. That we are still called as the children of God despite this is because of the Word of God that was given to us. It is because we have accepted the gospel Word of God as well as His Word on our sins and on the Law. Because we have acknowledged all His Word like this, God could work in our lives, make us His children and use us as His instruments of righteousness, and build His everlasting Kingdom through us.

As I carry on with my life of faith, when I see our fellow ministers or brothers and sisters who think they stand firm, the following thoughts come across my mind: "Why do they think that they know all about the Word of God? Why do they think that the Word of God has all been fulfilled in them? I can't

understand why they think like that, when there is so much that they do not even know about themselves. When it comes to my own case, I have come to see many shortcomings that I myself still cannot admit from the depth of my heart. Of course, they were saved all at once by believing in the true gospel. That much is clear, but still, why don't they know that it takes time for them to really yield abundant spiritual fruits by faith?"

For our hearts to give birth to new life as fruits, we must grow, bear fruits, and these fruits must ripen. This is who we must be, and yet for some reason many of our fellow believers think to themselves that they have all matured and, therefore, are living their lives of faith only on a theoretical level. That is heartbreaking for me to see.

My fellow believers, your salvation is attained once for all when you hear and believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, but nurturing your souls is not achieved all at once. This is why I have started to write books of nourishment, that is, the spiritual growth series, just after I finished publishing 10 titles of my gospel series. I just finished writing the second volume on the Tabernacle, and I said to myself, "I have finally laid down the basic foundation of the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, even though it is not sufficient enough." I admonish you, the newly born-again saints, that you must humble your hearts and be nourished incessantly by the Word of God, lest you should perish as time passes by.

However, there are people who dare to claim that the Word of God has been perfectly fulfilled in them. They even dare to say that they have no shortcoming whatsoever before others. Is

this possibly the case? Absolutely not!

After receiving the remission of sin, we actually come to have more shame before others. We thought that we would not commit shameful acts, but since we are only too human, we ended up committing many shameful acts. Before we were born again, we didn't know how wicked and insufficient we had been, but now, when our true selves are revealed, we realize just how wicked we are, and so there are more things for us to be ashamed of. We hope that our true selves would not be revealed, but all that we experience is the sorrow of disillusion. Is this not the case? Of course it is.

When we get together with our fellow ministers once in a while, we sometimes sing songs together or play soccer to relieve ourselves of all the stress that we have been undergoing. When we do these, we get so excited that we cannot control ourselves. Sometimes, we even quarreled with each other over little things while we are playing soccer. We, too, have carnal sides to us, as well as sinful selves, our failure to fully acknowledge the Word of God, our pursuit of the world, and everything else. Even so, through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, our Lord took upon our sins, was condemned for them, rose from the dead again, and has thereby saved us. By uniting our hearts with the gospel Truth, we have been saved by faith.

My fellow believers, whenever you hear the Word of God, acknowledge your own wickedness and sins, and that there surely will be the judgment of God for your sins. When the ministers preach the Word of God to you, what percentage of it do you acknowledge and accept by faith? You may understand it

just fine, but my question is not about intellectual grasp, but how much you acknowledge with your hearts.

By and large, most people cannot even acknowledge 5 percent of what they hear. For those who have matured spiritually through their faithful lives of faith, the depth of their faith has deepened, and so they acknowledge 10 percent, or sometimes even 20 percent. But I think it is difficult for them to exceed 50 percent. If anyone can reach beyond 50 percent, he needs no teacher. It is a feat of achievement for ordinary people to acknowledge God's Word even just 5 percent. They acknowledge this much when the sermon is very long. If it is short, then they admit less than 1 percent of themselves, or even as little as 0.00001 percent. When the sermon is long, they may find it hard to keep their concentration, but they still hear the Word, and they still come to admit themselves, even if it is only a small amount. When these small amounts accumulate, they turn into fruits, and there arises the work of life in the hearts of the saints.

This is why you shouldn't miss church gatherings, and why we should get together and have fellowship with one another. Do not think, "I don't want to have fellowship with these lowly people. I am different from them." It is the ordinary people who hold rather good human qualities. If each of us is all alone, we cannot realize our true selves, but if we are together, it is easier for us to discover ourselves. And so it is such a joy for us to hear each other's testimony in our fellowship.

Through the parable of the sower, our Lord is telling us that He has saved such wicked people like us from all our sins. Can

you grasp this now? Instead of indulging ourselves in overconfidence, we should examine ourselves. Do not fall into complacency, but take this opportunity to examine yourselves.

If I say to you, "You need to hear the gospel in detail again," then, some of you will probably be offended, thinking, "What does he think of me? I've led my life of faith for over 10 years, and yet he thinks so little of me." If you are like this, your heart is still of the bad fields. When a gospel preacher preaches the gospel, he first teaches the listeners about the wickedness and sinfulness of their hearts through the Bible. So you can see yourselves better while you listen to the gospel Truth. For your souls to be benefited, you need to see your true selves as fully as you can, and you need to hear the gospel of the water and the Spirit as often as you can. Has your self-respect been wounded often in God's Church? Do you think you are a man of great self-respect and are you tormented when your pride is wounded? If so, your heart is not yet of a good field, and you have to plow up your heart deeply to acknowledge your real existence.

When I preach, it is when I talk about the gospel of the water and the Spirit that I am both most excited and most tired. It is easier to preach about the other subjects in the Bible than to preach the gospel. I can do that pretending to be spiritual in a gentle voice. But when I preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit, I have to reveal all my insufficiencies. If I say that only you are wicked, you would not accept it, but if I say that I am also wicked, you would find it easier to accept my teachings. This is why ministers are exposing themselves in every detail when they preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Some

people might say to me, "Reverend, I would really appreciate it if you wouldn't be like this," but there is a purpose for me to be exposed like this. Even if there were no purpose, this is who I really am. Our God who sows seeds is true, and so if He sows, then we must accept His seeds. If the Word of God says, "This is who you are," then all we have to do is just acknowledge and accept it.

Our Lord told us, *"Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall" (1 Corinthians 10:12).* There are many people who have been perfectly saved from their sins, but at the same time, there are also many people who don't recognize their insufficiencies in the Church. They are astonished at themselves whenever their insufficiencies are revealed, and try to defend themselves for the mistakes. If you are like this, do not try to hide your insufficiencies before God's Church, nor try to regard them as just your mistakes that you should have not made. Whenever your insufficiencies are revealed, you should believe that God permitted them so that you would acknowledge the goodness of His Word. He could have perfected you as soon as you were born again, but He left you with your insufficiencies, so that you would come to recognize the Word of God through your concrete experiences, for otherwise you would not recognize it.

I may look pious and spiritual while I am preaching the Word of God. But when I step down from the pulpit, I am just like you. In some ways, I am worse than you. Lately I have not been strong enough, and what is worse, I have been struggling with various health problems. As I said before, this has made me

rather oversensitive. But, strictly speaking, my short temper is of my own temperament, and is not entirely due to my conditions.

My fellow believers, please have faith in the Word of God. Admit yourselves, and when the seed of the Word of God falls on you, acknowledge it and accept it. Though we have been saved from all our sins, there is still much in the Word of God that we need to acknowledge. This applies to all of us, to myself, to you, to our mothers and to our young students as well. Isn't there much that all of us need to admit about our insufficiencies. Of course there is. Though we are so insufficient, the Lord has still saved us with the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Therefore, all we have to do is acknowledge our real selves, that is, our insufficiencies and reaffirm the gospel Truth everyday.

I give thanks to our Lord. He said that the seeds that fell on good ground yielded a crop by a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. He told us that he who has ears to hear should hear. ✉

# You Have Been Allowed To Know the Mysteries of The Kingdom of Heaven

**< Matthew 13:10-23 >**

**"And the disciples came and said to Him, 'Why do You speak to them in parables?' He answered and said to them, 'Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says:**

**'Hearing you will hear and shall not understand,**
**And seeing you will see and not perceive;**
**For the hearts of this people have grown dull.**
**Their ears are hard of hearing,**
**And their eyes they have closed,**
**Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears,**
**Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn,**
**So that I should heal them.'**

**But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for**

**they hear; for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it. Therefore hear the parable of the sower: When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside. But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles. Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful. But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.'"**

For us to further spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we must further fulfill our roles by supporting every ministry for the spreading of the gospel, we must pray more, and we must live by faith even more. If we want to serve the gospel by a hundredfold more than now, then we must exercise our faith by a hundredfold more. We must ask God by faith, and through our prayers we must be prepared to receive God's blessings. When we serve the Lord with our faith, God will surely work in our

lives.

## Why Did the Lord Speak to His Disciples in Parables?

In today's passage, when the disciples came and said to Jesus, "Why do You speak to them in parables?" our Lord answered, *"It has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given."*

In other words, it was given to the disciples of Jesus to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven. But the mysteries of Heaven were not given to those whose hearts were hardened. Put differently, while those whose hearts are hardened may hear the Word of God with their ears, they do not really accept it into their hearts by faith.

Such people with hardened hearts do not try to believe in the Word of God; on the contrary, they place their own thoughts above God's Word. They do not want to serve God as the King in their hearts, for they themselves want to be their own kings. By "them" in this passage, our Lord was referring to such people with hardened hearts. So when Jesus said, "Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given," the word "you" here refers to those who have truly accepted the Word of God into their hearts and believe in it, and the word "them" refers to those who have not done so. We all need to understand this passage properly before we believe in it.

## The Reason Why the Lord Had to Explain the Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven in Parables

Jesus had to speak of the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven in parables, lest those whose hearts are hardened should be able to understand Him and make bad use of the hidden meanings for their benefit. This is why Jesus had to speak in parables. Our Lord did not want those whose evil hearts stand against God to realize the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, and it was to prevent such people from entering Heaven that He spoke of them in parables. He made it impossible for the people of hardened hearts to enter the Kingdom of Heaven with such dull hearts. Our Lord's intention was for the hardened people to turn around from their wickedness and to enter the Kingdom of Heaven by placing their faith in the Word of God. Since the Lord said here that Heaven is not permitted to those whose hearts are hardened, anyone who wants to enter Heaven must repent from his wicked mind and return to the Lord.

It is only in the Bible that we should discover the Truth spoken by the Lord. The Kingdom of Heaven is permitted to only those who revere God first, believe in Him, and follow and obey Him. Our Lord, the King of kings, was speaking to all creations about the gospel mysteries of the water and the Spirit. And He wanted all those who revere Him, who follow and serve Him, to reach the understanding of the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit. He wanted to them to realize, "This is the Word of the remission of sin."

But this was not the case for those whose hearts are hardened

before God. The Lord had permitted confused minds to the hardened people, so that they may not realize the mysteries of entering Heaven. The reason for this is because those whose hearts are hardened know no fear of God, nor do they recognize His majesty. It is because they do not acknowledge God as their Master, but instead try to exalt themselves higher than God. To such people, God has not permitted the understanding of the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit.

In conclusion, our Lord said in verse 12, *"For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him."* To those who truly fear God, who know His exaltation, and who follow Him by realizing and believing that He is the Judge and the Savior, God has enabled them to understand His Word even more, and He has given them even more blessings. So to those who are clothed in God's love, He has not only remitted away their sins more than sufficiently by the gospel power of the water and the Spirit, but He has also blessed them to live for His righteousness.

Our Lord says decisively, *"Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him."* He has made it impossible, in other words, for anyone whose heart has no fear of God and is hardened before Him to understand the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Just as God set that all water should flow to a lower elevation, He has set that His Word of the remission of sin should also flow to those whose hearts are lowly through the conduit called 'faith.' The Lord has enabled the humble-hearted to receive the blessings of the remission of

sin through their faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. In this gospel of the water and the Spirit, He has allowed us to understand what He meant when He said, "For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him." All His parables were spoken according to this intention.

Ruminating on the parable of the sower that Jesus gave in Matthew 13, you and I were able to realize God's desire and His intention. As such, we now need to examine ourselves to see whether we had not stood against God with hardened hearts. Among those whose hearts are hardened before God, there are the more obstinate ones who do not even repent from their stubbornness to the last. They say, "There is no God! Where is God? Really, is God anywhere at all? Since I had believed in Him so ardently and served Him so much, He should have blessed me; why then hasn't He blessed me at all?"

But God is still very much alive and actually exists. And He has come to you through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. So no one should approach God with a hardened heart. Instead, we must cast aside our hardened hearts, believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, and obey Him with this faith.

Before God, we must realize how our own hearts are, and we must obey His gospel of Truth. God made us be born on this earth as His creations, and He has given us the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit to fulfill His love in us. He approached us with His love for us: When we fell into sin, God saved us from all our sins with the gospel power of the water and the Spirit. By placing our faith in the Word of God, therefore, all of

us must take the Truth that makes us God's children. Only then can be we become God's children.

We need to remove from our hearts the wicked mind that does not believe in the Word of God. We ourselves need to believe that God is alive, and we need to believe in and acknowledge the gospel of the water and the Spirit that He has given us. If our hearts are hardened, we cannot understand the God-given Word of the remission of sin even if we hear it. We have all the more reason to cast aside our own wickedness and listen to the Word of God lest we should be condemned eternally.

Those whose hearts are hardened before God are bound to lead their souls to destruction, for they cannot understand the gospel of the water and the Spirit before God. Therefore, anyone whose heart is hardened before God must soften it and listen to the Truth of salvation with the ears of his heart. Sometimes, we the born-again may also see our hearts hardened, but no one should have such a hardened heart before God. Our hearts must instead obey God, and we must be capable of having this kind of heart. If our hearts are hardened before God, it is indispensable that we cast aside such hearts. Our Lord has told all of us to set aside our hardened hearts and to listen to Him.

## In the Age of the Old Testament Also, God Did Not Tolerate Anyone with a Hardened Heart

Referring to Isaiah 6:9, Jesus said, *"And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: 'Hearing you will*

*hear and shall not understand, And seeing you will see and not perceive.'"*

Let us then turn to Isaiah 6:9-13 here: *"And He said, 'Go, and tell this people: 'Keep on hearing, but do not understand; Keep on seeing, but do not perceive.' 'Make the heart of this people dull, And their ears heavy, And shut their eyes; Lest they see with their eyes, And hear with their ears, And understand with their heart, And return and be healed.' Then I said, 'Lord, how long?' And He answered: 'Until the cities are laid waste and without inhabitant, The houses are without a man, The land is utterly desolate, The LORD has removed men far away, And the forsaken places are many in the midst of the land. But yet a tenth will be in it, And will return and be for consuming, As a terebinth tree or as an oak, Whose stump remains when it is cut down. So the holy seed shall be its stump.'"*

Jehovah was angered and had decided to root out those with hardened hearts. Why did God get angry at the people of Israel? It was because their hearts were hardened before God. Because with their hardened hearts, they had stood against God. The people of Israel were supposed to acknowledge God as the absolutely perfect God, to obey Him and believe in Him, and yet in their heart they had fundamentally stood against God and failed to recognize His Word. This is why God declared destruction upon such people.

God also said, *"But yet a tenth will be in it, And will return and be for consuming."* In other words, there was not a single descendant of Adam who revered God and practiced good deeds at that time. However, because God brought them to life by

especially manifesting Himself to His servants, speaking to them, and transformed their hearts with His Word, there arose the people of God. He wanted to save the souls of those who knew His will, and who obeyed and believed in Him according to His Word.

This is why the Lord left a stump that would become the holy seed on this earth, when all sinners were supposed to be destroyed, as it is written, *"As a terebinth tree or as an oak, Whose stump remains when it is cut down. So the holy seed shall be its stump."*

God the Father laid the foundation of salvation and completed it through Jesus Christ: God the Father made Jesus be born on this earth, take upon the sins of this world once for all by receiving His baptism from John the Baptist, and be crucified and shed His blood on the Cross. In other words, Jesus Christ has become the holy stump on this earth, and God has perfectly saved all those who receive the remission of their sins by knowing this Jesus Christ and placing their faith in Him. God has made it possible for all those who understand and believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit to become the people of the Kingdom of Heaven.

## The Holy Seed on This Earth Is Jesus Christ and His People

The holy seed on this earth is Jesus Christ, the Son of God the Father. It is He who came to this earth, blotted out all our

sins, and turned His believers into God's own people. God said here that the Word of power, the Word of the remission of sin that Jesus Christ fulfilled, has now become a stump on this earth, and that through Jesus Christ, the believers have become God's people, and His Kingdom has been established. As we have been taught by the parable of the sower, we can all become God's own children when we admit our wickedness and believe in the gospel power of the water and the Spirit.

What is the greatest sin that one can commit against God? It is to live a religious life before God. To worship other gods before God, to believe in just about anything, is a great sin. Living a religious life constitutes a great sin before God.

God commanded us, "You shall have no other gods before Me." Apart from our own God who created this universe, who could ever be the God of creation? Nothing apart from God is the God of creation. Yet despite this, people believed in and followed in something else other than God, and this constitutes a great sin.

Therefore, the preachers of the true gospel must first teach such idolaters about their own flaws before preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit to them. They must teach that the One who created the universe is God, that only the Triune God is our Lord and the God who has truly bestowed us with His goodness of salvation, and that nothing else is the God of creation, but all else are only false gods.

If, on the other hand, if they preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit to people without first plowing the fields of their hearts, it would be a great mistake. When we preach the gospel

of the water and the Spirit to others, we need to first teach them what sins they have in their hearts, and that they are bound to be condemned for their sins and cast into hell. We need to first tell them that they are the seeds of evildoers, and teach them that if they have even the smallest of sin, they will be cast into to hell. Only after then should we preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit to them, because unless they first recognize their wickedness and sinfulness, the gospel cannot be deeply rooted into their hearts.

We also need to teach them that life in this world is completely empty, that the pursuit of worldly pleasures is all in vain, and that everything in this world is meaningless, nothing more a dream in a summer night. We should then testify to them who the living God is, and preach to them how the Son of this God came to this earth, blotted out all our sins once for all through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, through His baptism and bloodshed, and thereby has saved us from all sins. Therefore, when we are preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit, ignoring these procedures will only result in fruitless labor.

As such, those who preached the gospel of the water and the Spirit without first plowing the sinners' hearts to disclose their sins should admit their own mistakes to God. And those who heard the gospel of the water and the Spirit from such preachers, because they heard the gospel without realizing their own sins, could not become truly good fields. If we fail to plow people's hearts before we preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit to them, they cannot become God's true children, but instead

become just nominal Christians.

As I said before, the sins in my heart had agonized me before I met the gospel of the water and the Spirit. However, God enlightened me on the mystery of this gospel Truth while I was reading Matthew 3:13-17. At that moment, I realized that Jesus, by being baptized by John, took upon the sins of the world and fulfilled all the righteousness of God. I also realized that the gospel of the water and the Spirit is linked to both the Old and New Testaments. Both the Old and New Testaments testify, in other words, that our Lord took upon our sins of the world by being baptized by John, died on the Cross, rose from the dead, and has thereby saved us from all our sins.

I was so happy to discover this Truth that I could only give thanks to God. At first, because I was so deeply disturbed by Christians who professed to believe in Jesus without knowing the gospel of the water and the Spirit, I only taught them the gist of the right answer. I was so excited that I preached this true gospel directly to everyone I met at first, not plowing his heart beforehand. I made such mistakes for a while.

Of course, to those who wanted to listen carefully to the Word of God and believe in it, I also plowed the fields of their hearts first. However, when I encountered someone with a hardened heart, I immediately preached to him, “This is how Jesus took upon your sins and the sins of the entire mankind in the Jordan River, and by being crucified to death and rising from the dead again, He has saved us from all our sins.” In the end, I only ended up turning such people into wicked religionists before God. As the fields of their hearts had still remained as

wayside fields or stony fields, the gospel of the water and the Spirit planted in their hearts became useless as time passed by: Some were devoured by the Devil, and some sprouted but withered away shortly. This was all the result of the fact that they had not deeply understood the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

## Everyone Was a Sinner from the Very Beginning.

People's hearts have been filled with evil things from the very beginning, but it usually take them a long time to reach the clear understanding of their sinful nature. This is a problem for everyone. So it is quite normal for most Christians not to realize that their hearts have been stony fields, but to discover their true selves only later on.

If someone accepts the gospel of the water and the Spirit while he doesn't recognize his sinfulness to the full extent, his faith is too fragile to stand against the storms of his sin, as the house built on the sand cannot withstand a storm.

As we have carried on with our lives while professing to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we, too, have seen our worthless selves being revealed. For some of us, it is hard to admit the sins that we are actually committing, finding it too difficult to bear with this fact. So such people find themselves unable to say without any doubt that they really believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. They ultimately end up turning into religionists, for they do not have the faith

that holds onto the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit. Strictly speaking, they are not God's children and the Holy Spirit does not dwell in them. What would be the result is as clear as daylight. They would eventually leave God's Church, for they cannot unite with the Word of God in the Holy Spirit.

Through the passages in Matthew 13, our Lord is teaching us how we should preach the gospel, how we should minister, and how we should serve other souls. He is also telling us how we can realize the Truth that enables us to receive the remission of our sins, as well as how we can discover the mysteries of Heaven. To understand all these teachings, we need to first humble our hearts, acknowledge God, admit that He is our Master and the Lord of the entire universe, and believe in His Word. Recognizing God properly is the first step to receive all His blessings.

Our Lord said, *"I have nourished and brought up children, And they have rebelled against Me; The ox knows its owner And the donkey its master's crib; But Israel does not know, My people do not consider" (Isaiah 1:2-3).*

It is indeed because of God that we were born in this world, and it is by believing in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit that we have been born again. But some of us have ended up becoming mere religionists, for they have failed to know God, to realize their sins, and to understand that they are the seeds of evildoers and are bound to hell for their sins. Is there anyone among you who, by any chance, has received the gospel Word without the field of his heart being plowed first? I want all such people to plow the fields of their hearts once again even now, to

discover and admit their sinful selves, to truly believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and to be saved from all their sins. It is my sincerest hope and prayer that by doing so, you would all be saved from all your sins and become God's people.

Those who preach God's gospel should never forget the fact that when they are preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit, they should first plow the field of the sinful heart, and then preach the gospel of Heaven. Why? Because the Lord Himself told us here that there are wayside, stony, and thorny fields in the fields of human hearts. We should all realize that it is never too late for us to preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit after we first explain the Word of God sufficiently to people. We should sow the seed of the true gospel after they thus come to realize and admit their sins, humble their hearts before God, and acknowledge that they are piles of sin bound to hell. Only when we first plow their hearts and preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit can they really become God's people by believing in this true gospel.

It is only when we teach sinners with the Word of Truth that they are in fact sinners destined to hell, and when they, too, come to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit through the Word of God, that they can finally believe in Jesus properly. Just as a farmer plows his fields, turns over the soil, tills the earth, sows his seeds, and then waters the field, we the spiritual farmers must also preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit in this way.

At first, we did not know how to farm properly, for we had preached the gospel of the water and the Spirit right away,

without turning over the fields of people's hearts. As a result, among those of us who heard the gospel of the water and the Spirit without having the fields of their hearts properly plowed first, not a few have gone astray along the way; some have left the Church, and others have stood up against it. All these unfortunate results are due to our mistakes of not first plowing and turning over the fields of their hearts properly.

I repent before God from all such mistakes. My coworkers also repent from their mistakes. Since I myself have made these mistakes, how much more would my coworkers have made the same mistakes? At first, we all preached the gist of the gospel too easily, taking it too lightly because we intended to give the correct answer first, and to teach them in detail down the road. So in a way, it was just a foretaste edition of the true gospel, but hearing this, many of them came to believe that this is their salvation. But this is not the real salvation from sin.

Such people should first have admitted their sinfulness as the Prophet Isaiah had professed when he had seen the majesty and glory of God: *"Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, The LORD of hosts" (Isaiah 6:5).* True salvation is given only when one first admits to God that he is a sinner who is inevitably bound to hell for his sins, and then believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. When we come to have such concrete faith, we become so thankful that the Lord came to us and cleansed away our sins with the gospel of the water and the Spirit. We could not avoid but be judged by God and cast into hell, but by admitting to God

that we were sinners and believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we have received the remission of our sins.

This is why I want all of you to also cast aside your hardened hearts and believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. If your hearts are hardened, you will surely die before God. Are your hearts hardened, or are they pure before God? They must be pure before the Word of God. How pure must your hearts be? They must be very pure, not just slightly pure. Since the Word of God says that sinners cannot avoid but be cast into hell, we must believe that everything will be fulfilled exactly according to this Word. Therefore, all of us must believe with a pure heart that through the gospel power of the water and the Spirit, our Lord has saved us from all our sins, when we were all bound to hell and incapable of reaching our own salvation through our own tears, efforts, and labor.

The Lord said, *"It has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven."* To whom has it been permitted to know the Word of God about His Kingdom? The Lord said that it is permitted to those whose hearts are pure. Only those who have truly pure hearts can accept the Word of God just as it is written, and only they can receive the remission of their sins by the power of this gospel. In contrast, those whose hearts are impure and hardened cannot possess the gospel, the very mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven.

As we hear the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and as we have led our lives of faith until now, have our hearts been pure or not? We need to think about this carefully. Contemplate upon yourselves to examine if you are pure or not, and if you find that

you had failed to be pure, then cast aside your own stubbornness and place your pure faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

I am not speaking here about whether your acts are insufficient or not. What I am admonishing you is to ask yourselves whether your hearts that believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit are really pure or not, and to examine whether your hearts are hardened or not. If you discover that your hearts are indeed hardened, then you must repent and turn around. We should not just beg God for His forgiveness, but we must all return to God by placing our faith in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit.

We must admit our mistaken beliefs of the past, recognize our misplaced hearts, humble our hearts before the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and believe in this gospel. If we find it hard to humble our hearts, then we should at least humble our carnal bodies. Only then will God see the center of your hearts and give you the remission of your sins. It is my sincerest hope and desire that all of you, through your faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, would receive the remission of your sins and live as the people of God, and when the Lord returns, to meet Him and live forever with all His blessings.

Your may have met the wrong kind of gospel witnesses, and as a result, your faith may actually be on a wrong footing. While there is no doubt that mistakes were made by such insufficient witnesses, fundamentally speaking, however, isn't it really your hearts that are wrong? What is God rebuking us for? He is rebuking us for the fact that our hearts are not pure. It is

absolutely essential for you to cast aside the stubbornness of your hearts and believe in the Word of God purely, for you can no blessing from God if your hearts are hardened.

## In This Age and Time, It Is a Blessing for Us to Hear and See the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit, and to Believe in It with Our Hearts

Our Lord said in Matthew 13:16-17, *"But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it."*

Indeed, our Lord came to this earth over 2,000 years ago, and He really began to spread His Word of the remission of sin and of the Kingdom of God when He turned 30. When our Lord spoke about the remission of sin, He told people about the Kingdom of God by explaining the Word of the Old Testament, and He also taught them how they could be remitted from their sins and be blessed. Those who actually saw Him with their own eyes and heard directly from Him at that time were indeed blessed. From the foundation of the world, hardly any prophets or believers in the Old Testament actually heard what God Himself said about the Kingdom of Heaven when He came to this earth in the flesh of man and revealed Himself.

When Jesus walked on this earth, the people of Israel actually met Him, saw Him with their eyes, and heard what He said

about God and His Kingdom. Such people were tremendously blessed, and yet even among those who heard the Word directly from this Jesus, there were still many who did not believe in Him. In that age and time also, in other words, there were many people who, by hardening their hearts, stood against Jesus and did not believe in Him. Among the four different fields of the human heart, theirs were of the three bad fields that should have been plowed.

## We Can Hear God's Word of Truth from Jesus' Disciples Who Believed in the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit

In this age and time, you, too, can also hear the gospel of the water and the Spirit from those who have become the true disciples of Jesus. In fact, those of you who have met the servants of God spreading the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit and heard from them this gospel are the truly blessed ones. No one is more blessed than those who know Jesus and believe in Him properly. However, even if one meets Jesus, if he hardens his heart and does not believe in what He said, and therefore fails to receive the remission of his sins, he is no different from the most wretched.

Now in this age, the truly blessed are precisely those who know the gospel of the water and the Spirit and believe in it accurately. Yet among those who have met the preachers spreading the power of this gospel Truth, there are those who

were unable to receive the remission of their sins because of their failure to believe in the Word of God. They are the ones whose hearts are truly hardened. All such people must repent from their stubbornness and believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, for their hardened hearts will only lead them to hell.

My fellow believers, are the words of the servants of God spreading the gospel power of the water and the Spirit merely the words of man, or are they the Word of God? They are the Word of God. It is not easy for you to meet the preachers of the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit anywhere. They are simply not found among the religionists of this world. No matter how someone may be the most famous pastor of this age, and no matter how he may exercise the power of God, no one else but the true preachers of God can preach the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit.

You are the blessed, for you can hear the gospel of the water and the Spirit in this age and time through our Christian books series. The Word of the true gospel is given to you for free, as it is written in Romans 10:8-9, *"But what does it say? 'The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart' (that is, the word of faith which we preach): that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."*

Yet there still are people who, because their hearts are hardened, do not believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit even as they hear the Word of God. These people are truly misguided. Why? Because they cannot realize the Truth of

salvation, for as their hearts are hardened, they cannot hear even as they hear, nor can they see even as they see with their eyes. They are therefore bound to be destroyed for their sins even in the midst of such blessed opportunities.

Now, you can hear the Word of the gospel power of the water and the Spirit in God's Church and through our ministries. You can now hear the Word of the water and the Spirit that holds the mysteries of the very faith that enables you to enter the Kingdom of God. It is by hearing and believing in this gospel of the water and the Spirit with all your hearts that you can go to Heaven. Unless you hear this gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, you cannot enter Heaven no matter how much you yearn to do so.

Where else but only in God's Church could you hear the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit? Throughout the entire world, it is only the believers in the gospel of the water and the Spirit who can spread this gospel. Where else, then, could you ever hear this gospel, unless you first meet such servants of God? We are not boasting of ourselves, but I am only saying that there actually is no one else who preaches this true gospel except us. No matter how hard we look, there simply is no one else who is preaching this gospel Truth. We have heard many people confessing to us with their own words that they could not find this Truth, no matter how much they had continuously searched for it throughout the whole of Christianity.

Now, throughout this world also, there have arisen multitudes of the born-again who have seen, heard, and come to believe in this gospel Word of the water and the Spirit through our

literature, both in hard copies and e-books. If you are one of them, you, too, must truthfully believe in this gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit with all your sincere heart. You must indeed listen to us and believe in the Word of God in humility. Only then can you at last realize the mysterious Word of Truth that enables you to enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

Christianity is the gathering of those who follow Jesus Christ. Today, many people claim to follow Jesus and to want to become His disciples, but they need to recognize that they now actually believe in only one of the many religions of the world. They do not know and believe in Jesus properly, nor are they obeying and following Him. They only think to themselves that they are obeying Jesus, when in fact they are not following the real Jesus but only the elusions of their own making. If they do not like what the Word says, they even alter the Word of Jesus for their own taste to fit their own beliefs.

Most of them really have the image of a handsome Jesus. Did He really have the face of a good-looking man, when the Bible in fact says, *"He has no form or comeliness?" (Isaiah 53:2)* They believe all on their own, revising even the essence of Jesus, as well as His Word. It is because this is what they are doing that I can summarily describe their hearts in a word as stubborn hearts.

But whatever God said in the Bible is entirely infallible, if He indeed said so. All we have to do before His Word is kneel before it, and obey and believe in it with a yes. Even if you find it hard to lower your hearts before God's Word, you must still force yourselves to humble both your bodies and hearts before

God and acknowledge that He is right. If your hearts are not pure, you must repent. Only then can you accept His Word, and become God's people and workers.

## The Gospel Truth of the Water and the Spirit Revealed in Matthew 13:18-23

Our Lord Himself interpreted the parable of the sower in Matthew 13:18-23 by saying, *"Therefore hear the parable of the sower" (Matthew 13:18).* He explained to us by drawing an analogous parallel to something else that we are familiar with, so that we may understand His Word on the mystery of Heaven and grasp it more easily.

In Matthew 13:19, Jesus said, *"When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside."*

Not just anyone, in other words, can understand the Word of Heaven. When one hears the Word of salvation that explains the Kingdom of God and yet does not understand it, the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. To understand His Word properly, we need to realize first that we are sinners who have worshipped idols before God. From the day we were born, we have fundamentally failed to know God, to honor Him and to serve Him. This failure to know and believe in God as God is the sin of idolatry, which is the greatest sin before God. This is who we were. We need to recognize just

how flawed and how truly stubborn we are.

Because Adam and Eve, the first father and mother of mankind, sinned against God, they passed on the twelve sources of sin to all of us as our inheritance. And as a result, from our very birth we have been removed from God and turned into the accursed people who left Him. We were such seeds with hardened hearts that could not be saved from all our sins, but instead stand against God and disobey Him, and therefore destined to be accursed in the end, unless Jesus Christ saved us first. We must therefore admit here that we were the seeds of sin who could avoid but be cast into hell for our disobedience, and that we were terrible piles of sin who had been bound to live while bearing such fruits of sin and standing against God throughout our entire lifetime. We must realize our fundamental, true selves. If we fail to do so, everything will be snatched away from us.

Ephesians 2: 1-3 says, *"And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others."*

God is telling us here, "You are the seeds of evildoer who worship other gods before Me. You are basically the seeds of evildoer who have fundamentally stood up against Me, having sided with Satan the Devil, the prince of the power of the air."

When God says this to us, we must admit to Him, "We have indeed done so. While we did not do so intentionally, we still were ruled by the Devil and did not even know God."

We were so wrong, our forefathers were also wrong, and so will our descendants be. This flaw is the sin that makes it inevitable for us to be cast into hell. We indeed were such terrible sinners who, had our Lord not remitted away this sin with the water and the Spirit, simply could not receive the remission of our sins.

This is why we must first realize our fundamental existence. We shouldn't just hear the Word, but we must reach a clear understanding of it. We must truly realize how we are the seeds of sin and of evildoer; how we really are incapable of keeping the Law and doing good deeds before God, but only of committing evil deeds; and how we cannot be saved from our sins but only through Jesus Christ. We must recognize that we had been bound to follow only our flesh, to seek only after the fame, wealth, and glory of this world, and to be cast into the everlasting fire and perish forever. And after realizing the wickedness of our hearts, we must humble our hearts, and accept into our hearts with thankfulness that the Lord has blotted out all our sins.

The Lord said to us, "You are the seeds of evildoers. Your sins cannot be washed away, not even with soap." This is why when Jesus Christ the Son of God came to this earth, He was baptized by John the Baptist, saying, *"For thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness."* And when He came out of the water, God Himself testified, *"This is My beloved Son, in whom I am*

*well pleased."*

When Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist, He took upon all our sins. Our Lord told us that He came to this earth to save you and me who had been bound to hell for our sins, and that He took upon all the sins of mankind once for all by being baptized by John the Baptist, the representative of mankind. *"Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness" (Matthew 3:15).* This is what Jesus said when He was baptized. Jesus bore all our sins by being baptized. Do you believe now that all your sins were passed onto Jesus Christ?

Is there anyone whose heart is overwhelmed by a sense of guilt, thinking, "It's true that I believe in this gospel. But even though I believe in the Word, I have committed so many grave sins, and am going so astray before God even now. So I can't dare to say that I am sinless"?

My fellow believers, because there is no sin that our Lord did not take away from us, it is only right that all our wrongdoings, no matter how grave they are, were indeed passed onto Him. Our Lord said, "For thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness," and then He was baptized by John the Baptist. At that very moment, all your sins, no matter what kind of sin you might have committed, and no matter how grave they might be, were all passed onto the Lord. If you have indeed admitted your sinful nature to the full extent, and cast aside your hardened hearts before the Lord, then you now have to acknowledge the gospel Truth. You must acknowledge that Jesus is the Son of God, God Himself, and our Savior, and that the Lord took upon all your sins, no matter how insufficient you

might be, and what kind of sin you might have committed. Our Lord took them all away. Do you acknowledge this now?

Mankind is always insufficient. You must never forget that when you point your finger at someone, all other fingers are actually pointed at you. Everyone sins. You and I alike, we all commit sin. Do you think you could throw a stone at the adulterous woman, when our Lord said, *"He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first" (John 8:7).* You surely don't. You and I are committing the same sins that everyone else commits.

But by being baptized by John, Jesus took upon all the sins of this world and accepted them all onto Himself. All your and my sins were passed onto this Jesus when He was baptized by John the Baptist. Do you acknowledge this? Do you admit that had Jesus not taken upon our sins through His baptism, you and I would be 100% bound to hell for our sins?

If you acknowledge the Word that Jesus spoke, then this means that your hearts are not hardened. But if you acknowledge this only with your thoughts and do not recognize it with your hearts, then this can only mean that your hearts are indeed stubborn. To refuse to accept the Word of God into the heart is the worst sin committed out of a hardened heart, whereas he who acknowledges it with all his heart is one whose heart is humble. You and I must therefore acknowledge the Word with our hearts.

When our Lord baptized, the gates of Heaven were opened, and God the Father said, "He who was baptized just now is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." God the Father is

saying, "My Son took upon all your sins by being baptized by John the Baptist, the representative of mankind. My own Son thus became the propitiation for your sins. As the heavenly High Priest, He accepted all your sins onto His own body by being baptized, and by sacrificing this body of My own Son, I have washed away all your sins. This is how I have saved you from all your sins." You and I must acknowledge this Word with our hearts. Only when we acknowledge this with all our hearts does it mean that our hearts are not hardened.

My fellow believers, do you acknowledge the Word of God sincerely with your pure hearts? You must never harden your hearts before God. To have your heart hardened before God is for you to be truly wicked. To stand against God and disobey God's Word with your hearts is a thousand times more wicked than to offend His Word with your flesh. Standing against God with your acts is also evil, of course, but to do so with your hearts is truly evil.

When you do this in your hearts, God know it all. But if you think that God does not know it, and you shamelessly and brazenly reject His Word with your hardened hearts, you are committing the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, a sin that is unforgivable before God. What is this blasphemy against the Holy Spirit? Not believing in the gospel Truth is the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit consulted with one another and planned to blot out all the sins of us mankind, have fulfilled this according to the plan, and guarantee it to us. In short, the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is the sin of not believing that the Lord has blotted all our

sins with the gospel power of the water and the Spirit and made us God's own children. A heart that does not believe that the Lord has saved us who had been bound to hell from all our sins, and that He has thereby made us God's people, is a heart that blasphemies the Holy Spirit.

Some people insist that to prevent people from speaking in tongues and laying their hands on someone else's head to say healing prayers is a blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. But this is absolutely nonsense. It is those who stand against the gospel of the water and the Spirit that are committing the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. All other sins can be forgiven, but anyone who rejects the gospel power of the water and the Spirit and does not believe in it cannot be forgiven from this sin. Therefore, the Apostle John also defined this sin as 'the sin leading to death' (1 John 5: 16).

In the gospel power of the water and the Spirit is found the Truth of salvation, through which God has saved us. That God has saved us from all our sins presupposes that we had fallen into sin and could not therefore avoid but be bound to hell. This is why God had pity on us and has saved us with the gospel power of the water and the Spirit. It is by believing in this Truth, that Jesus Christ has saved us by coming to this earth, being baptized, dying on the Cross, and rising from the dead again, that you and I can become God's children and be freed from the evil schemes of Satan. It is by putting on the gospel power of the water and the Spirit that we can be removed from our old places where we had fundamentally stood against God and saddened Him, and receive our salvation from God. Therefore, far from

hardening our hearts, you and I need to humble them. This is what our Lord is telling us here.

Your hearts might still be like thorny fields, which are full of the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches, or like stony fields that still have many unrevealed sins. You also had lived religious lives, worshipped other gods before God, committed idolatry, and stood against God. In other words, your hearts might have been like a wayside field. When your unrevealed sins are manifested through your acts, all that you have to do is just admit that this is who you really are. Yet in spite of this there are so many terrible sins in your hearts that you find it difficult to admit them. But through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the Lord has still saved us. Do you believe this with your hearts?

This is to humble your hearts. The humble faith that is blessed by God is the faith that makes you His children, and it is the heart that has been saved from sin. With this faith, you must plow the field of your hardened, tough, and stubborn hearts. And you must accept what God has done for you into your hearts with a yes. This is the humble faith. This is the good field.

There have been not a few believers who have left God's Church and this blessed gospel by seeking the deceitfulness of the riches, fame, power, and their own lusts, even as they had once believed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. But even so, our Lord has blotted out even the sins of such people. In fact, with the water and the Spirit, the Lord has blotted out all the sins of everyone, of all those who left the Church to pursue their sexual lusts or carnal pleasure, or because they did not find the

Church to their liking. Yet these people decide on their own, "Because of what I did, I am forever separated from God," and they cut themselves off from Him. None other this constitutes the greatest sin before God. Because this constitutes the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, such people will ultimately reach their own destruction.

Are there still stones in the fields of our hearts? Are there sins that are yet to be revealed? We know all about sin, but only superficially. "Oh, so this is what God is saying," we think to ourselves. But this is all we know, and there still remains much that we do not realize, since such sins as murder, adultery, jealousy, fighting, thievery, and sexual immorality have not been actually carried out but only entertained in our wicked thoughts. Do you not have much that your hearts desire to do? Of course there is. Will you not then actually carry out these things sooner or later? You will. Does this then mean that you can do them freely? No.

Human beings are not that special. Everyone is insufficient. But the Lord has saved us from all our sins. To believe this is faith.

Jesus said that the mysteries of Heaven have been given to us. What, then, are the mysteries of Heaven? It is the Word about the gospel power of the water and the Spirit. Some people may be reminded of some illusions of Heaven by the phrase 'the mysteries of Heaven.' A while ago, a mystical false prophet, who insisted that he had been to Heaven, testified to Korean Christians that the angels in Heaven had been busy to prepare many apartment buildings for the saints to come. Subsequent to

this false prophet there arose other similar witnesses in Korea who claimed to have visited Heaven. But by 'the mysteries of Heaven,' our Lord did not mean such deluded illusions.

Jesus taught us the mysteries of Heaven, the gospel of the water and the Spirit, so that we would testify that the Lord has saved us from all our sins, even though we are insufficient. That's why I testify to you now that the Lord has become our everlasting Savior, and that to save us from all our sins, He was baptized, died on the Cross, rose from the dead again, and lives even now. Do you believe in the power of the gospel? If you believe, then you are safe.

The kind of faith that is approved by God is of the heart. If you try very hard to believe some truth in His Word even though you can never acknowledge it, this in itself cannot constitute your faith. Faith is a concept that belongs to grace. If we try hard to have faith in God's Truth, our efforts on their own cannot be of His grace, for the Lord said; *"Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt. But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness" (Romans 4:4-5).*

Trying hard to believe with one's own will is in itself a work. Just accepting God's Word with your pure hearts is faith. When the Lord says that He took upon all our sins by being baptized in the Jordan River, and that because of this all our sins were passed onto Jesus Christ, to acknowledge this Word is faith. To just acknowledge the Word of God is the heart of the blessed one who is poor in spirit. He who has a heart of fearing God needs not to try hard to believe in His Word.

Just saying, "I'll believe. I'll try hard to believe Your Word," only indicates that our hearts are hardened. When the Word comes upon us, we must say yes to it and believe in it. There cannot be "no" before the Word of God. Can there be anything in the Word of God that can be denied? Of course not! We must acknowledge that the Lord has saved us from our sins with the gospel power of the water and the Spirit. Therefore, to say only reluctantly, "I'll try to believe," is not right.

The Lord said that "he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the Word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces; some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty." He said that those who understand the Word bear fruit. You and I must also understand.

In Korea, there is a weird sect called "I've-got-it Sect." Its members try very hard on their own to convince themselves of their own remission of sin, for they do not know the whole Truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Because of their ignorance of the gospel Truth, they cannot but try to explain the remission of their sins by applying all kinds of allegories and metaphors. And when they happen to reach an understanding of such teachings by chance, they proclaim to be born again by such an understanding. Now, they regard us as a heretic. Why? Because they have found that their gospel is different from the gospel we are preaching.

Does this then mean that they understood the Word properly, or does this mean that they misunderstood it? They only claimed to understand when their understanding was of something worthless. It is as if they were joyously claiming to have

discovered a goldmine, when in fact they were rolling only in their own filth. All knowledge, apart from the Word of Truth on the gospel power of the water and the Spirit, is no more than waste. If anyone does not understand this hidden Truth of the water and the Spirit even as he reads the Bible, all his understanding is 100% in vain.

Jesus said that he who understands the Word bears fruit by a hundredfold, sixty and thirty. Those who do not understand the Word cannot bear fruit. What about you then? Can you understand the Word? Do you now realize clearly in your hearts and profess as follows? "Ah, I had indeed been bound to hell, and yet the Lord has saved me with the power of the water and the Spirit and has become my Savior. The Lord has thereby become my Master, and the God of my salvation. I can now believe that He will take me to the Kingdom of Heaven. My faith may not be great, but I now have faith, even if it is as small as a mustard seed." Do you at least realize that you have now become God's people? If yes, then you are all right. You are now to hear the Word and continue to grow.

Those who do not understand the Word even as they hear it are hardened in their hearts. You must understand the Word of the gospel as soon as you hear it, and whenever your insufficiencies are revealed in your lives, you must realize how the gospel power of the water and the Spirit that has saved people like you is such an amazing Truth. "Ah, I am this much insufficient, and yet the Lord has saved me like this. Hallelujah! Thank You, Lord!"

This is how you can no longer be bound by your sins, follow

the Lord, and serve Him with your renewed and cleansed hearts. Those who have reached this true understanding are the truly blessed ones and the citizens of God's Kingdom.

God has given us all the Truth so that you may understand it. Anyone can now understand this Truth, if only he would not harden his heart. If we cast aside the wickedness of our hearts and humble them, we can all reach this understanding. If you have no such realization right now, then cast aside the wickedness of your hearts and keep on hearing His Word through the servants of God. The understanding of the Word will then come into your hearts someday. When this realization is upon you, the Word will become your faith in the Truth that abides forever, never to disappear.

What you realize on your own is not the true understanding. Understanding what God's Church is teaching you with the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the only proper understanding.

I thank the Lord for giving us this Word on the mysteries of Heaven, and for allowing us to know these mysteries with pure hearts.

It is my hope and prayer that all those who still do not know the mysteries of Heaven would cast aside the stubbornness of their hearts, humble them instead, and pray to God to give them the understanding of this Truth. ✉

# The Kingdom of Heaven Is Like a Man Who Sowed Good Seed in His Field

**< Matthew 13:24-30 >**

**"Another parable He put forth to them, saying: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. So the servants of the owner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?' He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Do you want us then to go and gather them up?' But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, 'First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn.'""**

To spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit throughout the whole world and to bear good fruits that please God by a thirty, sixty, or hundredfold, we need many workers, as well as

sufficient financial means. God has enabled us to bear many good fruits thus far. But I also believe that in the days to come, He will bring even more fruits to bear through us. For this to happen, all of us must pray to God, and I believe that He will give us the power of prayer to complete all His works.

We are only preaching the Lord's salvation by faith. All that we have to do is spread this Truth trusting that God is working with us. While we are in fact all trying to do the work that pleases God, it is God Himself who actually fulfills this work. Walking with the Lord, we can feel that God is working all around us. As we walk with God and do His work, our hearts become even more joyful, and as we become one with the Lord, we come to receive even more blessings of God. I cannot thank our Lord enough for everything that He has done for us.

Matthew 13:24 says, *"Another parable He put forth to them, saying: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field.'"*

In today's Scripture passage, Jesus explained His will by drawing another analogy to an earthly farmer to let us know the mysteries of Heaven. Onto the fields of the hearts of people living in this world, God's seed of life has been sowed.

God has chosen the hearts of people living in this world as His workplace. He said that He sowed good seed in the hearts of these people living in this world. God's purpose in sowing good seed in this world was the following: To turn us, who had fallen into sin, into His own people, and to live with us forever in the Kingdom of Heaven. God always wants the fruit of salvation from all of us. Having sown the Word of salvation on this earth

and in people's hearts, the Lord was waiting for the fruit of eternal life to bear. But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. And these tares were growing with the wheat.

## His Enemy Came and Sowed Tares among the Wheat

Matthew 13:25-26 says, *"But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared."*

This passage tells us that before God sowed the gospel of the water and the Spirit in people's hearts, the Devil first sowed false gospels. God is telling us that in the heart of everyone living in this world, without any exception, He has sown the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit that frees him from all sins. Whether people desired this or not, both good seed and tares were together sown in the fields of their hearts.

Our Lord sowed the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit in everyone. While God was sowing good seed on this earth, the Devil was also working along side, but the purpose of his work lied elsewhere. It was to destroy people by preventing them from receiving the remission of sin through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Because many people did not realize that the gospel of the water and the Spirit sown is the very good seed that God sowed in every one of them, they ended up losing it to

Satan.

This is how two kinds of seed fell onto the hearts of people living in this world, and as a result, two different fruits were produced. These were the wheat and tares. In the hearts of people, both the good seed that turns them into God's people and the false seed that turns them into tares have been sown. As a result, two different seeds were growing side by side on this earth.

So, we need to reach an in-depth understanding of the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit from the passage of Matthew 13:27, which says, *"So the servants of the owner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?'"*

The Lord said that this happened because Satan sowed tares in the hearts of people living in this world. My fellow believers, how were tares sown in people's hearts? While the Lord sowed good seed in this world, Satan sowed tares. The servants then asked, "Do you want us then to go and gather them up?" But the farmer replied, "No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them."

When the Lord looked at the people of this world, He saw that in some of them, the God-sown seed of life sown was planted and growing well. The reality is that there are more tares than good seed sown in this world. In this world, living next to the righteous are those who spread the false gospels that harm people's souls and are incapable of blotting out their sins. My fellow believers, the gospel of the water and the Spirit is not a tare. What the Lord sought to teach in this parable of tares is that

trying to remove them may injure the hearts and souls of the believers of the gospel of the water and the Spirit also. This is why He did not want to hurt the wheat while trying to remove tares. The Lord knew that there were tares among the righteous, but He did not want to injure the wheat because of these tares.

This is why He said, *"Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, 'First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn.'"*

When we consider what the Lord told us here, we can see that just as the seed of the God-given gospel of the water and the Spirit has been sown in this world, so has the seed of the pseudo-gospels of tares been sown in it. So He is telling us that it is inevitable that they would bear two kinds of fruit. But we must remember what the Lord told us here, not to remove the tares but to leave them alone lest we uproot the wheat with the tares. This is why the Lord told us to spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit diligently until the day He judges the tares.

We must realize this. In due time, the Lord will take care of these tares and pull them up. He said that in the last days, He would send His angels to gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, and to gather the wheat into Heaven.

Every crop has a time for harvesting, and every farmer works hard for the harvest. It is by a farmer that the crops of his field are harvested, and while he burns the tares away, the wheat will be gathered into his barn. The same spiritual harvest is to be fulfilled by the will of our Lord.

Having sown good seed on this earth, our Lord wants to

harvest good fruits at all times. But the problem is that in this world, there also are those who bear bad fruits rather than good fruits. How wonderful it would be if there were no tare-like people in this world! But the reality is that there actually are many tares sown by the Devil in our present world. So God is admonishing those who have become the wheat, "Though Satan has sown tares, do not try to remove these tares, but quietly sow the gospel of the water and the Spirit on this earth and bear only good fruits."

It is the Lord who sowed the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the Word of salvation, in this world. At that time, the Devil also sowed his words of tares utilizing the power of the false religions of this world. We must be able to distinguish the true gospel from the false ones. Among the Christians living in this world, there exist two kinds of people, one of the wheat and the other of the tares. There is the wheat that believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, but then there are also the tares that do not believe in the true gospel.

It is because there are many tares as well as wheat in today's Christianity that there are divisions and struggles over its doctrinal differences. Christians are fighting with one another, in other words, claiming that while their denomination is the real wheat, the other denominations are only tares. However, the way to discern whether the seed that fell on the fields of people's hearts is good seed or bad seed is as follows: If their sins have indeed been forever blotted out as white as snow by believing in the gospel, the gospel they believe is the good seed. But if their sins still remain written in the tablets of their hearts

no matter how fervently they believe in their so-called gospel, the gospel they believe is the bad seed, the false gospel. It is by this criterion that the true gospel is distinguished from the false ones.

Put differently, the wheat and the tares are differentiated depending on whether one believes in God's gospel of the water and the Spirit or not. The good seed refers to the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit that God has given to mankind, while the seed of tares refers to the pseudo-gospels that are fundamentally different from the true gospel. Such false gospels may resemble the gospel of the water and the Spirit, but they cannot blot out people's sins, but are only enough to turn their believers into mere religionists. What is worse is that although there are many Christians in this world, only extremely few people actually know the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit and believe in it. This is how there are so many tares in this world.

God is showing us that in contrast to His work of sowing the gospel of the water and the Spirit, Satan is sowing tares. God has raised on this earth His workers who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. And from the age of the Old Testament to the age of the New Testament, and even unto this very moment, God has made them spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Even in this age and time, God is spreading the gospel of the water and the Spirit through His servants.

There can be no doubt that the gospel of the water and the Spirit is now being preached accurately in this age. However, it is also clear that the gospel of tares is also being propagated.

Those whose hearts are hardened are not only unable to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that is being spread in this age, but they will also stand against it as its enemies. By believing in the gospel of tares, many people have failed to realize the Truth of the water and the Spirit, and as a result, they have turned into religionists who are doomed to be destroyed.

In God's good seed is found the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit. We can see that this true gospel of the water and the Spirit is filled with the Word of salvation that is in accordance to the sacrificial system of the Old Testament.

For the people of the Old Testament, in order to offer sacrifice to God according to the sacrificial system set by Him, they had to prepare a sacrificial animal without blemish, and they had to pass their sins by laying their hands on this sacrificial animal, put its blood on the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and do everything according to how God had set.

So just like this, Jesus came to this earth as the sacrificial Lamb of entire mankind, was baptized by John for the purpose of accepting the sins of the world onto Himself, carried these sins to the Cross, shed His blood on it, rose from the dead again, and thereby fulfilled the everlasting salvation of mankind from sin. As we compare these two sacrifices, we can discover how the mysteries of God's salvation in the sacrificial system of the Old Testament are completely fulfilled in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Let us examine this in more detail together.

## The Gospel of the Water and the Spirit Revealed in the Old and New Testaments

The Old Testament's sacrificial offering was a shadow of Jesus Christ the Son of God in the New Testament. That Jesus Christ accepted the sins of mankind through His baptism is the same as the sacrificial offering of the Old Testament accepting the sins of the people of Israel with the laying on of hands. Through the exactly same method as the laying on of hands in the Old Testament—that is, His baptism—Jesus accepted the sins of the world.

Therefore, just as the sacrificial animal in the Old Testament shed its blood and died, Jesus also had to be crucified, shed His blood and die. Like this, Jesus took upon the sins of the world by being baptized by John, and He shed His blood and died on the Cross; we can see here how the Old and New Testaments match with each other perfectly.

Have you read my books on the Tabernacle? Although there are many people in this world who wrote books on the Tabernacle, no one apart from the Apostles of the Early Church era ever answered with the definite knowledge of the Truth manifested in the Tabernacle and its systems. Everything in the Tabernacle and every regulation of its system testify to the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

For example, in the Tabernacle system, "blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and fine woven linen" were repeatedly mentioned (Exodus 27:16). Ten curtains of the Tabernacle, the artistic design of cherubim on the veil for the Most Holy, the screen for

the door of the Tabernacle, the ephod of the High Priest and its band, the breastplate of judgment—all these were woven of blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and fine woven linen. All these regulations manifest the Truth that Jesus the true God has blotted out all our sin with the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

The gospel of the water and the Spirit, therefore, is the gospel of power that can remit away everyone's sins. This Truth is the powerful gospel of Truth that should not be revealed to just anyone. That's why God has hidden this Truth from religionists.

When false prophets come and preach their false gospels, ordinary people are prone to simply accept their fallacious doctrines into their hearts. Hearing such false gospels preached by these false prophets, if only 90% of what they say sounds right, people are bound to agree with them. Actually, only careful thinkers agree that far; ordinary people are likely to agree if just 80% of what they hear sounds right. Some people care even less, saying that this and that are all the same, even if they are about 60% similar.

In this world, in today's Christianity, there are those who are preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit that pleases the Lord, and there are those who are preaching the gospel of tares that does not please the Lord. The true gospel is 100% right, and if anything is not 100% correct, that it is never the right gospel. The Lord says that no one can avoid hell if a penny's worth of his sins remain in his heart. As such, no matter how the gospel of tares may be similar to the gospel of the water and the Spirit, it is of no use, for such pseudo-gospels cannot remit any sin of their believers. This is what our Lord is saying to all of us. This

is why He told us His parable, so that we may discern these things—to discern what kind of a world this world is, what kind of seed have been sown in people's hearts, and which is good seed and which is false seed.

What is our Lord telling us in today's Scripture passage? He said that both the true gospel and the gospel of tares have been sown in this world. God sowed the good gospel, but the enemy sowed the tares. We must listen carefully to the words of the Lord's servants who are preaching the real gospel.

My fellow believers, what are the tares? The tares refer to Christians who still have sin even as they profess to believe in Jesus. In other words, they are the ones who believe in false gospels. They are the ones who do not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit given by the Lord. The tares are the religionists who believe in whatever way they seem fit based on their own thoughts.

Such religionists are the ones who do not believe in the Word of God as it is, but instead add to and subtract from it on their own, believing according to their own thoughts. The tare-like faith of these people is will-oriented in its essence. Their motto is "Let us do this." Such people like to engage in various kinds of religious movements.

They believe in Jesus only on a religious dimension, saying, "Let's just say that we have received the remission of sin by believing in the blood of the Cross."

Such believers may ask, "What should we then do with the sins that we commit afterwards?" Then, they may answer, "We cannot be sure about that, but let's assume that Jesus Christ

solved away all the sins that we commit afterwards. Though we still have sin and feel uneasy, let's believe that He has blotted out all our sins."

Like this, the false prophets consider the Christian faith as one of religious movements. "Since the Lord blotted out the sins of the world on the Cross, let us just assume and believe that He also blotted out all the daily sins that we commit after believing in Jesus." In this way, they embark on their religious movement, proclaiming, "By coming to this world and being crucified, the Lord took upon all the sins of the world once for all and blotted them all at once. Therefore, let's assume and believe that we have no sin in our hearts." Their faith is one where they just agree to assume. They say, "Let's not argue, but let's just assume that this is how it is, and believe in it as such." However, such faith and belief that they have are neither true faith, nor true belief.

False teachers who have tare-like faith testify that they have been saved from all their sins by believing only in the blood of the Cross. However, as their followers continue to sin and can not resolve the problem of their sins to their satisfaction, they come to ask their leaders how they can find the solution to their problem.

"Reverend, I sinned once again and still remain sinful. What should I do now?"

Then, one of the false leaders may say to his congregation, "Jesus has already remitted away all your sins with His blood on the Cross, and so if you believe this, you have nothing to worry." He claims that since Jesus have remitted away all their

sins by shedding His blood on the Cross, all that they have to do is just assume that all their sins have disappeared.

But can anyone really be saved from all his sins just by assuming that they have all disappeared? Such faith is the foolish faith of religionists.

Did Jesus then really remit away our sins when He was crucified? Or, were the sins of the world passed onto the body of Jesus when He was baptized by John the Baptist? Can our sins be really blotted just by believing in the Jesus' blood on the Cross alone? No! It was not on the Cross that Jesus took upon the sins of mankind.

It was before Jesus was crucified, when He was baptized by John the Baptist, that He took upon the sins of the world (Matthew 3:13-15). Therefore, our sins cannot be blotted out just by believing in the blood of the Cross alone as our salvation. However, today's mainstream Christianity proclaims such faith as the orthodox one. This is why many people still have sin in their hearts even as they profess to believe in Jesus.

Yet their leaders claim that it is because the congregation does not believe in the blood of Jesus completely that they have sin. Is this really the case? Can our sins be blotted out perfectly if we just believe in Jesus' blood on the Cross alone? No, they cannot.

We are washed from all our sins by believing in the Truth that our Lord came to this earth, was baptized by John the Baptist to take all the sins of the world upon Himself, was crucified and shed His blood on it, rose from the dead again, and has thereby blotted them out to perfection. This faith is the right

faith. This faith is the faith that believes in the Truth revealed in the Bible.

Which of these two gospels do you think is right? Is it the gospel of the water and the Spirit, or the other gospel that says, "Let's assume that Jesus has blotted out the sins of the world just by being crucified and shedding His blood on the Cross"? Through their religious movements, these leaders are actually leading their congregations to the bondage of the sins of the world. Those who are beholden by such tares, in other words, have turned into religionists. Those who believe that it was on the Cross alone that the Lord remitted away all our sins can never receive the remission of their sins. This is because it was absolutely not when He was on the Cross that Jesus took upon the sins of the world.

Yet in spite of this, if people still believe that Jesus blotted out the sins of the world on the Cross, then they do not believe in the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit, but they only have a religious faith. The religionists of the world, regardless of whether they believe in Jesus or Buddhism, are just fine as long as they have joy and peace in their hearts. And when they feel sin accumulating in their hearts and their consciences are bound by sin, they are okay to just turn into sinners once again. This is why many people, no matter how they profess that Jesus remitted away their sins with His blood on the Cross, actually experience that their hearts are not freed from their sins. Of course, they continue to try to solve this problem, but they only reach their own death in the end.

Now, our Lord is asking the religious leaders of Christianity

with the parable of sowing. When they are asked, "How can you explain Christians who still have sin in their hearts even as they believe in Christ?" the tares answer, "Jesus solved away all sins with His blood of the Cross. Just know that He also solved away on the Cross all the sins that we commit afterwards. Just assume like this and believe in this way. Everything is then all resolved." When the tares teach their followers, they admonish them, "Let's just believe that Jesus blotted out your sins by shedding His blood on the Cross." But is such teaching really right? No, it is absolutely fallacious.

My fellow believers, it is by being baptized by John the Baptist and taking upon the sins of the world, being crucified, and rising from the dead again, that Jesus has delivered us from the sins of the world. This gospel, the gospel of the water and the Spirit, is the only true gospel. But the final answer that the tares' gospel can give is, "Let's just assume." In short, this is just a tentative conclusion derived from their own assumption that they have been saved.

In Christian communities, those who have this tare-like faith say to their followers, "Since Jesus was crucified and died on the Cross, let's just assume that He has cleansed away all our sins with His blood anyway. Let's believe like this." Some of the followers may ask, "Pastor, I do believe so, but my sins could not be washed away by any such confession. What can I do to be cleansed of all my sins?" Then, the tare pastor would answer, "You need to have stronger faith in Jesus. Just believe wholeheartedly that He blotted out people's sins only on the Cross." This is why their prayers of repentance are a way to

receive the daily remission of their sins. When you see them doing so, you must discern their faith and say, "You are the very tares."

The Bible clearly proclaims that the sins of the world were all passed onto Jesus when He was baptized by John the Baptist, and this is why Jesus carried these sins to the Cross, shed His blood and died, rose from the dead again, and has thereby become our everlasting Savior (Matthew 3:13-15; John 1:29, 19:30). When this is so definite and clear, why would you try to turn away from Jesus to a different gospel? (Galatians 1:6)

It is because the Lord has become the true Savior for us that He took upon all our sins of the world by being baptized by John the Baptist. And it is because of this that He went to the Cross, was crucified for the sins of the world, and rose from the dead again. By believing that all sins, including the sins we have committed after believing in Jesus, were passed onto the Lord once for all when He was baptized in the Jordan River, and that He has atoned all these sins by being judged on the Cross, we can be perfectly born again. This is because Jesus took away all the sins of this world through His baptism, and our sins were all passed onto Him once for all through this baptism. This is how we have been saved from all our sins perfectly by faith.

Of course, we might feel emotionally guilty in our consciences because we are still committing sins in everyday life. However, it is only on our part that we still continue to commit sins while living in this world. For the Lord's part, He has already blotted out all the sins of this world by being baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan River, and shedding

His blood on the Cross. By accepting all our sins of the present, the future, and the past through His baptism, then bearing all the punishment of sin on the Cross while shouldering the sins of the world and dying on the Cross, and rising from the dead again, Jesus has become our perfect Savior.

Yet the tares are incapable of explaining this, and only say, "Let's just assume and believe that Jesus solved away even our personal sins." This is fundamentally flawed. Let us now realize and engrave it deep in our minds that the hearts of those who have tare-like faith are misplaced. When I think about the tares in my mind, I think, "These tares are so clueless! And they are so worthless."

If someone graduated from a medical school, became a doctor, and came to treat patients, he should know exactly how to take care of their health problems and make them healthy again. If a doctor cannot diagnose correctly, and therefore cannot prescribe the right medicines, nor even perform the surgery properly, he cannot be called a doctor.

If you were a real doctor, shouldn't you examine your patient, shouldn't you explain to him exactly why he feels sick, where and how the diseases is progressing, give him the right prescription, and provide him with the right treatment? But if you do none of these, and just tell your patient, "I'm just going to assume that I've treated you all, and you should just think that you've all been healed now," would this make any sense at all?

Those who believe only in Jesus' blood on the Cross or some other doctrines instead of the gospel of the water the Spirit are just like this doctor. It is clear that all those who pretend to have

received the remission of their sins without even believing in the exact Truth, nor having the Word of Truth, are none other than tares.

To them, the tares of this world, I can proclaim the gospel of the water and the Spirit in all clarity. And I can say to these tares, "If you understand Jesus and believe in Him according to your own thoughts, as you are doing now, you are actually turning yourself into a servant of Satan." All that we have to do is just teach the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit to everyone who is tormented by his sins. We can heal such a patient for sure, and say confidently, "Your problems can be solved if you believe in the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit."

But the tares just say to people, "Let's believe somehow in what Jesus solved away on the Cross." But those who blindly insist like this based on their mistaken faith are neither God's servants, nor God's people. And it is in such people that Satan works, using them as his instruments to propagate the gospel of the tares to people. We must discern the true prophets from the false prophets to be led to God. I am not denouncing others without reason, but I am just proclaiming that the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the only true gospel that can deliver us from our sins.

## Who Are the Ones That Have Now Become Tares before God?

What, then, are tares? Those of you who have some farming

experience should be very familiar with tares. When a farmer sows rice seed in the field, the grain sprouts and grows, but also growing among the grain are tares. The farmer actually never wanted to sow the tares, nor had he planted them, but he can still see that the tares came out of nowhere and were planted in his field.

These tares are clearly no rice. So even when time goes by, they do not turn into grain. Tares are no more than weeds. Both the rice and the tares have green stems when they are growing. It's not easy to discern them from one another when they are still young. When they grow a bit more, the tares actually look healthier than the rice. The tares are taller than the rice, and they have white strips at the back of their leaves.

It is only later on, when the time for harvesting comes, that the rice can be clearly distinguished from the tares, for they are the plants that actually bear grain. When the rice bears grain, it droops with the weight of the grain, but the tares just stand upright and only have empty husks. On outside appearance, it is the tares that look bigger and stronger, but when looked at what they actually produce, they are no more than weeds that bear nothing edible. And the tares, even after withering away, still come back the next year.

What is worse is that because they feed on the nutrients that are supposed to go to the rice, if there are too many tares, the rice cannot grow well. If the farmer fertilizes the field and takes good care, the rice may also grow well, but it is not as healthy as the tares. If the farmer just plants the rice and leaves, saying, "I'm going to take off to the city. Take care of yourself. Grow

on your own," when he comes back to harvest, there will be few rice but only tares all over the field.

We see that many people were actually tares. Though they may really look all alike, tares are tares and grain is grain. The real crop and the tares are fundamentally different. Tares are entirely weeds. Of course, there are some grains that, as they are unable to imbibe enough nutrients, only have husks. But God still cherishes them all. If you can just grow into the grain, God will cherish you preciously, but Jesus said that the tares would be all bound to burn them, for they are good for nothing but only harmful.

The Lord said, *"The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field."* As we hear this parable, we need to think about the churches of this world. Then, you will realize that the grain implies those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and that all those who do not believe in this gospel are no more than tares. My fellow believers, through this passage, we must realize what will ultimately happen to us if we turn into tares instead of the grain before God, turn around, and become the grain by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Jesus said clearly here in this passage that the tares would be bound in bundles to burn them all.

We also should recognize that there might be some tares even in God's Church. If one calls on the name of Jesus, worships Him, believes in Him as his Savior, and abides in God's Church, and yet he still has sin in his heart, then he is a tare. If you want to find out whether you are tares or not, examine yourselves carefully to see whether or not you believe in the gospel of the

water and the Spirit wholeheartedly. If anyone does not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, then none other than he is the one whose faith is like the tares before God.

This is why we have to know and believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit properly to receive the remission of our sins. But unfortunately, there are still many tare-Christians throughout this world, who neither know the gospel of the water and the Spirit, nor believe in it. Such Christians are the same as non-Christians who do not believe in Jesus as their Savior. Therefore, they must turn around from the tare-like, false gospels, learn about the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and believe in it with their hearts. Also, those who still have sin in their hearts and have not been freed from their status as sinners even as they believe in Jesus must turn around from their doctrine-oriented faith and believe in the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit now to be remitted from all their sins.

## Those Who Are Now Tares Must Receive the Remission of Their Sins by Believing in the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit

In Matthew 5:25-26, our Lord said, *"Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are on the way with him, lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, the judge hand you over to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. Assuredly, I say to you, you will by no means get out of there till you have paid the last penny."*

Jesus said, *"Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are on the way with him."* "Your adversary" here refers to someone who is suing you. The adversary who accuses man to God is the Devil, and what makes you the accused is your sin. When there is sin in your hearts, this sin makes accusations against you to God. "You still have not received the remission of your sins. You are still a sinner. You will be condemned in the future." Like this, your sins will lay charges against you.

This is why the Lord told us to be quickly freed from such accusations while we are still living in this world. What we must do urgently while we are still alive, in other words, is believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and receive the remission of sin into our hearts. Receiving this remission of sin can never be put off.

Our Lord said, *"Lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, the judge hand you over to the officer, and you be thrown into prison."*

If your hearts have sin, then you will face the condemnation of sin. This is because the Lord declared the wages of sin to be death (Romans 6:23). It is only a matter of course that the sinful would be condemned for their sins. If you have your sins intact before God, these sins will drive you into hell. This is why in the end, the sinful will be imprisoned in hell and suffer the everlasting pain of death.

Therefore, we must take to our hearts what our Lord said in Matthew 5:26—*"Assuredly, I say to you, you will by no means get out of there till you have paid the last penny."* We will not, the Lord told us here, get out of the prison until we have paid off

the last penny of our sins, the smallest speck of all.

How, then, could we be remitted from all our sins, without even a penny left? This is actually rather easy. If we believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that the Lord has given us, we will surely be remitted from our sins. By believing in this true gospel, we can be washed from all our sins, to the last penny. It is by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that we have been cleansed from all our sins.

Have you been washed from all your sins or not? You surely have. When you believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit with your hearts, there is no more sin in your hearts, not even a penny. But given the fact that you will be cast into hell if you have even a penny's worth of sin, you must believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and thereby cleanse away all your sins as white as snow. Even if there are mountains of sin hiding behind your back, you can still be remitted from all such sins once for all by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Our Lord has sown good seed in this world and the Devil has sown tares. And now, you and I need to carefully ponder on whether we are really the grain before God or just tares. If we still have sin even as we believe in Jesus, then even now, at this very moment, we must believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and we must thereby be washed from all our sins completely, to the last penny. This is what our Lord is telling us.

No matter how fervently we might have believed in Jesus before God, and no matter how faithful we might have been to Him, if we have even a penny's worth of sin, then this sin will deliver us to the Judge. The Lord told us that the wages of sin is

death and the condemnation of sin is eternal curse. Given this, we must realize that we will be cast into hell if we have even a penny's worth of sin in our hearts, understand clearly that it is because we have sin in our hearts that we are tares, and turn around from our evil ways.

If you still remain as tares, you should admit, "I have misbelieved so far. Since my beliefs were wrong, I should believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit even from now on." But unfortunately, there are so many stubborn Christians who are insisting, "Are all these many Christians then going to end up in hell just because they don't know the gospel of the water and the Spirit? I studied orthodox theology, and have led countless souls to Jesus Christ even though I have had no idea on the gospel of the water and the Spirit! I have experienced so many things whenever I prayed to God, I have met the Lord so many times in my dreams, and I have seen my prayers answered so many times in my life. How can you then treat me as a sinner, just because I didn't know the gospel of the water and the Spirit?" They say that even as they had not known the gospel of the water and the Spirit, they are filled with the Holy Spirit, and cannot forget what they experienced with their faith. Can God the Holy Spirit dwell in the heart of a sinner though? Absolutely not! How foolish are they to cling to such fallacious beliefs then?

Jesus said, *"The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field."* God has sown in this world the good seed of the true gospel that brings the remission of sin. So that we may receive the remission of our sins if only we would

believe in this gospel, our Lord has sown the gospel of power, that is, the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The only true gospel is the gospel of the water and the Spirit. This gospel has the power that can blot out people's sins as white as snow. This gospel is the gospel that has fulfilled the Word of prophecy that is found in Isaiah 1:18, which reads, *"Come now, and let us reason together, Says the LORD, 'Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.'"*

If anyone does not believe in this gospel of the water and the Spirit, and instead thinks, "I will hold onto my old faith. Though I have a few sins in my heart, I only need to be sanctified just a bit more," he must listen to and be admonished by what the Lord said: *"You will by no means get out of there till you have paid the last penny"(Matthew 5:26).* You need to realize why Jesus spoke to you with such parables. And even now, He is still admonishing you to really know the gospel power of the water and the Spirit, and to believe in it with your hearts.

In today's Scripture passage, the tares refer to those who are bound by sin. They are the sinners who are not yet born again because of their failure to believe in the gospel power of the water and the Spirit. It is imperative for them to be born again by receiving the remission of sin.

Let us turn to John 3:1-5. *"There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, 'Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.' Jesus answered and said to him,*

*'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' Nicodemus said to Him, 'How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?' Jesus answered, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.'"*

Our Lord says here clearly that no one can see the Kingdom of God unless he is first born again. No sinner can enter the Kingdom of God because of his sins, and because he cannot enter Heaven, nor can he see the Father.

How, then, can we be born again? Our Lord said in John 3:5, *"Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God."* This means that one can see and enter the Kingdom of God only when he is born again of water and the Spirit. We should then realize here that the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit is the very Word that makes it possible for us to be born again.

And we must remember what the Lord said elsewhere in John 8, *"You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."* So put differently, this means that those whose hearts are still bound by their sins even as they believe in Jesus still remain as tares. Anyone who has even a penny's worth of sin in his heart is a spiritual tare. He is someone who has not been born again yet, for he still does not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

How, then, can such a person be born again? The Lord said that it is of water and the Spirit that one can be born again. The water here fundamentally means the baptism that the Lord Jesus

received from John the Baptist, because it is through this baptism that Jesus Christ took away all the sins of the world. Our Lord is Jesus Christ the Savior who shouldered the sins of the world by being baptized, who died on the Cross while carrying them all, who rose from the dead again, and who has forever saved us from all our sins.

The Holy Spirit also bears witness of the ministries that our Lord fulfilled when He came to this earth (1 John 5: 6). The Holy Spirit is the same God as the Father and the Son. This is why, when we believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, the Holy Spirit descends onto our hearts, and this Holy Spirit testifies to us that it is by our faith that we are born again of water and the Spirit.

God the Holy Spirit is our Helper. The Holy Spirit testifies to us everything that the Father and the Son planned and achieved together according to the written Word of God, and He bears witness to our salvation and guarantees it when we have faith in the gospel Truth. The Holy Spirit also testifies to us that it is by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that we can enter the Kingdom of God. He bears witness of the fact that our Lord, by being baptized, dying on the Cross, and rising from the dead again, has completely and perfectly blotted out all our sins. Therefore, what we need to realize is that to fulfill God the Father's plan, Jesus was born unto this earth, was baptized, died on the Cross, rose from the dead, and has thereby saved us from our sins; and that the Holy Spirit is the God who testifies to us that the Lord has indeed saved us by taking upon our sins with His baptism, dying on the Cross, and rising from the dead again,

and who helps us to believe in these things.

Put differently, the Holy Spirit is testifying to you, "God has saved you in this way through His Son. Jesus is God Himself and your Savior, and to be more concrete, He has saved you by being baptized, dying on the Cross, and rising from the dead again. He has perfectly saved you by taking upon your sins through His baptism, and by being crucified and shedding His blood in your place to be condemned for your sins." As such, if you have faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit in your hearts, you should answer the Holy Spirit with your faith. The Holy Spirit is also the Spirit of Truth. So when we read the Word of God and know the Truth through the Word, the Holy Spirit guarantees us our salvation.

## How Does the Holy Spirit Guarantee Our Salvation When We Believe in the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit?

The Holy Spirit says to us, "Your faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the right faith. You are now sinless. Why? Because to take away your sins, the Son of God was born unto this earth, was baptized, and died on the Cross: The baptism that Jesus received from John the Baptist was to take upon all your sins; His death on the Cross was the sacrifice that He made to bear the condemnation of your sins in your place; and the resurrection of Jesus Christ was achieved to give you new life. It was to make you God's people, to enable you to enter His

Kingdom and live with Him forever, that God Himself came to this earth and carried out His work." It is because the Holy Spirit testifies like this that Jesus Himself says that we can neither see the Kingdom of God nor enter it unless we are born again of water and the Spirit.

Is there anyone among you who still has sin in his heart? Anyone who has even a penny's worth of sin in his heart continues to be bound by sin even after believing in Jesus, and no matter how fervently he might say prayers of repentance for his sins, these sins do not disappear. As such, even though he had not known the gospel of the water and the Spirit so far, he should now know it, and believe in it as the real gospel.

Those who hear the gospel of the water and the Spirit and yet do not really believe in it, and instead hold onto their old faith, are bound to have sin in their hearts all the time. They regard the gospel of the water and the Spirit merely as one of new teachings, and therefore, just add it on top of their old faith. As a result, whenever they commit a sin, this sin is just added to their existing sins.

But those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit are without sin even though they are insufficient, for they believe in this true gospel. Why? Because Jesus already took away all their sins and made an early payment. This is the case because over 2,000 year ago, He already took upon our sins, went to the Cross and died on it, and rose from the dead again, thereby saving us all. It is by believing in this Truth that we can be remitted from our sins by faith. Unbelievers must believe.

Most of you probably have heard of the gospel of the water

and the Spirit, and already know this Word of Truth. To the believers in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, what I am saying here may be a repetition, but still, you need to hear it again. The Lord said that not everyone who calls upon the name of God and professes to believe in Jesus is the real grain. He said that there are both grain and tares in the so-called churches.

The grain bears the crops and the tares bear the fruit of the tares. The enemy has sown the tares, and through these tares, he bears yet more tares. God has sown good seed, made them bear grain, and the grain still bears even more crops. The Lord is telling us, in other words, that we must believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit without fail.

## This World Is the Field of the Kingdom of God

The place where God can do His work is this world. And it is in our hearts where God can sow the gospel seed of the water and the Spirit. But, at the same time, the Devil can also sow the bad seeds of tares in our hearts. This is why we must first know which gospel has been planted in the field of our hearts. If you now realize and know that the seeds of tares have been sown in your hearts, you must now lower your hearts before the gospel of the water and the Spirit and learn it all over again. And you must believe.

The four fields that Jesus spoke of in His parable of the sower refer to four typical conditions of the human heart. After knowing the condition of the field of our hearts, we then need to

find out whether it is really the good seed that has been sown in our hearts' field. If we find we have sin in our hearts, this means that the tares have instead been sown, and those tares in our hearts are fallacious gospels. We must now uproot them from our hearts and throw them away by faith. There are some pseudo-gospels that resemble the gospel of the water and the Spirit closely, but if they are not the gospel of the water and the Spirit for 100%, then they are false gospels. If such false pseudo-gospels have been planted in our hearts, we must pull them out without hesitation, and we must boldly plant, by faith, the gospel of the water and the Spirit in their place.

You need to realize that in the minds of many Christians who profess to believe in Jesus, there actually are many tares—that is, false gospels—that have been planted. At the same time, you should also realize that among yourselves, there also are many people in whose hearts the gospel of the water and the Spirit has been planted.

Our God the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit have sown the good seed in us. By giving us the gospel of the water and the Spirit, God has enabled us to receive the remission of our sins. He loved us so much, and His love is manifested in the fact that God Himself became a man. Jesus Christ the Son of God was born unto this earth through the body of the Virgin Mary. That God Himself came to this world in the flesh of man was to save mankind from their sins. It is only for this purpose alone that the Creator Himself became a human. According to this purpose, our Lord came to this earth, took upon all the sins of mankind by being baptized by John the Baptist, died on the Cross as the

price for taking upon the sins of the world, rose from the dead again, and has thereby become our Savior. The purpose for our Lord to become a man was, in short, to take upon all the sins of the world through His baptism.

After His resurrection, at His final moment on this earth before ascending to Heaven, Jesus said to His disciples, *"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19-20).*

By this commandment, Jesus is still telling us, "I, the Son of God, took upon all your sins, was condemned in your place and died, and have thereby saved you perfectly. I have risen from the dead again and have become your living Savior. You should therefore proclaim this gospel throughout the whole world." From this Great Commission, we can see just how important His baptism, His death on the Cross, and His resurrection are, and just how important this faith in the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit is. Seeing these things that the Son of God and the true God did for us, we must realize and believe just how critical this faith is.

We are now spreading the gospel of the water and the Spirit throughout the whole world, which is God's own workplace and the field where seed needs to be sown. And we are preaching the gospel of His baptism and bloodshed by obeying His commandment. Now is the time for you to know the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit and believe in it.

The Apostle Paul professed his faith in Romans 8:1-2, saying,

*"There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death."*

Even if you profess to believe in Jesus as your Savior, there are two possibilities for you: You may indeed abide in Jesus now, or you may be actually standing outside. This refers to the condition as to whether or not there is sin in your hearts right now, and this is an extremely crucial question for you. And whenever you sin, whether this present sin grapples your hearts and affects them is also important. Depend on this result, whether or not you have sin in Jesus Christ, you can find out if you are tares or the real grain.

The faith that enables you to come into Jesus Christ is faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. It is by this faith that you can enter the Kingdom of Heaven, for the powerful gospel of the water and the Spirit is the gospel that can blot out all your sins to perfection, even to the very last penny.

As it is written, *"There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1),* it is because we believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that we have no sin whatsoever, and it is because we have no sin that there is no condemnation either. The believers in the gospel of the water and the Spirit have now become forever sinless by their faith, and therefore they will never become sinners again. It is because they are now sinless by faith that they have become righteous.

The word "condemnation" in this passage implies "being condemned for having sin." It is to point out that there is sin in

the human heart. Countless Christians, even after believing in Jesus, still profess that they are sinners as there is sin in their hearts. But the Bible clearly states here that there is no condemnation in Jesus Christ, which means that the faith of those who say that they still have sin is a flawed one.

"I am a sinner. I am not God's son. I am no more than a tare." To have this kind of faith is to disobey the righteousness of God and to disbelieve in it. In contrast, the Apostle Paul declared, *"There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus."* And he went on to say, *"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death."*

What is this law of death that the Lord mentioned here? It is the Law that points out people's sins and ascertains that there will be condemnation of these sins. What is the law that condemns and judges people's sins and drives them to death? It is the just Law of God. The Law reveals and points out people's sins. It is the just Law of God that points out what is sin before God and how many great sins we have committed, and renders the verdict declaring, "If you have sin, you will be cast into hell." This is the very function of the Law.

What, then, is the law of the Spirit of life? This refers to the law of salvation through which the Son of God the Father has remitted away our sins, and blotted them all out to perfection. By this law of salvation, He made us be born again and receive new life, turned us into God's own children, and enabled us to receive everlasting life.

The law of the remission of sin is held in the gospel power of

the water and the Spirit. The gospel of the water and the Spirit is the law of salvation through which Jesus has saved us from our sins by coming to this earth, being baptized, dying on the Cross, and rising from the dead again. It is written, *"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death" (Romans 8:2).* This means that the gospel of the water and the Spirit has freed us from the law of sin and death.

My country Korea was once ruled by Japan by force for 35 years. To enslave the Korean people forever, Japan had forced Koreans to change their names into Japanese names and to even change our religions into Shintoism. The lives of Koreans at that time were miserable beyond description. Countless Koreans were drafted into the Japanese army by force and coerced to carry on the Japanese war of aggression during the World War II, and many lives were lost.

Had Japan not been defeated in the World War II, Koreans would have been deprived of their nation by the Japanese for even a longer period. But, thanks to the victory of the Allied Powers, Korea, along with many colonized nations, was liberated from the tyranny of Japanese imperialism. It was on August 15th, 1945 that Japan surrendered unconditionally to the Allied Powers, and it was on that day that the Japanese colonialism was completely driven of the Korean Peninsula.

Like this, owing to the righteous act of Jesus, the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has perfectly liberated all of us from the law of sin and death, just as Korea was completely liberated at the end of the World War II. Romans 8:3-4 says, *"For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God*

*did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit."*

What has freed us from the law of sin and death is the law of the Spirit of life, but what has taught us that we have sin and will cast us into hell is the Law. To free us from this Law, the requirements of the Law must be fulfilled. To this end, the Son of God came to this earth incarnated into the flesh, put all the sins of mankind on His own body, and freed us by fulfilling the requirements of the Law. All our sins were passed onto the body of Jesus Christ.

So Jesus Christ took upon all our sins by being baptized, went to the Cross and was condemned for these sins—this is why He said, "It is finished," when He died—rose from the dead again, and has thereby become our Savior to perfection. By becoming the propitiation for mankind, our Lord, the Lamb of God, has remitted away all our sins, leaving none behind, not even as small a sin as a penny.

This is why everyone who wants to become the real grain must believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. If you had not known the gospel of the water and the Spirit and believed only in the blood of the Cross thus far, you must believe, even now, in this gospel of the water and the Spirit.

What did Jesus say? He said that when people went asleep, the enemy came and sowed tares. This means that while people remained ignorant of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, Satan had his servants sow the false gospels of tares. Such a

false gospel is the gospel of only the blood of the Cross.

There is so much to talk about the false and true gospels. I can explicate the difference between the two down to the minutest details. With the Word of God, I can pierce to the marrow and search the mind, and I can discern whether one is a true prophet or a false prophet. By doing so, I can heal every kind of spiritual diseases for sure. I have done so to this day and will continue to do so. It is by continuously preaching the true gospel that I can enable others to know the false prophets the moment they approach.

There have been times when I felt very frustrated because of people's lack of understanding. However, since Jesus is waiting in His endless patience for harvesting, it is only right that we, too, should wait. We have to teach the lost souls again and again with patience, saying, "This is what the gospel of the water and the Spirit is. Through the Word of the water and of the blood of Jesus, you have received the remission of your sins all at once. You are forever righteous." Such are those who preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

It is my hope and prayer that you would all believe in the true gospel of the water and the Spirit, have the faith of the real grain, and be harvested into God's barn when the end days come. ✉

# The Power of the Gospel of The Water and the Spirit

**< Matthew 13:31-43 >**

**"Another parable He put forth to them, saying: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field, which indeed is the least of all the seeds; but when it is grown it is greater than the herbs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches.' Another parable He spoke to them: 'The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened.' All these things Jesus spoke to the multitude in parables; and without a parable He did not speak to them, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: 'I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things kept secret from the foundation of the world.' Then Jesus sent the multitude away and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, 'Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field.' He answered and said to them: 'He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one. The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. The Son of Man**

**will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!'""**

It is my hope and desire that the gospel of the water and the Spirit would be spread forcefully throughout the whole world. I believe that God will open the door to the whole world, including the unreached regions of the world, so that this gospel of the water and the Spirit may be proclaimed everywhere. I believe that the true gospel will be spread vigorously throughout the world, and that it will be testified fully to everyone who is looking for the Truth, leaving none behind. I believe that regardless of whether it is our desire or not, God's Great Commission, that propagates the gospel of the water and the Spirit throughout the entire world, will surely be accomplished in the near future. I also believe that it is through us that God will spread the gospel in the whole wide world, for this is what God has decided to do so.

God is also the Master of world history as it is written in Psalms 127:1, *"Unless the LORD builds the house, They labor in vain who build it; Unless the LORD guards the city, The watchman stays awake in vain."* This is just like the fact that South Korea went all the way up to the semi-final in the 2002 World Cup. My country, South Korea, had never survived the

first round of the World Cup Tournament, and it had never won even a game, and yet in the past World Cup, it went up to the semi-final. I am sure that this is God's amazing providence and blessing. To spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit throughout the whole world, God made sure that South Korea would be known to the world. I believe that God helps those in many quarters who seek first His Kingdom and righteousness.

I am sure all of you are eager to serve the gospel of God's righteousness. Therefore, we must pray more fervently for the spreading of gospel of the water and the Spirit. We need more material means to support our main ministries, that is, Christian literature ministries. Our Lord admonishes us, *"Make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon" (Luke 16:9)*. However, we cannot support the gospel ministries enough with our possessions, for our own resources are limited.

Therefore, we should pray to God to give us more material means. I believe that if we pray to God, He will give us far greater material blessings than now and work in our lives. Since it is to spread the gospel throughout the whole world that we are praying for financial means, I believe that God knows this better than us and will answer our prayers.

We pray to God by trusting in Him. All we have to do is ask for God's help by placing our faith in Him, and preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit throughout the whole world. When we labor by faith to spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit, God will hear our prayers and work forcefully.

God is pleased when we preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit throughout the whole world. I believe that this true

gospel will be spread even more and further than now, so that there would be no one in this world who has not heard the gospel of the water and the Spirit. It is my ardent desire that the Lord would do all these things in the next few years.

## What Is the Power of the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit That Is Like a Mustard Seed?

We just read Matthew 13:31-43. Verses 31 and 32 say, *"Another parable He put forth to them, saying: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field, which indeed is the least of all the seeds; but when it is grown it is greater than the herbs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches.'"*

Jesus said that the Kingdom of God is like a mustard seed that a man sowed in his field. Our Lord said that the mustard seed is the least of all the seeds, but when it is grown it is greater than the herbs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches. Our Lord was speaking about the power of the gospel through this parable by this passage. Put differently, through the power of this true gospel, God has enabled sinners to receive the remission of sin, to be freed from the bondage of their sins, and hence, to receive new and restful life.

In short, this passage shows us how the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit works to expand His Kingdom. In this parable, the Kingdom of Heaven here refers to the Kingdom of God, and the mustard seed refers to the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

When people first come across this gospel of the water and the Spirit, it may seem very small and not particularly valuable, but for those who accept it into their hearts, the greatness of God's Kingdom is fulfilled in their spirits. It refers to the process that a born-again saint becomes a worker working for His Kingdom. The Kingdom of God, in other words, begins from and is perfected through faith in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, whose power is like a mustard seed. When we believe in this gospel of the water and the Spirit that Jesus has given us, we will become God's own children, and those who thus have become so will turn also into God's servants who lead sinners back to God. Jesus told us through this parable that the servants of God build the Kingdom of God, embrace countless sinners in their arms, and lead them all to the Lord.

## The Lord Did Not Speak without a Parable

Matthew 13:34-35 says, *"Without a parable He did not speak to them, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: 'I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things kept secret from the foundation of the world.'"*

What are these things kept secret from the foundation of the world? They are the gospel power of the water and the Spirit that can build the Kingdom of God. Our Lord has kept the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the gospel of Heaven, secret on this earth.

Through His parables, in other words, the Lord spoke about

how the Kingdom of God can be built on this earth. We can see that it is through the believers in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that His Kingdom is built on this earth. Put differently, it is through the faith of these sinless people who have been born again by the gospel power of the water and the Spirit that the Kingdom of God is built. This is why the Lord has perfectly turned His believers into God's own people with the gospel power of the water and the Spirit, so that our spirits would lack nothing to become God's people.

By giving us the power of this gospel, the Lord has brought perfection to each and every one of us, and He has enabled us to become God's people and the workers of His Kingdom. Therefore, through such workers of God, many sinners are hearing the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, the true gospel, and gather under their teachings. This is how they are saved from all their sins, becoming the people of the Kingdom of God who receive all His blessings and protection. This is the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

The gospel power of the water and the Spirit is the perfect Truth for the Kingdom of God. This gospel power establishes the Kingdom of God and turns sinners into God's people by enabling them to be born again. It is when we believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that the Kingdom of God is built in us, sinners are turned into God's people, and the salves to the world are transformed into God's workers. Many who had belonged to Satan can now become the people of the Kingdom of God by placing their faith in the gospel of the power of the water and the Spirit.

This is why when the Lord spoke of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, He said that the Kingdom of Heaven is like a mustard seed, and He was right on the money! This Truth that Jesus said, that the Kingdom of Heaven is like a mustard seed that a man planted in his field, is a secret that God kept hidden. The Triune God planned as such even before the foundation of the world.

Because of Satan and their own weaknesses, mankind could not avoid but fall into sin and drown in it. Yet God has given a way through which even such people can still become God's people. This is why our Lord said, *"The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field."* The Kingdom of God, in other words, is hidden in the mystery of the gospel power of the water and the Spirit.

Therefore, when people believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, they will all receive the remission of their sins and become righteous. They will become God's people by their faith in the true gospel. They also will become God's workers by faith. Through this gospel, the accursed children will become the very objects of God's blessings. Apart from this faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, nothing else can turn you into such blessed ones. Did you become God's people when you had believed only in the blood of the Cross? What has perfectly and completely turned you into God's own people and has shaped you into the workers of His Kingdom is the gospel of the power of the water and the Spirit.

The Lord of this gospel power of the water and the Spirit is none other than our own Lord. You and I should never

underestimate the powerful gospel of the water and the Spirit, for it is our Lord who came to this earth and has given us this gospel out of His grace. At first glance, this true gospel may look similar to the pseudo-gospel that believes only in the blood of the Cross, but strictly speaking, the gospel of the water and the Spirit is on an entirely different dimension from such other gospels.

We must become God's people by believing in the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit. Through this gospel, we must first be remitted and cleansed from all our sins, and become God's people and His precious workers. We must also preach this powerful gospel of the water and the Spirit to those who still remain enslaved to Satan. It is when we do this that countless people can come to receive their remission of sin.

Jesus spoke of this mystery of Heaven in parables so that not just anyone would understand. He said that the Kingdom of Heaven is like a mustard seed that a man sowed in his field; and that though this seed is small at the beginning, in time it grows into a tree, and the birds of the air come and nest in its branches. When people did not have faith in this powerful gospel of the water and the Spirit, everyone was enslaved to Satan, only to reach death. But through the believers in this true gospel, there arose the people of God on this earth, and many have come to be blessed by God.

Is there any other real gospel of power apart from the gospel of the water and the Spirit? There is none. If there are some who are still wondering and searching, "Is it right for me to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and follow the Lord? Or is

there any other true gospel other than this gospel?" I admonish them to turn around from this foolishness.

The religionists of this world are still like the seed that fell on the wayside. They think that just because they have converted their religions into Christianity and are trying to live their lives to the best of their effort, they believe in God properly. But the fact of the matter is that they cannot even turn themselves into stony fields, for they cannot acknowledge the Word of God. Blocked by the solid wall of religion, they do not even realize just how sinful and insufficient they really are.

Even now, therefore, these people must know how lustful they are, know themselves, and seek the Word of Truth. They must believe, in other words, that our Lord, by giving us the gospel of the power of the water and the Spirit out of His compassion for us, has remitted away all our sins once for all, and has saved us perfectly. All of us must believe in this, and thereby become God's children. What we need to do afterwards is thank God.

Yet because there still are those who do not believe like this and are hesitating, God is disappointed. "Is this really the gospel of power or not? Should I believe in this or not?" To all those who are hesitating like this, I beseech them to put away their doubts now and make sure to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

## A Mustard Seed Is Small, but Has an Enormous Potential

Jesus said that the Kingdom of Heaven is like a mustard seed that a man sowed in his field. How small is a mustard seed? It is so small that you can hardly see it with your naked eyes. And while you are looking at it, if you happen to breathe too heavily, it will be blown away. This is what a mustard seed is. How, then, can this seed turn into a tree, when it is so small? Everyone may wonder like this. But once the seed sprouts, it eventually grows into a huge tree. It can then provide nesting grounds for birds to sing, a shadow to seek refuge from the scorching sun, and a windbreak that to find shelter from the rain and wind.

When we first encounter the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we may very well think, "What's so great about this?" But referring to this gospel, the Lord said that it was the mystery kept secret from the foundation of the world. He said in today's Scripture passage, *"I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things kept secret from the foundation of the world."* One of these parables is that Heaven is like a mustard seed that a man sowed in his field.

The Kingdom of God emerges through the believers in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Jesus said that it is through those who are born again by the gospel of the water and the Spirit that the Kingdom of God arises and expands, and His people emerge. Just like a small flame can be turned into a great fire and burn all the vast forest, it is through those who spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit, in other words,

that many people can become the children of God.

This is why we shouldn't think that there isn't much to this gospel of the water and the Spirit, nor think, in our ignorance, "I am sure there is something better than the gospel of the water and the Spirit." "So many people in this world have researched so much and produced so many studies. Does this then mean that what the theologians have been saying is all wrong?" If you really have such thoughts, you must cast them aside.

Realize the fact that a mustard seed, which seemed worthless and was ignored by all, eventually grows into a huge tree. Admit the fact that it is the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit that has turned you and me, who had been sinners, into the righteous.

Have your sins been ever remitted by any doctrines such as the doctrine of the incremental sanctification or the Calvinist doctrine of justification? Have you become righteous by attending the Pentecostal Movement that emphasizes your personal mysterious experiences? Theology, doctrines, and the righteousness of man have no power to blot out the sins of mankind. Only the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit can blot out our sins, turn us into God's people, and by making us the people of the Kingdom of God, build this Kingdom on this earth.

By whom is the Kingdom of Heaven built? The Kingdom of Heaven is built by those who believe in the gospel of the power of the water and the Spirit. Even before the foundation of the world, God chose us in Christ, predestined us in Christ, and made us His people in Christ. In short, it is in Jesus Christ His

Son that God the Father planned our salvation. That is, because Jesus Christ was born unto this earth, was baptized, died on the Cross, rose from the dead, and has thereby saved us, He has made it possible for us to become God's own children by believing in the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. By doing all these things, He has enabled us to praise God, to believe in Him, and to thank Him. He has made us praise the glory of God.

We therefore have come to know God's will toward us, which had been kept secret from the foundation of the world. By our faith in the truth revealed in His parable of the sower, we can understand the Word of Truth. Heaven, the Kingdom of God, belongs to those who have this kind of faith. Put differently, the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

None but the spiritually wise deserve the Truth. Those who are spiritually stubborn are sticking only to the prevailing knowledge, even though it has turned out to be untrue. There is a saying that goes, "We never think twice on the matters that are under the support of the majority." As such, many Christians do not even think about the possible fallacies of their faith, for the absolute majority of Christians believe that the blood of the Cross is the only truth of their salvation. That's why today's Christianity is full of such blind believers.

However, it is not okay for us to just have strong faith in whatever. Having faith in Jesus according to your own thoughts as the religionists of the world do, as if it were only a matter of religious creed, is not to believe in the true gospel of the water

and the Spirit. Before knowing the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we did not have the gospel of God that really blots out all our sins. To become the real children of God is not something that is feasible for only such empowered servants as the Apostle Paul or Peter.

Yet despite this, those who are ignorant of the gospel of the water and the Spirit say, "How can a man be without sin? That's possible for only God's special, powerful servants, like Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Elijah, Ezekiel, or Daniel," and assert that though we may believe in Jesus, we will not necessarily become like these servants. They became Christians all because it only seemed to them that Christianity is the greatest of the many religions of the world; because the Bible seemed like a great text and truth, something that they felt they should all know; because they were touched by Jesus' love of the Cross; because not to believe seemed like a sin, but to believe would make them wiser; because it looked as if they would be more cultured if they believed in God; because it looked as if they would be somewhat more classy if they walked elegantly having the Bible tugged at their side, sat in church, prayed and listened to the Word; and because they thought they would be turned into great intellectuals if they heard philosophical discussions about Nietzsche, Hegel, or other such great thinkers of the world.

In short, most Christians aimed to attain desirable personalities when they converted to Christianity. Put differently, there was almost no one who actually became sinless by believing in Jesus, who belonged to the people of God, who turned into His child, who was made righteous, and who became

God's precious worker; hardly anyone believed in Jesus with a desire to have the same faith that the righteous and the servants of God in the Bible had, to live his life like they did.

However, our Lord does not want us to become religionists. He only wants us to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, which has the power that enables us to become God's children and to build His Kingdom on this earth. My fellow believers, do you believe that the gospel of the water and the Spirit has made you God's children? Yes, this powerful gospel has indeed turned us into God's children.

The gospel of the water and the Spirit has granted us the same faith as that of Abraham. How did Abraham believe? He believed in God's Word in hope, despite his desperate situation. His faith was like this: "Lord, even though Your Word may not seem to be fulfilled in my thought, I am sure it will be achieved perfectly, for You are the Omnipotent God." Our present faith is the same as the faith of Abraham that God had approved. Sarah's faith was also the same as ours. How could Sarah bear a child? She became pregnant when she believed in God's promise that said, *"Is anything too hard for the LORD? At the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son" (Genesis 18:14).*

It was humanly impossible for Sarah to bear a child. She was almost 90 years old at that time. But this came true because Sarah and Abraham believed, "Since God promised us, He will surely give us a child by this time next year." Of course, Sarah couldn't believe God's word of promise at first, but she eventually came to believe even though it was humanly

impossible. Sarah might have thought, "I have lived long, but this is the first time that I hear such a comic story. It was decades ago that I went into menopause, and so it's impossible for me to bear a child now. God is saying such strange things." But she turned her heart around and said, "But since You said so, I believe."

Abraham and Sarah could have a child actually, and were so happy that they named their son Isaac. The name Isaac means 'laughter.' Abraham had a child at the age of 100. Abraham was so joyful. So when Isaac was weaned, he threw a great party.

My fellow believers, it was at the age of 75 that Abraham had left his home according to God's promise, and it was only now, at the age of 100, that he finally had a child. How long had he waited, and how much had he been led? Abraham was truly a man of faith who followed God's Word, even though he couldn't see any possibilities under his prevailing situations. This is why God approved Abraham's faith as the true faith in God.

Now, the same principle of faith should be applied to us. God is telling us that through the gospel of the power of the water and the Spirit, He has made us His own people, moving us from our place of sinners. The Lord said that He has blotted out all our sins including the sins we will commit in the future by taking them upon Himself through His baptism and atoning them with His blood on the Cross. While this may seem impossible, it is the reality.

My fellow believers, have faith in the powerful gospel of the water and the Spirit. It is written in the Bible, *"Now, faith is the*

*substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1).* Therefore, when you hold onto the Word of God, God's promises of blessing will be all yours. But if you do not hold onto the Word, you will lose them all.

A Korean proverb says that the salt in the kitchen is not salty unless it is actually used. No matter how much salt you might have in your kitchen, your food tastes salty only if you actually put salt on it; if you don't, your food is not salty at all. Like this, you must hold onto the written Word of God by faith. Unless you do so, the gospel of the water and the Spirit will be completely useless to you, no matter how much power it may have. If God is telling you that He has blotted out all your sins with the gospel power of the water and the Spirit, then you must hold onto the very gospel by faith. If, by this faith, you indeed hang onto the Word of God, this gospel will then be yours.

My fellow believers, I beseech you all to believe that the mustard seed in this parable is the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit is faith that is like a mustard seed. It may look tiny, but in it there is a strong life force, and when it grows, it turns into a huge tree and bears countless fruits. The gospel of the water and the Spirit makes it possible to receive the remission of the sin not just for me, but for everyone who hears this Word and believes in it.

## The Gospel Word of Heaven Spreads Like Leaven

Let us read Matthew 13:33 together. *"Another parable He*

*spoke to them: 'The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened.'"*

Here the Lord spoke through yet another parable, telling us that the Kingdom of God would prevail over the entire world through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The Kingdom of God, in other words, would expand like this. While the passage that we just covered, Matthew 13:31-32, speaks about the Kingdom of God that is fulfilled in our individual spirits, this passage from verse 33 speaks about the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit that spreads throughout this planet. When it says here, "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened," it means that this gospel power will spread throughout the whole wide world. The Kingdom of Heaven refers to the Kingdom of God and the leaven that was hidden in three measures of meal till it was all leavened refers to the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

The gospel of the water and the Spirit is the perfect Truth that is leading sinners to the righteous Kingdom of God. God will spread this powerful gospel throughout the whole world in the end times. He will propagate the gospel to every corner in this world, so that every one would have heard of this true gospel without exception.

Jesus said that the Kingdom of Heaven is like leaven that was put in three measures of meal. How much are three measures of meal? In the old days, flour was sold by measures of meal, from one measure to two, three, and so forth. Three measures of meal

would be no small amount, rather it is a considerable amount of flour that is enough for a village feast.

Jesus said that the Kingdom of Heaven is like leaven that is put into three measures of meal. This means that while the gospel of the water and the Spirit is as small as a mustard seed, when this Truth is sown in this world, it will spread to the hearts of all the people in this world. In other words, the gospel of the water and the Spirit, which is the gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven, will spread far and wide, so that everyone living on this earth would come to hear this Word without any exception. And it also means that the power of this gospel is enough to save everyone from sin. This gospel is more than capable of saving everyone, and it will be spread throughout the whole world.

So when I read this passage, I have every confidence that the Word of God will indeed be spread throughout the whole world. There are so many small island countries that I have never heard of their names. But even to such small and remote countries, the true gospel will be sown, and there will remain no country where this gospel would not have entered. I believe so because Jesus said that the Kingdom of Heaven is like the leaven that was put into three measures of meal. Without fail, this gospel of the water and the Spirit will be preached throughout the whole wide world: It will surely enter even to North Korea, and it will make to not just Arabic countries, but even to the small, unknown island nations. This is because the Lord Himself said that the gospel of the water and the Spirit is like leaven.

Though we ourselves may not have enough power or material means, the gospel of the water and the Spirit is tremendously

powerful, and therefore it will surely spread throughout the entire world. Is this not the case? This is why with faith we must prepare our ability to forcefully preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

"The true gospel will surely spread throughout the whole world. It will fill the entire world. Having faith in this, what, then, should we do?" When we go through a chain of thought like this, we realize that all creations belong to God, and we reach the conclusion that we should pray to the Lord to give us the financial means to preach this gospel everywhere. We should pray to God to give us a hundred times more than now—no, a thousand, a million, a billion times more, so that we may preach the gospel to every remote corner of this world in the shortest time possible.

Since God spoke to us about this powerful gospel and revealed it to us before the foundation of the world, He will surely spread this gospel throughout the whole world fully. I believe, of course, that He will fulfill this very soon. My faith is not groundless, but it is concretely rooted in God's Word, so that I can truthfully believe in the Word of God from the depth of my heart.

If a farmer only wonders, "Is it going to rain or not?" and just watches out for the weather, he will not gather much crop when the fall harvest comes. When the Word of God says so, we should have faith in His Word, saying, "Yes! It will surely come to pass as it is written!" And the Word of the water and the Spirit enables us to believe that it is the Word that turns us into God's people and allows us to enter the Kingdom of God. We

must realize that the powerful gospel of the water and the Spirit is the Word of Truth on the remission of sin, and we must realize that this gospel will fill the whole world to its fullness. And we must believe so. I, for one, believe this. Do you also believe?

Do you know the gospel power of the water and the Spirit? Do you believe that the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the Truth that enables you to become the people of God's Kingdom? Do you believe that the gospel of the water and the Spirit will cover the entire world? God has revealed this to us today. By revealing this gospel to the entire world, God will surely fulfill His plan.

Let us now turn to Matthew 13:36-43. *"Then Jesus sent the multitude away and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, 'Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field.' He answered and said to them: 'He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one. The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!'"*

My fellow believers, we must have the ears to hear. "Lord,

give me the ears to hear and understand the Word of God." Like this, we should pray to God and ask Him for His help.

Jesus' disciples came to Him and said, "Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field." The Lord then said to them, "He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man."

Like this, the One who spreads the gospel of Truth about the Kingdom of Heaven is God Himself, and He is Jesus who came as man. What is the field, that is, the object to which Jesus preached His Word? This object is the world itself. Everyone living in the world is His field. Jesus then said, "The good seeds are the sons of the Kingdom." Those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, in other words, are the ones who belong to the Kingdom of God.

In short, the good seed is the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and we can become God's children by believing in this gospel. The sons of God are the good seeds, and at the same time, they also sow the good seed in obedience to their Lord. Actually, we all have been saved from all our sins by the gospel Truth, and then we have devoted ourselves to the spreading of the Word of salvation.

As Jesus said that the enemy who sowed the tares is the Devil, it is the Devil who sowed and planted the false gospels in people's hearts. The tares grow more vigorously, but when we take a closer look, we can see that they are different from the rice. The tares have white strips at the back of their leaves. It is the tares that pretend to be more righteous. They pretend to be more virtuous and to have less sin. Just as an imitation flower is more splendid than a real flower, the tares look stronger than the

real grain. As the Gresham's Law says, "Bad money drives out good," the tares have been prevailing throughout the history of Christianity and become the absolute majority of today's Christianity. But, what is clear is that the tares will be gathered and burned in the fire in the end.

## Jesus Said That the Tares Are the Sons of the Wicked One

Jesus said that the tares are the sons of Satan, and that the enemy who sowed the tares is the Devil. It is the Devil who sowed them. The enemy of God, our enemy, is the Devil. Jesus said that the good seed, on the other hand, is sown by the sons of God. He said that the good seed is of the Son of Man, and that it is the Word of Jesus who came incarnated in the flesh of man.

Our Lord came to this earth and has saved us through the gospel of the water and the Spirit: Our Lord took upon our sins with His baptism, died on the Cross, rose from the dead again, and has thereby saved us. Before we believe in this Word, we must first believe that Jesus is God Himself. We must first believe that Jesus is God, the Son of God, and our Savior, and we must also believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, which tells us that to save us, the Savior Jesus was born unto this earth and took upon all our sins when He turned 30.

Although Jesus was born into this world incarnated in the flesh of man to come as our Savior, He is fundamentally the

same entity as God Himself. But even so, He did not show off His own Divinity, but He lived His 33 years of life in humbleness and humility, all in order to save us. He stood on our side, took upon all our sins, bore our condemnation of sin, died in our place, rose from the dead again, brought Himself to life again by His power to bring us alive also, completed our salvation to perfection, and has become the God of our perfect salvation.

The Bible clearly declares that Jesus is the true God and eternal life (1 John 5:20). This is why we must believe in Jesus as our God. We must believe that Jesus, as God Himself and the Son of God, has become our Savior. Our Lord fulfilled the gospel of the water and the Spirit on this earth. He spoke about the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and He fulfilled all His Word of the prophecy on this true gospel with His own body by coming to this earth. He also has made us believe in and preach this gospel of power, the Word of the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit.

The sowers of the bad seeds are the sons of the Devil. This is why Jesus said that those who spread the good seeds are the sons of the Kingdom of Heaven, and those who sow the bad seeds, the tares, are the sons of the wicked one. The two are clearly distinguished in this way. The tares and the real grain are not similar. They may look similar to the ignorant, but to anyone who looks at them closely, they are not the same. It is the tares that have white strips at the back of their leave, that are thicker and greener. But the tares will eventually succumb to a sudden fall. Do these tares fall because they are weak? No. It is because

they are not approved by God that they succumb to their downfall.

Our Lord spoke in exact precision that it is the gospel of the water and the Spirit that builds the Kingdom of God and that enables us to enter into this Kingdom. In other words, by the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we can discern clearly the grain from the tares. Many people, however, do not know it, because it is a mystery to them. This is why the Lord has revealed it to us.

Continuing to explain His parable, our Lord went on to say, *"The harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth."*

Jesus said that He would send His angels at the end of the age. He said that it is not we who would bind the tares and cast them into the fire of hell, but God, Jesus Christ Himself, will send His angels to reap the tares and bind them together to cast them into the furnace of fire. Jesus also said that the righteous would then be gathered together, and at this time, they will shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father. The real grain, in other words, will live in shining glory in God's barn, the Kingdom of Heaven, but the tares will live in suffering in the pit of fire forever and ever.

## Are You the Real Grain?

When it comes to the parable of the wheat and the tares, it is crucial to find out who is the real grain and who are the tares. Through this parable, we can see how the gospel of the water and the Spirit enables us to enter the Kingdom of God, and to become God's children; we can see that the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the only true gospel that delivers every sinner from all his sins; and we can see that our Lord told us that the gospels of the tares, even though they may look similar to the true gospel, are fundamentally different from the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

The gospel of the water and the Spirit that we are preaching is more than sufficient to be propagated throughout the whole world. It will spread without fail. Regardless of how insufficient we are, the gospel of the water and the Spirit will be preached for sure. Because this is not just our work, but God's own work, He will surely accomplish this work.

My fellow believers, why did the tares turn into tares? Isn't it because they heard and accepted the gospels of the tares preached by the sons of the wicked one that they turned into tares? How have we become the sons of God? Isn't it because those who first became the sons of God by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit beforehand preached the Word of the gospel power of the water and the Spirit to us? Yes, we had been sinners before God, but when we heard and believed in the true gospel, the gospel of the real grain, we became the righteous. Just as the tares and the real grain are fundamentally

different from each other, we must first find out whether we are the real grain or the tares. And we must draw a dividing line in our hearts.

You must ask yourself: "Am I standing in the line of the real grain? Or, am I now standing in the line of the tares? There still are opportunities. What is clear is when the end of the age comes, God will surely bind the tares first and cast them into the everlasting fire. And He said that for the tares, *"There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth."*

No matter how insufficient we might be in our acts, and no matter what kind of sin we might commit, we must believe that through the gospel power of the water and the Spirit, the Lord has perfectly turned you and me, who had all been bound to hell, into the children of God, so that we may become God's sons. We must believe that the gospel of the water and the Spirit has turned us into the righteous. We must believe that only the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the real Truth and the real salvation.

And we must confess, "Lord, You are the Christ and the Son of the living God." Just as Peter acknowledged that Jesus is the Son of God, God Himself, and the Savior, we, too, know and believe so, and have made the same confession of faith. By doing so, our faith has been approved and commended by God, and we have become His children, His workers, and the laborers of the Church. All of us, you and I alike, must believe that the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the only real Truth, and that only this gospel has blotted out all our sins.

"Should I step this way or that way? I can't step into this

direction entirely, at least not yet. I still need to leave some room. I will not bet everything here. I don't think this is all that there is." Is there anyone who, having put down one foot, is nonetheless still hesitant to put down the other foot? It is only the gospel of the water and the Spirit alone that has save you and me from all our sins. Only the power of this gospel of the water and the Spirit is sufficient to make us sinless. Nothing else can do this. As it is written in Acts 4:12, *"Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved,"* there is no other name but Jesus Christ who has cleansed away our sins by giving us the gospel power of the water and the Spirit. He has cleansed us completely and perfectly. Though our sins are like scarlet, He has washed them away as white as snow (Isaiah 1:18).

In His parable of the sower and four fields, our Lord said, "From the very beginning, you had worshipped idols, neither acknowledged nor listened to My Word, but were lustful, worldly, and hedonistic. You cannot avoid but be thrown into hell for your sins. But I came to save you and fulfilled your salvation to perfection through the gospel power of the water and the Spirit. I have blotted out all your sins. By being baptized, dying on the Cross, and rising from the dead again, I have perfectly saved you from all your sins. You should then believe in what I have done for you and become God's people. Won't you believe in this to become God's people? Don't you want to become God's own people? Don't you want to enter the Kingdom of Heaven? Don't you want to come into the Kingdom of God that I have prepared for you?"

Our Lord is admonishing us, "When I love you so much, when I will love you forever, why don't you accept My love?" This is what our Lord is speaking to all of us, to all the people of the world, through His parable of the sower.

Fundamentally speaking, we had left God and worshipped idols instead. We had been the seeds of evildoer who were born in this world with the twelve kinds of sins in our hearts, destined to live our entire lifetime only to bear the fruits of sin. We had always committed wicked deeds, and all the while we had been carnal, lustful, and hedonistic. Like this, we had been so wicked that it was simply impossible for us to become God's children on our own.

Yet to save such people like us, God Himself came to this earth in the flesh of man, and when He turned 30, He was baptized to take upon our sins. He accepted all our sins through His baptism, and then went to the Cross to be crucified. And shedding all His blood and dying, He then said, *"It is finished!" (John 19:30)* He shouted out, in other words, "I have now saved you perfectly!" And by rising again from the dead, the Lord has become the Savior for you and me.

He is now asking us, "I have saved you all. I have given you the Word of the gospel power of the water and the Spirit. Can you now believe in this? I have fulfilled your salvation by taking upon your sins with My baptism, dying on the Cross, and rising from the dead again. Can you now believe in all these things that I did out of My love for you?"

My fellow believers, fundamentally speaking, we had been no more than tares. Adam and Eve, our ancestors, turned into

tares deceived by Satan. But, they were saved by believing in the Word of God, and we, too, can also be saved by believing in His Word.

You have now been given an opportunity. Jesus is asking you, "You were born tares, but don't you now want to become the real grain?" Now, everything depends on our choice. If we think that it's okay to become Satan's servants, and we let our hearts stay as they are, then we will remain as the tares. But, if we think, "Though I am insufficient, I don't want to end up as the Devil's servant. I want to become God's son, despite my insufficiencies. Lord, please have mercy on me and accept me," then we must admit that we had been bound to hell, and we must believe that the Lord has saved us through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Such people can be turned into the real grain.

Through the parable of the wheat and the tares, God is ultimately asking us where we belong, that is, whether we are the tares or the wheat. Where do you want to belong? When the Devil provokes your hearts to think, "But I still like the tares; it's fine with me if I go to hell," you should say, "No! I may live my wretched life like this in this world, but I want to live happily in my next life. I want to live in a place where there is love. I want to be rewarded. At least, I want to go to the good place. Though my acts may be insufficient, I would like to be a worker of God's Church, and to live for His righteousness." I beseech all of you to have this kind of heart that seeks righteousness. This is what you should do.

Through the parable of the wheat and the tares, the Lord told

us how truthful the gospel of the water and the Spirit is. Our Lord likened the gospel of the water and the Spirit to a mustard seed, and He also likened the Kingdom of Heaven to leaven. Although the mustard seed is so tiny, in time it grows into a big tree that the birds can nest in. The leaven can diffuse and spread widely. The gospel of the water and the Spirit is so powerful that it is more than capable of covering the whole world.

I believe that this will surely come true in the near future, because the Lord said:

*"Now it shall come to pass in the latter days*
*That the mountain of the LORD's house*
*Shall be established on the top of the mountains,*
*And shall be exalted above the hills;*
*And all nations shall flow to it" (Isaiah 2:2).*

And we believe that when a new world dawns on us at the end of the age, those of us who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit will shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of Heaven. Do you believe so? You and I will live our lives shining forth as the sun. Jesus said that when that day comes, the righteous would shine forth as the sun.

What kind of life is the life that would shine forth as the sun? It is a glorious life in the Kingdom of Heaven. Who did Jesus say would live such lives there? The righteous will live there. In what do the righteous believe? They believe in the gospel power of the water and the Spirit. Whom do they ultimately follow? They follow our Lord. I give all my thanks to God.

Even as I preach this Word, I sense that though this Word may bring so much comfort and benefit to us, for those who

remain as the tares, it may only seem too tiresome and boring. But it is only owing to their stubborn perspective that their hearts are too hardened to hear the tender voice of the Lord. When I think about what they will face in the future, I feel so sorry for them. This is why I cannot stop preaching the true gospel. The gospel of the water and the Spirit will spread throughout the whole world without fail, and will cover it all.

And those who believe in this gospel will enter Heaven even if they are insufficient in their acts, but those who are standing in the line of the tares will be all cast into hell no matter how upright their acts might be. The tares are absolutely bound to be cast into the everlasting fire. This is why I feel so sorry for them.

When the last days come, the happy and the tragic will be clearly distinguished. As I preach the Word, there are times when I am unsure as to where to lay my focus. If I were to just ignore the tares and think only about the glory that awaits us, I can preach the Word in joy, even while dancing. But I can't be joyful to my heart's content, for there still are so many people throughout this world who do not know the gospel of the water and the Spirit that can make them to be the good field.

It is my hope and prayer that you would all realize just how wicked, lustful, and insufficient you had been before God, and how you had all been bound to hell; know that because of this, it is only by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that you can become God's children; and reach the faith that believes in this. The road of faith still remains long. Your lives are still there to be lived.

We are God's workers. So I give my thanks to God. Whether

we work hard or not, the will of God will be fulfilled regardless. I want the servants of God, His saints, and His Church throughout the whole world to first have faith in the Word of God. It is not a matter of saying, "Let's do something." Rather, it is to say, "God has thus spoken, and it will be fulfilled without fail." It is, in other words, a matter of having faith in the Word, to rise to the challenge, to pray and ask, and to believe that the Lord will surely give us power and enable us to fulfill this work.

God wants to save even the tares from all their sin. That's why we are trying to preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit even to the remotest corner of this world. I believe that by enlightening the hearts of many people in this world to recognize and believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, God will make it possible for them to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. ✉

# The Kingdom of Heaven Is Like Treasure Hidden in a Field

**< Matthew 13:44-46 >**

**"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it."**

In today's Scripture passage, our Lord Jesus continues to explain the mystery of the Kingdom of Heaven by drawing two more parables: The parable of treasure hidden in a field and the parable of a pearl of great price. The meaning of the first parable is as the following.

The Kingdom of heaven refers to the Kingdom of God, and the hidden treasure refers to His gospel. In other words, Jesus said that the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the most precious treasure on this earth. To discover the gospel of the water and the Spirit is to discover the treasure of the Kingdom of God. While living on this earth, finding the most precious gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit is finding the way to

enter the Kingdom of Heaven. The Kingdom of Heaven is like finding hidden treasure. This is why Jesus said, "A man found and hid it; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field."

## Only Those Who Know the Value of This Treasure Can Possess It

The main point of today's Scripture passage is that he who wants to make the Kingdom of Heaven his must pay its price. Anyone who wants to make Heaven his must pay a price that is worthy of living there.

When we discover the treasure, that is, the gospel of the water and the Spirit that enables us to enter the Kingdom of God, it is natural for us to try to make it ours. But to do so, we must pay its appropriate price. This is because the gospel of the water and the Spirit is so precious that one can make it his, only when he sells all his possessions and buys it. Because you and I have discovered the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and we sold everything we have and bought this gospel, we are now able to enter the Kingdom of God by faith. What makes it possible for us to enter the Kingdom of God is the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The gospel power of the water and the Spirit has perfectly blotted out all our sins once for all. Therefore, through this gospel of the water and the Spirit, we have become sinless and are now able to enter the Kingdom of God.

If one finds the Word of Truth, of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and just ends there, then this actually amounts to nothing. Why? Because this precious treasure may very well be taken by someone else. In other words, for us to enter the Kingdom of God by finding and believing in this gospel of the water and the Spirit, we must urgently make it ours by paying a price that is commensurate to it. Put differently, to pay the price for it or to earn it, we must lose and abandon many things of the world.

Of course, the Kingdom of Heaven is never a place that we can enter through our own sacrifice. It is a place that we can enter only by placing our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

What, then, is the meaning of today's Scripture passage that Jesus spoke? It is that those who really found the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the treasure that enables them to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, sold all their belongings and bought it to make it theirs.

Jesus said, *"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field."* When we encounter the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we should not hesitate, but accept it into our hearts immediately. It is only by our faith in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, the gospel of God, that we can receive the remission of our sins.

But, if we want to receive the remission of our sins by believing in this gospel, and live blessed lives to serve this Truth, we must pay a price. Just as it is said here that the man sold all

that he had, we, too, had to sell all our possession to make the gospel of the water and the Spirit ours. There is no one among us who can believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit as his own without making any sacrifice. When the gospel of the water and the Spirit is so precious, how could anyone believe in it without paying its price? We may have to pay the price by being persecuted to follow the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

It is no exaggeration to say that you have sold all your possessions to earn this gospel of the water and the Spirit after you discovered it. You surely had the following conviction when you made up your mind to hold on to the true gospel: "The gospel of the water and the Spirit is truly precious. No matter what I may lose in this world, this gospel Truth is worth it. I will make the gospel of the water and the Spirit mine, even if this requires me to lose everything that I have, for this gospel Truth is more precious than even my life."

If we can have the gospel of the water and the Spirit, it does not matter if we even lose everything that we have in this world. He who has this true gospel is the richest. Even if having this gospel entails our sacrifice, and no matter how we may be tempted by the priceless things of this world, none of these can be compared to this gospel of the water and the Spirit. By believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we can have the most precious and priceless treasure in the world.

If you really knew just how precious the gospel of the water and the Spirit is, you would try to have no matter what price you have to pay for it. This is because it is by having this gospel of the water and the Spirit that we can enter the Kingdom of

Heaven. None other than this is the very meaning that today's passage is trying to enlighten us.

*"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field."*

A man happened to find a treasure chest filled with diamonds, gold and silver, which was hidden in a field. He immediately went out and sold everything that he had and bought the field. Why did he have to sell all his possession? It is because if he had kept his possession, he could never have bought the field, and thus make the treasure his.

As I contemplate on this Scripture passage, I examine myself whether I have such conviction or not. And I admonish you to reflect on this passage, too. For us to make this gospel of the water and the Spirit entirely ours, we have lost so many precious things. To earn something precious, we had to sacrifice much as well. Perhaps you are wondering if you really had to buy this gospel of Truth by selling everything you had, or if this gospel is really that much precious. So today, I want to speak to you about the value of this gospel of the water and the Spirit. I would like to explain to you just how valuable is this gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit that we know. Is this gospel just a mere religious doctrine of the world? Or is it worthy of buying, even if it means that I would lose my everything, from my home to my wealth, my parents, my wife, my children, and even my life? This is what I would like to speak about to both myself and to you.

This gospel of the water and the Spirit is the gospel of Truth

that enables us to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. The gospel of the water and the Spirit is the Truth of salvation for all sinners. It is the Truth that makes it possible for us to be saved from all our sins. By placing our faith in anything else other than the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we can never receive the remission of our sins, and therefore nor can we enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

As our Lord says that He is the door, and that whoever enters through elsewhere apart from this door is a thief and a robber, if anyone claims that we can enter the Kingdom of God without believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, then he is a robber. And his faith is the faith of the tares. That only the gospel of the water and the Spirit can enable us to enter the Kingdom of God is the absolute Truth that requires no further comments. As such, this gospel of the water and the Spirit is the priceless treasure that is more than worthy of buying even if it requires us to sell everything that we own.

On this earth and in Heaven alike, what is the most precious to you? What is the most precious treasure for you and me? It is the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The gospel of the water and the Spirit is the most precious treasure for all of us. He who has given us this precious gospel is none other than our Lord Jesus Christ.

Do you now realize the worth of this gospel that our Lord spoke to His disciples through His parable? If you really knew the value of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, you would sell all your possessions and buy this treasure. If, on the other hand, you did not know the value of the treasure, you would

think it is a waste to sell everything you have to buy the treasure. In other words, when one does not know the value of the gospel, he is bound to be controlled by his circumstances. If anyone thinks that his own possessions are more valuable than the gospel of the water and the Spirit, then he is someone who does not know the true worth of this treasure. If we do not know the value of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we may easily throw it away.

My fellow believers, we, as the believers in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, cannot just receive the remission of our sins for no cost. For us, the gospel of the water and the Spirit is clearly our treasure, and the real Truth. This gospel is a tremendous treasure for us. It is such a priceless treasure that we would not be able to buy it even if we were to sell everything on this earth. So this gospel is a fabulous treasure, but those who do not know its value do not want to buy it. The reality is that they should actually be thankful if they can only buy it by selling all their possessions.

Some people, even as they know the gospel of the water and the Spirit, only look at it and do not buy it to make it theirs. Such people only know the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and have not been saved from their sins. If we can only buy this gospel of the water and the Spirit, even if we have to sell everything we have, it is still a bonanza for us. There is nothing in this world that is as valuable as the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

I am admonishing you loudly with all my heart: Believe in this gospel of the water and the Spirit that enables you to enter

the Kingdom of Heaven; believe in it no matter what price of sacrifice you have to pay; and hold onto this gospel. I admonish you to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, make it yours, and keep it in you, no matter what sacrifice this might entail. I beseech you to keep this faith, to follow it, and to become one with it. This is the same admonishment that the Lord gave to His disciples.

Our Lord is saying to us, *"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field."* Even if we were to dedicate our youth to believe in this gospel of the water and the Spirit and lose everything in the process, it really is no loss for us. It is this gospel that is life itself; it is this gospel that has blotted out all our sins and thereby enabled us to receive the remission of our sins; it is this gospel that enables all of us who believe to enter the Kingdom of God. This is why I dare to tell you to sell everything you have and buy this gospel of the water and the Spirit, for it is that much precious. I say this to you because I know the eternal value of this gospel.

If you know the worth of this gospel of the water and the Spirit, then you would be able to believe in it and follow it, even if it requires you to sell all your possessions. But if you do not recognize its value, then you would not sell everything you have and buy it. So in the end, you will not be saved, but lose what is the most precious. Even in the Church, when we look from this angle, there are those who follow this precious gospel only reluctantly. They are the ones who keep all the many possessions that they have, and just stare at the gospel from afar. I am not saying here that you should sell actually all your

possessions—no, absolutely not! What is the worth of our puny individual wealth, anyway? Would it amount to a million dollars, if we were to sell all our possessions? Would it amount to $10 million? Compared to the Kingdom of God, our possessions are a drop in the bucket. Don't be alarmed here by what I am saying, worried that I might be asking you to sell all your possessions and bring the money to me. I have absolutely no ulterior motive here, as if I were coveting your possessions.

What you have, of course, is precious to you, but in the greater scheme of things, I consider it to be too small to pay for even a meal for all the righteous of the world. If we were to gather around all the righteous people throughout the world and hold a feast for them in one of the classiest restaurants, for reservation alone, we would have to put down a million dollars, if not more. Like this, our material possessions are not that valuable.

But the gospel is different. The value of the gospel is literally priceless, yet those who do not know this value do not buy it. Such people are those who consider something else that they have to be more valuable than the gospel Truth, and therefore cannot give up their own possessions and follow them instead. To speak about these things at this hour is rather shameful, and it certainly brings no joy to me. As our Lord says, *"Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine" (Matthew 7:6)*, if I could have my way, I would not talk about such ones. I wish I could just explain this passage to you, talk about only those who follow the gospel, and then end my sermon there.

But there are those who, even after encountering this gospel of the water and the Spirit, keep wondering, "Should I follow this or not? Should I believe in it or not? Should I unite with it or not?" They constantly calculate the cost and benefits of doing so, and continue in their hesitation, endlessly weighing their options. When I see such people, it brings regret to me that this gospel was given to them. I almost feel like snatching away the gospel from them and telling them to quit.

In Korea, there are many people who do not know the value of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. This is why we decided to stop preaching the gospel in Korea temporarily. Since people swaggered over some money, as if they were doing a favor to us by believing, we decided to stop. Unless one sells all his possessions and dedicates his entire lifetime to buy this true gospel of the water and the Spirit, he can never make it his.

But I believe that throughout the world, there are many who would bet their life on this gospel. This is why we are trying to evangelize the whole world. I am sure that there still are countless souls that would buy the true gospel even if this requires them to sell their everything and pay its price, if only they could believe definitely and enter the Kingdom of God, if only they could receive the remission of sin, if only they could live the life of righteousness, and if they could only unite with the Lord and live with Him. Of course, we are positively preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit all over the world since it is His Great Commission, but it is also true that we were motivated to do so because we believed that there would be many more innocent souls around the world. We don't

need to compel someone who does not know the value of the gospel to believe in it, but it is far better for us to give this gospel to those who are actually looking for it.

How valuable is the gospel of the water and the Spirit? It is like treasure in the Kingdom of Heaven. Let us assume here that there is a chest that holds a crown made of diamonds, sparkling with mysterious light, and a dress adorned with all kinds of precious stones. The chest and all the items in it are so precious that we cannot even set their price. If you could buy this chest by selling everything that you have, would you then exchange it with all your possessions or not? Of course you would.

It's rather unlikely, but since everyone has a different mind, perhaps some of you would say, "I don't want to. I don't like diamonds. I prefer pork chops!" But if you knew the real value of this chest, you would not hesitate to sell everything you have to buy it. I know its worth. I know the preciousness of this gospel power of the water and the Spirit. I believe that you, too, know this value. I believe that it is because you know the value of the gospel that you are holding onto this gospel so far.

However, perhaps there also are people who, while realizing its value, nonetheless know only a third of its full worth. No diamond, even if it is the size of a head, is of any use to those who do not know its value. Perhaps there is something else that is more precious than diamond, but I can't think of any. At any rate, if we assume that there is nothing as valuable as diamond, how happy would we be if only we could have it? If you knew that it is more valuable than what you have now, would you exchange it with your possessions or not? Would you buy it or

not? Of course you would buy it! The gospel of the water and the Spirit is like this diamond. The Kingdom of Heaven is like treasure hidden in a field.

Let me elaborate on the parable of the hidden treasure here. Suppose that a man came upon a field, and for whatever reason, he happened to dig up one of its corner and found a wooden chest. So he wondered, "Is this a casket?" But it didn't look like a casket, since there was a lock. So he opened the lock and uncovered the lid, and all of a sudden he was forced to squint his eyes by the brilliant light coming out of the chest. The man then quietly put the lid down and locked it again, and then covered up the chest with earth. He then called up his real estate agent, told him that he wanted to sell every real estate he owns, from his house to his factory and his land, auctions off his jewels and even his clothes at fire sale prices, and he sold everything else that he owns. So he now has about $3 million in cash from all these sales. He carried all this money and went to see the owner of the field. And so the bargain started:

"Are you the owner of this field?"

"Yes, I am."

"I would like to build a cottage on that piece of land; would you mind selling this field to me? I will, of course, make an offer that corresponds to its price. I would really appreciate it if you would sell this field to me."

"How much will you pay?"

This field, in fact, was only valued at $30,000. But the man was so bad at bargaining that he offered $1 million from the beginning, when he should have first offered $30,000 or

$25,000 for the field. Wouldn't the owner of this land be shocked by this sudden and outlandish offer? So he thought about it carefully, and something just didn't seem right. "There must be something very valuable in this land. A goldmine, perhaps?"

"I don't want to sell. This land was inherited to me from my forefathers, and so it should be inherited to my descendants."

"Well, then I will pay you $1.5 million."

Then, the landowner thought, "But this land is valued at only $30,000; why is this guy offering me $1.5 million for it? He must be out of his mind! Should I sell it? No, wait. He is head over heel to buy the field. I should try to jack up the price some more."

"Do you really have that much money to begin with?"

The man went to his car, brought a case, and put it down before the owner. Seeing a case of one million-dollar cash, the landowner thought, "I guess he does have the money. So he is offering me $1.5 million. But I should bluff a bit more and see how it goes."

"No thanks. I won't sell it."

"I will pay you $1.7 million."

"Nope. I won't sell the land even if you offer me $10 million. Why, you ask? Because this piece of land was passed onto me from my forefathers, and I will make sure that it is passed onto generation after generation. My forefathers told me to never sell it, and so I will never sell it. A man should keep the trust. I must keep the last words of my forefathers." Seeing that the man did not hesitate to offer so much money for the land, the owner

thought that he could bluff his way to a higher price.

"What about $2 million then?"

"Nope; that won't do."

"How much will it take for you to sell this field then?"

"I will sell it if you offer me $3 million."

"You are like a fortuneteller! How did you know that I had $3 million? My entire asset is worth exactly $3 million, not a penny more, not a penny less. Okay, that's deal! I will pay you $3 million with two more cases of cash."

So he paid off the money, and bought the field that day. In exchange for everything that he owned, now he finally got hold of the field. But He was so happy, for the field was that much worth it. It was worth selling off all his possessions to buy it.

The gospel of the water and the Spirit is of great worth beyond description. It was worth it even if we were to lose our life. It was all the worthwhile even if we had to sell ourselves into slavery. You probably have heard about the martyrdom of the Early Church age. Many of the Early Church believers were willing to embrace their martyrdom to keep their faith in the true gospel. Some of them gladly gave up their noble status and even became slaves of their acquaintances to defend their precious faith. This is the value of the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

How valuable is this gospel of the water and the Spirit that you and I have heard? This gospel of the water and the Spirit is the precious gospel that enables us to possess everything in the Kingdom of Heaven. This gospel Truth is so precious that we had to buy it and make it ours, even if we had to sell all that we owned to do so. Just as the man sold his everything to buy the

treasure chest hidden in the field, we must have the gospel of the water and the Spirit by paying off the price with all our possessions, if this is what it takes. To thereby be saved is the most joyful thing to do. Is this not the case, my fellow believers?

There are, however, many who are trying to possess the gospel Truth without selling theirs. Such people can lose it at any time. They may give it up as soon as they are not happy with it even slightly. Since they had not bought the gospel by offering all their belongings, they may abandon the gospel at any time, and take back their belongings and leave.

But those who bought this gospel by selling all their possessions can never lose it. Why? Because they have placed their lives on it. Anyone who does not buy the gospel of the water and the Spirit by selling everything that he has is someone who does not believe in it. Depending on circumstances, he may very well abandon this gospel. So I can't stand it when anyone toys around with this gospel of the water and the Spirit and think lightly of it. The power and the truthfulness of this gospel of the water and the Spirit are worthy of buying even if it requires one's life. It is through this gospel that we can receive new life, and it is by the power of this gospel that we can earn all the treasures that are in the Kingdom of God.

This is why when I see people wavering before the precious gospel, unable to decide their minds, wondering whether they should believe in it or not, and whether they should follow it or not, I feel sorry for them and pity them. Why? Because for anyone who does not know the true value of the gospel, his life itself is worthless. He himself is living a worthless, cheap life

that can be sold for a few lousy changes. When our souls are so precious that they cannot be changed for anything under the heavens, how could we cheapen our lives in such a way?

Because we, the human beings, were created in the likeness of God's image, our existence is such that we are to live forever. We are to become God's children and live forever to enjoy splendor and glory together with God. We are all that much worthwhile. Our Lord said, *"A man who is in honor, yet does not understand, is like the beasts that perish" (Psalms 49:20).* So those who do not know their own precious worth are like the beasts that perish. We must recognize that God has made us precious in Jesus Christ.

There are people who, not knowing the value of this gospel, are still undecided, wondering whether they should believe in this gospel or not. I have fully explained all the benefits and prestige that accompany the true gospel. However, there are many people who can't decide and still waver, and there are also many people who are worried that they might get cheated. In other words, there are many who cannot see the value of the gospel itself. When I come across such people, I find them so pitiful and I feel so frustrated.

Those who don't know the worth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit can never give up their possessions to earn it, and therefore, can never be born again at all. Just how much do they have and how exalted are they to boast of themselves so much, without even realizing how miserable life is for all who are not born again? They are setting themselves up for mockery. The life of those who are not born again is like that of a dog that eats

its own vomits and swallows its own waste (2 Peter 2:22).

They may say, "Buying this land would be a loss for me." It's as if they can only see the earth that is covering up the treasure chest. They seem to not see the light that is coming out of the treasure chest. Such people appear to have no idea just how precious the gospel of the water and the Spirit is.

On the other hand, there also are those who know very well how precious the treasure chest is, and who hold onto it steadfastly. He who bought the treasure field by giving up his everything checks this chest everyday and holds onto it.

There are some others who still haven't bought the field, but nonetheless are still bargaining with its owner all the time: "I will buy this land sooner or later. So, don't sell it to anyone else! Why would you try to sell it out to anyone else, when you know that I'll buy it?" So the owner says, "If you sell everything you have and offer its proceeds to me, then I'll sell it to you." But they only reply, "Well, but I am telling you that I'll buy it. It's not that I am not going to buy it, but it is just a matter of when. I can't buy it now, just not now."

This is so frustrating. They drive me crazy. There is no comedy like this. I feel absurd when I see such people.

Our Lord said that the Kingdom of Heaven is like treasure hidden a field. A man found this, and sells all that he has and buys that field. To make what is precious ours, we must pay its price. With all our hearts, all our strength, and our all life, we must appreciate the value of what is really precious and believe so. We must realize that the gospel of the water and the Spirit has brought us new life, and we must believe in this. We must

know and believe that it is this gospel that has blotted out our sins and made us God's children.

However, even in God's Church, there are those who do not believe in this gospel of treasure. My fellow believers, is the gospel of the water and the Spirit the same as any other gospel? Every time the pseudo-gospel preachers open their mouths, they only lay emphasis on the movement for regional evangelization. They engage in activism, saying that we must go to the people and make them Christians, but they do this without the gospel of the water and the Spirit. That's why they only yield the tares, the religionists, instead of truly born-again Christians. Only the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the true gospel. If people believe only in Jesus' blood on the Cross when they profess to believe in Him, their faith is the faith of the religionists.

Even if you were to lose everything, when you believe in this precious gospel, you will gain far more. And you will receive far more blessings. You need to realize this fact and appreciate the value of the gospel Truth when you believe in it with your hearts. Do you believe? Words cannot express it any further.

## The Kingdom of Heaven Is Like a Merchant Seeking Beautiful Pearls

Verses 45 and 46 say, *"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it."* Our Lord said here that the Kingdom of Heaven is

like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls. He said that when the merchant had found one pearl of great price, he sold all that he had and bought it.

Through the parable of the treasure hidden in a field, our Lord is telling us that we have to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit no matter what sacrifice is required. And now, with this parable of the pearl of great price, He is telling us that we have to defend our faith in the true gospel no matter how difficult it might be.

The pearl here refers to the perseverance of faith. Think about the how pearls are made inside oysters. How hard is this process, and how much patience is required? When an oyster is injured, it excretes some substance to heal itself from the injury, and this excretion eventually turns into a pearl.

Jesus said that the Kingdom of Heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, meaning that if we have encountered the gospel of the water and the Spirit and believed in this gospel, if we sold all our possessions to believe in it, then we should commit our life and death to keep this gospel, no matter what price of sacrifice would follow. Even if we were to lose our everything, in other words, we would still keep this precious gospel so that we would not lose it. We would pay whatever price to keep it.

My fellow believers, while it is important to have the precious treasure, once we have it, it is also important to keep it and manage it well, so that we can enjoy all the benefits that are accrued from it. To do so, we have to pay a high price, the price of sacrifice.

Some people keep a safe vault in their homes. They place their valuables, such as jewels, in these vaults, but even after this, they still worry that they might lose them. So they permanently affix the vault on the wall, so that it would be even more difficult for a thief to break into. From the very moment they build the house, they place the vault in the wall. There actually are people like these who build their houses with this thing in mind, making sure that no one would ever be able to break into the vault unless he demolishes the whole house or has a key to the vault. They do this because they've placed all kinds of treasures in the safe, and they want to protect them. Those who are not so rich, of course, would just place their money in the closet or underneath the mattress. In short, those who think their possessions are very precious try that much to protect them from robbery. If someone thinks that he has nothing to lose, he won't lock even the front door when he leaves his house.

Once we believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we must realize how valuable it is, and we must try to keep it. Since there are those who are trying to snatch it away from us, to protect our treasure, we must pay the price of sacrifice. This is what the parable of the precious pearl is saying.

We are devoting ourselves to the Great Commission, commanding us to go and preach the precious gospel of the water and the Spirit throughout the whole world. If this gospel is precious to us, we must protect it in every way, so that it may not be corrupted. This is why I sometimes speak to so bluntly, so that it would be planted in your hearts firmly, so that you would reach a correct understanding of it, and so that you would

keep it well.

My fellow believers, there are those who try to corrupt this gospel of the water and the Spirit. There also are people who are so ignorant of the value of this gospel of Truth. They do so because they do not know well about it; had they known its real value, why would they do this? This is why we must appreciate the value of the gospel.

This is a treasure that cannot be changed for any other treasure. In this chest there are all other treasures. It has all kinds of precious stones, from pearls to sapphires broaches, gold bracelets, amber rings, diamond rings, jade rings, and so forth. This chest cannot be changed for anything in this world, for it was given to us from God. If only we would believe in this and take it to the Lord, we would receive rewards that are even greater than this, and so we have all the more reason why we shouldn't change it for anything else.

Just as the merchant, when he realized the value of the pearl, sold all that he had and bought this pearl, once we believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and appreciate its worth, we must dedicate all our efforts to protecting it and spreading it. This is not to be done just once, but we must commit our own life to it. We must invest our everything and bet our lives on it.

While walking around my neighborhood, I once came across a new pizzeria that just opened, with a large banner hung across the storefront. The banner read: "I've bet my life on pizza!" So the moment I saw this banner, I couldn't help myself but try its pizza. How could anyone pass on a pizza that someone has bet his life on? And how could anyone say that the pizza didn't taste

that good?

So I told my coworkers, "We should go there and have our lunch. How could we not, when the owner has apparently bet his life on it? We should give it a try. Let's go to this pizzeria that's got a life riding on it."

So we all went there and tried out its pizza. The verdict? It wasn't as good as to bet one's life, but it was better than most pizza. Having finished our lunch, we sat there for a while, not knowing what to say to the owner who was eagerly waiting for our approval, and finally I said, "That was so good! It was really as good as to bet your life! It was really delicious." Even though his pizza wasn't the best that I had ever tried, I couldn't help but appreciate his commitment to his restaurant. I like such dedicated people. Anyone who works so diligently as to bet his own life on his task deserves my respect.

No matter how awful the pizza might be at that pizzeria, since the owner bet his life on his business, I had confidence in the restaurant and I wanted to go there again. Likewise, as we serve the gospel of the water and the Spirit, I want us to really bet our life on this gospel, dedicate our entire lives to preach this gospel. And I want all of us to keep this gospel. This work that brings new life to people's souls and saves them from destruction is indeed well worth our effort. It is worthwhile for us to even lay down our life. As we work, even if God suddenly takes us away and we die one day, this work is worthy of betting our life on it. There will never be a time when we quit this work because of some changed circumstances. This ministry of preaching the gospel is all the worthwhile for us to bet our entire

lives and everything we have.

And we must have patience while devoting ourselves to this precious ministry. We must endure until the end, for it's not so easy to follow the Lord. Because it's not so easy to serve the gospel, we must endure and persevere lest we should lose it; we must appreciate its value, and never change our hearts that had sold everything to buy it. Until the day we enter the Kingdom of the Lord, we must serve the gospel in endurance and perseverance. We must put down our own life as the collateral for the work of the gospel—this, in essence, is what the Lord is telling us now. Had this been a matter of small weight, I would have explained to you by referring to my own past life, but because it is such a precious work that cannot be compared to anything, I can only admonish you to know the value of this precious gospel, believe in it, persevere, preach it, keep it up until the end, and then receive the tremendous blessings that await you. This is what our Lord told us.

I am so happy and proud that I am serving the Lord with you. Our congregation has only 300 members, but we are preaching the gospel to the whole world. We will do even more work in the future, 100 times more than what we have done so far. How would we achieve this, you might wonder, when even now there are limits to our abilities and it seems so remotely possible? We can achieve this by working with faith. Do we work with only our bodies? If this were the case, today alone is hard enough for us to collapse. We need to rely on our faith more and to try harder. He who enables us to achieve these things is the Lord.

I am so happy. I am so happy that I can do this work with you.

Ever since I found this gospel of the water and the Spirit, I have become such a happy man. What about you? Have you also become happy since you met the gospel of the water and the Spirit?

When we first met this precious gospel, you probably thought that it was nothing but a mere accident. It may seem like only a coincidence, but in fact, it was all planned beforehand. And it is in this plan that we found the precious treasure, and also made it ours. This is why I am so happy. Though it is not easy to keep this gospel, the fact that I can do this work is enough to make me happy.

Whenever the countless people of this world utter nonsense, instead of speaking of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, I immediately reply to them like this: "What are you talking about? You are just talking trash. Stop spewing out garbage. Do you think that this gospel of the water and the Spirit that we have, the gospel that is revealed in the Bible, its power, and the One who has given it to us, are like you at all? Do you think that the worthless thoughts proceeding from your puny brains can even be compared to the Word of God? Your IQ is in three digits at best, and yet you keep saying all these crazy things!"

My fellow believers, when people speak not about the gospel of the water and the Spirit, but about some other similar gospels, do they even make a dent to us? Of course not. Only fools utter such weird talks. When I talk to people, I always talk about the Word of God without fail, and I never talk about my own thoughts.

In this world there are many pastors and many Christians

who profess to believe in Jesus. But, can they be compared to us? Can our workers be compared to these false pastors? Of course not. Can you be compared to the religionists of the world? Of course not. The fact that anyone would even dare to compare us to such false Christians, who are no more than religious bastards, is itself an insult for us. The word "bastard" refers to someone who is born out of wedlock, and this word is a fitting word for the religionists of the world. When we read Genesis 6, there come the bastard giants who were born of their unmatched parents: *"There were giants on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore children to them" (Genesis 6:4).* Bastards should definitively be called as bastards, what is precious should definitively be called as treasure.

We are God's own people. We are God's workers, of those who have the most precious treasure in the world, and of those who have treasure-like faith. I thank God for this. To have dignity and pride about ourselves is, when compared to this faith and this Truth that God has given to us, so trivial. We are, in fact, more than able to boast of our pride to anyone. But it is a matter of course that we have to forsake our pride and lower our heads for this precious gospel.

Given this, who could then even dare to compare us to those who have not received the remission of their sins and believe in false gospels? Who could ever do this? What fame, temptation, or treasure could possibly take us away from this love that is found in Christ?

I give all my thanks to God. ✉

# The Kingdom of Heaven Is Like a Dragnet That Was Cast into the Sea And Gathered Every Kind of Fish

**< Matthew 13:47-52 >**

**"'Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered some of every kind, which, when it was full, they drew to shore; and they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but threw the bad away. So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.' Jesus said to them, 'Have you understood all these things?' They said to Him, 'Yes, Lord.' Then He said to them, 'Therefore every scribe instructed concerning the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure things new and old.'"**

In today's Scripture passage, our Lord continued to speak about the Kingdom of Heaven. The Lord said, *"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea*

*and gathered some of every kind" (Matthew 13:47).* Our Lord said here that the Kingdom of Heaven is like a dragnet. The dragnet refers to God's Church.

Why did God say that His Church is like a dragnet that is cast into the sea? He said this because it is through God's Church that the gospel of the water and the Spirit is sown throughout the whole world, and souls are thereby saved from their sins. God has sown the seed of the gospel of the water and the Spirit in this world through His Church, so that all mankind may enter His Kingdom. This is why He spoke of Heaven by drawing an analogy to casting a net.

Our Lord said that it is God's Church that sorts out the fish caught in the net of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, gathering the good into vessels but throwing away the bad. He also said that He would send His angels at the end of the age, and separate the wicked from among the just and judge them. This is why He said that the bad fish would be thrown away. The souls forsaken by God will wail and gnash their teeth in the furnace of fire.

God's Kingdom is built by the gospel of the water and the Spirit that is being proclaimed throughout the whole world. Our Lord has cast the net for the sake of souls' salvation throughout the entire world by giving them the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and is waiting, and it is those who are caught in this net that He saves. In short, souls can be saved from their sins by hearing the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit through God's Church. Our Lord is also telling us that He will sort out the wheat from the tares among those who are inside the Church,

and that He will send the good to the Kingdom of God and cast out the bad into hell.

## The Gospel of the Water and the Spirit Sown in the Four Fields of the Heart of Man

Today's Scripture passage comes from the parables in Matthew 13. Our Lord finished up a series of His parables with this passage. Since all the parables in Matthew 13 are interrelated with each other, I would like to once again review them from the parable of the sower.

Our Lord said in Matthew 13:18-23, *"Therefore hear the parable of the sower: When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside. But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles. Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful. But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."*

Our Lord told us of four fields: The first field is the wayside

field, the second field is the stony field, the third field is the thorny field, and the fourth field is the good field.

The first, wayside field refers to those who are living only religious lives. For those who believe in whatever religion of their choice, or those who believe in Christianity only as one of the many religions of the world like this, even if the gospel seed of the water and the Spirit that enables them to enter the Kingdom of God is sown, hearing this they do not understand, and therefore Satan comes and snatches away the seed.

The second field is the stony field, and Jesus says that this is he who hears the Word and immediately receives it with joy, and yet because he has no root in himself, he endures only for a while; when tribulation or persecution arises because of the Word, he stumbles immediately. He stumbles because there is no earth into which he can root. Before God, whoever hears His Word on the gospel power of the water and the Spirit must realize that this Word is the essential Truth of the remission of sin, and he must accept it into his heart. However, even if one accepts this true gospel, it is still possible for him to have no root and end up dead as a result. This means that his heart did not fully agree with the Word of God.

What is the root here? It is none other than the Word of God. To tell us about the gospel of the water and the Spirit, God was first telling us about our sins. And He also spoke about the condemnation of sin. Yet some people did not believe in all this Word, when in fact they had to believe in it with all their hearts.

We must realize that all the God-spoken Word was spoken to us, and whenever we hear this Word and listen to what it says to

us, we must hold onto by faith and believe in it. Only then can we receive the remission of sin into our hearts. Even after receiving the remission of sin, our insufficiencies are still revealed, and in times like this, we must realize, "Though I am this insufficient, the Lord has saved me from all my weaknesses and all my sins," and we must have faith in the Word of God—only then will our faith not perish.

The second field in the Scripture passage actually refers to those whose hearts stand against God, and into whom the Word of God cannot enter as a result. They only heard the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, and failed to accept other lessons in the Word of God. In other words, they believed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit only religiously. Therefore, they were reluctant to believe in the Word of God, and as they failed to believe wholly in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, they reached their spiritual death. Because there was no depth of earth, they had no root, so that they came to face the consequences of sin. In the end, while they did know the gospel of the water and the Spirit, they nonetheless perished, for they neither knew nor admitted their wicked hearts.

Therefore, it is crucial for us to acknowledge all the Word of God even after coming to know the gospel of the water and the Spirit. All the Word of God is like the root of a plant, and only when we hold onto God's Word and place our faith in it can we live and not die. This kind of faith is the faith that enables you to attain life.

Unless we have such Word of God and such faith in our hearts, we are to carry on with our lives of faith only

halfheartedly, and in the end, we will turn into mere religionists and perish away. Such faithless people believe in Jesus only as a matter of Christian doctrine, and they attend church only formally, not having genuine faith in God. The result, therefore, is that they go to church carrying their own righteousness, only to boast of their own rightfulness and claim, "This is how wonderful and smart I am!"

We can never hear this gospel of the water and the Spirit from anywhere else but only from God's Church. But, we must remember if we have no real faith even as we attend church that preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we will surly perish in the end. As such, we must ruminated on and believe in the Word that we hear through God's Church.

The gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit is completely different from the elusive doctrines of today's Christianity. Those who attend the worldly churches only call on the Lord's name loudly, speak in tongues, and ask for only blessings whenever they pray to God. They also think and believe that if they fast and are faithful to God, they would be blessed, but this is no more than elusive faith. They become elders and deacons without the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Their faith is the exact opposite of the faith of the gospel believers.

However, our Lord still wants to bring salvation even to such people. The Lord wanted to blot out our sins from God's side and accomplished this mission through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, was pleased to bring the God-given salvation to us and give us the gift of faith, and has already bestowed all mercy, blessings, love, and grace on us. When it comes to

believing in Jesus, we should not attend church only as a matter of religious practice, but we must know the real Truth through our faith in the Word of God.

As we attend God's Church, what would happen if we were to flaunt our own righteousness, fail to hold onto the Word of God with our hearts, and succumb to laziness in our lives of faith? Even for the righteous, if they do not keep holding onto the gospel of the water and the Spirit, their hearts feel empty. Therefore, we must revere God's Word, engrave it in our hearts, hold onto it with our faith, ruminate on it and believe in it. We must indeed run toward God with all our hearts, and all the while follow His righteousness and live for His gospel.

If any of us fails to wholeheartedly unite with the servants and God's Church, his faith is bound to perish. This world is still a world ruled by Satan. Therefore, no matter how we might know and believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, if the Word of God does not take root in our hearts, our minds will starve, be bound by sin again and captured by false doctrines, and die.

Our faith must not become the first wayside field, nor the second stony field, nor the third field of thorns. The third one is the thorny field: *"Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful."* If one hears the Word of God, but he is fooled by the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches, it is only too obvious that he would fail to bear any fruit. If one's heart is all placed after the things in this world, such as material

possessions, fame, the opposite sex, or power, then he is bound to turn into a tare. To receive the remission of sin by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and to therefore have the faith that enables us to enter the Kingdom of God, is not something trivial that can be abandoned to temptation. Among the four fields in the parable of the sower, these three fields cannot bear fruit.

Therefore, we must think about the grace of salvation that God has bestowed on us and thank him for it, and it is indeed right for us to serve the Lord because of this, and unite with Him because of this. If, on the other hand, we are only concerned about material things, just asking about how we can live well in this world and how we can have fun, then ultimately, our faith will perish in the end, even if we heard and believed temporarily in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit.

We also are, of course, highly interested in the world and material things, even though we believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. But these are not all to us. While it is in fact true that we are not entirely free of any interest in the pleasures of the world, and that we belong here, in our hearts is the One who is more precious than these. He is our Lord who gives us the gift of all blessings: The gift of everlasting life; the gift of the remission of sin; and the gift of spiritual faith. He makes us prosper in both body and spirit with these abundant blessings.

Therefore, it is only proper for us to cherish this God even more. Though we are insufficient, the gospel of the water and the Spirit has remitted away all our sins, and so it is only natural for our hearts to thank God. The Lord says that when we always

keep the gospel of the water and the Spirit in our hearts, hold onto and believe in all the Word of God as well, and follow the Lord, we will be more than able to enter the Kingdom of God. He also says that this is how we can become the people of faith like Abraham, bear many spiritual fruits on this earth also, and become great men and women who are respected by people on this earth.

## The Gospel Word of the Water and the Spirit Will Cover the Whole World

Our Lord said, *"The kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered some of every kind."* The Kingdom of God is like a dragnet. The Kingdom of God belongs to the believers in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and this Kingdom of God has cast a dragnet throughout the whole world. The entire world, in other words, will be covered with the gospel of the water and the Spirit. And the Lord has enabled everyone to know all about it. He has made it impossible for anyone to escape from this dragnet, the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Many people have heard the gospel of the water and the Spirit, whether in passing, from friends, parents, or children, through books, or in whatever way. And the Lord said that He would come and see the fish caught in this net, and gather the good into vessels and throw away the bad.

And the Lord said, *"The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, and cast them into the furnace of*

*fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth."* The Lord said here that the Kingdom of God belongs to the believers in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and that it is these believers in this true gospel who would become the disciples of Jesus Christ and preach the gospel throughout the whole world. Responses vary among those who hear this gospel; some are caught, while others escape and refuse to hear.

But in the end, there is the work of sorting those who are caught in this gospel of the water and the Spirit, where the Lord gathers the good into vessels and throws away the bad. The Lord said that He would separate the wicked from among the just. In other words, even among the believers in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, there are both the righteous and the wicked.

How could there be both the just and the wicked among the people who have accepted the true gospel? When all sins can be blotted out if people believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, how could the Lord say that among them there are both the just and the wicked? We need to pay careful attention to this and find out the answer.

All of us likewise attend church and live our lives of faith, but some of us will be classified as the wicked before God. Who are they? Who are the wicked in the Church? They are those whose hearts are like the third field in the parable of the sower. They are the ones who, despite claiming to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, are still greedy and more interested in material things, who are interested only in the wealthy lives of their flesh, and who show no interest whatsoever in spreading the gospel of the water and the Spirit throughout the whole

world and obeying the will of God. Although such people heard and believed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, they can never bear fruit. In the Lord's eyes, they are wicked, for they failed to unite their hearts with His works by faith.

Our Lord said that He does not just look at our outward appearance, but our hearts. Do we believe in God with our hearts, unite with the Church with our hearts, and together preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit throughout the whole world with our hearts? This is what our Lord looks at. When Jesus said that the fish caught in the net would be separated into the good and the bad, He meant that the among those who attend God's Church that preaches the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the righteous and the wicked would be separated. These are the wheat and the tares. This is what our Lord said in the end.

Do you believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit with your hearts? Do you really admit that the Lord is never pleased with these first three fields, and that the seed sown in these fields can never bear fruit?

Essentially, the righteous can never be like such fields, even though they are still weak in their flesh. What is the first field? Is it not the wayside field? We, the righteous, cannot believe in Jesus in the same manner of those who have religious faith. Do we follow Christianity as if we were following one of the worldly religions such as Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, or Hinduism? We cannot do this.

Our Lord is the Christ and the Son of the living God. Jesus Christ created the whole universe, made you and me, and to

deliver us from all our sins, He came to this earth, was baptized by John the Baptist, died on the Cross, and rose from the dead again. Like this, our Lord has saved us once for all and has become our everlasting Savior.

Therefore, for us to attend God's Church is not for our religious practices, but it is to live our lives of faith. It is the life of faith that the just carry on. Since God is in fact our Savior and Master, it is only a matter of course for us to recognize the Master as the Master. It is only proper for us to believe in Him and follow Him. The Lord wants us to follow Him with this kind of faith.

As we believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and follow the Lord, there are times when we face tribulation or persecution because of our faith in the Word. It is written, *"Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution" (2 Timothy 3:12)*. Therefore, we can follow the Lord only when we deny ourselves. What is meant by denying ourselves? It is to deny the lusts of our flesh.

Is it right for us to think only of ourselves? No. We may not be national heroes, but we must lay down our life for righteous work. Why do people remember and respect national heroes that have long been dead? It is because they took upon their duties for the sake of their nation and their people. They did not fight for their countries at the risk of their lives. They did what they did for their nation and people, even as they knew very well that they would be caught, tortured, and put to death. This is why we memorialize them as the courageous ones who did the right thing.

By believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we have received the remission of our sins. Because the Lord Himself has blotted out all our sins through the gospel power of the water and the Spirit, we have now become sinless by faith. Since the Lord has saved us from all our sins by taking upon the sins of the world, being condemned for them, and rising from the dead again, if we are to believe in this gospel and come to His Church, then to serve and follow God's righteous work is to be the good fish. Of course, it requires our sacrifices in every field of our private lives. However, if anyone does not unite his heart with those who serve God and the gospel, but instead turns his back from them, God will forsake him, no matter how fervently he professes to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. This is because he is classified as a bad fish, a wicked man.

The Lord became the propitiation for all of us. By giving us the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the Lord has saved us from all our sins. Our Lord loved us, gave us all His good gifts, and sacrificed for us to make us happy. The Lord loved us, still loves us even now, and wants to continue to love us, and He desires to live with us happily forever. He is only asking us, "Would you not become my hands, eyes, and feet to spread this gospel to others while you are on this earth?" How then could we not unite with the Lord?

However, there are people who reply like this: "I don't want to. Do you take me for a fool? I know all about it. Okay, I believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. I am now sinless, am I not? That should be enough; why do you ask me to

give up everything and live only for the gospel? Do you think I am stupid? Why do you keep bothering me like this? Stop it. The modern man pursues freedom. So please don't do this to me. I thank you for giving me the remission of sin, but don't expect me anything else from me. That's it!"

My fellow believers, to have such hearts and to do such things is the kind of faith that stands against God. This is the faith of the wicked who betray God. If we truthfully believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit with our hearts, then though we may like such things of the flesh, and do not want to be disturbed from enjoying our private lives, we can never do all we want out of our stubbornness. Why? Because the love we have received is far too great, and the salvation our Lord has given us is far too magnificent, we can never do so. No matter how wicked and completely worthless we might be, once we know the grace of God, we can never do this. If a man does not remember the grace that was bestowed on him, then it is proper to say that he is worse than a dog.

My fellow believers, in today's Scripture passage, Jesus is telling us that He would separate the wicked from among the just. This is His message of warning that concludes the series of His parables.

He said that the Kingdom of Heaven is like a dragnet cast into the sea. The Lord is spreading the gospel of the water and the Spirit throughout the whole world. I am sure that whoever seeks the Truth will be able to find the gospel of the water and the Spirit without fail, and that countless souls will come to believe in it. But, among those who profess to believe in the true

gospel, many will be classified as the wicked and be cast into fire because of their halfhearted lives of faith.

The Lord said that He would gather the good into vessels. He will bring the authentic believers, who truly obey Him and live their lives of faith with thanksgiving, to the Kingdom of Heaven. The gospel of the water and the Spirit that you have heard is the Truth that enables you to receive the remission of your sins. Your faith in this Truth may be weak at this point, but if you really attend God's Church faithfully, do not miss gatherings, and hear the Word in anyway possible, then you will come to really live the Spirit-filled lives, truly believing and following it with your hearts. If you cannot find God's Church in your vicinity, keep your faith by nourishing yourselves from the spiritual food provided through our books and web site. Pray to God to allow you to have a church of God where you can share the gospel of the water and the Spirit to your hearts' content.

My fellow believers, it is written in the Bible, *"To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Romans 8:6).* Even at this hour, many of you would like to slack off in your homes than be in church. How much would you prefer to watch a rented movie enjoying pizza and cola? There is no one who does not know this kind of pleasure. So in a sense, the life of faith that requires you to sacrifice these things and devote yourselves to spiritual affairs may seem rather foolish to you. If you consider it based on your carnal thoughts, you may very well reach this calculation.

But the life of faith is to follow the Word of God like Abraham. It is to follow the Word written in the Bible without

fail, for it is the truth. All things will be fulfilled according to the Word of God for sure, not according to our own carnal expectation, and therefore it is a wise choice to follow God's Word by faith. It is by faith that we can receive the remission of our sins, follow the Lord, please Him, have our prayers answered by the Lord by believing in this Word, be blessed, become the workers who do the spiritual work of Heaven, and receive the blessings of the fertility of the earth.

Jesus said that the Kingdom of Heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered some of every kind. He said that when it was full, they drew to shore, and they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but threw the bad away.

What are the bad here? As I mentioned before, they are the ones who follow only their own lusts of the flesh. The bad fish are those who do not sincerely believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit with all their hearts, but believe in it only halfheartedly to placate their consciences, follow only the pleasures of their flesh, seek only carnal things, and live their lives for such purposes alone.

Throughout the whole world, God has cast the net called the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and is waiting for fish to be caught in the net. Put differently, He wants everyone to receive the remission of sin by hearing and believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. This is why God is working, and yet among those who profess to believe in this, there are those who are outside the real faith. They will surly be judged. Even among those who profess to believe, in other words, some will be cast out like this.

It is true that we are insufficient, weak, carnal, and prone to follow the things of the world. This is because we are still in flesh. Though this is true, there still are those who dedicate themselves to the righteous work of God. It is true that our God has given this Word of Truth to this world, to us, and it is also true that we, having received the remission of sin, are to live our lives of faith by trusting in God's Word and following it. It is by faith that we can do the just work. We must live our lives of faith by looking toward the written Word, engraving it in our hearts, and holding on it. "Since You said that You would do this, I believe that You would indeed do it without fail." To have this faith, to look toward God's Word with faith, to follow this Word and obey it by faith like Abraham—this is the life of faith. It is with this kind of faith that we should live our lives of faith. Only then would we have proper and great faith springing forth in both our spirits and minds, and prosper even in the flesh with the help of God.

Our Lord is saying to us in Matthew 6, *"Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."* It is the believers in the gospel of the water and the Spirit who can do the righteous work that God spoke to us. When we accept the gospel that God has entrusted to us with our hearts, believe that it is right for us to serve this gospel, and do indeed serve and follow it even though we are insufficient, then the Lord will add even more blessings to our spirits and bodies for the rest of our whole lives. When we actually live by faith, we will experience these things.

But if we try to live only our carnal lives, all the blessings in

this world will also end. All that this entails is just our own efforts, and there is no help from God, either directly or indirectly. However, if God is pleased by our faith, and thus helps us both directly and indirectly, then everything we do will go well.

*"Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."* The Lord says, "If you truthfully believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit with your hearts, then first think of the expansion of the Kingdom of God throughout the whole world, pray for it, unite with it and serve it. I will then help you in every step of the rest of your lives. If you serve Me, I will bless you also."

Jesus said, "Whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets." If you really want to be loved and blessed by God, then all that you have to do is really believe with your hearts and follow with your hearts. If you do what pleases the Lord with your hearts, in other words, the rest will also be taken care of by Him. This is God's promise. This is why mankind's methods and means are all unnecessary before God. How foolish is it for us to pick our brains and scheme with our minds, when our IQ does not even reach four digits?

Before God, mankind's trickery is nothing. Rather than trying to do everything according to our own shallow thoughts, we should believe in the Word of God and follow it with faith. If the servants of God preach His Word as it is, we should follow them by faith. God works in our lives when we really believe in and follow His Word. We must not think that we can

somehow serve God with the righteousness of mankind.

You and I need faith in all the Word of God, and we also need God's abundant blessings on our everyday lives. To meet these needs, we must first believe in God's Word and live our lives for the gospel. For anyone to be blessed without doing so is simply not true. If someone says that he was blessed even when he did not believe in the Lord, neither served Him, nor followed Him, then this means that God hasn't cared for him. If someone in God's Church has such a wicked mind and has not served the gospel Truth, he will soon leave the Church and perish in the end. To be blessed without living by faith is actually a curse in itself.

God wants to have fellowship with the hearts of faith that believe in His Word. This is the spiritual fellowship. God knows everything. Therefore, we must believe, with our hearts, in God's Word and the words spoken by His servants, and in anyway possible, our hearts must participate in His righteous works and unite for the sake of the gospel. Such participating hearts can have the ears that understand God's Word immediately. Their spiritual eyes are opened and their faith grows. The Bible says, *"So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17).* When the servants of God preach His Word, it is only those whose spiritual eyes are open that see faith, learn it from the servants, and make it theirs. And when such people have fellowship with one another, they can learn from each other's faith also. They can witness themselves how their faith grows by leaps and bounds. That is indeed the case.

As I have carried on with my life of faith and walked with the Lord to this day, I am truly thankful for the times that I felt the presence of the Lord and had fellowship with Him. To speak of it would take more than this book. Indeed, volumes upon volumes would still not suffice. So I am first explaining to you what the Bible is saying on a commentarial level. Now, I want to finish this sermon by concluding on how we should live our lives of faith, what this Word is ultimately warning us, and what it is telling us to believe.

The Kingdom of Heaven is the Kingdom of God. The dragnet is the gospel of the water and the Spirit that is being spread by God's Church. The fish are humans. Those who believe in the true gospel with their hearts are the good fish, that is, the righteous. But those, who do not believe with their hearts but only temporarily, abandon the Word of God, and follow their own carnal lusts and thoughts, are the bad fish. The former will be accepted and enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but the latter will be thrown away.

Jesus says that this is what will happen when the end of the world comes. This will indeed come true without fail. When we arrive at the end of our individual lives, we will also go through this judgment. Everyone living on this earth will stand before God's throne of judgment at least once. God said that He would destroy this world and build the next new world. Long ago, there was a time when dinosaurs roamed the earth, but one day that world disappeared all of a sudden, and a new world began. Like this, the Lord will open another new world in the future. Through His written Word, our Lord speaks of

the Millennial Kingdom and the Kingdom of God to come.

My fellow believers, the Bible does not just speak of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. There are many other themes that the Bible addresses. It is only because the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit is the key that opens the gate of the Kingdom of God that the preachers must constantly and ceaselessly preach this gospel Word of the water and the Spirit. There are so many issues in God's Word to tell you about, but if I talk about them all at once, would your faith sprout and grow? It will be proper for me to preach an appropriate amount so that you can all reach a good understanding.

You the saints who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit will be persecuted, mocked, and despised by people because of this faith. But if you really believe, you should set aside such mockeries and persecutions as a mongrel dog's barking, and then the troubles that you face for the sake of God's righteousness will turn into your joy. If you do not think so, then you are not holding onto the Word of God. If anyone does not dedicate himself to the work of righteousness, if he puts himself before the work of God, and if he is afraid of what the worldly people might think about him, then he does not believe in the Word of God. Rather, he believes in the so-called "Christian" organizations.

It is clear that such people belong to the fish that are sorted as the bad and thrown out by God for sure. If we believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit wholeheartedly and follow it with all our hearts, and if we first seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness despite our insufficiencies, then we will never

turn into the bad fish. However, if we fail to believe in and follow the true gospel with our hearts, and instead think of the life of faith in His Church as only a way of our carnal lives, then when the last days come, God will treat us as the bad fish.

I worry that you might end up like these people. I want you, in other words, to have faith and to live for God's gospel. It is only true faith that is approved by God. If we truthfully believe with our hearts, then sooner or later we will grow to be faithful Christians.

Although your flesh may be far too insufficient, I still admonish you to be born again by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit in the center of your hearts, follow God, and be led by the Shepherd and follow Him in your lives. When you do so, the Word of God will then fill your hearts and enable you to grow even without realizing, and you will discover that you have become the people of faith like Abraham.

It is my hope and prayer that all our servants of God, saints, and workers would indeed become the good field among the four fields of the heart. It is my desire for you to believe in and follow the Word of God with your hearts. And I yearn that God would bless you who are seeking to live such a spiritual life, and add more faith upon your faith. ✉

# Mary Is Assuredly Not Divine

**< Matthew 13:53-58 >**

**"Now it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these parables, that He departed from there. When He had come to His own country, He taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished and said, 'Where did this Man get this wisdom and these mighty works? Is this not the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Judas? And His sisters, are they not all with us? Where then did this Man get all these things?' So they were offended at Him. But Jesus said to them, 'A prophet is not without honor except in his own country and in his own house.' Now He did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief."**

Jesus Christ's hometown is Nazareth. Jesus returned to His hometown, and He taught the Word of God there in a Jewish synagogue. All who heard Him were astonished and offended by Him, saying, "Where did this Man get this wisdom and these mighty works? Is this not the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Judas? And His sisters, are they not all with us? Where then did this Man get all these things?"

When Jesus returned to His hometown and continued to preach the Word of God there, those who heard His Word did not believe in it even as they were amazed by it. What's the reason for this? It is because this place was His hometown. The reason why they did not believe in what Jesus said was because He was from their own hometown. So the crowd was all agitated, saying, "From what we know, He is not educated, nor does He know anything. So how can He say these things?" This is why they ignored and did not believe in Jesus' Word.

There are lessons that we should learn and know from this passage, and there is also a need for us to reaffirm our faith from these lessons.

We must not deify Mary and idolize her. Because there are religious organizations in this world that have idolized Mary, I will make it clear here that it is fallacious to deify her.

We usually place the Catholic Church under the category of Christianity. Throughout the whole world, there are more Catholics than Protestants. The reason why I raise Catholicism here all of a sudden is because none other the Catholic Church is representative of the religious organizations that have deified and idolized Mary.

Why do Catholics idolize Mary? They do so because they believe that the Virgin Mary gave birth to only Jesus until she died. They exalt her as the "Queen of Heaven." They even call her "the Mother of God." Because Jesus is the true God, this seems literally plausible, but a tremendously dangerous idea lies hidden in it. Once they started going on deification of Mary, they have kept intensifying such a tendency incessantly.

Finally, Catholics came to call her as "Immaculate Mary." Put differently, this means that she was born without sin, and didn't commit any sin during her whole life. So, they even argue that she had not given birth to any other child to Joseph, her husband, after bearing Jesus Christ. If their claim is true, where then did the brothers and sisters of Jesus listed in today's Scripture passage come from?

Such biblically unsound ideas have been consolidated by the equally non-biblical affairs, such as Mary's supposed apparitions at Fatima, Portugal in the early 20th century. Here I would like to introduce a passage extracted from a Catholic document:

"Fifteen years after the apparitions at Fatima, Mary appeared to children in Belgium, both at Banneaux and Beauraing. These are the last Marian apparitions to receive the full approval of Rome. Our Lady appeared to five children at Beauraing: Fernande, Gilberte, Albert, Andrew, and Gilbert in thirty-two apparitions from November 19, 1932, until January 3, 1993. On December 21, 1932, Our Lady identified herself to the children, 'I am the Immaculate Virgin.' The children saw a golden heart in the center of Mary's chest. On January 3, 1933, she said to Andrew, 'I am the Mother of God, the Queen of Heaven. Pray always!'"

What do you think about this? Catholics now believe that Mary was resurrected while she was sleeping, and that she ascended into Heaven just like her Son did. All these doctrines have aimed at the deification of Mary, trying to equalize her status to that of her Son. But nothing could be further from the truth!

## We Must Not Deify Mary

Mary was a Jew who was born in the house of Judah. She was an ordinary young woman of the house of Judah. Joseph, her husband, was also a man of the house of Judah.

What is the origin of this house? One of the twelve sons of Jacob was Judah, and God had promised to him, "I will continue to raise kings from your descendants." According to this promise, Jesus Christ was born unto this earth as the King of kings through the house of Judah.

We must therefore realize that Mary is absolutely not someone who should be deified. She was only a woman who was bestowed with the special grace of God and used as His precious instrument for His work of salvation. As such, when we look at Mary's faith, she is indeed a blessed woman and worthy of our respect, but to say that this Mary must be honored and exalted even more than Jesus because she was somehow born without sin, and also because she is the Queen of Heaven, is simply a product of ignorance stemming from foolish thoughts.

Catholics call Mary as "the Interceder of their prayers." They say that since Mary is an interceder between God and man, when people pray to her, she would speak on their behalf to God the Father. And they say that it is even more effective to pray to Mary. This has originated from their carnal thoughts that to speak to the king's mother would be more effective than to ask her son. So everyday, they say many Rosaries. But you should seriously consider whether your prayers would really be

conveyed to God the Father if you pray to Mary.

As a matter of fact, Mary gave birth to many children. We can find from today's Scripture passage that apart from Jesus, she bore six or more children. Jesus was especially to be born though the body of a virgin. That God was born through the body of the Virgin Mary to become man was something that Jesus had to fulfill unfailingly in order to save everyone from sin. It was because Jesus, God Himself, was sinless that He was born through the body of the Virgin Mary.

However, Mary's other children, that is, Jesus' brothers and sisters in flesh, were born into this world ordinarily through normal conception. James, who wrote the Epistle of James, was Jesus' own brother, and Joses, Simon, and Judas were also Jesus' brothers in flesh. And He also had at least two sisters or more. Except for Jesus, all children born between Mary and Joseph were born into this world through normal conception. It is a lie to claim that Mary did not give birth to anyone apart from Jesus, and it is also a lie and a fallacy to claim that Mary was born without sin. This is absolutely nonsense.

As such, we must not idolize Mary. We must not worship the Virgin Mary as God, far less think of her as God's mother or wife. Nor should we pray to her. We must not worship her as God, either, or revere her as God. Catholics say Mary's prayer that goes, "Hail Mary full of grace the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen." I once saw on a Catholic TV channel how they were saying Mary's prayer: A man first

recited the first half of the Prayer, and then the others responded with the rest half of it. When I saw this, it saddened me deeply beyond words.

They pray like this, but Mary is not full of grace like God. What nonsense is this to speak of Mary as being full of grace? Mary was merely a woman on whom God's grace was bestowed. Just as you and I have received God's grace, so too did Mary put on the love of God. It was because God used Mary's body as His instrument that she was blessed. It was only because Mary accepted God's grace by faith, and conceived and gave birth to Jesus, that she received God's grace and love; had she not given birth to Jesus, she would have been no different. Yet despite this, people still think of her in carnal terms, deifying her, building statues for her, and asking for her help before these statues. Nothing could be more dismal.

In Catholicism, many cases of Mary's apparitions have been reported. Some others testified that they had seen the tear of blood flowing from the eyes of her statue. If a statue bleeds, it is only bleeding rust stain, as water sips into the statue and causes the metal parts inside it to rust. By deifying this, Catholics are creating an atmosphere as if Mary is alive, but in fact all this talk is utterly fallacious.

Of course, these words may offend those who deify and worship Mary, but this is the reality. They claim that Mary never gave birth to anyone except Jesus. But it is clearly written in the Word that Mary gave birth to several children. Does this then mean that this Bible is a lie? Or does it mean that our Bible is different form their Bible? This passage in their Bible is the

same as ours, even though they have seven extra books called "Apocrypha."

How could Mary be the holy Mother of God? She is only one of the lowly women. Exactly like us, Mary is only one of humans. So praying to her is completely futile. Those who are carnally minded have misunderstood Mary so much that they have idolized and deified her, and are placing their faith in her. But this Mary, whom Catholics revere as the Queen of Heaven even at this very moment, was no more than one of the lowly women just as it is written in the Word. Mary was not such a great woman as to be mentioned by everyone, but she was only a woman of faith. Yet the following generations deified her and worshiped her like this. This was the Devil's scheme. He is still telling people, "Believe in Jesus, but also believe in Mary," so that they would not receive the remission of sin no matter how much they believe in Jesus. The Devil does this because one cannot be saved if something is added to or subtracted from the Word of God.

This is why today I am treating this topic so seriously and trying to preach the Word of Truth. It is to spiritual aspects that we must pay our attention.

There is nothing else but only this faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that we need to know. Apart from this faith, all our evil deeds, such as corrupting the Truth, and idolizing human beings like this out of our carnal thoughts, only make us God's enemies, and therefore we must not tolerate these things. Since the Catholic Church just covered up the fact that Mary had given birth to many other children apart from Jesus Christ,

Catholics are actually praying to Mary and thus are going astray that much farther. It is because they do not believe in the Word but follow their own man-made thoughts that they are all perishing like this.

As you and I carry on with our lives of faith, if we do not believe based on the Word of God, we, too, will face such results. What the Word approves is approved, and if the Word says that God has saved us with the water and the Spirit, then He has indeed saved us with the water and the Spirit; we should not interpret it so absurdly based on our own carnal thoughts. We should not idolize or lower someone apart from what the Bible is speaking of. Our lives of faith must be centered on the Word.

We are preaching the gospel to the world. In fact, we must now devote all our energy to spreading this gospel. My fellow coworkers, as you and I spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit, what task has been entrusted to each of us in our work? Are we devoting all our efforts to this work? Unless we devote all our energy to this work, some absurd issues can arise and exhaust us. You are the workers of the gospel, and the witnesses who are spreading the gospel throughout the whole world. This age now is the most opportune for spreading the gospel. If we do not spread it now, we will have to put our life at risk to spread it later, and what is worse, we cannot expect that it would be as effective as today.

In such a favorable time for spreading the gospel, if we do not devote ourselves to this mission, then we, too, may fall into such carnal errors. The people of Jesus' hometown ignored Him out of their carnal thoughts. Catholics also exalt Mary with their

carnal thoughts. For us not to follow their examples, each and every one of us must be faithful to our assigned work and run for the gospel.

My fellow coworkers, the door will now open throughout the whole world. It will open without fail. The closed nations will be opened and we will be able to preach the gospel in each and every corner of the world. We can ship our Christian books into the countries where the gospel of the water and the Spirit had not been spread yet and share them with people, and we can also print our books outright in those countries. Through our coworkers throughout the world who have received the remission of sin and are now working with us, we can print our Christian books locally and distribute them directly. The gospel will then spread around in no time.

And we will continue to post new books in our web site. As we continue to publish our spiritual growth series like this book on Matthew, God's work will be carried out successfully. We must do this work by faith and continue to live our spiritual lives of faith.

I believe that now is the time for our saints and our ministers throughout the world to be bold and ambitious. And I believe that our purpose must be clear. We should not lay our focus on whether we are approved by others or not. Rather, we must now think about whether or not we are faithfully fulfilling the works that God has entrusted to us, and whether or not the gospel of the water and the Spirit is thus reaching the whole world. We should ask ourselves whether or not we are indeed devoting all our strength and effort to these works. This is what we must be

attentive of. Never forget the fact that Satan is trying to make us have carnal thoughts and to destroy us. Do not even think that we would live like this for ten thousand years. The world will end sooner or later.

The cause of the complete collapse of the Russian Orthodox Church is a great lesson for us. Its leaders had argued for years over such trivial issues as what the priests should wear on the pulpit, that is, whether their garments should be blue, red, or black. When they were thus fighting amongst themselves over such absurd questions, do you know what happened in Russia? The Communist Revolution broke out, and the communists imprisoned all the religionists and killed them. When Christians were misplacing their minds and interests in such absurd issues, Satan dealt a devastating blow to them.

Is this not the case in today's Christianity also? Isn't each denomination claiming to be the only and the best denomination? In Korea, there was a heretic group called the Church of Eternal Life, whose founder was recently arrested and sentenced to death for murdering several followers who had deserted the sect. This founder claimed that one could receive eternal life if he keeps the 318 commandments of his own law. One of its core creeds rested on a bizarre commandment stating that one can receive eternal life if he does not sleep with his wife. Compared to the 613 commandments of the God-given Law, the 318 commandments of this law were only half the true Law in number, but even so, would anyone really be able to keep even one of them? This is simply impossible, even for the most devoted follower of the sect. Because everyone is insufficient,

what is needed is the gospel of power that saves insufficient sinners, not such man-made bizarre commandments.

My fellow believers, I admonish you to examine yourselves. Are you not insufficient? Of course you are. How, then, could you have received the remission of your sins? You have been saved only by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. If you really believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, you would then also pass your insufficiencies onto Jesus Christ.

"What is there to do? I at least believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The Lord came to this earth, was baptized, died on the Cross, rose from the dead again, and has thereby saved me through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. I believe in this. I am now sinless, for the Lord has blotted out all my sins. Though I am insufficient, God has entrusted me with His works, and I will faithfully fulfill them before I go to Him." This is the spiritual faith.

My fellow believers, we must live with such spiritual minds and by such faith. Rather than commenting on how others are, it is far more beneficial for us to examine ourselves, admit our insufficiencies, and ruminate on the Lord's gospel. Remember that when you are pointing your finger at someone else, three fingers are actually pointed at you. We must remember the Bible passage, *"But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!" (Galatians 5:15)* and realize that to argue over who has done right and who has done wrong is to sink our teeth into each other and to tear and kill one another. If we keep gnawing at one another, who could possibly survive as a whole?

As I read today's Scripture passage, I would like to say a few pointed words to some Christians who have deified Mary and believe in her instead of believing in God the Father and in the divinity of Jesus: "Stop this absurdity now!" I want them to realize that they are living their lives of faith only carnally, and to now return to the real, spiritual life of faith. It saddens me deeply to see that people have made up strange religions by freely adding their own thoughts and are heading toward the path of destruction.

We should believe in the Truth proclaimed by the Bible only as it is. Since the Word says that God has blotted out all our sins with the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we must believe accordingly, just as it is proclaimed. It is when we believe in this that we become sinless. And it is our goal of faith for us to be born again and thus to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Is this true or not? Of course it is. Have we become without sin just because there was some emotional change in our hearts? No, it is because we believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that we are now sinless.

My fellow believers, if someone tries to alter the gospel of the water and the Spirit, he is unquestionably wrong. But among the righteous, there could be evil ones, even though they do not try to alter the true gospel. If there is someone among the born-again who does not serve the true gospel and only tries to live virtuously to win a good reputation, he is an evil one before God. Let's assume here that there is someone among us who has done nothing wrong and has lived piously. But this person does not serve the gospel. Is this person then a good person? No, he is not. No matter how piously he might live, if he does not serve the

gospel and does not live for the gospel, then he is a wicked man. He is the most wicked man who has done nothing right.

What loss does God suffer if we sin, and what benefit is accrued to Him if we do not sin? If we sin, then it is only we who are judged and punished. God is not ruled or influenced by us, but He is the only omniscient and omnipotent God who can do everything according to His will. He is the Judge. We must therefore not think of Him as one of us, as if He is like us. It is we who need Him. Is it because we have lived virtuously that we are justified? No, absolutely not! It is because we believe in Him that we have received the remission of our sins. It is because He has blotted out our sins with the gospel of the water and the Spirit that we have been saved. And it is because we believe in this that we are now sinless. Living virtuously does not mean that there would be more spiritual changes in us.

When we serve the gospel, we are spiritually transformed and our faith grows. If we do not serve the gospel, then there is no benefit whatsoever for us, nor are we better off in anyway. If the gospel of the water and the Spirit is taken from us, there is no good faith in us, nor, for that matter, any faith at all.

Let's suppose here that you give up your effort to serve the gospel and instead pursue your own carnal affairs. What will happen then? You will be corrupted in no time. Your hearts will rot away immediately, just as maggots swarm over a dead rat. When your hearts thus die and rot, the stench of decay will permeate. Your bodies, your acts, your minds and your thoughts will ooze disgusting stench. Do you agree? The same is true for me as well. I, too, will stink with a terrible stench if I do not

serve this gospel. Had I not been born again, I would not bear with the people of this world. Unless we serve the gospel, this is who we would become.

## Our Faith Must Not Be Carnal, But Spiritual

We must not live our lives of faith carnally. To deduce that Mary is the wife of God the Father because she gave birth to Jesus is a carnal logic. How could this be a spiritual logic? Can anyone ignore Jesus just because He is from his hometown?

One must not deify Mary, nor should one dismiss Jesus simply because He is from the same hometown. Jesus is the Son of God, He is fundamentally God Himself, and He is our Savior. Yet despite this, there were Jewish Rabbis—teachers, that is—who heard His Word and ignored Him. No matter how great these teachers might have been, they could not speak like Jesus. They could not reveal the mysteries of salvation. But in spite of this they still stood against the gospel of the water and the Spirit and refused to believe. And because they did not believe, Jesus did not perform any signs or miracles there.

The same applies to you and me also. If you do not believe in this Word of God, the Lord will not work in your hearts. It is when you and I believe in the Word of God wholeheartedly that the Lord works in our hearts. When the Lord holds our hearts steadfast, fills them, makes us serve Him, enables us to avoid falling into evil and to follow Him by leading us with His Word, is when we are standing firm on our faith.

Therefore, we should not live our lives of faith carnally, but we must live by faith. Our lives of faith must be centered on the Word. We must base our lives of faith on the Word at all times. We cannot slacken off this life of faith. "Since I've grown this much, I can now make my own judgment and take care of myself even without the Word." To think like this is wrong.

We must always live our lives of faith centered on the Word. We must never forget the gospel of the water and the Spirit, but grounding ourselves in the Word, we must make the spreading of the gospel of the water and the Spirit our purpose, and we must continue to march forward for this purpose. Only then can we avoid being entangled in absurd affairs and wasting our time. And only then can we properly live our lives as servants, be commended by God and loved by Him even more, and prosper in both body and spirit. As such, we must not live our lives carnally.

How many family members did Jesus have in His flesh? His brothers alone were seven. This means that Mary had at least 7 children. It is quite possible that she had even more children, but this is the least number of children that she had.

It is because many people today keep thinking of Jesus in human terms and believe in Him in the same human way that their faith is groundless. "Jesus died on the Cross for me. How painful it must have been! I believe!" To believe in Him like this is to have carnal faith. Our Lord said that He came by the water and the Spirit, and that He has blotted out all our sins with the water and the Spirit. Shouldn't we then believe accordingly, just as He said?

Instead of sympathizing with His suffering, shouldn't we accept the salvation that Jesus has already fulfilled for us exactly as it is, and shouldn't we hold onto and believe in the Word likewise, exactly as it is? Do not be so pretentious as to show your sympathy to Jesus. Who is to sympathize with whom here? It is God the Father and Jesus who should show us compassion, not us—are we, after all, in any position to sympathize with Jesus? Are beggar or the homeless in any position to pity us?

All those who believe in Jesus only carnally must be awakened. Even now, they believe only in the blood of the Cross, saying, "How painful it must have been! Since He died for me, I believe in Him." But this faith is nothing but an emotional faith that comes out of pity. It is an absurd belief in which one agrees to believe in Jesus, as if he was doing a favor to Him. It is arrogant faith that says, "Okay, I'll now acknowledge. I will acknowledge that You have saved me."

Just how wrong is this? It is an insulting injury to our Lord's pride. It is a blasphemous offense to Him, for one who needs Lord's compassion is, not knowing his proper place, agreeing to believe in Him as if he is doing a favor.

What makes us to be in right relationship with God is faith. What is real faith? Looking at the work of salvation through which God has save us with the water and the Spirit, we cannot but admit the Truth of His love with thankfulness. And because this gospel Truth makes sense to us when we consider it with our reason, we cannot but revere God and confess to Him, "I believe in what You have done for me. I believe in Your righteous work." None other than this is faith. To look at with

reverence what God has done for us and to believe in it is faith. A religion, in contrast, is something that is made of human thoughts.

Instead of being bound with your own insufficiencies, you should meditate on the Truth that the Lord has blotted out all your sins with the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and believe in this Truth. Weren't our sins passed onto Jesus when He was baptized in the Jordan River and came up from the water? Our Lord, by shouldering our sins through His baptism, dying on the Cross, and rising from the dead again, has saved us perfectly.

If our sins were passed onto Jesus, then we are now sinless. Are you still with sin then, or do you have no sin? Of course you have no sin. And Jesus was also condemned for all our sins. This is how He has cleansed our hearts. We should now march forward by placing our faith in our Lord. Though you and I are insufficient in our flesh, the Truth is that the Lord has blotted out all our sins. Therefore, by faith our hearts can be cleansed, and by faith we can live our spiritual lives of faith for the works that please the Lord. All that remains of us is to receive new strength everyday and run our race of faith.

We must live our lives of faith spiritually. We have not grown up fully, nor have we matured completely. We must continue to run toward the mark as the Apostle Paul declared: *"Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are*

*ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:12-14).*

Likewise, I would also like to say to all of you and our workers throughout the world: "Do not complain about this or that. Be faithful to what has been entrusted to you now. If you can spare some time even as you are doing this work, then you should examine yourselves and stand again on your faith. What room is there for you to comment on how others are doing, whether they are doing well or badly? Be more diligent if you have extra time. We are still far away from the goal of attaining the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

Can you become holy enough to stand before God with your own righteousness? Can you reach such holiness by not making mistakes in your conversation or behavior? Never! To serve the Lord is holy; it is not by pretending to be holy on our own that we can become holy. It is only because of the gospel that we have become holy. It is because the gospel has blotted out all our sins that we have been sanctified.

To be frank, we do not pray that much when we gather together. We pray for the spreading of the gospel throughout the world, and for all the things that we do to serve the gospel faithfully and effectively. Then we the workers of God enjoy eating and talking with each other in great joy. Since we meet after laboring hard, we just have tasteful dish and restore our strength. If we have still some time left, we go out to play soccer. We are refreshed by doing so, and get back to everyone's position to do our best in serving the gospel Truth. To thus return and take care of our families and do what has been assigned to us with

renewed strength is spiritual. Is there anything special to it? What else is there for us to do, other than to diligently and faithfully carry out the works that God has entrusted to us?

If you do not serve the Lord, nor the gospel, then could you do something else that would make you holy? Would you be holy if you cultivate your mind sitting in deep meditation in a cave? Instead of becoming holy, you will become even filthier. If one is all by himself and just sits idle without doing anything, then only worldly and useless thoughts come to his mind.

My fellow coworkers, we have not spread the gospel completely yet. This is still far away. I know that it is very hard for us. I believe that God will give us strength. God will make us to serve the gospel more. Sometimes, we are troubled by the things of the past. But we must not be bound by the things we have done already. Rather, we should press ourselves toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Paul also tried to forget those things that are behind and reach forward to those things that are ahead. You have to faithfully carry out what has been assigned to each of you, and devote all your hearts and strength to this work. This is wise.

Jesus said, *"A prophet is not without honor except in his own country and in his own house."* You, too, will be without honor in your house. If your family members have not been born again, then you will often been persecuted. It is because you are not spiritually compatible with them that there is struggle between you and your family members. Because we the born-again carry on with our lives of faith and live for the gospel, our very thoughts and lifestyle are different from the worldly people.

There are far too many incompatibilities between the born-again and those who are not born again yet.

## We Must Spread the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit to Europe Also

I believe that we must spread the gospel to Europe more vigorously as well. Though we have been publishing our books in almost all the European languages, there still are not many who are accepting this true gospel in Europe. Many people from all over the world have been requesting our books, but such requests coming from Europe have been rather rare. Our books have not entered in bulk into even a single country in Europe, but as a way will soon be opened for this, we are now preparing for it. In no time, we will hear the news that the gospel Truth of the water and the Spirit is spreading in Europe even more than in the United States.

I believe that the gospel will soon be spread to Japan also. Recently, one of our English titles was translated into Japanese. As it took a long time for this book to come out, any Japanese truth-seeker will be able to realize immediately upon reading our book that it is the Truth.

In my previous sermon I spoke to you about the four fields of the heart, and what we need to ponder upon now is this: “Am I a tare or wheat?” “Was I a wayside field when I heard the gospel? Did I hear this gospel when I was living a religious life? Or was I a stony field that accepted the true gospel for the moment but could

not believe in it with my heart? As this gospel was preached to me, did I just say that I believed, even as my inside was filled with my sins, few of them were revealed, and I had not admitted them yet? Or am I now a thorny field? Even though I did believe in the gospel Truth, because I still love the world too much, am I not following the Lord only halfheartedly? Or am I a good field? Do I really believe that the Lord has saved me, even though I cannot but only be this insufficient? And am I a real grain of wheat before the Lord?" These are the things that we should ask ourselves.

In previous sermons I explained a series of Jesus' parables in Matthew 13. Do you remember this Word? Have you forgotten it all? By the way, you do realize whether you are the real wheat or the tares, right? And you also know which stage we have reached in our lives of faith, right? We were fundamentally the wayside fields or the stony fields. Those who have failed to hold onto the Word are still stony fields. It is by holding onto the Word that we come to admit that we are the seeds of evildoer. And it is by holding on the Word of the water and the Spirit, and because the Lord has blotted out our sins, that we become sinless and are brought to life instead of dying.

"Even though I have received the remission of my sins, am I not still trying to succeed only in this world, unable to cast aside my lust for the world? Am I not using the name of Jesus for the sake of my prosperity in this world?" We need to think about these things. We need to examine ourselves to see if we are of these three kinds of fields: Such hearts have no interest in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, nor in serving it, but are interested only in becoming rich; and deceived by the fame of

the world and the pleasures of the flesh, all our interest lay only in these things. We also need to realize that these three fields were all forsaken, admit that we had been such fields, and believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

We have to admit, "My heart desires this world and does not know my own sins. This is not right. I am making a mistake now." And we have to believe in the Word of the water and the Spirit. Then, we will become good fields, accept the Word, bear good fruits, and we ourselves will become the real grain. It is when we accept that we are wicked and that we are bound to hell if we have sin, and when we also accept the gospel of the water and the Spirit as well, that we can become good fields. This is how we can become the wheat and the good fields before God and yield by thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold. Such people will be commended by God and entrusted with more works. They will be even more faithful when they are persecuted, and therefore, the Lord will bestow even more blessings on them. There is no doubt about it.

When Peter said to Jesus, "See, we have left all and followed You," Jesus answered and said like this: *"Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's, who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time--houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions--and in the age to come, eternal life" (Mark 10:28-30).*

When we serve the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the Lord never gives us the blessings of faith without persecutions. Our Lord wants us to be cleansed of the carnal residues from our

hearts before He blesses us to His heart's content. When He thinks, "This one is faithful to Me, and will not go astray even if I bless him," He bestows material blessings on him, too. God gives us strong faith first, and then He gives us other blessings upon the blessing of faith.

We should then think about these things: Having the deep-rooted faith, we must hold onto the Word that we hear, have spiritual thoughts, believe in God's Word, and think about how we should live. We should humble our hearts before God instead of thinking that we are already perfected. We should remove our carnal residues from our minds when the Lord makes us do so once in a while, and admit our true selves when God makes us do so. And we should follow the Lord with clean hearts, without letting our hearts be seized by our insufficiencies by shaking them off with our faith. When we pray to the Lord, hold onto the Word, and serve Him by faith, He will entrust us with various works. When God sees it fitting, then He will bless us so much, either directly or indirectly.

Let us become the ones who are spiritual. This is the key point. There is nothing else. There are people who have been born again for 10 years or more, but this does not mean that they are already perfected. They must run again toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus (Philippians 3:14). There are stages upon stages, and we must continue to run until the Lord is satisfied.

All that remains for us to do is to preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit to the entire world. It is intolerable for us to become obstacles to the spreading of the gospel of the water and

the Spirit. If only this gospel is spread, then it is okay for us to be insufficient. And if we only believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, live for this gospel, hold onto the Word of God in our hearts and follow it by faith, then God, too, will say that it is okay.

However, if we engage ourselves in useless things, and quarrel with each other on worthless accounts, then God cannot tolerate this. Everything apart from the spreading of the gospel is a waste of time. We should do everything for the sake of spreading the gospel of the water and the Spirit, as it is written, *"Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31).*

And I should say that Catholics around the world must awaken and come to their senses. Whether or not they like to hear this, what should be said must be said. They should know that Mary gave birth to six children apart from Jesus. It is the prophets' duty to enable them to realize the truth from the Word, and to say, "What we had believed was all false. It was all wrong." Mary was an ordinary woman, but she came to be blessed when she believed in the Word of God. We also yearn to have such strong faith, for this is the most blessed thing to all the born-again saints.

Whether people listen to us or not, we the priests of this time must tell them the Truth of the Word of God exactly, for it is written,

*"For the lips of a priest should keep knowledge,And people should seek the law from his mouth; For he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts" (Malachi 2:7).*

Let us thank God and devote all our strengths to serving the gospel. Let us all live by spiritual faith. Halleluiah! ✉



## Rev. PAUL C. JONG

The author has been preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit to the lost souls of the entire world for nearly two decades now.

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**There are countless people living in this world, and although many of them profess to believe in Jesus as their Savior, this is only a hypothetical notion for most of them. Throughout the whole wide world, from the Americas to Asia, Europe, and Africa, countless people are trying to be saved from their sins by believing in Jesus Christ. But many of them have fallen into confusion just like the wise men from the East journeying to Israel to meet the Baby Jesus. These men were so dazzled by the splendor of Jerusalem that they momentarily lost the star that was guiding them to Jesus. None of us should allow something like this to ever happen to us. Even though people today are also trying hard to meet Jesus and reach their salvation, many of them are ultimately unable to find Jesus, and the reason is because they are trying to meet Jesus according to their own thoughts.**

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