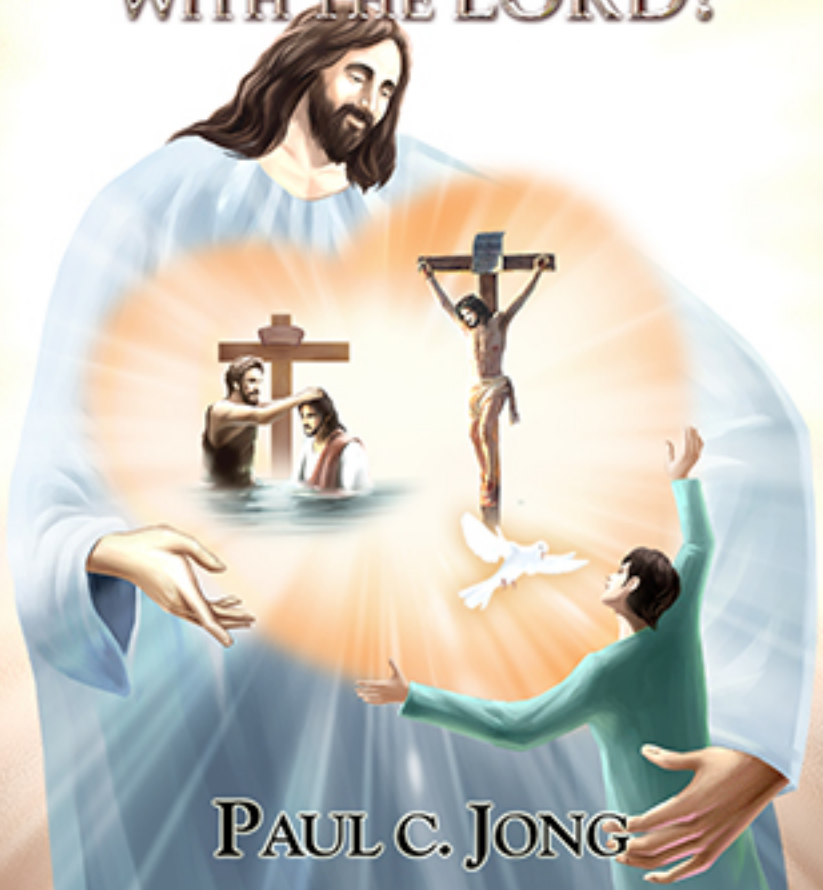
SERMONS ON THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW (I)

When Can a Christian Have an Intimate Conversation with the LORD?



Paul C. Jong



When Can a Christian Have an Intimate Conversation with the Lord?



Hephzibah

When Can a Christian Have an Intimate Dialogue with the Lord?

This is the title for the first volume of my sermon series on the Gospel of Matthew, and I decided on this title to preach to you about the Truth spoken by the Lord. To reach any goal, small and great alike, one must take the right first step. Following the Lord is the ultimate goal for all Christians, and to reach this goal they must know the gospel of the water and the Spirit first of all, for only then can they really follow the Lord.

As one of the Four Gospels, the Gospel of Matthew is quite familiar to most Christians. You might even have read it several times already. But the Gospel of Matthew, like every other Book in the Bible, must be read through the prism of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Some Christians are highly impressed by the Lord's mountain sermons recorded in the Gospel of Matthew, and so they try to follow the Lord's will just from this point of view. However, I would like to help you reach a better understanding by preaching to you about the righteousness of God, which is His purpose.

Do you know about the baptism of Jesus Christ? Do you know where and through whom you can meet the Lord? Do you profess to believe in Jesus as your Savior with a clear understanding of the righteousness of God? These are some of the most important questions that are addressed in this book.

WHEN CAN A CHRISTIAN HAVE AN INTIMATE CONVERSATION WITH THE LORD?

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PAUL C. JONG

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

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WHEN CAN A CHRISTIAN HAVE AN INTIMATE CONVERSATION WITH THE LORD?

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ISBN 89-8314-986-8

Website : www.nlmission.com
www.bjnewlife.org
www.nlmbookcafe.com
E-mail : newlife@bjnewlife.org

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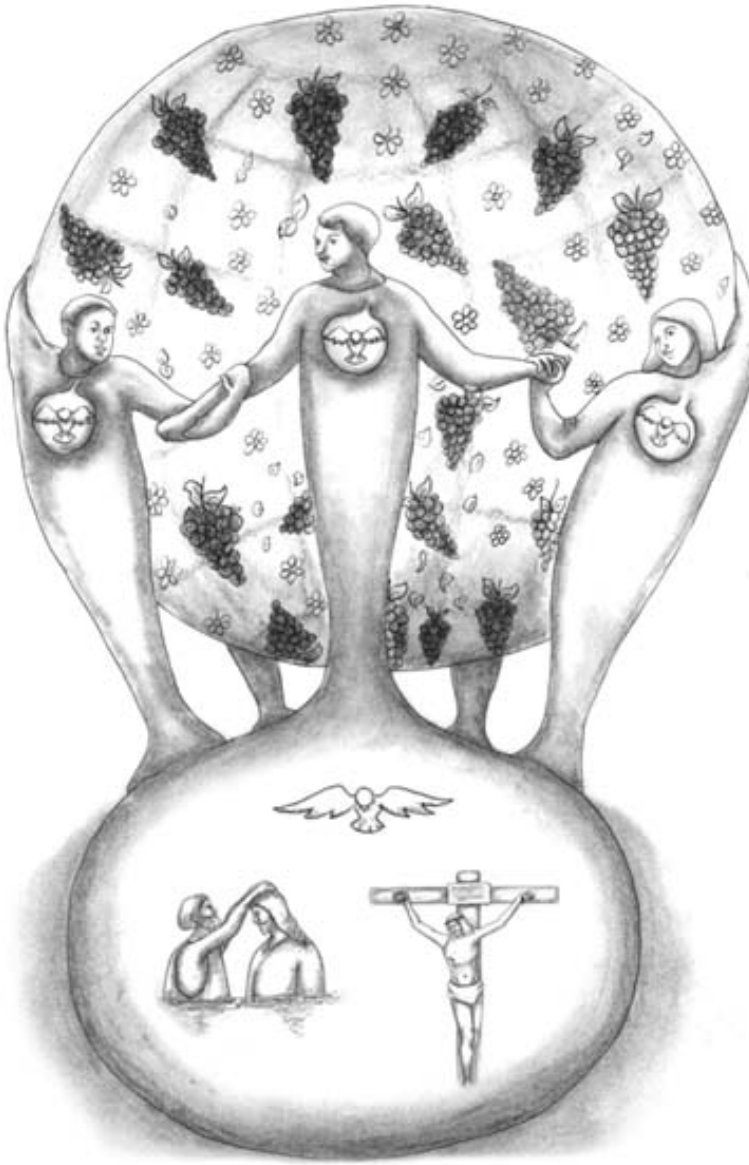
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Preface

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, Jesus Christ. 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 and pray that God's workers will rise up in every single nation of his/her own country.

This publication is the first book 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 now present to you. 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 heart.

I believe that these sermons will indeed be spiritual food for all people. Because it is impossible for all of us to have fellowship face to face with all the believers and God's workers from other nations, I hope that through sharing this book, I may 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 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 that the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the only truth that gives life. I am sure then that they will come to realize all the Scriptures are filled with the truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. And eventually, all the people in the world shall come to 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. Therefore, people throughout the world will live as the Disciples of Christ. Now, we will become the instruments that save the lost souls and we will do His work for the lost sheep across the nations with the belief 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 gospel not only blesses those who believe in it but also allows them to lead their lives as God's workers. They will be blessed physically and spiritually. 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 for God's Kingdom as believers in

this true gospel of the water and the Spirit. 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.

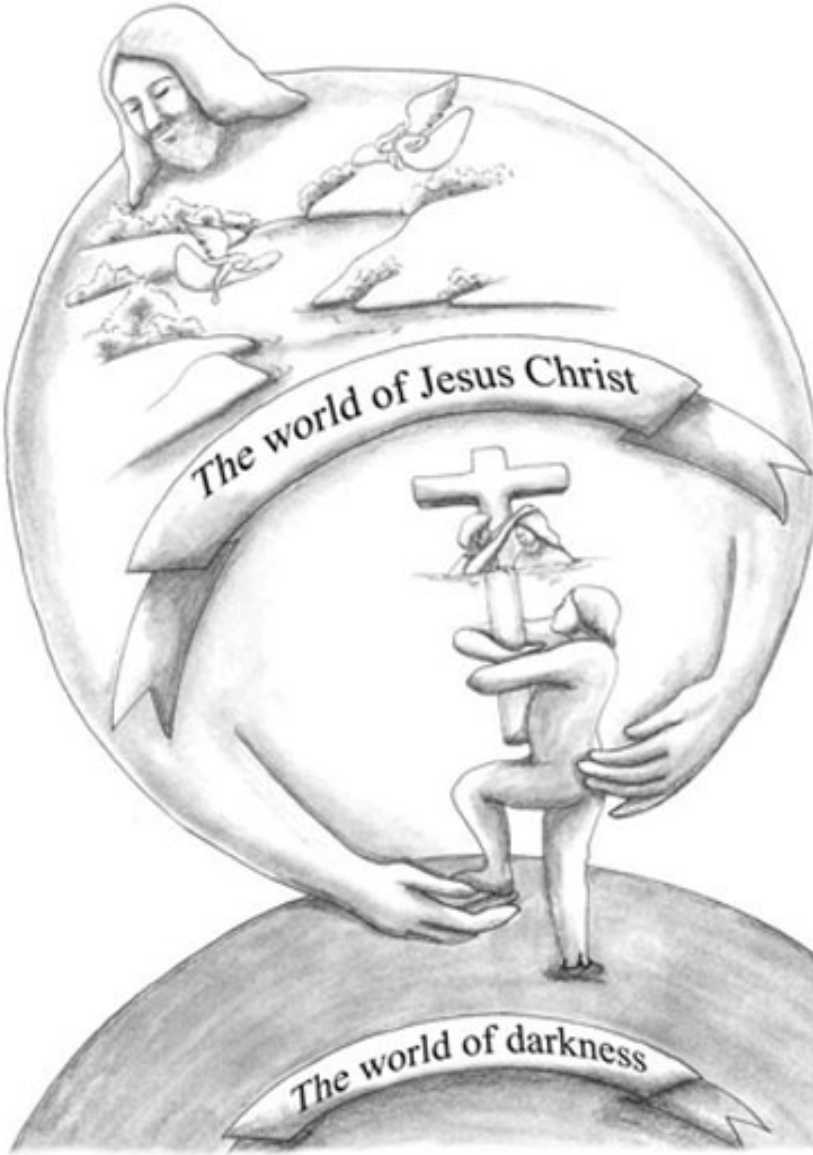
If God permits, we will do these things and many more. And I believe He will bless every one of us. May God give abundant spiritual and physical blessings—the blessings of the holy faith of Heaven and the fatness of the earth—to everyone who believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.✉

Paul C. Jong

CHAPTER

1

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The Genealogy of Jesus Christ

< Matthew 1:1-6 >

"The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham: Abraham begot Isaac, Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot Judah and his brothers. Judah begot Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez begot Hezron, and Hezron begot Ram. Ram begot Amminadab, Amminadab begot Nahshon, and Nahshon begot Salmon. Salmon begot Boaz by Rahab, Boaz begot Obed by Ruth, Obed begot Jesse, and Jesse begot David the king. David the king begot Solomon by her who had been the wife of Uriah."

To become a part of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, we need to believe in His Salvation. In other words, believing in His salvation is the only way we become part of His genealogy.

Our Father God did not send angels to save us, he sent none other than His only son. It was Jesus Christ that our Father God sent to save us from our sins. He made a covenant that anyone who believes in Jesus, who is the Son of God and our Savior, would be forgiven of all of his sins once and for all. In such a context, Matthew 1:1 says, *"The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham."* Here, "the genealogy of Jesus Christ" implies the spiritual world of how we

can become God's Children through the faith of knowing and believing in Jesus Christ, being delivered from the power of darkness.

This passage describes what is required of a sinner to be saved from his sins and become a child of God. In other words, to become a child of God, one needs to have the same faith that Abraham had. What kind of faith is required to enter the Kingdom of God? We need to believe in God's Word absolutely as Abraham did. What about Abraham's faith pleased God? He believed God's Word in its entirety and hoped for what was impossible by human logic. He believed in God's covenant just as He said, which was beyond human imagination. That was the full extent of his faith. Even though Abraham's wife was past childbearing age and therefore it was impossible for her to conceive a child, Abraham believed in God's covenant with him that his offspring would be as many as the stars in the sky. Therefore God accounted it to him for righteousness and was pleased with him. This is how Abraham became the father of the righteous by faith.

You and I today look up to Abraham as the father of all believers because he believed exactly what God said. In the same way, we need to have the kind of faith that Abraham had to enter the Kingdom of Jesus. This is the only way for a sinner to receive the remission of sin and become a righteous person. We come to enter the Kingdom of God, and receive His salvation, by accepting Jesus as our Lord and Savior.

How do we believe in Jesus as our Savior to become a part of the genealogy of Jesus Christ? In other words, how do we

believe in His salvation for sinners? We need to believe in the Gospel of the water and the Spirit as it is given to us.

Our Father God sent his Son, Jesus, to this world as the Savior of the world to take away all the sins of the world. Therefore, we must admit that Jesus took all of the sins of sinners by the method of being baptized by John the Baptist at the Jordan River. And the true faith is believing that He was crucified for our sins, bled and died on the Cross, rose again from the dead, and saved the believers in Him wholly. *"But Jesus answered and said to him, 'Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.' Then he allowed Him. When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him" (Matthew 3:15-16).*

This passage is the truth of how Jesus took on the sins of the world by His baptism. Our Father God sent our Lord Jesus to the sinners and had Him take on all of our sins as He was baptized by John the Baptist to cleanse our hearts as white as snow and to open the door to the Kingdom of God. We can become the righteous by accepting His Word in our hearts and become the members of His family. Anyone who believes in the work that Jesus did can change from a sinner to a sinless person. The way to become a family with God is to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

For a sinner to become a child of God, he needs to have the faith that believes that Jesus is the Savior of the sinners. In the scripture, "the son of David" means that Jesus is the descendant

of Judah. In the Old Testament, God made a covenant that He will make kings from the tribe of Judah, a son of Jacob (Genesis 49:10). David is a man from the tribe of Judah of whom the Old Testament spoke. And Jesus was born from the tribe of Judah as the King. As Abraham did, we become a part of royal family by believing God's Word. We become children of God spiritually. And anyone who has become a part of the genealogy of Jesus Christ by faith has already become a child of God. Abraham bore Isaac, Isaac bore Jacob, Jacob bore Judah and his brothers, and they kept on bearing their descendants. People who believe in God's Word continue to bear God's children.

All who became a part of the genealogy of Jesus by faith were those who had received God's mercy, and were not those who had anything to brag about themselves. They were humble and weak, but believed in God's Word. Therefore, they became one family with the real King.

As we become a part of His genealogy by faith, we need to know this—that in the genealogy of Jesus Christ, there was a prostitute named Rahab as well as a woman named Ruth from the Moabites, of the Gentiles. Then, how could a prostitute have become a part of the genealogy of Jesus? It is by Rahab's faith in God that she came into the Kingdom of God. God tells us that the only way for a sinner to become a child of God is believing in His Word. This means that true faith is not living a good life by doing good work, but believing in God's Word. How could a prostitute have lived according to God's Will? However, God even forgave all the sins of someone like a prostitute, who committed many sins, by the Lord's salvation. Even a prostitute

could become a child of God by having faith in the truth of God's salvation. This means that every sinner in this world can become a child of God.

The Bible tells us about the faith that believes in Him and His Word. In Matthew 1, the Bible talks about the faith of Tamar again. Who is Tamar? She was the daughter-in-law of Judah, who slept with her father-in-law. When we look at it morally, how could a woman who had a sexual relationship with her father-in-law become a part of the sacred genealogy of Jesus? However, Tamar was approved because of her faith that believed in the covenant from her father-in-law. She became a part of the genealogy of Jesus by her faith that believed in the Word that her father-in-law conveyed.

It was customary in Israel that when the first son is dead, the second son is given to the wife of the first son. If the eldest son does not have offspring when he dies, the father-in-law has the responsibility of marrying the wife of the first son to his second son. Tamar was married to a first son of Judah. But the first son was wicked in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord killed him. So, as the custom of Israel, Judah gave his second son to Tamar. However, the second son knew that the heir would not be his so he emitted on the ground, and God put him to death. The father-in-law had to give this third son to his daughter-in-law. However, he was too young, so the father-in-law promised that he would give his third son when the son is grown up. Tamar waited for the third son. However, the father-in-law did not give her his son, so Tamar thought of a trick.

There came a day of sheep shearing in the year. So Tamar

took off her widow's garment and wrapped herself with a veil and sat in an open place. Prostitutes in Israel must have had their head and face wrapped and covered with a veil. When Judah saw her on his way up to the sheep sheering, he wanted to be with her. So he gave her his signet, cord and staff as a pledge and slept with her. Judah did not know that this was his daughter-in-law. A few months later, Tamar's pregnancy started showing. It was considered adultery since she was a widow then. In Israel, an adulterer was to be punished by being stoned or being burned. Judah planned to stone her to death. But Tamar said at that time "I am pregnant by this man who this staff and signet belong to." They were the pledge that Judah gave to the prostitute. Therefore, Judah acknowledged them and Tamar would bear sons that continued the family line.

This shows that God blesses people who believe in His Word of Covenant and live by it. As such, anyone who becomes a part of the genealogy of Jesus does so by their faith in God's Word. As is written in the passage, *"Judah begot Perez and Zerah by Tamar,"* Tamar gave birth to twin sons and continued the genealogy of Jesus by her faith in God's covenant with Judah. Here, no Israelites criticized Tamar, saying "you have done wrong." Rather they praised Tamar for her faith, saying that it is a faith of blessing. Likewise, God accepts the faith of those who believes in God's Word. Tamar could become part of the genealogy of Jesus because she believed in God's covenant. If we believe in God's Word, we can become His children as well.

We do not become righteous by good deeds. Every sinner can become a righteous person by believing in the gospel of God's

righteousness and become one family with God. The Bible tells us that it is not our holy behavior that makes us God's children. Rather, we become children of God by our faith in God's Word of covenant. We become children of God and enter the World of Jesus by our faith that believes the Words of God. We become the children of God through our faith in God's Word. We must know and believe that we become righteous and sinless by believing in Jesus.

The Bible tells us that the faith that believes the Scripture as it is is the faith that believes in the righteousness of God. To become righteous as we accept Jesus, we have to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The word "Sanctification" is used often in all the religions in the world. However, Jesus tells us that there is no one who entered the Kingdom of God after being sanctified on his own. Let's examine the Scripture. Abraham presented his wife as his sister out of fear for their safety. Isaac did the same with his wife. Abraham sold out his wife and Isaac is also a man who did the same thing. Tamar and Rahab in the passage were also some of the examples of people who could not have been included in the genealogy of Jesus if it had not been for their faith. In Christianity, sanctification means becoming holy gradually. However, Tamar had a sexual relationship with her father-in-law, Rahab was a prostitute, and Ruth was a gentile. None of these women had the status to become part of Jesus' genealogy in human perspective. However, the reason they were called righteous and became a part of the genealogy of Jesus is due to their absolute faith in God's covenant. This is the kind of faith that leads us to become

children of God. By God's Word of righteousness, we came to know the gospel of the water and the Spirit by the faith that believes Jesus is our Savior. In other words, the fact that we became sinless people is not even 0.0001% due to our own good work. We became sinless people by believing in Jesus as our Savior, who is the Son of God, and the written Word of God, that is, the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

We became the children of God by accepting Jesus as our Lord and Savior. God, Our King, tells us that those who are with the Holy Spirit are His people. He calls people like us who have faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit "My children, the born-again." In the Bible, the righteous children of God are different from ordinary people who are not yet saved from their sins. Those who have accepted and believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit are different from the rest of the people who have not received the remission of their sins. We have been forgiven for all our sins because we believe in Jesus, who is our Savior, as our Savior in our hearts. We know that we have already received the remission of all our sins because we believe that the Lord came to this world and was baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan River and shed His blood by dying on the Cross. Therefore, we became children of God through the Son of God and by believing that Truth.

Hallelujah! We thank our God who has given us this gospel of the water and the Spirit, the righteousness of God. ✉

Let's Give Thanks to Our Lord Jesus Who Came to Save Us

< Matthew 1:18-25 >

"Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins.' So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: 'Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,' which is translated, 'God with us.' Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name JESUS."

We greet Christmas. It seems like it is going to be a silent night and a holy night this year. The city has become quiet and still. It is hard to see Christmas lights or decorations on the street as we face an economic downturn. This must be a reflection of the bad economy these days. This reminds us of how we should keep our faith as we have another Christmas this year. Let's look a New Testament passage from Matthew.

Verse 21 says, *"And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins."* Our Lord was born into this world through a virgin and was called Jesus. The name "Jesus" means that it is the One who will save his people from their sins.

We, who have already met Jesus, are joyful as we greet Christmas. However, Christmas means nothing unless we understand the meaning of this day. If we do not greet Christmas in the Lord, what would this Christmas mean to you? If we greet the Christmas in the Lord, we can see that the love of the Lord for you is abundant. Christmas signifies that God, the King of kings, who made the universe sent His only Son to this world to save His people from their sins. When we are in Him, Christmas is the most joyful and thankful day.

This is why we designate a day as Christmas to thank God. Of course, this cannot be the exact date that was described in the Bible. Some people are arguing that this is the day of worship for the sun god. However, we should not diminish the meaning of Christmas. Some people believe that we have a wrong date as the day that Jesus was born. Regardless of when the exact date was, we should celebrate Christmas to remember why He came

to this world. As we celebrate Christmas, we should think deeply in the Lord about His love and the salvation we have received from Him. In Christ, we need to celebrate the Lord's coming and thank Him by believing that He saved us from all our sins. For us to be able to truly celebrate Christmas, we need to understand the true meaning of Christmas.

We are giving Sunday worship service. It's 11:12 a.m. There was 11:12 a.m. yesterday and there will be 11:12 a.m. tomorrow. This means that the world will go on until our Lord comes back. This world will exist until God ends it. However, if we do not understand the true meaning of Christmas in the Lord, what does this special worship service have anything to do with us? December 25th, 11:12 a.m. means nothing more than another hour that passes by in a year. As we approach the end of the year, we should re-examine our faith in the Lord. I mean, we need to remember the love Jesus has given us, and the salvation we have received. Everything in this world, even the life itself, and the time that passes has no meaning without Jesus.

On the other hand, Christmas has so much meaning when we greet it in the Lord. We were saved from all our sins because He came to save us. If He had not come to save us, we surely would have been destined for destruction, but Jesus was baptized and crucified because of us. He came to this world through the Virgin Mary to save His people from their sins. Therefore, as Christians, Christmas is a truly holy day.

Therefore, the birth of our Lord has something to do with us when we see it in the Lord, who created and controls the entire universe and oversees the beginning and the end. Therefore, we need

to see the work of His true love, through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. This world exists because God created the universe. God said He would destroy this world as He has done once before. We can see that the end is near. Just as we can feel and understand "Oh, this is the work of God!" as we watch in the Lord the cycle of seasons of spring, summer, fall and winter, we can also feel that He is creating a new world as He saves us from all our sins.

He has shown us His Creation, so that we know that this universe is going around because the Capable One has the control over this universe. Humans believe when they see it for themselves with their human eyes. When we are in God, we can understand clearly how He works. However, when we watch the four seasons in the Lord, we can see God's providence most clearly. If we look at our lives in God, we can also see our lives clearly. When we look at it in the Lord, common people live 70 or 80 years of a miserable life until they die. We were destined to live in misery and die in misery. We can see that our Lord came to this world, was baptized, crucified, and rose from the dead to save us, who were destined for destruction because of our sins, all at once. In Christ, we were saved from all our sins by the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and taken out of destruction and the curse. Therefore, we must look at all things through the eyes of faith in Christ.

Some people doubt that Mary, being a virgin, could really have a child. As a matter of fact, even some pastors doubt that Jesus was born through the Virgin Mary. As they preach and pretend to celebrate His incarnation, in reality, they do not believe that Jesus was miraculously conceived and born by the

Virgin Mary. Such people show their stupidity like this. When we do not see the works of God through the eyes of faith in the Lord, we can believe none of them. The passage tells us that Jesus was born after being conceived by the Holy Spirit, and before He was born God said to name the baby Jesus. All this was done to fulfill what had been said.

Over 700 years before Jesus was born, God prophesied through the prophet Isaiah that *"the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14).* This was a prophecy that God would come to this world in a human body to save humans. When we look at it in the Lord, We can see that this is the work of God to deliver people from their sins. This is so that we can see and believe that God created the people and He had saved us from our sins.

This is, however, impossible to believe if we only see it with human eyes and try to understand by human logic. As a result, some people say that not only God enjoys His creation of humans, but also the suffering of humans by eating from the good and evil tree. As a result, sometimes, some people say this: God enjoys His creation of humans. And He also thinks it is very funny to watch humans suffer from eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. But, fellow Christians, the fact that the earth and all the other planets go around in their designated orbit, that there is the Milky Way, that this earth has the perfect conditions for human life, that there is day and night, and all the mysterious works and miracles of life with the precision that modern science cannot comprehend tell us that there is a God of goodness.

When the Lord came to this world, He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, was born, and became "Immanuel" to fulfill His covenant. In other words, He set His Providence of salvation before the creation of the universe, and promised it to us humans and fulfilled it as it is. Just the fact that He came through a virgin alone is a blessing to us and we thank God for it.

When we put our trust in Jesus, we should not have a doubtful attitude. When we doubt, everything looks doubtful. That is because, when we are blinded by our sins and we become doubtful and our faith is incomplete, we cannot see the absolutely good works of God to the full extent. But, when we trust God completely, our eyes are open by the Holy Spirit, and we are able to accept Jesus to be saved from our Sins. We, who believe in the righteousness of God, were saved from our sins by believing in Jesus Christ because, because we actually look at His works in the righteousness of the Lord. We benefited because we looked at it in the righteousness of the Lord. But those who do not believe in the righteousness of God cannot greet Christmas with any meaning.

Jesus came to this world as Immanuel to be with us. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and was born as the baby Jesus. And He took away the sins of all humans by being baptized at the age of 30, was crucified carrying all the sins of the world, rose again from death and became the Immanuel God, who is to come again. And it is our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, was born as the baby Jesus and grew up to take on our sins by being baptized, and saved us by the blood of the Cross, who resides and works in our hearts now as the Holy Spirit. And

the Holy Spirit, who dwells in our hearts of faith that believes the righteousness of God, gives us the grace of salvation, peace, and blessings, and lets us believe the fact that Jesus has become our everlasting Savior.

Regardless, December 25th is a day that we remember the birth of our Lord Jesus to celebrate and give thanks to God. We thank God for being able to celebrate this day. If there were no Christmas on December 25th, the earth would be a gloomy place. Then mankind would have to live in despair without Jesus. There would be nothing joyful. Mankind receives a new hope by one fact that the Savior of mankind, the Savior of the sinners, the Savior of the people heading for destruction came to this world. Regardless of how miserable it was in the past, we have hope for the future in the Lord.

What hope would we have in this world if Jesus had not come? What have the so-called "sages" and the "holy men" in this world such as Socrates, Sakyamuni, and Confucius done for us? They gave us nothing more than moral teachings. Who in this world does not want to lead a good life? They could not give us the salvation from our sins, the Judgment, and destruction.

Jesus is the only One who has saved you and me from all our sins: He came to this world to blot out all our sins by His baptism and crucifixion. Only those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, that is the righteousness of God get saved from their sins. Those who do not believe in the righteousness of God cannot be born again. From that point of view, we receive the true remission of sin by believing that the

Lord is the King of all kings, and by the faith that believes He came to this world, and was baptized and died on the cross and resurrected from the dead and became our Savior. We have new life and became God's people who can enter Heaven because the Lord has come to this world to save us.

It is the history of mankind that leads to self-destruction when we gnaw and swallow up each other. Until now, we only have had the history of gnawing, biting, and killing of each other. The sin of killing each other was transferred to our Lord at the Jordan River as the greatest man in the history of mankind was baptizing him, and we are saved from our sin at once as He was crucified for our sins. But Jesus came to this world, and took on all the sins of the sinners that gnawed and killed each other by getting baptized at the Jordan River by the greatest man in human history, and saved us from all the sins of the world at once by giving up Himself and dying on the Cross. We must believe this truth at once. This is how the Lord gives us the hope of salvation.

We should not renounce our faith that believes and trusts Jesus Christ out of our personal lives or the entire human history. There could be no history of mankind without Jesus Christ. There could be no true family value without Jesus in this world. There could be no true faith or true salvation without Jesus. You could say, "That is what you say since you are a preacher." However, that is not so. I would like to give you an example. I just said that there could be no history of mankind without Jesus. Let us examine whether this claim is true or not.

Great Britain, in the past, had conquered many countries, and

hence the phrase goes "the Sun never sets on the British Empire." There were no hours of the day in Great Britain that the sun set. As the sun was setting in one country that was a British colony, the sun was rising in another British colony. Therefore, the sun never set on the British Empire. This is how powerful Great Britain was in the world and they conquered the world with the power. There were many puritans in Great Britain at that time. These puritans who believed in Jesus as their Lord and Savior escaped Great Britain and went to America. They could not live in the country that was persecuting them for their faith. As the puritans left Great Britain, the reputation that the sun never sets also faded away. The prosperity and the power they had in the world died out and the only reputation they have left today is in the country of gentlemen.

The puritans who went over to America spread their gospel, whether it was right or not, to the rest of the world. As this happens, America rose up as the new power in the world. Do you not think it is mysterious? The Americans spread the gospel to Korea. Now, Korea's economy rose up, and we are now called "the dragon in Asia." The symbol dragon, of course, is not a spiritually good symbol. However, to the unbelievers, a dragon is a strong figure that they would even serve it as their god. This is why the economic development of Korea is phrased as "dragon of Asia" or "the tiger of Asia."

When we look at the world history, we can see that the countries that serve Jesus and spread the gospel somehow had economic revival. When the country drifts away from Jesus, and

persecutes the believers, their economy dies down too. The prosperity of a country almost depends on the spread of the gospel from that country.

As we can see, Jesus is the center of the world history. Jesus is the most blessed Lord and Savior in the history of mankind. This world cannot be blessed without Jesus. Jesus is still alive and rules over the universe and the lives of you and me, and gives us the peace in our hearts. We must look up to Him, worship Him and thank Him in His abundant grace. As we live our lives in this world, we must look at everything in the Lord, and live with the faith in the Lord. In the Lord, I say! In this world, we need to look at the incidents of human history and even the changes of economic status through the lens of faith. We can see everything correctly only when we see things through the lens of Jesus Christ. This is also the only way to be saved from our sins.

Who is Jesus Christ to us? He is the King of Kings. We should be thankful just by the fact that the King has come to this world to save His people. Your King has come to save you from your sins. Do you thank Him who came in the same flesh of a lowly human as you?

Someone might say, "What is there to thank? On a day like this, it would be nice to eat some rice cake soup, have a drink, and hang out. If someone would invite me for a drink and pay for it, then maybe I would thank him…what is there to thank?" This is because the person looks at it with human eyes. Dear fellow Christians, the true joy is not in trivial matters, but rather, in the knowledge that the Lord came as the King and saved you

from your sins that we are thankful. The King came and has saved us. And that is what we should be grateful for. We should be thankful just by the fact that the King of kings came to save us, and just by the fact that He saved us. With human eyes, we may be thankful if someone gave us enough monetary material that will pay back all of our life's worth of debt, but in fact, what we should really be thankful for is that the King of kings came to save us, who were destined to go to hell. Dear fellow Christians, is this so or not? —It is exactly so.—

We are thankful when we truly look at ourselves in the Lord. I preach the gospel by looking at everything in the Lord, and believing the blessings of the Lord and with thanks. Because I see everything in the Lord, I am thankful and content even though I do not have anything. When I look at it in the Lord, that the Lord came to save me is what makes me content. If we do not look at it in the Lord, but look at it outside the Lord with our human eyes, nothing makes us content. We have to look at the salvation that the Lord has given us and be thankful in the Lord. We have to look at everything in the Lord. We need to interact with others with our faith, examine the history with our faith; everything should be faced with our faith. We have to see other people in the Lord, we have to see the world history in the Lord, and we have to see everything in the Lord. When we face the world with our faith, we have true peace and blessings in our hearts. When we do that, there is truly life, peace, and blessings in the Lord. This is why we are thankful.

Anytime we see in the Lord, we can be faithful to the command "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything,

give thanks." When we do not see it in the Lord, we cannot but "weep always, weep without ceasing, in everything, weep." You and I must see everything in the Lord. As we greet this Christmas, we need to be thankful that the King of Kings came to save you and saved you, and that He saved me, and that He wiped out all the sins of mankind. We need to greet this Christmas with that kind of faith and be thankful.

Dear fellow Christians, should we be thankful for this or not? We are thankful. Is this a fairy tale or the truth? It is the truth. The Scripture says, *"So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: 'Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel'" (Matthew 1:22-23).*

Can an unmarried woman bear a child on this earth? Well, unmarried woman can have a child in advance before her wedding. Many women have children out of wedlock. This is evidenced when we visit an orphanage. Many children are abandoned at the orphanage by their unmarried mothers. Families in foreign countries adopt some of the children out of wedlock. Of course, there are cases where unmarried women have a child. However, that is different from a virgin giving birth to a child since it is possible for an unmarried woman to know a man.

There is no virgin on earth who has not had any relationship with a man that gave birth to a child. You might say, "Couldn't there be if she has artificial insemination?" A woman is a man with womb, in other words, the womb-man, so she is called woman. Woman, who has a womb, gives birth to a child. But a

man is inevitably needed for a woman to give birth to a baby, because only man has the seeds of babies for her womb. Mary also was a woman who had a womb. However, there was no man. Mary conceived a child solely by the Holy Spirit. This was prophesized over 700 years before the birth of Jesus, *"Behold, the virgin should be with child, and bear a Son and they shall call his name Immanuel."* The angel Gabriel appeared to deliver the message from God that Mary will be pregnant with Jesus.

The angel said, "Blessed woman, the grace of God will be with you. You will bear a great Man." Then, Mary asked, "I do not know any man. How could I have a child?"

"Your cousin, Elizabeth is with a child as well in her old age." The fact that Zachariah's wife, Elizabeth was with a child in her old age, or the fact that a virgin conceived a child are done by the fulfillment of the prophecy through God's special Providence.

Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word," and accepted the message that the angel brought, and the baby grew in her womb. This is Jesus Christ. Because this is no lie, but the truth, we are thankful and those who believe this are blessed. We, who are in Christ, cannot thank God enough for giving us His only Son.

However, for those who do not believe in this truth, Christmas is nothing more than a day for Christmas tithing to meet the church budget. Several hundreds of thousands of dollars could be budgeted through "the special offerings for Christmas" under the pretense of Christmas. Many people turn in their names as someone who gave the special offering, but

God is not happy with that. We should be thankful that our worship is not a gathering of pretense, but of truth to celebrate the birth of Jesus and to thank God.

We thank the Lord for coming to save us from the destruction and sin and saving us from all our sins. Of the days of the year we spend, Christmas is the day that we commemorate to receive the most blessed news within the gospel of the water and the Spirit. We should be thankful by truly believing in the Gospel of the water and the Spirit with our hearts and the salvation in the Lord. We should also believe and judge everything with the faith and eyes that see in the Lord and follow with the faith in the next year as well.

Are you all thankful to God? Our Lord has given us truly amazing grace. Now the Lord is with us, we are so thankful that we cannot even begin to thank Him. We give glory to our God. ✉

Jesus Who Was Conceived By the Holy Spirit

< Matthew 1:18-25 >

"Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins.' So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: 'Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,' which is translated, 'God with us.' Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name JESUS."

Matthew chapter 1 describes the birth of Jesus in detail. By

human logic, a virgin who has never been with a man having a child cannot be possible. A pregnancy could be possible only when there has been a sexual relationship between a man and a woman. Therefore, throughout the history of all ages, this kind of extraordinary birth is only seen as in a myth. However, this was possible with God.

We can understand this if we carefully examine the reason Jesus was born. The reason Jesus Christ, who is God in His essence, was born in a human form through the Virgin Mary was to save His people from all of their sins. In other words, to save sinners from their sins, He Himself had to come as the Savior. To save the sinners, a sinless One was needed as the propitiation for our sins (1 John 2:2), and that was Jesus Christ, who was God Himself.

For a virgin who is pledged to be married to have a child before the marriage is an action that deserves criticism of the society as an unlawful behavior. This could even be a sin that deserves the death penalty among the Jews at that time. The Law of Israel commanded that anyone who committed adultery be stoned. According to today's scripture lesson above, Mary and Joseph were pledged to be married. Joseph and Mary both feared God. So, through the marvelous occurrence they had experienced, they learned to follow God's plan with faith that feared God.

The Scripture records specifically this historical event in Isaiah 7:14: *"Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel."* And again, Isaiah 9:6 states, *"For unto us*

a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." And it was fulfilled.

Also Micah 5:2 records, *"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me. The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting."* This passage prophesizes the birth of Jesus definitely and concretely.

The Books of Micah and Isaiah are prophecies that were recorded by the prophets Micah and Isaiah as the words of God were on them, inspired by the Holy Spirit. They knew by God's prophecy about the birth of Jesus Christ, who was to be born over 700 years after their days, and recorded it.

Besides these passages, there are many places in the Bible that prophesy the birth of Jesus directly or indirectly. This is truly amazing. The birth of Jesus was an impossible mystery unless it was designed and done by God Himself. This proves that God the Father had planned the birth of Jesus from everlasting, that is, from the beginning, before there was ever an earth (Proverbs 8:23).

The Bible is composed of 39 Books of the Old Testament and 27 Books of the New Testaments, totaling 66 Books. The Old Testament is composed of the Books of the Law and the Books of the Prophecy, while the New Testament provides the Gospels, the Epistles, and the Revelation. The Old Testament is mostly written in Hebrew and Aramaic and the New Testament is written in Greek. The strength of the Hebrew language is its

precise meaning and the strength of the Greek language is its extensive vocabulary.

The Bible was recorded over 1600 years throughout several centuries by forty some people in many different places. As a result, the lack of credibility on its unification is the general view. However, this was not written by any man's intelligence, but rather it was written inspired by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, all the prophecies of the birth of Jesus coincide with the events and facts that happened historically.

2 Timothy 3:15-17 records, *"And that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."* This passage proves clearly that the Bible is authentic and that its author is God Himself. And we have to know that, not only in Isaiah, but in the entire 66 Books of Old and New Testament in the Bible are the prophecies and records about the birth and work of Jesus Christ.

Luke 24:27 records, *"And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself,"* and verse 44 records, *"Then He said to them, 'These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.'"* These passages make it clear that the Jesus Christ is the master of whom the Bible spoke.

Then what is the reason that Jesus was born, who has been prophesized and testified to throughout the centuries, through the body of the Virgin Mary as a human? In the name 'Jesus' the purpose and the meaning of His birth are clearly reflected. As we put meaning in a name when we name things, Jesus has the meaning "the One who will save His people from their sins." The fact the He was given the name Jesus of all the names is a sure sign that shows the purpose of His birth.

The Almighty Creator came to this world in a lowly human form. This shows the amazing grace He has for us. The reason Jesus came as a human was because He loves us so much.

John 3:16 records, *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."* What this passage tells us is that anyone who believes in Jesus can enter Heaven.

There would be no one in this world that would sacrifice his only son for a criminal. When this is so even with humans, the fact that the Creator was born in a human body for humans that are just like insects tells us how much the Holy Triune God loves this world. Therefore, if someone rejects His unconditional love, he deserves to be condemned for such stubbornness.

John 8:24 states, *"Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins."*

Here, what does the passage "if you do not believe that I am He" mean? This means that "if you do not believe that God sent His one and only Son and that one and Only Son is Jesus

Christ." The reason Jesus came to this world is to save the sinners from all of their sins as it was recorded in Matthew chapter 1.

The work of the Old and New Testament is the work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is real and alive. As it is real that Jesus came to this world to take on the sins of the world, crucified on the Cross and was resurrected on the third day, the Holy Spirit is another Person, and a real Spirit of the Holy God just like Jesus. Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit is also God Himself.

I mentioned earlier that the work of the Bible is the work of the Holy Spirit. Genesis 1:2 records, *"The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters."* The Spirit of God in this passage is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit truly exists just as God the Father and Jesus truly exist. The Holy Spirit is also mentioned in today's scripture lesson that we have read: *"After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit."* This passage tells us that Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit in the Virgin Mary.

Therefore, in reality, God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit are the same God to us. For Jesus to come to this world as our Savior, there was collaboration with God the Father and the Holy Spirit that made it possible for Jesus to be the Savior. However, some people find this part hard to believe and demand evidence that explains this, saying this is absurd. Then, I can give these people the work of the Trinity in detail from the

Scripture in the works of God the Father, Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit. Just as you truly exist, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and God the Father truly exist. As we are all human, but each individual is different and unique from the others, the role of the each one in the Trinity is different, but they are one God. I tell you that the Holy Spirit is the divine Spirit.

Devine Spirit, the Holy Spirit is a Person, and has its own independent character. It was by the work of the Triune God that the Savior of mankind, Jesus, came to this world through Mary. Therefore, we know that in the work of salvation, the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit worked together. This is why Jesus commanded His disciples to *"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" (Matthew 28:19)* right before He ascended to Heaven. The work of God that created the universe and all the work that God has done are not done by God the Father alone, or done by His Son, Jesus Christ alone, but they are done by God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit together as they counsel about all the works and do all the work.

We were saved from our sins by believing what the Savior had done for us. As Jesus is a true being, the Holy Spirit is a true being as another character of divine God. Just as Jesus is a true Being, the Holy Spirit is a true Being as another Person of divine God just as Jesus is. Therefore, all the works within the universe are the work of the Triune God. In fact, not only the Holy Spirit resides in the hearts of us who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, but also He tells and teaches us the truth and guides us in the way of life.

Let us look at John chapter 14. John 14:25-26 says, *"These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you."*

This is why the Bible calls the Holy Spirit the Helper. The Holy Spirit that the Father would send "will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you." The Helper Holy Spirit teaches us the truth. He teaches us the truth about all things such as what pleases God the Father and what His will is. Also, the One who reminds us of what the Lord has taught us is the Holy Spirit. This is why the Bible tells us that *"the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you" (1 John 2:27).* This means that the Holy Spirit teaches us about God as He resides in our hearts. This is why the Holy Spirit is the Helper.

The Scripture describes Jesus Christ in detail as well as the works of the Holy Spirit. All the Books of the New Testament, such as the four Gospels, Acts, the Pauline Epistles, the Epistles by James, Peter and John, and even the Revelation are teachings of Jesus. In the period of the four Gospels, the Lord Himself taught us. As the period of the Gospel was over, Jesus ascended to Heaven. He promised that He would send the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, and since then it has been the age of the Holy Spirit.

This is the period of Holy Spirit. This period that you and I live in is the period in which the Holy Spirit works. This period that you and I live in is the period of the Holy Spirit, and the

Holy Spirit resides within us, and makes us to spread the gospel. And He helps us understand the Truth, rebukes our sins, guides us to follow God's will well, and supplies what is lacking in us. Also, He helps us realize what is wrong, and reminds us of the Word.

The gospel of the water and the Spirit is the gospel of the Holy Spirit. This means that the Holy Spirit works with the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Why does the Holy Spirit do the work? That is because this is the period of the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ was born in this world, and took on our sins by His baptism, received judgment, ascended to Heaven, and will come back someday. Until Jesus' return, the Holy Spirit works along with the written Word.

The Holy Spirit is the God who works through the God's Word. When Mary accepted God's message, the Holy Spirit works to have baby Jesus. The Holy Spirit gave the ability that made it possible for the baby Jesus to be born because Mary who heard the words of God accepted God's message saying, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." As such, the Holy Spirit works through what was prophesied.

Matthew 1:22-23 says, *"So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying 'Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel, which is translated, 'God with us.'"* We must know that the Holy Spirit works for those who believe in the written Word of God.

In Luke, the Bible tells us that the angel Gabriel, who showed

up to Elizabeth also shows up to Mary and tells her, *"Blessed are you among women! The Son you will bring forth will be great!"* The great One meant the Savior. Then Mary was frightened and asked him, *"How can this be since I do not know a man?"* Gabriel told her that *"Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren."* Then Mary accepted the words of God that the angel gave her and said, *"Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word."* And the angel departed from her, and then Jesus was born from her. This is a good example of how the Holy Spirit works.

In this age, the Holy Spirit is still in the world working within our hearts. How does the Holy Spirit work? When we believe in the written Word of God, the Holy Spirit works through God's Words. When we spread the Gospel to those who have not accepted Jesus, it is the Holy Spirit that works within them. When you and I spread the gospel and God's Word, the Holy Spirit within us works on those who are not yet born again. When the Gospel is spread, the Holy Spirit works within them, helping them to understand the Gospel. When people hear and think about it, the Holy Spirit teaches them the Word of God as to what it means, and works within them to help them understand the gospel. As a consequence of this, people receive the remission of sin. Because God gives us the understanding through His Words, the Holy Spirit works through what was written in the Scriptures.

Our Salvation was planned by God in Jesus Christ before

creation, and Jesus Christ, the Son came to this world and accomplished our salvation through His water of baptism and the shedding of His blood on the Cross. And the Holy Spirit assures the redemption we have received that was planned by God the Father and executed by the Son. The Holy Spirit, as the Helper, helps us to have strong faith, saying, "You are believing correctly, Believe like that, that's correct."

As such, the Holy Spirit is the Helper and Teacher to every one of us. This is why the period of the Holy Spirit is the period of New Testament, and the period of the New Testament is the period of the Holy Spirit. Therefore we must know that we are living in the period of the Holy Spirit.

It is true that Mary conceived a child by the Holy Spirit as she accepted the words of God that He gave her, and by the work of the Holy Spirit, the baby Jesus was born into the world. We thank our God who gave us this salvation. The work of the Holy Spirit enables us to be saved.

Conceived by the Holy Sprit means that the salvation we have is from God. It is not done by a great founder of a religion but a work done by God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit to make us His children. This is how we were saved from our sins and received the remission of sin. This is why the fact that we were saved is by the work of the Holy Spirit. And this is why we are thankful.

Generally speaking, we know Jesus pretty well, but we do not know much about the Holy Spirit. However, in reality, the One who resides within us is the Holy Spirit. As it is said that Jesus is in the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit in Jesus Christ, the Son

in the Father and the Father in the Son, it was Jesus who cleansed our sins before ascending to Heaven, and now it is the Holy Spirit that lives within us in our faith. Jesus Christ, for real, came to this world, blotted out all the sins of yours and mine, and ascended, and now the faith that believes in Jesus Christ and the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit resides within your hearts. You and I are under the control of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore we must know the Holy Spirit very well. If you and I make the Holy Spirit who lives within us unsatisfied, it is displeasing God. When we please the Holy Spirit who lives within you and me as we follow His instructions, not only are we joyful, but God is also pleased. Therefore, as our faith that believes in Jesus Christ in our hearts should be unchanging, you also need to be aware of the Holy Spirit that lives within you. When we are aware of the Holy Spirit, we can have a proper relationship with God. And only when we are aware of the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit works within us, and makes intercessions to God on our behalf, helps us to understand God's will, and leads us in the paths of righteousness. But if we dissatisfy the Holy Spirit, then the Holy Spirit would be in a bad mood, and He would say, "Then you do whatever you want, you take care of it on your own," then we would feel as if we were abandoned by God and we would be depressed and confused and feel we are separated from God 9000 miles away. So, we must know the Holy Spirit well, who lives within us. By the Work of the Holy Spirit within you and me, Jesus has saved us and the Holy Spirit still works within us to guide our way.

Do you understand this? —Yes.— The reason you

understand this is because you have received the remission of sin, and now the Holy Spirit dwells within you. Those who have not been saved and thus do not have the Holy Spirit in their hearts cannot understand the Word of God and say the Word is illogical. There is nothing more logical than the Bible that was written as it was inspired by the Holy Spirit. The introduction, the body, and the conclusion is clear and obvious in the Bible. However, those who are not yet born again cannot see the authenticity of the Bible at all. So, Jesus regards them as the blind, saying, *"Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into the ditch?" (Luke 6:39)*

Once I met a pastor. This pastor one day said to me, "If you can explain to me by human logic how Jesus was born from a body of a virgin, then I will believe in God's Word as it is." As many theologians have this kind of faith, so did this pastor. I was dismayed by his saying that he would believe in Jesus if I could explain to him how a virgin who does not know man could be with a child. So I asked him.

"Are you a pastor?"

"Yes, I am a pastor, and I am also a director for a Christian student organization at a university."

"A director? What is the role of the director?"

"The role is to help students to understand Christianity, so they can have faith."

"As the director, you do not believe in the birth of Jesus? Do you not believe that Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit in the Virgin Mary, born into this world, and saved us from our sins?"

"No, I do not believe it."

"Then first, you should be ashamed of yourself. Secondly you cannot call yourself a pastor who is a shepherd to your sheep. You are merely a professional pastor who simply does it to make a living."

He said that a chicken can lay unfertilized eggs, but having a child without knowing a man is impossible.

I said, "This is why I say you must not be an authentic pastor but only doing it to make a living. How can you lead the students to Jesus when you don't even understand this or have faith in this? You should leave your Christian student organization that you are leading. You would not lead them to Jesus. You are ruining their souls."

It was lamentable that someone who calls himself a pastor does not understand the birth of Jesus by the Holy Spirit. To tell you the truth, if the Holy Spirit does not live in you, it is impossible for you to understand the birth of Jesus as it is written in the Bible. How do you understand the birth of Jesus? There is such thing called artificially insemination these days, however, even this requires a sperm and an egg for conception. Then how could it be possible to be born only with one of them? However, the birth of Jesus was possible because it was the work of God.

The event that the baby Jesus would be born through the Virgin Mary by the work of the Holy Spirit was prophesied over 700 years before Jesus was born. Why was there the passage in Isaiah, *"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel"?* When God wants to let us know His amazing plan for us, He often reveals it through a

particular event that is not possible by human power.

There was a time that Israel was taken over by the enemies and all the people in Israel were taken as captives. It was impossible to take this country back from the enemies. However, God promised that this country would be restored in 70 years. No one believed it, but the miracle happened in God's hands.

Likewise the amazing miracle through the prophet Isaiah "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel" really happened. It is impossible by human logic, but God had promised that He would work through this miracle, and He really did. How does God work with His mighty power to save you and me? As He sent his prophets to prophesy, He still sends His servant angels to deliver His messages and saves anyone who believes in the Messages. Therefore, the salvation for you and me is the work of the Holy Spirit.

By the works of the Triune God—God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit, we have been saved. So, even now God sends the Holy Spirit to anyone who accepts His Word and makes them children of God. When we were saved, did we get saved or received the Holy Spirit because someone shouted, "Receive this fire" or "Receive this Holy Spirit"? No, we did not. The Holy Spirit always works through the written Word. Whether we read the Word ourselves, or someone preaches it to us, if we believe in the Word, the Holy Spirit works within us to help us understand the Word and assures us. So the Holy Spirit fulfills the Word within us as it is written. This is why God

gives the Holy Spirit as a gift to those who believe in the Word.

You and I have received a truly amazing salvation through the work of the Holy Spirit. Here, That the Virgin Mary conceived a baby, Jesus, by her faith in the Word, and that you have been saved by believing in the Gospel of the water and the Spirit and thus Jesus came to dwell inside you as the Holy Spirit are the same principle. If you believe in God's Word, you will receive the remission of your sin, and then become a child of God. When you become a child of God, the Holy Spirit lives within you.

Jesus Christ is the Son of God who came by the Holy Spirit. Jesus, the Son of God was without sin. He works within us the same way it is written in the scripture lesson. As Mary accepted the message from the angels, the Word became flesh and was born as the Baby Jesus. This is how the Word works. This is how Jesus became our Savior.

As we say "the work of the Holy Spirit," someone might imagine that the Holy Spirit appeared to Mary and told her "I will work through you from now on," and worked as some magic. That is not how it happened. That is not how God worked. When God sends His Word, if we accept God's Word, the Holy Spirit works within us along with the Word of God, and as a result, the Word is fulfilled within us as we believe. The same principle is applied to the birth of Jesus and our being born again. That is how it happened when you receive the remission of your sin. That is how it worked when I was born again. When we accept and believe in God's Word, our sins are actually blotted out and the Holy Spirit assures that.

That is how Jesus and the Holy Spirit work. Is this not amazing? Mary accepted God's Words and the baby Jesus was born. What happened when you and I accepted the Word of salvation through Jesus' baptism and the blood of the Cross? Were your souls born again as the righteous or not? They were born again. Was there the Holy Spirit in Jesus or not? There was. The Holy Spirit was in Jesus from His birth. Is there a Holy Spirit within us who has made us born again by the gospel of the water and the Spirit? There is. It is the same miracle. It is the same Word.

Do you understand the Word that Jesus was born by the work of the Holy Spirit? —Yes.— It is the same work. It is amazing. Therefore, when we receive the remission of our sins by accepting Jesus, it is not the end. The Holy Spirit who actually lives in us teaches us, and guides us as a Teacher. Therefore, it is the Holy Spirit within us who is reigns over us, teaching us and guiding us.

Therefore, we are not alone. God, the Holy Spirit, is always with you. You are with God. Likewise, the Holy Spirit also helps in our weaknesses when we are in trouble or hardships. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercessions for us with groanings which cannot be uttered (Romans 8:26). If we do not know what to do, it is the Holy Spirit who teaches us, "That is not the way, this is it." He reminds us of God's Word, and comforts us. When we are in sorrow, He holds our hearts and comforts us. This is how we are always with the Holy Spirit.

You and I have received a very amazing salvation. The

salvation you and I have received is truly amazing. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit created this universe, so that you and I could receive this salvation and become children of God. We must know this.

Why did God create the world? He created the world so that people like you and me, those who have received the remission of sin, could be the lord of this place. This is why our salvation was planned before creation. It had been planned since forever long ago that you and I would be saved from our sins today. According to the Providence God planned before creation, not only we have been saved from our sins, but also we became the children of God who have the Holy Spirit living within us. Therefore, in reality, we are living as princes and princesses, as the children of God in His Kingdom. Though we may not be princes and princesses as we live in this world, we are the children of God and princes and princesses in His Kingdom. We are the very important people, the true VIP's. We are important people who have truly received amazing salvation.

This is why Christmas is amazing and has great meaning. When the baby Jesus was born after being conceived by the Holy Spirit, as Mary conceived the baby Jesus by accepting God's words, and the baby Jesus was born in 10 months, the work of our salvation started. This is why we remember and celebrate Christmas. We sing "Joy to the world, the Lord is come" when the Lord was born from the Virgin Mary after accepting God's message. We sing "Joy to the world, the Lord is come" on the day when the Lord was born through the Virgin Mary, who accepted God's words that were sent to her from

God. We are commemorating the day of this amazing work.

To be accurate, Jesus was not born in a day of freezing weather, but in a warm day while the shepherds stayed overnight in the field with their sheep. Rather than putting an importance on the exact date, we have designated a day that the whole world comes together to commemorate the day that opened the door of salvation after being conceived by the Holy Spirit, and to remember the salvation we have received in our hearts. What is important is not the day itself, but rather the fact that Jesus came to this world, and that Mary accepted God's words so that the baby Jesus was born.

We meditate on the amazing salvation again as we commemorate this day. We must bind ourselves again to be those who please the Holy Spirit as we remember the salvation we received by the work of Holy Spirit and that He is living within us. Fellow Christians, we are people who are truly blessed with amazing blessings. Mary was considered the blessed but you and I are just as blessed. Is it true? —Yes.—

Is Christmas a day that we paint the town red with our boyfriends, girlfriends, sinners and family? Or is this a silent night, a holy night that we spend doing righteous deeds as we remember and commemorate that the Lord came to save us? It is the day for righteous deeds. I am telling you in advance. I tell you this out of fear that there is anyone in here who misunderstands the meaning of Christmas and feels sorry for himself because he is not out partying. I say this in a fear that there may be someone who thinks "why am I not out drinking like the rest of the world, but spend it so silently?" and feels

swayed by the sense of inferiority. The best way to spend Christmas is to spend it silently, meditating on the meaning of the day, or by doing some righteous deeds. There could not be a more memorable Christmas than if we would proclaim the gospel on this Christmas, and as a result, someone would receive the remission of sin. Just like the baby Jesus was born when Mary accepted the Word of God, a sinner can become a righteous person and be born again as a little Jesus in this world by accepting the gospel Word that we have preached. Could there be any more beautiful meaning at Christmas time than that? I hope that you have this kind of righteous Christmas, and if it is at all possible, a meaningful Christmas.

I also urge to look around you to see whether there is anyone in sorrow or pain during this Christmas. Christmas is a holiday that the whole world celebrates. However, we must remember and believe that it could be a very sorrowful holiday for some people so that you can make this Christmas the Christmas that benefits others.

Christmas is a joyful and thankful day. As for me, I hope the publication of our gospel books is done quickly so that I can pass them out at Christmas. I hear that my first book is going to be sent out to America tomorrow, and I wish the book could be put out on Amazon.com soon, so that more people may read it next year. As there are books getting published in Chinese, I hope the publication is done soon so that they can be distributed in Hong Kong and China next year. As Mary conceived the baby Jesus by accepting God's Words, I wish the Chinese could accept Jesus and receive the remission of sin as well. Is it not

your hope as well? —Yes.— I hope you have a very meaningful Christmas and a cozy Christmas with other righteous people if it is at all possible.

We thank God for our salvation and His protection for us. We see many accidents during every Christmas season, and we thank God for protecting us from these accidents. There are many traffic accidents from drinking and driving as well as crimes by younger people for money to meet their budget for pleasure. We should be careful during the Christmas recess.

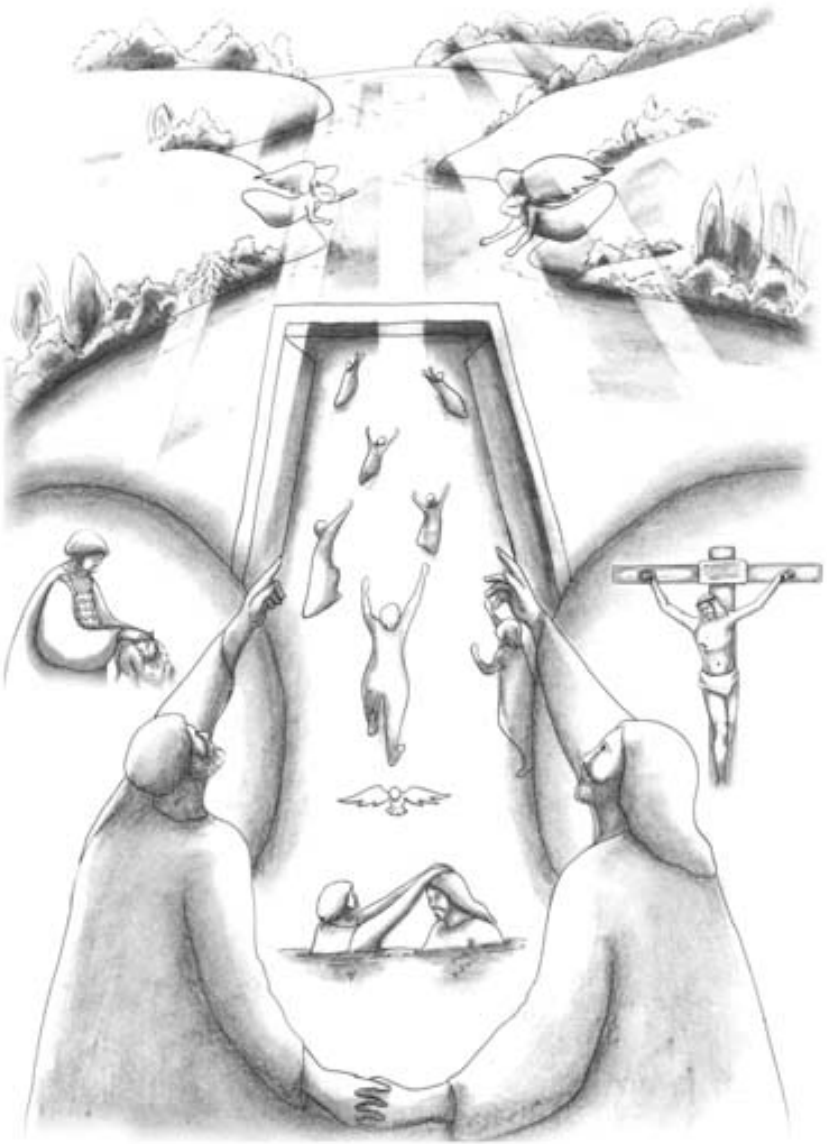
I hope that you pray constantly for His protection, for the spread of the gospel, for His Kingdom, for your safety, for the safety of His Church, and the safety of God's servants and fellow Christians, and for the salvation of many souls. ✉

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CHAPTER

2

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Where Can We Meet The Lord Properly?

< Matthew 2:1-12 >

"Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, 'Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.' When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. So they said to him, 'In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet:

'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
Are not the least among the rulers of Judah;
For out of you shall come a Ruler
Who will shepherd My people Israel.''

Then Herod, when he had secretly called the wise men, determined from them what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, 'Go and search carefully for the young Child, and when you have found Him, bring back word to me, that I may come and worship Him also.' When they heard the king, they departed; and behold, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was. When they

saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy. And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Then, being divinely warned in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed for their own country another way."

There are many people living in this world. Among these people, many think of Jesus as their Lord only in theory. In America, Asia, and Europe, many people in the world want to receive salvation from their sins by believing in Jesus Christ. As it is in Matthew chapter 2, we should not become confused like the wise men who were traveling to meet the baby Jesus, guided by the stars, but fell into confusion when they stopped by at Jerusalem. Even today, there are people who try hard to meet Jesus to receive salvation, but never meet the Savior. The reason is that they want to meet Jesus according to their own fixed ideas.

Christians all over the world have to truly meet Jesus who came by the water and the Spirit and be saved from their sins to become the people of God. However, in reality, this is not how it is. The reason that it is not so is because these people do not follow the Word of God, but rather follow their own fixed ideas. The faith of many people in the world today is in a state of confusion. Many people in the world do not meet the King of

kings with no difficulty because of their fixed idea that the "King will be born in Jerusalem."

However, He had to come to this world as a lowly human to save lowly sinners. Therefore, it is natural that people do not receive salvation when they try to meet Jesus and be saved from their sins by their fixed ideas. Even now, many people think and fall into the misunderstanding that 'it will be easy to meet Jesus Christ if I go to that big church, and if I go to that big church to hear the sermon, I should hear the correct Word of God'. But it is not a matter of whether you hear it at a big church or a small church when you hear the Truth of the Word of God. When people preach according to their own fixed ideas, it prevents sinners from hearing the true Gospel and being saved from their sins and receiving the Holy Spirit.

Yesterday was Christmas Eve, and today is Christmas. When we think back on the sermons of Christmas these past two days, it makes my heart break that even now there are many Christians who have not truly met Jesus Christ even though they believe in Him. Also, this reminds us once again of the truth that one cannot meet the Lord according to his own fixed ideas.

During Christmas, some churches make a life-size figure of the baby Jesus that is wrapped in swaddling clothes and lay it in the manger. Also, some churches are only interested in the special tithing on the day that the baby Jesus was born. Some churches do good through charity with an intention to help the poor. However, the reason that the baby Jesus was born was to save all of mankind from all of its sins of the heart and make them the people of God.

The Bible tells us that the wise men faced many difficulties because they followed their own fixed ideas. And this caused many little children to die. Although where Jesus Christ was to be born was in the area of Bethlehem as was prophesied by the prophets, they thought that He would be born in Jerusalem because of their own fixed ideas, and the result was chaos and the deaths of many little children. Even now, because many people believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior according to their own fixed ideas of the flesh, they cannot meet Jesus Christ who came by the gospel of the water and the Spirit. People need to know that they cannot meet Jesus Christ properly, who is the King of the Truth, because of their fixed ideas.

Many Christians today are prone to think that they can be healed from their diseases or become rich when they believe in Jesus. But this is merely their fixed idea. When a person believes in Jesus with the carnal motives, he cannot receive his salvation or the Holy Spirit. People do not receive the Holy Spirit because they believe in Jesus as the Savior according to their own fixed ideas.

Many people feel satisfied when worshiping in a large church, listening to pipe organs and a huge four-part choir. However, we must agree that the belief that we would meet God if we just worship Him in a big church is a false belief that comes from our useless and worldly ideas. Therefore, we must acknowledge that we cannot meet Jesus Christ, who brought the gospel of the water and the Spirit, according to human ideas. What is truly lamentable is that throughout the world, people rejoice in the birth of Jesus Christ only with worldly pleasure

without knowing the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

When we visit college campuses, we often see young students singing and worshiping God with guitars. The scene of worshiping God is beautiful. However, the more you listen to their praises, the more you can feel the thirst in their souls. You can feel that their souls are desperately thirsty because, although they are praising God with their lips, they have not been successful in meeting the God of real Truth even if they have eagerly wanted to. However, their wish to meet the Lord without the gospel of the water and the Spirit is nothing more than a wish. Though they say they believe in God, they are seeking God as sinners since they have not found the gospel of the water and the Spirit. This means that sinners who are not born again today in Christian churches are singing songs full of thirst for meeting God.

However, people who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit give worship that is full of thanksgiving since they have met the Lord who has blotted out all their sins and saved them. The righteous offer worship of thanksgiving for the salvation they received from God. But sinners cannot offer worship of thanksgiving since they try to worship God without the knowledge of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Sinners cannot meet Jesus Christ the Savior, because they try to meet Him without the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

When we look at the current status of Christian churches, we cannot help but agree with the reproaches by the world that Christian churches today are run like worldly companies. This means that the churches are not doing their essential duties.

Today, the goal of Christian churches is budgeting for their annual finances and meeting their annual budget through Christmas tithing and Thanksgiving tithing.

We must emphasize the spread of the gospel of the water and the Spirit since the church of God has the responsibility of giving true life to the world. But, as a matter of fact, most churches have been criticized by many since their goal is just pursuing worldly values. Also, they are killing souls that should not die with false gospels (Ezekiel 13:19). However, the problem is that the leaders of Christian churches do not realize the seriousness of the spiritual corruption in their churches.

My fellow Christians, what happened when the wise men gave up on following the star and adopted their own thoughts? There was much confusion. The wise men failed to meet Jesus on their way at first because they followed their own thoughts, but later they turned around their thoughts and looked for Jesus based on the Word of God, and finally met Jesus the Savior properly.

In the Bible, the wise men were able to meet the baby Jesus properly because they asked the scribes and the priests, and followed the prophecies that were written in the Bible and went to Bethlehem. The reason that the wise men were able to meet Him was because they followed the words of God that were written. This is the same as meeting the true Savior spiritually by knowing the gospel of the water and the Spirit and believing it. The wise men could not meet Jesus no matter how hard they tried when they were ignoring the written prophecies of God. We all can be forgiven of all our sins and offer true faith to

Jesus only when we hold onto the words of God that are recorded and believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The wise men could present the faith of three gifts.

We should know that everyone who is born again has the Word of faith that believes the gospel of the water and the Spirit from God. We all must know that we can meet Jesus exactly when we accept God's gospel of the water and the Spirit in our hearts. We all became the true priest in spirit, who can receive Jesus in our hearts and pray to the Savior by the faith that believes the written Word of God. We were able to truly meet Jesus, worship Him, and receive His guidance by the everlasting gospel of the water and the Spirit. The incident of the wise men being able to meet Jesus teaches us that it was possible because of the faith that believed the written Word of the prophecies.

What is written in Matthew 2:6 is the fulfillment of the prophecy that is written in the Old Testament in Micah 5:2: *"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting."* God had promised through the prophet Micah that Jesus Christ, who is the King of kings, would be born in Bethlehem.

Bethlehem means 'house of bread,' and it was a tiny country town in Israel. This town was the hometown of David. As God had promised Judah, who was one of the twelve sons of Jacob in the book of Genesis that "the throne will continue by the descendants of you, Judah", it is as He had prophesied. Therefore, as in the prophecy that God had given to Judah, our

Lord was born in Bethlehem. Our Lord was truly born in this world in a human body as the King of kings. So, as God has promised and prophesied through the prophets and as it was written, our Lord was born in a small town called Bethlehem.

Our Lord shows us how He works through His written Word. Our Lord talks to us in Truth, and accomplishes His words as He has spoken. Therefore, when we believe in and follow God, it is often necessary to deny our own thoughts. Since it is possible to think wrong with our own thoughts as we follow the Lord, we must constantly deny our own thoughts and follow with the faith that believes in the written Word of God.

The wise men, guided by the star again, finally arrived in Bethlehem and met the baby Jesus. If we wish everyone in the world to meet Jesus, we must spread the written Word of God. We can meet Jesus only when we believe and follow the written Word of God. We cannot possibly know and meet Jesus as the Savior by our own ideas apart from the written Word of God.

When we believe and follow the written Word of God, we come to know that Jesus was born for us, was baptized by John the Baptist to take on the sins of mankind, took on all the sins of the world, bled and died on the Cross, was resurrected and accomplished the salvation for us when He rose again. This is the only way we can meet Jesus, the King of kings. This is why we must believe in Jesus through the written Word of God and the gospel of the water and the Spirit in order to meet Jesus the Savior. We must remember that we cannot possibly meet Jesus, the Savior, unless it is by the written Word of God.

All the three gifts, gold, frankincense and myrrh, were

valuable. Myrrh symbolizes the unchanging Word of God, and if we do not have the Word of God, the Truth, we cannot believe in Jesus or receive the gospel of the water and the Spirit. If the wise men gave only two gifts of gold and frankincense, they would be nothing more than religious men. Such would be a wrong faith that came from human thoughts, and not the correct faith in God's eyes. We must consider that we also have to give the three gifts to the Lord. If we want to meet Jesus, we must first receive the gospel of the water and the Spirit, receive the remission of sins, and follow Him only by faith.

When the wise men from the East came into the house, they saw the baby Jesus with Mary His mother. Only then could they bow before the baby Jesus, present their gifts, and confess their faith. As Peter confessed, *"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God",* they could give such a confession. If the wise men did not depend on the written Word, but on their own thoughts, and went around the vicinity of Jerusalem looking for Jesus, they could not have met the Lord. However, when they went to the place that was written about, the baby Jesus was there. Likewise, in these days, anyone who truly wants to be born again needs to follow the written Word of God and be born again by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Regardless of who it is, one needs to believe in the written Word of God as it is to meet the baby Jesus today. And we must get rid of the kind of faith that believes in our own thoughts, but need to return to the Savior by believing in Jesus who saved us from all our sins through the written Word, and the gospel of the water and the Spirit. All the Christians in the world must know

this gospel of the water and the Spirit and return to God. That is how we meet Jesus, the Savior. That is how we can be born again, receive salvation and become the people of God. We must return to the Word and meet the Lord. That is the only way we offer our sound faith to God and are approved.

People in the world who have not yet met Jesus Christ must return to God by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. We must return to the Word of God and meet Jesus Christ in Truth. When we believe and follow the written Word of God as it is, we become believers of a sound faith. As a matter of fact, all the people in the world should come back to the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Rather than seeking after so-called orthodox denominations or big church buildings, we must receive the gospel of the water and the Spirit through the written Word of God as we humble ourselves.

Even though the whole world knows that Jesus had come, the majority of people have not yet met Jesus Christ as their Savior. These people still look for the Lord in a worldly palace. However, they must go to Bethlehem. When they go to a small country town of Bethlehem, there they can meet Jesus. They cannot meet Him anywhere else. The baby Jesus is absolutely not in a palace. Fellow Christians, do you understand? The baby Jesus absolutely does not live with King Herod. We must go to Bethlehem to meet Jesus. This means that we must come to the house of bread, in other words, the church where the Word of God dwells, to meet Jesus. We must go to the church of God to have bread, food, water and servants. Therefore, today's Bethlehem means the church of the born-again.

All of mankind can clearly be saved from all their sins only by their faith in God's salvation that is from the Truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. However, many people are still wandering in confusion, trying to meet Jesus with their own ideas just as the wise men did. Some people search for Him for 50 years, and some other people still search after 70 years.

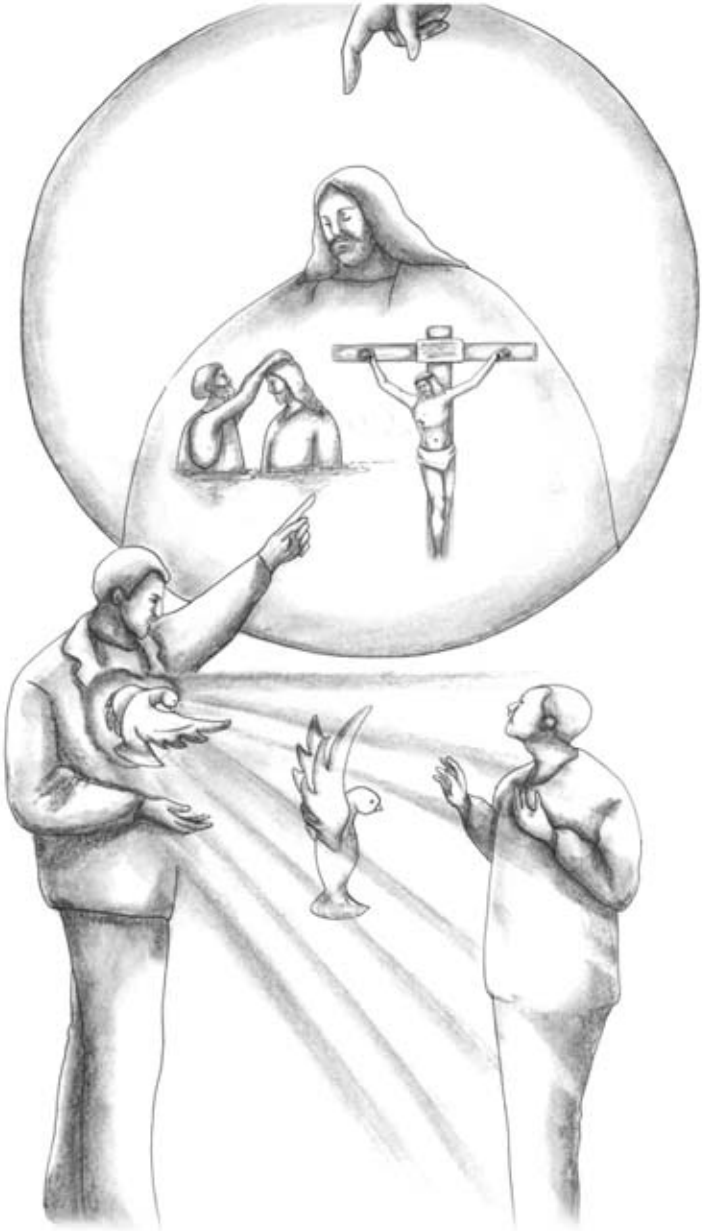
We have the obligation to drag out those who have not met the baby Jesus, the Savior, and deliver the gospel of the water and the Spirit to them so that they also can meet Jesus, the Savior. We must open our eyes of faith wider and see more broadly. We are the priests who must pass on the gospel of the water and the Spirit to everyone in all quarters in the world. ✉

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CHAPTER

3

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Spread the True Gospel And Jesus' Righteous Deed

< Matthew 3:1-17 >

"In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!' For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying:

'The voice of one crying in the wilderness:

'Prepare the way of the LORD;

Make His paths straight.''

Now John himself was clothed in camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to him and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, 'Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not think to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than

I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.' Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. And John tried to prevent Him, saying, 'I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?' But Jesus answered and said to him, 'Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.' Then he allowed Him. When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'"

In the Bible, John the Baptist must have been an extremely important figure. John the Baptist cried out for repentance from the people of Israel. We must remember precisely the work of Jesus and John the Baptist. Jesus, who came to this world saved mankind, obeying the will of God along with John the Baptist. John the Baptist and Jesus came to this world and accomplished righteous deeds.

John the Baptist urged the people of Israel to return to God. We can see in Matthew 3:7 that John the Baptist boldly rebuked the Pharisees and Sadducees saying: *"Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"* when he saw them

coming to him while he was baptizing. This John the Baptist rebuked the people of Israel severely as a prophet: "Repent, you brood of vipers!" John the Baptist was a prophet who did righteous deeds in God's eyes and was the last prophet of the Old Testament era.

Some wonder how John the Baptist, as a prophet of God, could have uttered such a horrible expression as "Brood of vipers." However, the Bible has it recorded and tells us that it was a righteous deed in front of God. All prophets should be people who can cry out for the righteous deed of God. And there came another One who accomplished righteous deeds besides John the Baptist. That was Jesus.

In the Bible, Sadducees are politicians. They are the politicians of the world. They put more emphasis on the politics of this world than serving God. However, the Pharisees were the conservative religious leaders. At the same time they said they believed in God's Word as it was, they denied Jesus.

God was greatly disappointed when He saw these people. In God's eyes, are these evil people or not? The Pharisees and the Sadducees are evil people in God's eyes.

The Pharisees did not believe in Jesus as the Messiah. That is why it is correct when John the Baptist called them a brood of vipers. John the Baptist did not compromise with the religious men of that time. Rather than compromising with the Pharisees and Sadducees, he tried to turn them around by rebuking them as a brood of vipers. John the Baptist taught the people who were returning to God that repenting was not good enough, but they needed to have the fruits of their repentance, and that they

needed to turn away from evil. For example, they have to return and pay back all the money they had exploited. Then they could come back to him for baptism, and return to God.

When we listen to his claims, we can see without a doubt that he was a servant sent by God. About the time that John the Baptist appeared was the time that Jesus Christ started His public ministry. John the Baptist's proclamation was to help the work of Jesus. At that time, there had not been a servant of God for about 400 years to the people of Israel. Therefore, the appearance of John the Baptist was an opportunity as well for the people of Israel to hear the providence of God and the voice of God.

John the Baptist cried out: "Brood of vipers, repent and return to God. Turn away from idolatry. You need to renounce foreign gods and return to God to avoid God's judgment." It was a great blessing to the people of Israel that a servant of God could rebuke and advise them like that. The entire nation of Israel was shaken by the cries of John the Baptist. The miracle of the High Priests, Sadducees, and Pharisees coming to John the Baptist, repenting and returning to God occurred.

John the Baptist testifies about the abilities of Jesus Christ, *"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire" (Matthew 3:11-12).* He testifies that he does the work of turning

people back to God by rebuking them, but the one who comes after him will baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire.

John the Baptist said that people who were born again by believing in Jesus will be gathered as the wheat into Heaven and the ones who are not born again will be separated with winnowing fan as chaff and be burned with unquenchable fire.

We must know that John the Baptist cried out for repentance in God, and that Jesus Christ, when He came to this world, received baptism from John the Baptist. According to the Gospel of Luke, Jesus was about thirty years old when He was baptized (Luke 3:23). Here, why did Jesus want to be baptized when He was thirty? The reason that it was 'about thirty' was because one had to be thirty years old in order to carry out his duties as a High Priest. God said in the Old Testament that the sons of the High Priests had the ability to take on the responsibility when they turned 30 years old (Numbers 4:35). Likewise, when Jesus turned 30, He was baptized by John the Baptist.

The reason that Jesus received baptism from John the Baptist was to accomplish all the righteousness of God. Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist to take on the sins of everyone in the world.

However, people are confused and do not understand why Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist. Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist is a secret revealed in the Bible. Many people do not understand the secret of the baptism and misunderstand why Jesus was baptized. They think it was to present an example or to show modesty.

We must know that Jesus came to this world and was baptized to save everyone in the world from his sins. Jesus could accomplish the righteous deed of taking on the sins of the world by being baptized by John the Baptist when He came to this world. The righteous deed is that Jesus took on all the sins of the world once and for all by getting baptized by John the Baptist. Jesus' baptism was to fulfill all the righteousness of God and was the will of God that was pleasing to Him. Our Lord came to this world to save us from all our sins. He was baptized to take on the sins of yours and mine once and for all by the baptism and bled to death for us. The Lord took on all the sins of the world once and for all.

In Matthew 3:15, *"all the righteousness"* means Jesus taking on all the sins of the world by being baptized by John, and bleeding to death on the Cross. At that time, Jesus took on all the sins of the world, all of our sins. How fortunate is it, and how thankful are we?

Fellow Christians, do we commit sins in this world or not? We commit sins. Do we only commit a few sins here and there? Or do we sin greatly? You commit many sins in this world, and your sins are included in all the sins of the world. Jesus took on all the sins of the world once and for all by being baptized by John the Baptist, and bled to death on the Cross once and for all, and wiped out the sins and judgment.

How could you and I be those without sin if Jesus did not take on all the sins of yours and mine once and for all? This Truth is the righteousness that our Lord fulfilled by being baptized and bleeding when He came to this world. Jesus is the

Savior who came to this world as the Son of God and took care of the sins of the world and the judgment of the sins for us.

What We Need to Remember

As we greet Christmas this year, we must remember that John the Baptist and Jesus fulfilled the righteousness of God that no one else could have done. As we greet Christmas, we need to think: 'how can I join in on the righteousness work as we greet Christmas, as we commemorate our Lord who fulfilled the righteousness?' rather than 'how can I have fun? How can I make good memories?' We can certainly remember the work of John the Baptist and Jesus. We, too, should be those who think of Jesus and John the Baptist who fulfilled all righteousness on this Christmas. Our lives should be devoted solely to spreading that righteousness of God. After we receive the remission of sin by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we must continue to lead a life that spreads this gospel.

What would we be if we do not offer ourselves to this righteous ministry that spreads the gospel of the water and the Spirit? How can we expect God to give us His blessing if we do not participate in this righteous ministry? We must participate since we know that Jesus has saved us by taking on all of the sins of mankind. Is it not necessary to spread all over the world the gospel of the water and the Spirit? Can we do righteous deeds according to the flesh? Can we avoid committing sins by trying not to do them? How can we, the insufficient ones, live the

righteous life after receiving the remission of sin? Would it not be possible by spreading this gospel of the water and the Spirit that saved us from the sins of the world through Jesus who came to this world, took on all the sins to the Cross, bled and died so that He could take on the judgment of the sins for us? What would truly be the good work that you and I do in this world? Would God be happy by our proper behavior and memorable deeds?

The most righteous work for us in this world is spreading the gospel of the water and the Spirit. What is righteous is devoting all of our hearts and energy into spreading this gospel of the water and the Spirit. Whatever appearance you have, God will only be glad when you are involved in the work of spreading the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

What does it mean that when Jesus was getting baptized he said: *"For thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness, then he allowed Him" (Matthew 3:15).* These are the words of testimony that tell us that Jesus took on all the sins of the world that we have committed by the baptism that He had received from John the Baptist. When Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist, all the sins of the world were passed onto Jesus once and for all. Jesus received all the sins of the world that are yours and mine through His baptism once and for all. This is how the body of Jesus could take on all the sins of the world, and this is how it was possible for Him to face judgment as both hands and both feet were crucified on the Cross. However, this does not mean that the sin was upon His soul. You must receive your salvation by believing that Jesus came to this world and fulfilled the righteousness of God, and John the Baptist also participated

in this great ministry by passing on the sins to Jesus through laying on of his hands.

John the Baptist did two things as the servant of God, the greatest representative among those who were born from a woman.

The first one was pointing out the evilness of everyone. He cried out for people to return to God by rebuking them, saying, "Serving other gods besides God is sin." The second was that he baptized Jesus to pass on the sins of everyone in the world. This is the righteousness of God that was for you and me. This is the very righteousness that the Lord came to fulfill in this world.

Jesus came to this world to receive the sins of yours and mine and take them on. And He received baptism to take on everyone's sins in this world, your sins, and your descendants' sins, and their descendants' sins, your parents sins, your ancestors' ancestors' sins, the sins of everyone from Adam as long as this world exists until the last day, though we do not know when the earth will cease to exist. Jesus received the baptism to blot out our sins and to cleanse us of our sins.

The word 'to baptize' means "to cleanse by dipping or submerging, to wash, to make clean with water, to wash one's self, or to bathe." Therefore, Jesus was baptized to take on all the sins of the world. Jesus cleansed our sins by receiving the sins through John the Baptist. Just as your clothes get washed when you wash your clothes with water, just as your filthiness gets cleansed when you take a bath with water, Jesus cleansed our sins clean by receiving baptism and took on all of the sins of our hearts through John the Baptist.

My fellow Christians, do you believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit? ―Yes.― Do you believe that the Lord came to this world, was baptized, and died on the Cross to fulfill the righteousness of God?

As we greet Christmas, we must remember Jesus our Lord who fulfilled the righteousness for us. It is said, *"Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31).* As we greet Christmas, we must ruminate on what is truly righteous, how we can lead a life of righteousness, and believe firmly. You and I need to keep our faith in Jesus Christ in this world and return to God someday. We must live the one life we have in this world, doing righteous work. What kind of work do we need to do in front of God? We must think of righteousness once. Before we can think about whether or not we should live for the righteousness of God, we must think about what righteousness itself is first.

I am greatly thankful to God as I greet this Christmas. And I wish you would do the "righteous thing." What kind of righteous thing can you do in front of God? Can we do any righteous thing by doing well with our flesh? Don't even think about it. Trying to do righteous things with the flesh is like a tower built on sand that will crumble down in one moment. Even if you were good all your life, if you make one wrong move, all the humanly righteousness is shattered.

The true righteousness is spreading everyday the gospel of the water and the Spirit, with which God has wiped out all our sins. Participating in this spreading of the gospel is participating in the work of God. You and I live for the purpose of this work.

Whether you work for a company or own your own business, it is righteous for you to devote yourself to this gospel of the water and the Spirit. If you cannot do it yourself, it is righteous through your prayers and small materials. Whatever you do, whether eating or drinking, living to spread this gospel is righteousness.

Fellow Christians, even though we did not go over the Bible verse by verse, you are those who generally have heard these words. I believe that you believe in these words as the Truth. Do you believe that Jesus came to this world and fulfilled all righteousness? Do you believe that the Lord has fulfilled the greatest work that wipes out all the sins, yours and mine? —Yes.—

It is so fortunate that Jesus took on all the sins, and we are so thankful that He fulfilled 'all righteousness.' How lamentable would it be if He took some sins and did not take some others? However, whatever sin you have committed, Jesus took it all. Have a strong faith. I hope you please God with your faith and do righteous deeds by your faith. I hope you live by the faith. And I hope you go to Heaven by your faith. I hope you are a person without sin by your faith. I hope you are a person who receives the Holy Spirit by believing in the true gospel of the water and the Spirit.

I truly thank God again and again because I believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Fellow Christians, do you believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit? —Yes.— I hope that all of you are those who truly believe in the true gospel as we greet Christmas. Hallelujah! ✉

Jesus Who Came to Blot Out Your Sins

< Matthew 3:13-17 >

"Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. And John tried to prevent Him, saying, 'I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?' But Jesus answered and said to him, 'Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.' Then he allowed Him. When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'"

Even as today's Christians profess to believe in Jesus as their Savior, many of them do not know that Jesus is the Lord who has delivered us from all our sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. It is therefore necessary to prove to them, with this gospel of the water and the Spirit, that Jesus is indeed their Savior. As all are born as sinners, to be washed from all their sins, all must believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. In other words, to be born again, they must believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and only when they believe so

can they meet the Lord. Whether or not we can receive the remission of our sins and be born again depends on whether or not we know and believe in Jesus Christ correctly.

For us, the most important key to reach the truth of the remission of sin is knowing and believing in who the Lord is and what the Lord has done. When Jesus asked His disciples, *"Who do you say that I am?"* Peter answered by saying, *"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."* That Peter thus confessed his true faith was because he was led and taught by God the Father to reach this understanding.

Now, we must also reach the correct understanding of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and like Peter, we must be able to make the true confession of faith to our Lord. What we must all grasp here is the need to recognize and believe that the baptism of Jesus and His bloodshed on the Cross were exactly the sacrifice that our Lord made to shoulder our sins and be condemned for these sins. When we believe so, we can be wholly delivered from all our sins.

The Word of God is divided into two parts: the Old and New Testaments. The New Testament is the fulfillment of the prophecies promised in the Old Testament. And it is also the record of the prophetic announcement of the new world to come, which the Lord had promised to His disciples. This new world will soon be fulfilled to us by Jesus Christ. The Old Testament is also the true Word of God that records the prophesy of mankind's salvation, that the Son of God would come to this earth, and that just as hands were laid on the sacrificial offering of the Old Testament and its blood was shed, He would take

upon Himself all the sins of the world once and for all by being baptized by John the Baptist, shed His blood by dying on the Cross, and thereby save all the sinners of the world from their sins. Through the sacrificial system manifested in the Tabernacle, our Lord has revealed to us that He is the Savior who would fulfill this promise, and that He has indeed achieved this. Put differently, the entire Old Testament is achieved exactly throughout the New Testament by our Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus has given us the true gospel of the water and the Spirit, so that when we believe in Him as our Savior, we would all correctly understand and believe that the Savior prophesied in the Old Testament to come is indeed our Lord Jesus Christ.

The sacrificial system in the Old Testament was the stepping-stones of God's revelation to reach the whole truth of His salvation, and it enables us to receive the remission of our sins infallibly by understanding and believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Jesus has enabled us to realize why He had to be baptized by John the Baptist, and how, because of this baptism, He had to shed His blood by dying on the Cross. It is only when we reach the correct understanding of this gospel truth that we can truly be saved and become God's own people. The gospel truth of the water and the Spirit that Jesus has given us is what enables us to correctly understand and believe in His public ministries of salvation.

These Are the Ministries of the Water and the Spirit That Jesus Fulfilled When He Came to This Earth

The core Word of the New Testament is this: Coming to this earth, Jesus took upon Himself all the sins of the world through the baptism that He received from John the Baptist, and He has thereby paid off all the wages of sin with His blood. The life and death of your soul depends upon whether you correctly understand and believe in this gospel of the water and the Spirit. And, in fact, all the 39 books of the Old Testament and 27 books of the New Testament describe in detail this pivotal truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

The sacrificial animal that was offered in the Tabernacle of the Old Testament for the sins of the people of Israel could wash away their sins, for they had laid their hands on its head and offered its blood and flesh to God. Only by reaching a comparative understanding of this sacrificial system of the Old Testament and the baptism and bloodshed of Jesus in the New Testament can we also correctly understand the remission of our sins and believe in it. In other words, just as a sacrificial lamb or goat had accepted the iniquities of sinners with the laying of their hands or the hands of the High Priest, it was by being baptized by John the Baptist that Jesus could accept our sins of the world and shed His blood thereby dying on the Cross.

Even though we don't know all the details of the Bible, when we get the clear and concrete understanding of the baptism and bloodshed of Jesus in the New Testament as compared with the

sacrificial system of the Old Testament, we can receive the remission of sin by faith. We must believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit to receive the remission of sin given by God.

Jesus wrote the gospel of the water and the Spirit that can wash away all our sins as the written Word of God. To the believers of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, He has entrusted priesthood, so that everyone on this earth would wash away his sins with faith. In the Old Testament, this priesthood was promised only to the descendants of Levi. It was these descendants of Levi who were given the duties of interceders that washed away the Israelites' sins and fulfilled the just love of God. As such, we the believers of the gospel of the water and the Spirit must understand the sacrificial system of the Old Testament, and thereby reach an even deeper understanding of Jesus' baptism and His crucifixion to fulfill this priesthood properly before God in this age of the New Testament.

It has now been 2005 years since Jesus Christ was born on this earth. This Jesus came to this earth as the Savior, and by receiving baptism from John the Baptist and being crucified to shed His blood, He has forever washed away all our sins. Therefore, it is only proper that the year of Jesus' birth would become the benchmark of the chronological table of world history. It symbolizes the fact that the beginning of all things is from Jesus Christ, for as far as we are concerned, Jesus Christ is God Himself who created this universe and the Savior who has blotted out all our sins with His water and blood, and He also stands at the center of the history of the universe.

Is Today's Scriptural Passage Telling Us of the Passing of Our Sins?

In today's scriptural passage, it is written, *"Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. And John tried to prevent Him, saying, 'I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?' But Jesus answered and said to him, 'Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.' Then he allowed Him. When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'"*

All of us are the descendants of Adam, born with twelve ingredients of sin from the very day we were born into this world, and therefore we all had no choice but to be put to death for our sins and be condemned for them before God (Mark 7:21-23). We could not avoid but live cowardly and die hopelessly because of our sins, and we were all bound to the terrifying fire of hell. However, Jesus was born on this earth, when we were at the verge of eternal destruction. He was born in the appearance of a lowly one, to deliver us mankind from all the sins of the world. It was to deliver such people like you and me from the everlasting sins of this world that the Lord came to this earth incarnated in the flesh of a man.

When our Lord turned 30, He bore the sins of the world by being baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan River. At that

time, John the Baptist was giving his baptism of repentance to many Israelites that made them return to God. But the baptism that John the Baptist gave to Jesus was to fulfill all the righteousness of God. It was a baptism that was given to pass all the sins of this world to the body of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God.

John the Baptist was the representative of mankind (Matthew 11:11). And he was the last prophet of the Old Testament, the biblically legitimate priest who was born from the house of the High Priest, and thus, ministered as the last priest of the age of the Old Testament (Luke 1:1-21). Therefore, all of us must understand the ministry of John the Baptist without fail before we try to understand the ministry of Jesus. The truth is that Jesus Christ accepted the sins of the world through His baptism received from John the Baptist. We must understand this truth and believe in it. Only when we reach an in-depth knowledge of the ministry of John the Baptist can we understand it in connection with the ministry of Jesus and thoroughly understand the whole truth of the remission of sin, of the true atonement.

The Old and New Testaments make profound prophecies about and detailed descriptions of the ministry of John the Baptist. Matthew 11:11 writes about John the Baptist as the following: *"Among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist."* In chapters 3 and 4 of the Book of Malachi in the Old Testament, it was prophesied that God would send Elijah. Malachi 4:5 says, *"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD,"* followed by verse 6, *"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." The Bible teaches us that this Elijah who was prophesied in the Book of Malachi in the Old Testament was none other than John the Baptist who passed the sins of mankind, the sins of the world, to Jesus through His baptism.

In the New Testament, Jesus Himself said that John the Baptist was *"the greatest of all those born of women," and "the Elijah who is to come" (Matthew 11:11-14).* What, then, is the role that John the Baptist fulfilled when He came to this world? As the representative of all mankind, John the Baptist was the one who passed the sins of the world to Jesus by baptizing Him. He was the one who fulfilled the ministry that turned the hearts of sinners to God, as well as the one who baptized Jesus to pass the sins of the world to Him. As someone who was born from the house of Aaron the High Priest by the providence of God, John the Baptist was qualified to carry out the duties of the High Priest (Luke 1:1-10). Therefore, John the Baptist was the one who fulfilled his priestly duty to pass everyone's sins to Jesus through His baptism.

The reason why John the Baptist had to come to this earth was to pass the sins of the world to Jesus by baptizing Him. And John the Baptist was the one who rebuked the people who had left God and testified to them that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, the sacrificial Lamb that would blot out the sins of the world with His baptism and bloodshed. By coming to John the Baptist as the sacrificial offering that would make the sins of this world disappear and being baptized by him, Jesus fulfilled the prophesy

about the laying of hands on the head of sacrificial offerings written in the Book of Leviticus (Leviticus 1:3-5).

This is why John the Baptist had to baptize Jesus and pass the sins of this world to Him, and thereby fulfill the righteousness of God, the will of God the Father. Jesus was the Lamb of God who accepted the sins of everyone in this world by being baptized by the greatest of all those born of women. In other words, it was because Jesus wanted to accept the sins of this world once and for all that He was baptized by John the Baptist.

When John the Baptist was giving the baptism of repentance to the people of Israel, Jesus came to him and said, "Baptize Me. It is fitting for Me to be baptized by you and fulfill all the righteousness of God" (Matthew 3:15). To bear all the sins of this world, Jesus had to receive His baptism from John the Baptist, for it was the baptism through which He took upon all the sins of everyone in this world. By thus bearing all the sins of this world through this baptism received from John the Baptist, and by being crucified to shed His blood unto death at the Cross and rising from the dead again in three days, Jesus has become the everlasting Savior God.

Thus, Jesus was baptized because it was fitting for Him to fulfill the will of God the Father (Matthew 3:15). And it was by this will of God the Father that John the Baptist baptized Him. In other words, Jesus received the spiritual laying on of hands and shed His blood just like the Old Testament's sacrificial offering. In Leviticus 16, we see that two sacrificial goats accepted the yearly sins of the people of Israel with the laying on of the hands of the High Priest. Just like this, Jesus accepted

all the sins of this world once and for all through the baptism He received from John the Baptist and shed His precious blood on the Cross. Jesus is therefore the Savior of mankind who accepted their sins onto His own head by being baptized.

Jesus is the only begotten Son of God the Father, and the heavenly High Priest of the Kingdom of God. As such, for John the Baptist, the representative of mankind, to fulfill his priesthood as the earthly High Priest, he had to meet Jesus the High Priest of the Kingdom of Heaven and fulfill all the righteousness of God the Father. Through the baptism of Jesus, the just love of God came to be realized.

Who, then, is higher between John the Baptist and Jesus? Of course, Jesus the heavenly High Priest is higher than John the Baptist. Jesus is more exalted than anyone else, for He is God Himself who created the entire universe, and He is also the Son of God who came to this earth to save mankind from the sins of the world. To save mankind from the sins of the world, Jesus came to this earth and was baptized by John the Baptist. Jesus is not a mere creature like us.

In the baptism that Jesus received from John the Baptist, there is God's example of a special work. When Jesus came to John the Baptist to be baptized, John the Baptist said to Jesus, "I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?" As we can see, John the Baptist at first declined to pass all sins to Jesus by baptizing Him, but in the end he could not refuse, for Jesus Himself wanted to be baptized by him and thereby bear all the sins of the world. So Jesus commanded John the Baptist to baptize Him, saying, *"Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting*

for us to fulfill all righteousness" (Matthew 3:15).

Before Jesus Christ was baptized by John the Baptist, Gentiles and Jews alike all had sins in each of their hearts, and therefore they could not avoid being condemned and destroyed for their sins. We know very well that everyone is a fragile being who cannot avoid being destroyed for sinning against God in this world. This is why Jesus took upon Himself all the sins of the world by being baptized by John the Baptist. Our Lord had to fulfill this work through John the Baptist. For Jesus to take upon Himself all the sins of these people, He had to receive from John the Baptist the baptism that would fulfill all the righteousness of God.

"Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness" (Matthew 3:15). Here, *"all righteousness"* is "πᾶσαν δικαιοσύνην" (*pasan dikaiosune*) in Greek. This word *'dikaiosune'* means "the fairest state" or "righteousness," or "equity."

Just as the sacrificial offering of the Old Testament had blotted out all the sins of the Israelites by bearing them all, in the New Testament, Jesus washed away all the sins of the entire mankind by coming to this earth and bearing all their sins Himself by being baptized by John the Baptist. Fundamentally speaking, Jesus came to this earth as the Lamb of God, and by thus becoming the sacrificial offering for our own sins, He has delivered us from the sins of this world. The reason why the Savior became man and sought to be baptized by John the Baptist lies in the fulfillment of the righteousness of God.

Jesus said*, "Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us*

to fulfill all righteousness." Spiritually, this means, "It is fitting for Me to take upon Myself everyone's sins once and for all by being baptized by you and washing them all away." This also means that the baptism Jesus received from John the Baptist was the fulfillment of the laying on of hands of the Old Testament, which, in turn, means that Jesus actually accepted the sins of mankind once and for all. Therefore, we must all have the faith that knows and believes in the truth manifested in this baptism that Jesus received. We must know the result of the baptism that Jesus received from John the Baptist and His bloodshed on the Cross, and we must understand and believe in it correctly.

The Presbyterian Church gives an abridged version of baptism, where its followers are baptized not by full immersion in water, but by sprinkling, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. In the Scriptures, this kind of baptism was given in water-scarce regions, such as desert areas. This is how, for instance, Philip baptized the Ethiopian eunuch. But when Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist, He stood in the Jordan River waist-deep. The baptism that Jesus received from John was one where John the Baptist laid his two hands on Jesus' head, immersing Him in the water, and then raising Him out. This baptism was the same as the Old Testament's laying on of hands, where the High Priest had passed on the sins of the Israelites by putting his two hands on the head of the sacrifice. The baptism that Jesus received from John the Baptist was the baptism through which He accepted the sins of the world by bearing them all.

What is the significance of the fact that John the Baptist put

his hands on Jesus' head to baptize Him? In the Old Testament, the ritual of 'laying on of hands' was performed in the following cases: 1) to pass one's sins to his sacrificial offering (Leviticus 1:1-10; 4:1-25); 2) to consecrate the servants of God (Numbers 8:10, 27:18); and 3) to return the blasphemy to the blasphemer (Leviticus 24:14).

Whatever the case was, 'laying on of hands' was the way of 'passing something on.' When a servant is consecrated as a pastor, for instance, senior pastors lay their hands on his head, signifying that their God-given power and gifts are now also given to the new pastor. This means that with the laying on of hands, all the gifts and power that had been permitted to the senior pastors are now bestowed on the new pastor also.

However, the most typical case of 'laying on of hands' was of the sacrificial system, which was performed to pass sins onto the sacrificial animal. And parallel to this, the reason why John the Baptist put his hands on Jesus' head was to pass on all the sins of the world. This is why to this day, when pastors baptize believers, they invariably put their hands on their heads. Why is this done? It is as a sign of their faith, to show that they believe that Jesus bore the sins of the world through His baptism, that they are baptized.

As the Savior, Jesus took upon the sins of the world by being baptized by John the Baptist, the representative of mankind. This was the same as the High Priest of the Old Testament passing the sins of the people of Israel on to the sacrifice by laying his hands on its head (Leviticus 16:11).

Having been baptized by John the Baptist, the representative

of mankind, Jesus was immersed in water and then came out of it. Spiritually speaking, this symbolizes the fact that because Jesus took upon Himself all our sins of the world once and for all by being baptized by John the Baptist, He would eventually die on the Cross, rise from the dead again, and thereby become the perfect Savior. It tells us that Jesus accepted the sins of this world through His baptism, shouldered our sins, and was condemned for all sins by shedding His blood unto death on the Cross.

In short, Jesus' baptism by the laying on of hands implies that He accepted the sins of the world, His immersion into the water signifies His death on the Cross, and His coming out of the water indicates His resurrection. For all of us, in other words, Jesus has fulfilled the righteousness of God by vicariously satisfying the requirements of the law of sin and death that we ourselves had to meet. This is why the Bible states, *"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" (Romans 8:3-4).*

At this time, when Jesus came up from the water, God the Father opened the gates of Heaven and said, *"This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17).* God had planned to blot out all the sins of mankind through His Son before the creation. And this work was fulfilled by His Son by coming to this earth, taking upon the sins of mankind by being baptized by John the Baptist, shedding His blood on the Cross

unto death, and thereby perfectly delivering His believers from sin. By being baptized and shedding His blood, our Lord fulfilled all the will of God once and for all.

Therefore, when Jesus obeyed the Father's will by taking upon Himself all the sins of mankind with His baptism, God the Father was pleased with His Son Jesus, saying, *"He who did this is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."* This is why Christians must believe in the baptism that Jesus received from John the Baptist, as well as in the blood that Jesus shed on the Cross as the condemnation of all our sins. This is why God the Father opened the gates of Heaven and said that the One who was baptized now was His Son, in whom He was well pleased.

"Behold, the Lamb of God Who Takes Away the Sin of the World!"

Now turning to John 1:29, you and I must understand the evidence proving that Jesus took upon the sins of the world once and for all by being baptized by John the Baptist, and we must believe this with our hearts. John the Baptist, seeing Jesus whom He had baptized coming toward him on the very next day after His baptism, testified, *"Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"*

Put differently, John the Baptist testified, "None other than Jesus is the very Savior of mankind, the Savior who accepted all their sins through His baptism and who would shed His blood for them." On the next day, seeing Jesus again, John the Baptist

testified once more, *"Behold the Lamb of God!"* Because Jesus had already been baptized by John the Baptist, and now that He had thus accepted the sins of the world, He had to be crucified and shed His blood. This is why John the Baptist testified, *"Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"*

We must understand the meaning of the phrase "the sin of the world" and decide whether to believe the truth of His baptism or not. What is the correct understanding of the sins of this world? Many people generally think that the "world" here, temporally speaking, only entails their own little world—that is, whatever they have known from the time they were born to their present. But the correct understanding of the sins of the world requires us to regard the "world" here as the all-encompassing time from the beginning of this universe to its end.

I was told that some kind of dayfly could live only a day at most. For such insects, living for 12 hours means living half their lifetime. If they last a bit longer, they would already be facing their sunset, and if they live up to 24 hours, they would then have lived their full lifetime. So naturally, the concept of "tomorrow" has no meaning for them.

Like this, since we live for only 70-80 years, we don't really have a clear understanding of such concepts as "eternity" or "infinity." However, our Lord the Almighty God is saying to us: the world is the time from the beginning of this universe to day it ends. In other words, our concept of time is definitely different from the temporal concept of the world that God is speaking of here. The time of the world that our Lord is speaking of is far more expansive than our conception.

Our faith must be based on the Word of God—that is, we must believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit written in God's Word. Therefore, when we consider what John the Baptist said—"The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world"—or what our Lord Himself said—"For thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness"—we must understand them to mean that Jesus took upon the sins of all human beings with His baptism and carried them to the Cross, and we must believe this with our hearts.

When did Jesus bear the sins of this world? Jesus took upon the sins of the world once and for all when He accepted all sins by being baptized in the Jordan River by John the Baptist. The phrase *"for thus"* here is *'hutos gar'* in Greek, which means 'just in this way,' 'most fitting,' or 'there is no other way besides this.' This word shows that Jesus irreversibly took the sins of humankind onto Him through the baptism He received from John the Baptist. In other words, Jesus could blot out the sins of the world only when He was baptized by John the Baptist without fail. We must therefore invariably understand the baptism of Jesus and His bloodshed as the remission of our sins and believe as such.

With this method of passing the sins of the world to Jesus, where John the Baptist laid his hands on Jesus' head, Jesus took upon the sins of the world once and for all, shed His blood, and thereby completed our atonement to perfection. This was the purpose of Jesus' baptism. We understand that in the Old Testament, the laying of hands on the sacrificial offering and its bloodshed meant the atonement of the Israelites. Likewise, we

must believe that through His baptism, Jesus has washed away everyone's sins by accepting the sins of the world, and that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once and for all (Hebrews 10:10).

The word "baptism," "βαφτισμα" (baptisma) in Greek, means "being immersed." Therefore, "to baptize" literally means to immerse or to submerge under water. To be more exact, it means: 1) to cleanse by dipping or submerging, to wash, to make clean with water, to wash one's self, bathe; 2) to overwhelm; 3) to bury; and 4) to pass on.

Herein lies the reason why you must understand the gospel of the water and the Spirit properly and believe in it: First of all, all your sins were passed onto Jesus through the baptism that He received from John the Baptist. Because Jesus accepted all our sins of the world through His baptism, all those who believe this are now without sin. Since by being baptized Jesus has already washed away all the sins of the world, there can no longer be any sin. Jesus was the Lamb of God who took away the sins of this world. These sins of the world include all the sins that you have ever committed and will ever commit, from those committed in your childhood to your adulthood and to those that you will commit until the day you die. By being baptized by John the Baptist, Jesus fulfilled all righteousness, shouldering all these sins and carrying them to the Cross.

Second, the meaning of washing denotes that as the sins of the world were passed onto Jesus with His baptism, they were all washed away. Third, the meaning of burial implies that when the sins of the world were with us, we had to bear the

condemnation of sin and be cast into the fire of hell, but now that our sins were passed onto Jesus through our faith in His baptism, Jesus had to die for our sins in our place. This is why Jesus was baptized in our place, was vicariously crucified and bled to death in our stead, was buried in our place, and rose from the dead again. By thus being baptized, crucified, and buried; by rising from the dead again; by sitting on the right hand of God the Father; and by letting all sinners come to know the gospel of the water and the Spirit, Jesus has enabled all who believe in this to receive the remission of their sins by faith.

When we are saved by believing in Jesus as the Savior, in His baptism and His blood on the Cross, then we can actually become God's own children. For us, this means that our sins were passed onto Jesus. Because Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist and shed His blood on the Cross, our sins can no longer be with us. All our sins, from those committed in our childhood to those committed in adulthood and to the day we die, were wholly passed onto the body of Jesus and were condemned already. It is because all our sins were passed onto Jesus that He shed His blood on the Cross in our place, died and rose from the dead, and has thereby given us new life.

Now, if we believe in this Jesus as the Savior, then we can all become sinless. Those of you who from now on know the gospel of the water and the Spirit, understand it, and believe in it with the heart are all righteous. You are no longer sinners. You are now righteous. It is by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that you can become righteous. We cannot attain our salvation with our own endeavors, for we will continue to be

insufficient and commit sin, but the Lord has already washed away all our sins with the baptism that He received from John the Baptist and the blood that He shed on the Cross. So it is by knowing the truth that salvation comes into our hearts.

The Gospel of the Water and the Spirit Proven by the Sacrificial System of the Tabernacle of the Old Testament

First of all, let me briefly explain the basic physical layout of the Old Testament's Tabernacle. The Tabernacle itself was a relatively small structure, but it was surround by an outer court that was fenced in with pillars and screens of fine woven linen. There was a gate to this court, and past this gate, as one approached toward the Tabernacle, there stood the altar of burnt offering, and the laver of bronze was located past this altar. The Tabernacle itself was divided into two parts: the Holy Place and the Most Holy. The doors of this House of God (one for the Holy Place and another for the Most Holy), as well as the gate of its court, were all woven of blue, purple, and scarlet thread and fine woven linen.

Why did God make all the doors and gate of the Tabernacle by weaving them with these blue, purple, and scarlet thread and fine woven linen? The reason is because through them, God was foretelling how Jesus would come to this earth, take upon the sins of the world once and for all through the baptism that He would receive from John the Baptist, and be crucified and shed

His blood. By being baptized by John the Baptist and crucified for the sins of the world, Jesus took His own body as the sacrificial offering for us.

By believing in Jesus as the Savior, and by believing in the Word telling us that Jesus who became the blue, purple, and scarlet thread took upon the sins of the world by being baptized, we can at once be delivered from all our sins by faith. Jesus used these blue, purple, and scarlet thread and fine woven linen for the door of the Tabernacle in order to tell us that He is the King of kings, and that He has saved us from our sins by being baptized and crucified. The blue, purple, and scarlet thread and the fine woven linen used for the door of the Tabernacle are none other than the antitype of salvation, telling us that the Lord has saved us perfectly (1 Peter 3:21).

This is why if we were to open the gate of the court of the Tabernacle and enter, we would see the laver of bronze past the altar of burnt offering. The altar of burnt offering shows us God's law of justice prior to His law of salvation, that "it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment." Through the altar of burnt offering, in other words, God showed us beforehand that we would be condemned for our sins. If we really believe in Jesus as the Savior, then we must realize that in the Old Testament, in order for the Israelites to be saved from all their sins and the condemnation of sin, they had to pass their sins to their sacrificial offering and kill it before the altar.

Like this, Jesus took upon the sins of the world once and for all by being baptized by John the Baptist, and this is how He could be crucified and shed His blood for us. Coming to this

earth, our Lord bore our sins by being baptized by John the Baptist and bore all our condemnation of sin once and for all. In short, by being baptized, shedding His blood, and rising from the dead again in order to save us from our sins and condemnation, Jesus has become our true Savior.

Where Are Our Personal Sins Now Found?

What, then, must we do about our personal sins that we will continue to commit daily as we live on? Brothers and sisters, if we remember everyday that all our sins were passed onto Jesus when He was baptized in the Jordan River, that is, if we continue to believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit with our hearts, then we will always remain sinless. Why? Because Jesus, knowing that we would sin everyday, took upon all the sins of the world by being baptized by John the Baptist, carried them to the Cross, shed His blood while dying, rose from the dead again, and blotted them out all at once.

However, this truth of salvation, the gospel truth of the water and the Spirit, is effective only when we truly understand it and believe in it with all our hearts. We can become perfectly sinless only by remembering and believing that all our sins were passed onto Jesus and washed away when He was baptized by John the Baptist, for we sin everyday. We have been washed from all our original sin and personal sins by our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Dear fellow Christians, if you want to be remitted from all

your sins, then you must understand and believe that all our sins were passed onto Jesus when He was baptized. And you must always ruminate on the Word of the true gospel, especially whenever you commit actual sins. Only then can your hearts be always cleansed, and only then can you be qualified to serve the righteous works of God. The gospel of the water and the Spirit tells us that all our sins were passed onto Jesus when He was baptized by John the Baptist, and that He was condemned for them on the Cross. It is through the gospel of the water and the Spirit that the Bible tells us about the remission of sin.

All of us must regard and believe in the Word of God as the truth. If you believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, then it is impossible for you to have any sin. If we really believe in Jesus Christ as the Savior, then we are the people of faith who believe that Jesus at once took upon Himself all the sins of this world, whatever they might be, through the baptism that He received from John the Baptist. The baptism that Jesus received from John the Baptist has made everyone sinless, just as the Book of Romans tells us, *"For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous" (Romans 5:19).*

As we live in this world, we sin everyday. Were all our sins passed onto Jesus already? All our sins were already passed onto the body of Jesus a very long time ago, more than 2,000 years ago. Were the sins that we are to commit out of our weaknesses in the future also passed onto Jesus, and was He condemned for them as well? That is right.

Does this then mean that it's okay for us to commit all kinds

of sin at our whim? That is not the case. Even those who have been born again by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit are, of course, all bound to continue to sin out of their weaknesses. However, they can still keep their hearts clean at all times by ruminating on the true gospel of the water and the Spirit. People sin more out of their weakness than out of their voluntary will.

Therefore, when the believers of the gospel of the water and the Spirit experience their weaknesses, they cannot but thank the Lord even more by renewing their faith in His baptism and bloodshed, for the Lord has already washed away all their sins with His baptism and His blood on the Cross and was condemned for them. Now they are not bound by sin anymore, but rather they willingly volunteer to spread this truth to others. By doing so, our hearts are rejoiced even more.

What about you then? Do you believe that to blot out all your sins, Jesus came to this world, was baptized by John the Baptist, shed His blood to death, and rose from the dead again? Yes, we are giving our thanks to Jesus who came to blot out our sins perfectly. And He has indeed made them completely disappear once and for all.

In the Tabernacle of the Old Testament, entering through the gate of its court and passing by the altar of burnt offering, we would come across the laver of bronze. While measurements and limits were specified for all other utensils of the Tabernacle, no such limited measurements were given for this laver of bronze. Spiritually speaking, this symbolizes the fact that by being baptized and shedding His blood, Jesus has blotted out all

our sins without quantitative limitation. Like this, the laver of bronze has the unlimited efficacy to wash away all our sins. It holds the power to wash them all away.

This laver was made of bronze, implying that all sins must be condemned. But it contained the water to wash the priest's hands and feet. This tells us that the Lord has completely washed away the sins of the world by being baptized. When the priests of the Old Testament gave sacrifices at the altar of burnt offering, they were smeared with all kinds of filth, from animal blood to feces, as they slaughtered sacrificial offerings after laying their hands on them. It was with the water of the laver that they washed themselves of such filth. Like this, this laver of bronze implies the baptism of Jesus that has washed away filthy sins. All our personal sins that we commit in this world have already been blotted out through Jesus' baptism. This is what the laver of bronze reveals. By believing in this truth, we can be remitted from all our sins and always live with clean consciences forever.

How many times was Jesus baptized by John the Baptist to accept the sins of this world? He was baptized only once. By receiving baptism from John the Baptist only once, Jesus has forever washed away all the sins of this world perfectly. Why was He baptized only once? Because Jesus is the everlasting Son of God who had the power to accept all the sins of the world from its beginning to its end once and for all with His baptism. As Jesus said, "I am the Alpha and the Omega," He is God the eternal Being. Because Jesus is the Son of the forever living God, He could accomplish His eternal salvation once and

for all: He came to this world once; shouldered the sins of the world all at once by being baptized by John the Baptist once; was crucified and shed His blood once, and has thereby washed away all our sins all at once.

We must know the gospel truth of the water and the Spirit and believe in Jesus as the Savior. It is by being baptized once that Jesus has washed away the sins of the world. Your sins were passed onto Jesus once and for all when He was baptized. By thus being baptized once, Jesus fulfilled all the righteousness of God that blots out the sins of the world. You must realize that all your sins were passed onto Jesus through His baptism. And you must believe this. You have nothing to lose from believing this. It is by our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that we can receive the everlasting remission of our sins.

If you find yourselves asking Jesus to forgive your sins everyday, then you should know that you are not yet born again. And you have to understand the gospel truth of the water and the Spirit, and you must believe in Jesus as your true Savior all over again according to this gospel. Pastors throughout the world, who have misunderstood the baptism of Jesus, must also believe in Him all over again. Many pastors do not have the proper understanding of the gospel of the water and the Spirit that has washed away their sins. How, then, do you think it would be possible for them to help others to receive the remission of sin, when they themselves have not received it? If, by any chance, you have been pretending to be holy only with the deeds and appearance of your flesh even as your hearts remain sinful, then you are merely hypocritical religionists and the children of

destruction. People will not be able to receive the remission of sin with your help.

However, your souls can be freed from all your sins when you can discern the truth of salvation from the false religions of the world with the faith that knows and believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Only when you properly understand the gospel of the water and the Spirit, God's Word of life, and believe in it properly in your hearts, can all your sins be washed away. Yet countless people still remain oblivious to the fact that the sins of the world were passed onto Jesus when He was baptized by John the Baptist. Therefore, you yourselves must first humbly accept the gospel of the water and the Spirit into you hearts by believing in it. Jesus said, *"For thus, it is thus fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness" (Matthew 3:15).* Jesus fulfilled all the righteousness of God when He was baptized. Through this baptism that He received, Jesus accepted all the sins of the world. With this baptism, all your sins were also accepted by Jesus.

Are you not the people of this world? Of course you are. Are your sins not included in the sins of the world? Of course, they are. Once you realize this, you can be delivered through the truth that Jesus shouldered all your sins by being baptized. To realize that you are sinners bound to be condemned for your sins is the stepping-stone that leads you to realize that your only Savior is Jesus Christ Himself.

Have you come into Christ? Or are you still standing outside Christ? You must clearly know where exactly you stand. You are the people of this world. Were all your sins then passed onto

Jesus or not? They were. Do you then admit that those Christians who say, "Lord, I'm still a sinner," are not the born-again saints? In spite of believing in Jesus, they do not understand that our sins were passed onto Jesus through His baptism, and as a result they rely only on the blood of the Cross and are suffering everyday, asking the Lord to forgive their sins.

However, what did the Apostle Paul tell us? He told us, *"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).* So, if we wail and cling to the Lord constantly asking Him to forgive our sins, all that we are doing is only blaspheming His baptism and bloodshed even as we profess to believe in Him. This kind of faith is only an insult to Jesus.

Do All of Us Believe in the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit?

Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist. All our sins were passed onto Jesus at that time once and for all. Accepting the sins of the world through His baptism, Jesus then shed His blood and died on the Cross. And He rose from the dead in three days and now sits at the right hand of the throne of God.

It is imperative that we first reach the correct understanding of whether or not Jesus took away the sins of the world, including your sins, when He was baptized. By understanding the gospel of the water and the Spirit and believing in it, we must respond to the salvation of God. We must respond to what

God did for us, saying, "That's right." When the Bible tells us that the Lord took away all the sins of the world by being baptized, we must abandon our own thoughts and respond to this by believing the Word as it is. Had the Lord not taken away your sins through His baptism, then His bloodshed on the Cross would have been all in vain. We must believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit with our hearts. The Lord has completely blotted out all your sins of the world.

Faith and salvation do not depend on your own efforts. Your salvation from sin is depends on whether or not you have the faith that believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that Jesus has given us.

Do you now recognize that the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the only true gospel, and do you now want to admit this truth in your heart? Then, you must confess as the following: "Lord, to this day, I had not known that You shouldered the sins of the world once and for all by being baptized; I had misunderstood and misbelieved. But I thank You for making me realize, even now, that I had misunderstood Your salvation. Now that I have come to understand and know the truth of the water and the Spirit, I believe in it and thank You for it."

You, too, must now understand the gospel of the water and the Spirit, realize that it is for none other than yourselves, and accept it into your hearts as such. Always acknowledging salvation as it is in your hearts is what faith is about, and this is the faith that is based on the correct understanding of Jesus, one that enables you to receive Him into your hearts. And believing in this truth is the way for you to become God's own children,

the very faith that remits you from all your sins. What is your understanding of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and how exactly do you believe in it?

Our Lord said, *"You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).* We must recognize the gospel truth of the water and the Spirit as it is. This is the faith that believes in God. He has saved us from the sins of the world with His water and blood. Because He has saved us from the sins of the world with the water and the Spirit, those who truly believe this before God will indeed be born again.

Are You Still Debtors?

Jesus said in John 3 that unless one is born again of water and the Spirit, he can neither go to the Kingdom of Heaven, nor see it. Being born again of water and the Spirit is only possible when we believe in the baptism of Jesus, His blood on the Cross, and the truth that He is the Son of God and our Savior. Do you believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit?

Let's assume here that a man has accumulated half a million dollars in debt. Interest alone is too much for him to bear. For ordinary working people, this kind of debt is beyond their means to settle. Nor could this man pay back his debt, and so he just went bankrupt and disappeared. But even he flees to somewhere else and works hard trying to pay off his debt, would he really be able to pay even the interest, let alone the principal amount? His creditor, meanwhile, goes after his co-signer to get the

money back, but the co-signer has no way to pay back, either. So the creditor, being rather unscrupulous, goes after his parents, making all kinds of threat to force them to pay back the debt. The parents can't stand this, and so they pay off the creditor, and they get a receipt from him in return.

Having paid the creditor off, the father then starts to look for the son, who no doubt would be suffering both in body and mind. He looked for his son everywhere for 10 years, but he still could not find him. One day, after 12 years went by, the son finally returns, having saved some money. He first goes to his father and says, "I've saved $400,000, but I am still short for $100,000. Can you lend me this amount? I'll stay with you and work hard to pay you back." The father then embraced his son in tears, saying to him, "I've already paid off all your debt! You have nothing to worry anymore! How much you must have suffered all this time!" Telling the son that his debt was paid off, the father shows him the receipt.

The son is overwhelmed with gratefulness, but at the same time he feels as if he had suffered needlessly, thinking to himself, "For the past 12 years, I had lived my life as a deadbeat, never having a moment of peace, when in fact I didn't have to. I had lived as a deadbeat when I wasn't one. I just didn't know. All my sufferings have been in vain!"

Dear fellow Christians, those who are trying to receive the forgiveness of their sins on their own, even as Jesus has already remitted all their sins through His baptism and Cross, are still tormented with the problem of sin, just like this son.

By being baptized, Jesus has already blotted out our sins. He

already took away all our sins by being baptized, bore all the condemnation of sin by shedding His blood on the Cross, and has thereby saved us. Do you now realize this? That you were bound by your sins is because you did not know that Jesus took away all your sins when He was baptized. Jesus indeed took all your sins away. Believe this.

"There Is No Longer an Offering for Sin"

Let us now turn to Hebrews 10:1-18: *"For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.*

Therefore, when He came into the world,
He said:
'Sacrifice and offering You did not desire,
But a body You have prepared for Me.
In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin
You had no pleasure.
Then I said, 'Behold, I have come—
In the volume of the book it is written of Me—
To do Your will, O God.''

Previously saying, 'Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and offerings for sin You did not desire, nor had pleasure in them' (which are offered according to the law), then He said, 'Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God.' He takes away the first that He may establish the second. By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once and for all. And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified. But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us; for after He had said before, 'This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them,' then He adds, 'Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.' Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin."

The passage here says that the Law is *"a shadow of the good things to come."* Just as passing yearly sins with the laying on of hands in the Old Testament was real, so was it real that Jesus came to this earth and took upon all our sins once and for all by being baptized by John the Baptist. The Old Testament is a shadow of the New Testament. Shadows can exists only when there are actual objects that cast them.

Like this, God's salvation manifested in the sacrificial system of the Old Testament was realized through the ministry of Jesus

Christ. In the Old Testament, countless lambs, goats, and pigeons were slaughtered and offered to God. But it was not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to completely take away sins. The everlasting remission of sin had to be fulfilled by Jesus the High Priest of Heaven. This is why our Lord came to this world, was baptized, and shed His blood for us.

Referring to Jesus, the Book of Hebrew declares that He is the High Priest of Heaven. In the Old Testament, it was the High Priest who remitted the sins of the Israelites by offering sacrifices to God on their behalf. Like this, our Lord came as the High Priest of Heaven. *"Behold, I have come—In the volume of the book it is written of Me—To do Your will, O God."* Jesus came to do the will of God the Father.

What do you think is the will of God the Father? It is to save all human beings from their sins. Actually, there was no human being on this planet who could do the will of God the Father. There was One who could do the will of the Father, and this was none other than Jesus. Because Jesus accepted all the sins of mankind and blotted them all out in obedience to the will of God the Father, the Father can now accept those who believe in His Son as His own children. This was the will of God the Father. His will, in other words, was to blot out our sins.

Following the will of God the Father, Jesus came to this earth, took upon all the sins of the world by being baptized, shed His blood and died on the Cross, and has thereby given us new life. This is why our Lord said in Hebrews 10:9, *"Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God."*

Verse 9 continues to say, *"He takes away the first that He*

may establish the second." The sacrificial system of the Law could not give eternal salvation to mankind. So God has given everlasting salvation to those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, not the Law. Can we wash away our sins by doing some charitable works? Or by giving prayers of repentance? Or by giving large offerings to our churches? None of these can wash away our sins. We simply cannot receive the remission of our sins through our own good deeds. This is why our Lord came to this earth to be baptized and shed His blood.

Hebrews 10:10 says, *"By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once and for all."* By being baptized once, dying on the Cross once, and rising from the dead again at once, Jesus has become the Savior of those of us who believe in Him. Dear Christians, it is imperative for you to realize that you cannot receive the remission of your sins through the Law. But once you believe in the water and the blood of Jesus, and that He is God Himself, you will all be able to enter Heaven.

To make all our sins disappear, Jesus offered the everlasting sacrifice with His body by being baptized and shedding His blood. By coming to this earth, being baptized, dying on the Cross, and rising from the dead again, He has become the eternal Savior. Were your sins forever passed onto Jesus when He was baptized? Is this why Jesus said, "It is finished," as He passed away on the Cross? Has God placed His law of the Spirit of life in our hearts and blotted out all our sins? Is your faith placed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit? By believing in

this gospel, are you now righteous? Or, do you still remain sinners?

You are all righteous. Before hearing the Word, you were clearly all sinners, but after hearing it, you have now become righteous, and have put on the new man who is renewed even in knowledge (Colossians 3:10). How can we then be baptized into Jesus? By believing in Jesus' righteous ministry with our hearts, we can be baptized with Him, die with Him, and be brought to life with Him. This is the elementary principle of faith that believes with the heart.

Dear fellow Christians, let us all realize that there is no other way to enter Heaven but by faith; let us all understand and believe in this baptism of Jesus and His blood, instead of fronting our own righteousness; and by doing so, let us all be washed clean from all our sins.

With my faith, I give my boundless thanks to God before the gospel of the water and the Spirit that He has given us through our Lord. It is my sincerest hope and prayer that each and every one of you would also now come to know and understand, without fail, the gospel truth of the water and the Spirit revealed in Matthew 3:13-17, and believe in it with your hearts, so that you would all become God's own people.

May all His blessings be with you! ✉

CHAPTER

4

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Blessing Is Fearing God And Serving God

< Matthew 4:1-11 >

"Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry. Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, 'If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.' But He answered and said, 'It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.' Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, 'If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written:

'He shall give His angels charge over you,' and,

'In their hands they shall bear you up,

Lest you dash your foot against a stone.'

Jesus said to him, 'It is written again, 'You shall not tempt the LORD your God.' Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me. Then Jesus said to him, 'Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.' Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him."

The righteousness of God that saves us from our sins is that Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist and that He bled and died on the Cross to save us from our sins once and for all, and that God testified that He was the Savior. Today's Scripture passage is about an event that happened right after the baptism of Jesus at the Jordan River.

After Jesus was baptized, He was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And because He was hungry after having fasted for 40 days and 40 nights, the devil tried to tempt Jesus with three temptations.

First Temptation

The first temptation of the devil is written in verse 3: *"Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, 'If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.'"*

How hungry could Jesus have been after fasting 40 days and nights? When Jesus' body was extremely hungry, the devil tempted Him with food. "If you are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread. Then you can eat it! Command them to be bread. Then you can live! Aren't you hungry to the point of death? If you want to live, you can live that way. You fasted for 40 days, and you must be starving to death, how much do you want to eat? But what would be out here in the wilderness? If you are the Son of God, you can command them to be bread and eat, can't you? So eat. Eat."

Obviously the devil was tempting Jesus because he knew

Jesus was the Son of God. But the devil tempted Him with food. In other words, he was testing Him in His life of the flesh. "Rather than dying from hunger, you should make these stones into bread and live. If you want to live now, you need bread of the flesh! If you are the Son of God, you can make bread to eat. You will live then. So, do that. Do that." He tempted Jesus when He was extremely hungry as if He would live only if He had bread. However Jesus refuted this by saying: *"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God."*

Dear fellow Christians, in essence, what do the body and soul of a person live on? Can a person live eternally on bread for the flesh? The devil was tempting Jesus with bread for the flesh. Truly, what should we believe in to live? The Lord said: "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God,'" and this is true.

When a person is hungry, he thinks that he has to eat bread to live, but, in fact, a person's life is dependant upon the faith in God's Word. A person's life of body and soul depends upon the Word of God. If God's Word were not in the world, our spirit and flesh would be destined to die. God said that our body and soul would live by the faith in the Word that comes out of God's mouth, and that is so. Because the written Word of God is the Truth, our souls can live on the Word of God through our faith. Because of the Word of God that is food for life, the bodies and souls of yours and mine can live to their fullness.

God has given His Word to people. Through the Word, He feeds, forgives sins, and lets people live. The Word of God

created all things in the universe, and permitted everything humans needed in this world. Also, because there is the Word of God, our souls can receive the remission of sin once and for all through faith. The Word of God is the kind of Word that thoroughly wipes away all of our sins. Also, God's Word is the Word of Truth that leads us to the Light, and therefore only those who believe in it can live. We also need to believe that we can only live by believing in the Word of God. This is true. We must know that humans live by believing the written Word of God rather than living because we have bread for the flesh. Our Lord talked to us about the Word of God.

As we live in this world, we fall in our own temptation at times because we are captivated by our own greed. People think that if we have a certain amount of money, we can live in plenty in this world. Of course, this is understandable. However, what is it that a person truly lives by? On what account does a person live? A person can live by believing the written Word of God. If there were no Word of God, it would not be possible for us to believe in God or meet God.

A person cannot live by bread of the flesh alone. Especially, the righteous can live only if they can hear the authentic teachings on God's Word. And a person is not made of body alone, but also made of the soul and spirit as well. Therefore, only if we hear the true Word of God, can we resolve the problems of the soul as we live. By reading and hearing the Word of God, our soul and body gain weight and we live in abundance. Only if we hear the true Word of the forgiveness of sin can we receive the purification of the sins of our soul. This is

why everyone who heard the true Word of God can live in body and soul by believing in it.

The devil often tempts everyone with words such as these: "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become bread. Make these stones into bread and eat them. If you were the Son of God, wouldn't it be possible? Hungry, aren't you? Do it. Do it. If only you have bread, you will live, won't you? At any rate, a person would live if he eats three meals a day, and has enough food in storage for 365 days a year times about 70 or 80 years. Wouldn't a person live and not die if only he has food?" This is what the devil tells us.

The devil tells people this, and many people are fooled and fall for this. There are people, who fall for this, thinking, "That's right. I can live if I only have this." We are not necessarily talking about money only, but the thought that we can live if we have a few of the worldly materials that we want. We think, "I can live and not die even without the Word of God."

However, that is a big miscalculation. In reality, our body also dies without God's Word. Truly, a person does not live by bread, the abundance of worldly material, or the sexual desire that the world can gratify. This is why we need to listen carefully to what Jesus said, when the devil tempted Him, *"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God."* The devil tempts us when we have become weak, when we are starved and hungry, and when our soul is exhausted. He asks people, "You would live only if you have bread, won't you?" and confuses them. Many people consider what they have, and think, "Oh, I have sufficient

possessions to sustain my life! Then, I would live and not die even if I do not hear the Word of God."

But, fellow Christians, even when the devil tempts us like that, we do not live by bread alone, but by believing every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. I hope we keep this in mind. I hope we keep in mind that we cannot live if we do not have the Word of God.

You can live only if God's Word is in your heart. Dear fellow Christians, is this so? Or is it not so? It is so. Don't forget the fact that we can live because there is God's Word. The reason that mankind has existed until now also is because God's Word exists. When the gospel of the water and the Spirit is spread to the end of the world, our Lord will come back, and when He comes back, He said He would end this world and start a new world. All these will be completed according to His Word.

Dear fellow Christians, the Word of God is the Truth. Jesus beat off the first temptation of the devil by saying, *"It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'"* When the devil heard this, he was astonished. However, the devil was not someone who would stop at this.

The Second Temptation

The second temptation appears in verse 5: *"Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, 'If You are the Son of God, throw*

Yourself down. For it is written: 'He shall give His angels charge over you, and, In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.' Jesus said to him, 'It is written again, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God.'"

The devil tempted Jesus by taking Him up on the pinnacle of the temple and told Him to throw Himself down. He turned God's Word against him when he said, "For it is written 'He shall give His angels charge over you and in their hands, they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.' Earlier you refused my temptation because you believe in the written Word, didn't you? Then, you should do as it is written. You believe in these words, right? Throw yourself down, and according to the written Word, God shall give His angels charge over you in their hands, they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone when you throw yourself down. Try it now." Then Jesus said, "It is written again, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God.'"

Dear fellow Christians, the devil sometimes tempts people using the written Word of God. However, Jesus said not to tempt the Lord our God. The devil said to Jesus, "Surely, you shall not die. Why? That is because you are the Son of God." This is true. Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Therefore, He would not have died. Jesus is different from us, the humans. However, the devil tempts. But the written Word of God says "not to tempt" God. In other words, we must live by believing the written Word and God rather than tempting God.

Often, people tempt Jesus. There are too many times that people tempt God, "I did it like this, but why did God treat me

this way?" But if we just believed in God there would be no need to tempt Him. We do not have the qualifications to tempt Him, and we must not tempt Him. God is not someone who should receive temptation from us. The reason we are tempted is because we are dragged by our greed, and it is not because God tempts us that we are tempted.

Some one might raise an objection against God, taking Abraham as an example: "What was it all about that God had Abraham offer his son Isaac? Is this not God tempting Abraham to see whether or not he believed?" But that was not the case. It is not that God tempted Abraham. Rather, it is that God permitted the process to show us how surely Abraham had the faith that truly believes the Word of God in his heart, and how he became the father of faith by his faith.

Dear fellow Christians, we must believe in the Word of God. Even though God is not visible to us, we must believe in the written Word of God as the Word of God that God spoke. We experience by believing in the Word of God that the Word of God is fulfilled in its entirety. Therefore, we must believe. If that is how the Word of God is, we must believe it as it is, and not be swayed regarding our faith in the Word no matter how the circumstances and situations shake and change.

If that is how the Word of God is, that is the truth. And if it is not fulfilled as the Word of God says, then the problem lies on our side. It is because we do not have faith, or our faith is not strong enough, that is, our faith is shaking, sometimes we seem to have faith, and sometimes we do not. In short, it is because of the problem of our faith that it is not fulfilled as the Word says

rather than because there is a problem with the Word of God.

God works His miracles for those who truly believe in God's Word. However, God said those with shaky faith should not even think to gain (James 1:7-8). No matter how small our faith is, whether we believe or not believe is what is important. We must believe and not tempt God. If we believe in the Word of God, we receive the remission of sin, and it is fulfilled to us as the Word is. Dear fellow Christians, do you believe? —Yes.—

To you and me, it is a faith that believes in the Word of God that is important. It is because God sees the heart of a person rather than the outward appearance of a person. God sees whether he really believes, behaves according to the faith, and lives by the faith. However, it doesn't mean that you have to show God your strong faith right now. Even if your faith is as small as a mustard seed, you have to confess your faith in His Word, saying, "I believe. My faith lacks, but I believe. I do it because I believe. I wait Your reply because I believe in You. I follow You because I believe Your Word of promise." God sees such stable and firm faith in our hearts. When the devil tempts you and me, we must fend him off by believing in the written Word.

The Third Temptation

Thirdly, verse 8 tells us: *"Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him 'all these things I*

will give you if you will fall down and worship me.' Then Jesus said to him 'Away with you Satan, for it is written: 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.' Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came to Him and ministered to Him."

"For it is written: you shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve." What we, the people, have to do is only worship God and serve Him. What is needed between God and us? How should we live before God?

We must fear God, worship Him, believe in, and follow Him if it is His will, and because God is a God of the Word and He exists as the Word, by believing in Him, we believe in the Word, and obey Him according to the Word, and worship Him and follow Him with such faith. This is how we must live before Him—*"You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve."* This is the duty that you and I and all of mankind must do in God's eyes. There is not much else that we, the people, have to do. There is not much else we need to do throughout our lives other than acknowledging God, believing in the great God, and obeying, bowing down, believing, following and serving God the Creator. This is our solemn duty and this is so.

The devil took Jesus up on an exceedingly high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. What is the highest mountain in the world? Mount Everest. The mountain is 8,848 meters high. It is very easy to memorize, isn't it? Dear fellow Christians, perhaps the devil showed the world on top of Mount Everest. The devil said to Jesus that he would

give Him all, that as they looked at the world from the top of the highest mountain, if Jesus would worship him. The devil said that if Jesus would believe the devil to be God, and serve and obey him, he would give Him the whole world.

But what did Jesus say? Jesus said: "Away with you Satan, for it is written: 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.'" The One I need to bow down and serve is God the Father and not you. What I should bow down and serve is not the glory of this world." That is what Jesus said.

Bowing down before God and serving God are our joy, our satisfaction and our fulfillment. Worshiping and serving God is everything to a person. This is what we have to do, there is nothing else to do, and there is nothing more valuable and nobler than this. Bowing down before God is acknowledging every word of God, and serving God is acknowledging God Himself. What better things are there than bowing down before God who made us as His creation? What better life could there be than that? What better glory could there be than that? We only worship God humbly. And we thank God for all His blessings and everything in Him.

What is a blessing to us is that we can worship God, and God anoints us with heavenly blessings when we bow down before Him, obey Him, believe in Him and spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Because God is the one who gives everything to us, He is our all. Because He is our all, because He is everything to those who have been born again, I hope you know that bowing down before God is a blessing.

Even now, because God is alive, we are joyful and glad, and

we are living, receiving all blessings. Because there is God, and we have a heart that fears God, we can glorify Him in His blessing.

Did the devil say that he would give everything if we worship him when he showed all the kingdoms of the world? There are many magnificent things in this world that we do not know about, we may be captivated by its splendor momentarily. However, we cannot worship the devil even if there are many things that could dazzle our eyes.

If the devil tempts us with worldly material and says he would give us everything in the world if we serve him as God, we must fend him off with the written Word of God: *"Away with you Satan, for it is written: 'you shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.'"* We must fend him off this way. And in reality, the devil cannot give us many things. The devil bluffed to Jesus as if he was God and said: "If only you bow down before me, I will give you all this," but in reality who is the owner of everything? It is Jesus.

Dear fellow Christians, to whom does everything in the universe belong? It is you, the righteous. To whom does everything in the universe belong? It is the sons of God. This is why God called us the ones who would inherit Heaven. He calls those who are born again the ones who will inherit Heaven. This universe is the heir's, then whose is it? It belongs to the righteous.

However, the devil says: "Bow down before me, if you don't believe in God, but believe in me and follow me, I will give you everything in the world." This is a method that the devil often

uses. The devil once thwarted me that way as well. It is a method that he used to use on me as well even before I believed in Jesus. By the way, the devil was knocked out in the third round.

Dear fellow Christians, how should we live in God's eyes? We need to live a life that worships God, and only serve Him throughout life. God forgave our sins, all the sins by the water and blood, wiped us clean and made us His children, and gave us the blessing that we can worship God and serve God. We must thank God who gave us the blessing of salvation, and worship Him by faith and serve Him throughout life.

Carefully consider the Word of God that wiped our sins clean. The Lord wiped us clean by taking on all of our sins upon Himself through His baptism, being crucified on the Cross and receiving judgment of the sins for us. The Lord gave us the blessing that we can worship God and serve God by wiping us clean and pure with water and blood and taking us as the people of God.

What kind of temptation is pressing on you and me? How do you fend off these temptations? Jesus gave us the correct answer through the three temptations He experienced in today's Scripture passage. He had fended off the devil's temptations with His faith in the Word of God. If we understand this answer, and live our lives, believing in it, we can also fend off these temptations. Although worshiping God is a blessing, we do not know it very well.

Dear fellow Christians, do you think it is better to be served than to serve Him unconditionally? But, it is a very good thing

that you and I are serving God. Dear fellow Christians, worshiping God is a great blessing. It is a great blessing that we worship someone who is at a very high position. Is it so or is it not so? It is so. At any rate, we have to serve somebody in this world, and cannot live without serving anyone. If we do not serve God, we serve the devil. Surely, if we do not serve the devil, we serve people. In any case, we have to decide whose servant we will become. Dear fellow Christians, under this circumstance, is it not a great blessing that we serve God? However, because we live without knowing this, Jesus received the third temptation and told us the correct answer: *"You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve."*

Dear fellow Christians, we must believe in the Word of God. As we hear the Word of God we think: "Oh! Jesus told us the correct answers, and living this way is right, as I worship God, it is righteous to worship if it is the Word of God. Even though I am sometimes like a moron, an idiot, a fool, and an imbecile, I am someone who has received a huge blessing. I thought I should live to my heart's content without being restricted by anyone, saying 'it is my life', but that was not it. Now I know it is strange to live that way. It is righteous to attend the Lord as my Master and live as the servant of God." We must comprehend the truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit and have faith that believes and live by being blessed. Although sometimes we look a little stupid when we look at ourselves, but in reality the fact that you and I can worship God and serve God—you must know that this is a great privilege and a righteous way of life for you.

I wonder what I would be serving if I have not been serving God now. Surely, I would be serving the gods of this land, which could give me the pleasures of flesh. I would be drinking and eating everyday, worrying about how to live, and serving the gods of this land. Every kind of beverage might be my god. I would be living, holding onto these things.

Dear fellow Christians, Jesus had us be born again, and told us what kind of life we should live and what kind of faith is the true correct faith. Although we are lacking and weak, we are not what we were before. I hope you thank the Lord who gave us the blessing that we can be saved, acknowledge God and worship God. You have a thankful heart to the Lord, do you not? Yes. It truly is a blessing that we are greatly thankful for.

Jesus gave us this faith by fending off all three temptations: Believing that a man lives by the Word of God. Believing that we must not tempt God. Believing that it is righteous to worship God and serve the Lord throughout life. God gave us the faith that it is a great blessing. We must have faith and live as we worship and serve God throughout life.

This is how we must live. Dear fellow Christians, do you believe? —Yes.— Do you believe that this is righteous? —Yes.— We must believe in our hearts that this is the righteous way of life.

What a blessing is this that we, the righteous, can worship God even though we fall short? How big of a blessing is this that we have the God of the Word? We give thanksgiving before God. God gave all of us this righteous faith, and we hope that God gives everyone in the world this righteous faith. I hope that the

souls of yours and mine receive a constant blessing from God by believing in the Word of God. ✉

CHAPTER

5

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The Sermon on the Mount

< Matthew 5:1-16 >

"And seeing the multitudes, He went up on a mountain, and when He was seated His disciples came to Him. Then He opened His mouth and taught them, saying:

Blessed are the poor in spirit,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are those who mourn,
For they shall be comforted.
Blessed are the meek,
For they shall inherit the earth.
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
For they shall be filled.
Blessed are the merciful,
For they shall obtain mercy.
Blessed are the pure in heart,
For they shall see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers,
For they shall be called sons of God.
Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice

and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

'You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. 'You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lamp stand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.'"

We read in Matthew chapter 5, verses 1-7 that Jesus spoke to His disciples and to us. Christians have called this teaching 'the Sermon on the Mount' since Jesus spoke these things on a mountain.

Blessing to Those Who Are Poor in Spirit

First, if we look at the Scripture from Matthew chapter 5 verse 3, Jesus said: *"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven."* What the Lord means when he says "blessed are the poor" is that He granted Heaven only to those who are poor in spirit.

His teaching that *"blessed are the poor in spirit"* is the Truth. It is so. The poor in spirit that Jesus talked about cannot have

contentment in this world, and therefore they accept the salvation that the Lord gives. If your spirit has contentment with worldly materials, it would be impossible for you to accept in your heart the remission of sin He allowed through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. This is why He says that if you are poor in spirit, the Kingdom of Heaven could be yours. God gives forgiveness of sin and the Kingdom of Heaven to you who are poor in spirit.

Blessing to Those Who Mourn Through the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit

The second teaching of Jesus in Matthew 5:4 says: *"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted."* This is the teaching He gave as He saw the ones who believed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit were in pain due to the sins they committed before God. The Lord said that the ones who mourn before God because of their sins would be comforted by God. Why is this so? It is because such people agonize before God because of their sins. One who acknowledges God, and believes that He is alive, cannot but weep over his sins. God comforts these people by giving them salvation through the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

In reality, even though we believe in Jesus, we frequently make mistakes before God and commit sins without exception. However, the comfort of God is there for those who are hurting in their heart because of the sins they have committed, since

they have not lived by God's will, and still commit sins even though they acknowledge God.

We fall short in many ways before God. Of course, some might be insensitive to their iniquities and trespasses for they have reached the determination that acting on God-given instinct cannot be bad. However, we will not receive the comfort that God gives us if we do not even have the heart to mourn when we fall short, when we do not live by God's will. This is why you and I need to have the heart to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit as we mourn before God about our evil deeds, and mourn about our sins with each other. This is the only way that our hearts will truly be comforted through the comfort of salvation that God gave us.

Blessing That the Meek Receive

In Matthew 5:5, the Bible tells us that *"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."* There is a reason why our hearts must be meek before God. If our hearts are meek before God, then we can accept the words of salvation of the gospel of the water and the Spirit that He speaks to our hearts. If our hearts are not meek but defiant, we cannot accept all the words of God into our hearts. This is why hearts that are not meek would be a problem. This is why the attitude of our hearts before God is important. Hypocrites can fool people temporarily, but they cannot have an eternal fellowship with God unless they accept the Word of God with a meek heart.

In Matthew 5:5, the Bible tell us that *"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."* These words tell us that those who have received the remission of sins will be inheriting the Millennial Kingdom and the eternal Kingdom of God as the inheritance of the faith. If we accept in our hearts the gospel of remission, that is, the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we receive eternal forgiveness of sin. Anyone who accepts in his heart meekly that the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the Truth can accept all the divine blessings of Heaven. These words tell us how truly blessed are those who accept the gospel of the water and the Spirit with meek hearts.

We must accept in our hearts that 'all the words of God are authentic.' God spoke to us all through the written Word of God. God says to us through His Word: "you are fundamentally full of sins due to your ancestors." Then we should all have the heart that acknowledges the words of God. Whatever words proceed from the mouth of God, we must meekly accept them as they are. Whatever words God, who is the Truth, speaks, are all (*note: "authentic truth" is not a common American expression*) truth. Those who can accept in their hearts meekly all the words of God may have the faith that shall inherit the Kingdom of Heaven.

Those who have meek hearts before God believe firmly the words that God spoke to us as they are. Therefore, God speaks to them about the gospel of the water and the Spirit. And, He offers the Millennial Kingdom as an inheritance to those who accepted in their hearts the gospel of the water and the Spirit. This faith is the faith that enables us to inherit the new earth.

Blessing That Those Who Want to Serve the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit Receive

And in verse 6, it says: *"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled."* These words mean that those who are hungry for the work of God will be filled by working for the righteousness of God. The righteous are hungry to serve God. Therefore, they do righteous work to eat the food for their spirit. That is because all of God's words are the food that gives life to everyone's soul (Isaiah 55:1). All of God's work is also spiritual provision for the righteous. This truth is a hidden secret to those who are not born again. The righteous acquire full stomachs from righteous deeds through union with the church.

For we who are the righteous through the remission of sins, we are either starving for the work of God or we are starving for carnal desires. For anyone who has a heart that wants to do righteous work for God, God always makes it possible to do righteous work in fullness through His church. God gives us the spiritual faith so that we can do work for God, and lets us be filled as we work for righteousness. Truly, those who want to do righteous works for God learn from experience that they acquire fullness of the spirit.

Are you hungry for the righteous work of God? If so, you will receive fullness of your spirit by spreading the gospel of the water and the spirit and doing the work of God. You must know that even though your outer self might have a heart that pursues carnal desires, the Holy Spirit inside you is hungry for the

righteous work of God, and always wants to do righteous work.

Our Lord said in Matthew chapter 4 that *"Man shall not live by bread alone, but every word that proceeds from the mouth of God."* When Jesus was fasting for 40 days, the devil appeared in front of Jesus and said, *"If you are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread."* The devil tempts both Jesus and everyone else, saying 'the bread for the body is life.' However, that is not so. That is because Jesus said, *"Man shall not live by bread alone, but every word that proceeds from the mouth of God."* A man cannot live by bread for the body alone. That is because human beings have spirits. Therefore, men need to eat the bread for the body, but they also need to eat the Word of God that proceeds from the mouth of God, which is food for the spirit. This is the only way our flesh and spirit can live.

In essence, this truth tells us that the Word of God that God spoke lets our spirit live. We, the righteous, could not live by bread for the flesh alone, but by hearing and believing in the Word of God that proceeds from the mouth of God. No matter how much bread a born-again saint eats, there is sense of hunger and thirst because the spirit is hungry for the righteous work of God. Since the Holy Spirit lives within the heart of the righteous, we must live by doing righteous deeds. That is, the righteous can live only by hearing and believing in every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. This shows that we can live only by believing in every word of God and by following the Lord with faith.

The spirits of born-again saints are hungry for the righteous work of God. Men do not live by bread for the flesh alone, but by hearing and believing in every word that proceeds from the

mouth of God. The spirit of the righteous can enjoy spiritual fullness by spreading the gospel of the water and the spirit to others. The spirit and flesh of the righteous live by doing the righteous work of saving others from sins.

There is desire in the heart of born-again saints to do righteous works. We, the righteous, absolutely cannot live by what is of this world alone. We absolutely cannot live with that of flesh alone. Among the righteous, ones with weak faith have thoughts like this: “Since I have received the remission of sins, I can now live if I only take care of the problem of food, clothing and shelter.” The righteous person with thoughts like that ends up following his own desires, and eventually loses his life.

However, a righteous one cannot live by following the desires of the flesh alone. Even if the righteous person follows the desires of the flesh, the flesh cannot accomplish its desire. If he only follows the desire of the flesh, the heart of the righteous one becomes destitute. On the other hand, we, the ones who are born again, are hungry and thirsty for righteous deeds, and therefore we are always joyous in spreading the gospel of the water and the Spirit. A righteous one experiences the wellness of the spirit and the wellness of the flesh by believing in the Word of God and doing righteous works.

New believers often do not understand this truth of faith. Therefore, people who are of weak faith often are killed in spirit after living a life that pursues carnal desires. The righteous who pursue carnal desires are tempted by the devil with the things of the flesh. If the righteous one gives in to that temptation, he surely dies.

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This is why the Lord said the blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness. And you and I have now become people who carry out the righteousness of God. Then the true provision for our spirits is spreading the gospel of the water and the Spirit. It is working for the righteousness of God. As we spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit, it becomes a true provision of the spirit to you and me.

When our Lord was here on earth with His disciples, there were times that our Lord needed food for the flesh as well. Once in Sychar, a city of Samaria, the disciples of Jesus had to go for a long way for food. When the disciples held out the food, saying, "Lord, eat this," the Lord said, "I have food that you do not know about." That food He mentioned is in the work of spreading the gospel of the water and the Spirit. This is what Jesus said when He was telling the woman by the well that He Himself was the Messiah.

We must know that Jesus made food for His Spirit by carrying out the Will of the Father. Since the disciples did not know this truth because they were still young in spirit, Jesus said this to them. That is, these were words for you and me and other born-again Christians.

As a matter of fact, the way for the spirits of the righteous to live is to follow and believe and carry out the righteousness of God, and therefore be filled everyday. The righteous are filled by believing and carrying out the righteousness of God. We are filled when we carry out the righteousness of God, and are able to live as we praise God.

There is a blessing for people who hunger and thirst for the

righteousness of God. Do you hunger and thirst for the righteousness of God? —Yes.— I thirst for the righteousness of God, too. So, after I do this part of the work of God this time, I do other work for His righteousness, and I do the work of God, and continue to seek and carry out righteousness.

One day, I watched a TV program called 'World Travel.' In this program, people who had traveled to all different parts of the world were showing the film that they had taken from many different countries in the world. As I watched the program, I thought 'I should pass on the gospel of the water and the Spirit to that country.' Even when many people who watched the program thought it was fun or were interested in the new culture, I, the righteous one, came to realize that the people in that country needed the gospel of the water and the Spirit as I was watching it. Because the righteous ones hunger and thirst for righteousness, regardless of what it is they see, they see with a different perspective. We, the righteous ones, feel the necessity of passing on the gospel of the water and the Spirit to those who do not know the righteousness of God in the world.

What happens if we pass on the gospel of the water and the Spirit to them? They receive deliverance from all sins, don't they? That is right. If we want to pass on the gospel of the water and the Spirit to the people in that country, there is something we must do first, and that is finding someone who understands the language and the culture of that country. That's why we are trying first of all to find good translators of various languages first of all.

God always helps those who hunger and thirst for

righteousness to do righteous works. As we tried to find people who can translate, we found out that we could find them if we put up an advertisement on the Internet, and put up advertisements. Finally, we have some responses. Many interested people have applied, and we have entrusted translating work to them after selecting competent translators in each language.

We are righteous people who are doing the work of passing on the gospel of the water and the Spirit to the people in the world. The righteous want to pass on righteousness to every lost soul in the world. We, the born-again, hunger because we want to spread the righteous gospel to everyone in the world.

Since the righteousness of God is the true provision of life for the spirit of the righteous ones, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness will be filled. Righteous people cannot live without carrying out God's righteousness in this world. Without spiritual food, they end up dying from starvation of the spirit. Spiritually speaking, the righteous are like good trees that bear good fruit. Just as people become hungry if we do not eat food for the flesh, the righteous ones who have received the remission of sins cannot live due to starvation of the spirit if we do not carry out righteousness. Fellow Christians, try living a life that does not carry out righteousness or that is not in union with your church. Then, you will keenly feel that your spirit is starved for the righteousness of God. Because the hearts of righteous people hunger for righteousness and want to carry out the work of God, they want to eat the provision for the spirit.

People who are young in faith need to keep being fed provision for the spirit, but if the faith grows to certain point

after eating a certain amount of spiritual food and carrying out righteousness, they can enjoy the joy of salvation on their own. This is why the predecessors of the righteous faith pursue the life of righteousness. I often say to my colleagues, "Let's take a break after this," however, it is hard to do that. How can we help it when we die in spirit if you and I do not carry out the work of God! We have to carry out the work of the Spirit.

Fellow Christians, do you not eat when your body is hungry? If you feel you are starving to death, you have to eat. Therefore, anyone who hungers and thirsts for the righteousness of God must do the work of God. People like that are blessed people. Our Lord always tells these words to the righteous ones. We, who are the righteous ones, become full in spirit when we do the work of God. Dear fellow Christians, if you want to be fulfilled, be diligent in the work of God!

However, you cannot do the work of God alone. Therefore, we must carry out the work of God in union with one another. Hearing the word of God is righteousness, and reading the Word of God and praying to God to request help is for the righteousness of God and working loyally in each position is also for His righteousness. The Lord said, *"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."* God said to us to seek His righteousness first. That means we think of the work of God first and the matters of the flesh secondly. If that is how we are before God, we receive all blessings from God in flesh and spirit. This is the truth of the spirit that God has spoken to us. This is the truth that Christians and the servants of God should never forget.

Blessing That the Merciful Receive

Matthew 5:7 states, *"Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy."* In the Bible, being merciful toward others means having a compassion for sinners. When we see people who are sinners, we think to ourselves 'how pitiful.' When we, the righteous ones, look at the souls that are not born again, they look pitiful. This is not just people from our country, but it is the same when we see people from many other countries in the world.

During my first mission trip to China, I dropped by a coffee shop in Beijing to take a rest with my colleague. I found two western travelers were seated beside us, having ordered a piece of bread and only two cups of coffee. While we were talking about the mission plans for the country seriously, they kept company with each other for over two hours. When one person talked, then the other listened and said 'ha,' and when the other talked, then the first person said 'ha.' They really enjoyed talking and listening to each other. Whatever the content of their discussion might have been, their hunger for discussion looked very sincere.

At any rate, when I see people like that, I feel sympathy as well. They are so serious when they have a discussion about trivial matters that are of the flesh, but they need to hear the gospel of the water and the Spirit from us. And this is the most urgent topic they have to discuss. I feel sympathy when I see such people. Even though they go around boasting, it is pitiful since they do not know the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

In the hearts of the righteous ones, we have the desire to make books as the provision for the lost souls, and distribute them to each person. However, they would not even know how pitiful they are. Though our country may not have as much wealth and national power compared to the advanced western countries, and therefore they may look at us as the people of a weak country, we, the righteous ones, have spiritual compassion on everyone in the world. Even the people of countries with considerable wealth are pitiful when righteous people see them.

"Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy." This means those who have compassion for others will receive mercy. How numerous are the people for whom we should have mercy! This is true all over the world.

Blessing That Those Who Have Forgiveness of Sin Receive

The Lord said in Matthew 5:8, *"Blessed are the pure in heart."* He said that those who are pure in heart will see God. Dear fellow Christians, in essence, those who are pure in heart are the ones who have received the remission of sin in their hearts by believing in the Word of God and in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Those who do not follow the desires of the flesh but the gospel of the water and the Spirit are pure in heart.

I watched a historical drama on TV yesterday. In the drama, one of the king's subjects finally rebelled against the king and attacked the palace. The one on the throne was dismayed by the

rebellion. The subject of the king finally plotted treason with the support of his subordinates. At first, the subject was against taking the throne. "I could never do that. Betraying the king as his subject is against my principles." It almost looks as if he understands principles and it seems he is righteous, but he is nothing more than a coward. He had been waiting for the opportunity to ascend to the throne, and finally accepted his subordinates' wishes to overthrow the king, pretending that this was against his will, but doing it because of his wife's persuasion. Those who start a revolution in this world are all the same. So, it is right, as someone said, that politics is the process of making everyone's private interests into public interests.

Dear fellow Christians, can our Lord lose our support? No, He cannot. The Lord is the absolute King of kings and a good King to us. The King of kings lowered Himself and saved His people from their sins. He wiped out all the sins of His people and saved them with the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Then, would His people follow the Lord loyally or not? They volunteer to follow their King.

Jesus Christ, who is the King of kings, is the King of the righteous. Jesus Christ, who is the King of the universe, is God to us. When we look at the records in Matthew chapters 1 through 7, we can clearly understand that Jesus Christ was not a person who was a creature such as Confucius, Socrates, Plato, or Buddha. Jesus Christ is the Absolute Being to all of us and our Savior. And He is the King who reigns over heaven and earth.

Our Lord said, *"Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."* Who could possibly say these things? No

one can do that. Our King is only our Savior, Jesus Christ. Today, there are many theologians who deny the deity of Jesus. However, it is the Truth that Jesus, Jesus' Father, and the Holy Spirit are the God who created the heavens and earth (Genesis 1:1). The Lord said to His disciples *"Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God."*

Is there anyone who doubts the deity of Jesus among those of you who have received the remission of sin? We cannot deny for one moment that Jesus Christ is a Person of the Triune God, and the King of kings. The Lord came to this world and saved us from our sins and the judgment of sins by the gospel of the water and the Spirit. God the Father lets us be saved from all our sins once and for all, if we believe in Jesus Christ as our Savior along with the true gospel. We believe in the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

If Jesus Christ was not God, mankind cannot receive deliverance from sin. If Jesus Christ is not the Absolute Being to us, all of His work was not absolute, either. And, if that is the case, then we cannot receive salvation from all our sins by believing in Him as our Savior. It is because the Son of God came to this world as the Savior and saved us from all the sins of the world that we receive salvation from all our sins by believing in Him.

Blessing That the Peacemakers Receive

The Lord said in Matthew 5:9, *"Blessed are the peacemakers,*

for they shall be called the sons of God." The Lord calls us, the born-again Christians, spiritual priests. Spiritually speaking, we are priests, who stand among the people in this world and reconcile them to God through Christ. Those who have become priests before God work hard for the reconciliation between God and the people. If we pass on the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and the truth of the remission of sins to the people in this world, we work on the reconciliation between them and God. Also, the righteous pass on God's salvation, the will of God, to the people.

They pass on this truth: "People have sinned before God. Therefore, they are headed towards destruction due to their sins. They will go to hell. Therefore, receive God's love and salvation by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, then you will receive salvation from all sins." We truly love the gospel of salvation and pass it on. We free the people and make reconciliation between them and God by passing on the Law of God and the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Our mission school students are going around these days reaching out to people, and if we want to reach out to people, we must sharpen the spiritual sword of the Word when reaching out. We understand and believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and we affirm this gospel that we believe in to the lost souls. Therefore we must first mark the passages where the gospel that is about the water and the Spirit is recorded, and then we can go to reach out. Only then can we meet the souls captivated by sin and teach them correctly. In everything, there is a difference between doing it with faith and without faith.

These words of the Bible are spiritual weapons to the righteous ones. To every born-again Christian, the Word of God is a powerful weapon.

The Lord said that the peacemakers are blessed. This means that there is blessing to those who pass on this gospel of the water and the Spirit. He said these people would be called the sons of God. Truly, only the sons of God could pass on the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and those who hear the gospel could make peace with God. The righteous ones are faithful in preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Therefore, they receive abundant blessings from God in flesh and spirit.

Blessing That Those Who Are Persecuted for Righteousness' Sake Receive

In Matthew 5:10, it says: *"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."* Those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and carry out this work will have the Kingdom of Heaven. Those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake are blessed.

Dear fellow Christians, have you ever been persecuted for righteousness' sake? Have you ever been persecuted by the sinners for the righteousness of God, for the gospel of the water and the Spirit, for keeping the gospel of the water and the Spirit, for having union with the church of God and the Kingdom of God and for doing the work of God? Have you ever been disregarded by people because of your faith in the gospel of the

water and the Spirit? That is being persecuted for the righteousness of God. The righteous are even persecuted by their own biological families for the righteousness of God. There is blessing from God to those people.

The righteous should not be embarrassed about being persecuted for the righteousness of God. That is the blessing from God. If the righteous live for the righteousness of God, they are to be persecuted even by sinners. Righteous ones are even persecuted by their friends. If you try to be in union with God's church, you will surely be persecuted. It is the will of God for the righteous to be persecuted (2 Timothy 3:12). They persecute the righteous in words, saying, "Do you really have to go to every service rather than having a life of haphazard faith? Are you not busy? Take it easy, man! Doesn't it matter if you do not attend the Sunday service just once a year? Do you really have to live by faith? Do you really have to do that?"

Do they or do they not? They do. "Do you really have to do it and break our close relationship? It seems that your faith in Jesus is wrong." This is what people say. When people in the world say peace, they think being in union with them is peace, but the true peace is being persecuted for the Kingdom of God, for the gospel of God, for the salvation of souls. This is what it means to be persecuted for the righteous gospel of God.

Making peace for yourself, for your pride, for fame, to avoid your own loss is not being persecuted for righteousness, but being persecuted for yourself. These are not persecutions for the righteousness of God. These persecutions are the kind of persecutions you have for yourself. What our Lord spoke about

is the persecution for righteousness, for righteous deeds, for the salvation of souls, and for the Kingdom of God.

When someone reviles and persecutes you, and says all kinds of evil against you falsely for the sake of God's righteousness, you can react to him in mind, saying, "Even though he persecutes me because he does not understand me, I must do this to save that person from his sins." The Kingdom of Heaven is for people like you.

Today, many of those who have heard the true gospel do not want to be persecuted for righteousness' sake. So, they are afraid to have true faith in Christ. Some people know the gospel of the water and the Spirit, but do not pass it on to others; and some side with the sinners rather than with God in order to avoid persecution. These are not the people who have blessings. Even if they have received the remission of sin, if they are not persecuted for the sake of this gospel of the water and the Spirit, they end up betraying the true faith on the way rather than keeping their faith until the day they stand before the Lord. It is acceptable of someone to be weak, but if he denies the true gospel from the core of his heart and holds hands with the people in the world to go against the gospel, he is not a blessed one.

Just as the fishermen gathered the good fish into vessels, but threw the bad away, God will separate the wicked from among the just (Matthew 13:47-49). This is in the parables of Heaven in the book of Matthew. However, in reality, anyone with the Holy Spirit cannot avoid persecution for righteousness' sake. Rather, a man cannot but live for righteousness after believing in the

gospel of the water and the Spirit and receiving the remission of sin. It is absolutely not possible for one to consult one's own interest, if he is truly guided by the Holy Spirit within his heart. A righteous man receives persecution for righteousness' sake.

The fact that the righteous man suffers difficulty, is that in itself all bad? That cannot be. Sometimes, we suffer difficulty to pass on the gospel, but is there anything that is not difficult? I hope you are all those who are persecuted for the righteousness of God. Also, I myself first want to be someone like that first. As a righteous person, I hope you are not unnecessarily persecuted for many misdemeanors, such as, being caught as you drive recklessly after heavy drinking, being arrested as you steal in a store, or being caught and going to jail for swindling. God will not be happy with that.

Jesus said in Matthew 5:11-12, *"Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you."* He said that we will be blessed when we are reviled and persecuted, and when someone says all kinds of evil against us falsely for His sake.

People in the world often persecute the children of God and God's churches. What does that mean? That means we, the righteous ones, are blessed. If we are reviled by people in the world for believing and pursuing the righteousness of God, we will be blessed by God. Righteous ones like this are blessed because they are persecuted for the gospel of God and God's church. But some do not have faith in His Word so that they try

to avoid the persecution that comes to them for the sake of God.

Those prophets and the servants of God in the Old Testament, who are our predecessors in faith, were persecuted much more than we are for God's sake.

We Are the Salt and the Light of the World

Jesus said, *"You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men."* We, who are the righteous ones, are the salt of the earth. That the righteous are the salt of the earth means that they are necessary beings in this world. People who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit are necessary beings in this world.

However, what if the salt loses its flavor? What does it mean that the salt loses its flavor? That means it cannot work as salt. A righteous person loses his power because he throws away the Truth and walks according to the course of this world rather than living for the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

In Matthew 5:14-15, it says, *"You are the light of the world"*. It says: *"A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lamp stand, and it gives light to all who are in the house."*

The righteous ones are the light of salvation. The world hears the gospel of the water and the Spirit from the righteous ones. In other words, sinners receive salvation from sins through us, the righteous.

In Matthew 5:16, it says, *"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."* We live glorifying God by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and receiving the eight blessings by faith. We must always continue this life of faith with the faith that believes in the Lord. We thank God, who gives us divine blessings. All this truth is the Sermon on the Mount that the Lord spoke. ✉

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CHAPTER

6

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You can download Rev. Paul C. Jong's Christian
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The Lord's Teaching on Prayer (1)

< Matthew 6:1-15 >

"Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly. And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words. Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him. In this manner, therefore, pray:

Our Father in heaven,

Hallowed be Your name.
Your kingdom come.
Your will be done
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
As we forgive our debtors.
And do not lead us into temptation,
But deliver us from the evil one.
For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

There is a child named Jin Woo Kim at our church. He was almost dying because of a rare disease. When he was first hospitalized, even the doctors did not know the cause, so they were at a loss how to cure him. We could only pray to God to heal the child. And now, the Lord led the child to meet a better doctor, so he is now in a much better condition. When hard times come our way, we must do all we are supposed to do, but we must first remember to pray.

In Matthew 6:1, the Lord says, *"Be careful not to carry out righteous deeds to show off to other people. Otherwise, you will not be rewarded by your Father, who is in Heaven."* This means

we should not show off our righteousness to others in our religious life. These words are for both those who are born again and those who are not yet born again. However, we, the righteous ones, should keep in mind this saying, *"Be careful not to do righteous deeds to show off to other people."* The Lord said that if we carry out righteous deeds in order to show off to others, we would not be rewarded later by the Father, who is in Heaven.

We can find a common theme in today's scriptural lesson. That is whatever we do, we should not do it in front of others in order to show off our righteousness. The Lord says that we should believe in Him and His Word in our hearts, and wholeheartedly do righteous work before God who sees us in secret. This means that we should do something good from our heart rather than to show off. Only then will God the Father reward us, and we can receive the reward as God pays us back. In other words, if we live a life of faith only to show off, God will not have God's approval. No matter how hard a man tries to do something good, it will not be approved if it is done to show off.

Then, is everything we do hypocritical, if other people come to know it? That is not so. Whether it is known to other people or not, if a man carries out righteousness because of his faith, that is done with his faith, and not to show off. Everything that is not done with faith and believing heart is hypocritical. It does not matter whether the other people happen to see our good deeds or not. In short, carrying out the Word of God before Him by faith is always approved by God, but anything that we do in order to win others' approval rather than God's is showing off.

God will not reward the hypocritical faith, and therefore, we have to avoid such faith in our religious life. We have to keep in mind this teaching when we do a charitable deed or pray.

This Is How He Wants Us to Pray

In Matthew 6:5-6, it says: *"And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly".*

When we pray, what do we really need? We must pray with the heart that comes before God like a little child. "God, I do not have this. Give this to me." "Father God I am in trouble, please help me." Praying with a heart of a child is praying like this, and it is possible when we have a simple faith. Therefore, when we pray or carry out righteous deeds, we should do all these things because we have faith in our heart.

The Lord also said, *"But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly" (Matthew 6:6).* When we pray to God, we must go into the secret room of our heart to say our prayers to God who is in the secret place. God, the Father listens to our prayers and rewards us when we only look to God and ask God

in His presence. In other words, when we pray to God, we pray to God who is in the secret place, and therefore we need not show off to others. This does not mean that we can only pray in secret, but rather we do not pray to be seen by others, but we pray with the heart that we ask God because we truly want to in our hearts.

What do you learn from the Scripture lesson above? We learned that the Lord abhors show-offs. Why does God not like show-offs?

People gather around and shout "Lord" three times loudly, and knock on the pulpit, and many repent in agony saying, "Lord, forgive me. I have sinned." People cry out like this, but as soon as they walk out of the church, they laugh. They cry at one moment and then the next moment, they are clapping and laughing and making a fuss. Because everyone in such worship is in a crazy state of mind, even a sane person feels, "Am I insane? I feel like I am going crazy, watching people who cry at one moment and laugh the next moment." That's why people with a right mind and senses do not go to churches like that. God also abhors people like that the most, turns His face away from them and calls them hypocrites.

Then, who are the people who cry and shout as they pray and want to have nothing to do with the Lord as soon as they come home? Most of these people are demon possessed. At their meetings, even the leaders are demon-possessed and speak in tongues that people cannot understand. They sometimes spur their followers on to excitement using the sound effects with microphone saying, "Receive fire! Fire-fire-fire!" They make

the people confused, leading them to pray with tears and cries one moment, and then the next moment, to praise the Lord in boisterous insanity.

Behaviors such as these are of show-offs that have nothing to do with the will of the Lord. When we read the Word of God, we can see that God does not like show-offs. Only praying with faith by giving our heart to God wholeheartedly pleases God. God already knows what kind of faith we pray with, and wants to hear our true prayer before God.

We must change our attitude for prayer before our Lord. All we have to do is be honest and simple as we ask, "Lord, I do not have this. Please give it to me." It is because our faith is not strong enough that we use many florid phrases as we pray. If we keep hearing about the Word of God, our faith that trusts in God also grows. As we hold onto the Word of God and pray, we grow to believe in God, and as we receive His answers to our prayers that we offered with faith, we are even more thankful to God. And as we learn more about God, we grow to be a person of faith later. So we come to pray to God more and more, and become a person who prays only to God whenever we pray. Sometimes, we pray to God in agreement about certain issues. In truth, there are times we pray out loud, but in any case, that is not for other people to hear our prayers, but to God. True prayers are of simple faith like these: "God, help so-and-so since he is in this kind of condition. Heal so-and-so. Give so-and-so health. Bless so-and-so since he is in this kind of situation."

Before I was born again, I used to pray with many florid phrases such as this: "Our Father, who is holy, and merciful and

full of blessing. Thank you for the love and mercy that the Father God gives us…" I used to marshal all sorts of flowery words whenever I prayed. Are such prayers really prayers to the Lord who is in the secret places? If we really pray constantly like that, will the Lord listen? Do we really have that many things to pray about? I do not think so. The Lord said "Do not repeat yourself like the Gentiles or the Pharisees. Do you think I can hear you only if you say many words? That is not true." And He said, *"Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him" (Matthew 6:8).* This is the prayer that the Lord taught us as the example of how we should pray.

In the Lord's Prayer, It Tells Us to Pray for the Forgiveness of Sins First

From Matthew 6:9, the Lord teaches us how to pray with His sample prayer. This is what the Lord's Prayer is all about. He said, *"In this manner, therefore, pray."* The first is, *"Our Father in Heaven, Hallowed be Your name."* This means that we must pray so that the Lord's name will be hallowed. Here, those who have not yet received the remission of sins must know that they must pray first to receive the remission of sins, because such is the very prayer that honors the Lord's name. Therefore, a sinner must pray like this first: "God, please wipe out my sins. Make me a child of God." This is how they should pray first. They should also pray, "Please help me be born again

by hearing the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Help me believe in all Your words. Help me understand every and each word of God." This is how they must pray first.

However, only we, the righteous people who have received the remission of sins, could pray the proper prayer and live a proper life that meet the first line of the Lord's Prayer: "Our Father in Heaven, Hallowed be Your name." Truly, if we want to avoid blemishing God's name and live a holy life, we must ask God for help like this: "Please do not let me be a stumbling block and blemish Your name. Help me live a holy life by faith throughout all my life. Help me live a holy life that is for the righteousness of God." We must pray to God to "hold us every moment" as we ask for help to glorify God's name.

He gave us, the righteous, the first prayer topic to live our lives holy so that His name will be hallowed. Since the sinners cannot call God as their Father, they must first pray for the remission of their sins: "Please wipe out my sins. Let me understand the gospel of the water and the Spirit that You gave me. Let me receive your remission of sin by knowing and believing in the Truth of Your Atonement." In order to glorify God's name as the first line of the Lord's Prayer, every sinner must first pray to God for help for the remission of sin.

We Must Live a Life of Prayer That Is for the Kingdom of God on Earth

What is the second part of the prayer? It is "Your Kingdom

come. Your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven." We must pray that God's Kingdom will be established on earth. Our God Father sent our Lord and blotted out all our sins once and for all by the Lord's baptism and the blood of the Cross. Therefore, we have the Holy Spirit in our hearts, and God's Kingdom is in our heart spiritually.

However, there are still many people who have not received the remission of their sins in their hearts and struggle with sin. Because, God's Kingdom is not yet in their heart, so they must pray for the forgiveness of their sins first. Our Lord has blotted out all the sins of the world about 2,000 years ago as He was baptized by John the Baptist and crucified. However, there are still many people who have sins because they do not know and do not believe this. Therefore, we must pray that they may receive the remission of their sins thoroughly.

God is the only Master of every human being. However, the reality is that many people in this world give in to the devil and live as his servants rather than serving God. The Lord really hates such degradation, and eagerly wants all of His creatures that He made to believe in His words, be born again and become His people. Therefore, we must pray that the Kingdom of God will come in everyone's heart before the end of the world and His Millennium Kingdom come. God wants us to pray that everyone will receive the remission of sin, and so the entire universe will be a Kingdom that God reigns, and that all this will be done. Therefore, God commands us who are born again for the expansion of His Kingdom. In other words, we, the righteous people, must pray for the expansion of God's Kingdom.

We Must Live a Life of Faith for the Food of Life

Let's read Matthew 6:11, which has the third prayer topic in the Lord's Prayer. *"Give us this day our daily bread."* We must pray for our daily food that we eat. But this means that we should also ask the Lord for the food of eternal life. We need to take in food both for our body and spirit. So, we must pray, "Give us the food that we can eat for our body and spirit." What we ask for is not for a year's worth or a month's worth, but we ask for what we need for our flesh and spirit everyday.

Dear fellow Christians, we need to pray for our spiritual bread everyday. It is not wrong for us to pray to God for our food for the flesh and spirit. Because we became people who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and thus obtain the privilege to ask God the Father whatever we need, therefore we should also pray according to this third prayer topic. Those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit are clearly people who work for the righteousness of God, and so must pray that God helps with the worldly material for the gospel of the water and the Spirit, to bless the works in progress. It is proper for the righteous to live for the righteousness of God and live properly for the spreading of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. It is not that we pray the Lord's Prayer only once in life, but we must say such prayer topics everyday.

If we pray to God to give us the daily food we need, God will answer us. When we pray with our heart, we can experience God's allowance for us of food for the flesh and spirit within God's church. He gives us such food sufficiently so that God's

servants, His people and all Christians can gather together in His Church and live in union with each other as they work for the gospel, or praise or serve the Lord. God gives us spiritual food everyday when we listen to the sermons of His servants, the testimonies of the saints, and even when we meditate the Bible on our own.

We, the righteous, often can obtain more food from our everyday lives than from reading the Word of God. The Holy Spirit in our hearts is always pleased and delighted with our spiritual work that pleases God, the Father. And what makes the Holy Spirit pleased in our hearts is the very daily food for us. If we pray everyday to the Lord "Give us the food" and do not do anything, this is not a genuine prayer. If you have prayed to God, you must anticipate how God will answer to the prayer and do your best in your place, so that God can work through us. If we do not work for the gospel of the water and the Spirit and expect God to give us the spiritual food when we are only sitting around, it is mocking God.

We gather often in God's Church for worship services. This is exactly the food we can eat, and not just listening to the words in the church, doing the Lord's work according to His will becomes exactly the spiritual food to us. If a righteous person does not do the work of God after receiving the remission of sin, his faith dies sooner or later and he will end up leaving God's Church. Some people even lose the faith that believes in the Truth of God's perfect salvation. Therefore, we must do the righteous work of spreading the gospel of the water and the Spirit in order to obtain our daily food.

Those Who Have Become Righteous by Faith Should Be Able to Forgive Each Other

It is written in Matthew 6:12, *"And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors."* This is the fourth topic of the Lord's Prayer. We could misunderstand this fourth prayer topic as saying that we must repent everyday and be forgiven everyday. However, this fourth topic is not about being forgiven everyday. The fourth topic is conditional. Since we received the remission of sin from God all at once by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we must also live for the righteousness of God by forgiving people who have done wrong to us. We must forgive people who have done us wrong just as the Lord has forgiven all our sins unconditionally by the water and the blood. What these words of God are telling us is that we must write off other's wrongs to us since God has remitted us of all our sins.

Imagine we have debt of $5 hundred billion, which is such a large sum of money that we cannot pay it back even if we worked for all our lives. The wages of sin of each one of us will be that amount. But, God took pity on us and wrote off the debt for our sins unconditionally. Rather than saying 'I will consider it paid,' God, the Father send His Son, had Him baptized, taking on the sins of the world, and crucified. Therefore, He paid the price of our sins and saved us by Jesus' baptism and the blood on the Cross. This is how the Lord wrote off our debt by believing in His remission of sins. We received the remission of sin by doing nothing to wipe out the sins, but only by believing in the Truth. By the faith we have, we have received the gift of

salvation and the cleansing of all our sins from God. Since Jesus paid off the debt of $5 hundred billion that we could not pay back enough throughout our entire life by His baptism and the blood on the Cross, our sins were written off by doing nothing, but only by His grace.

Now, we must write off little wrongdoings others have done to us. We must live on the premise of forgiveness for each other. Living with other righteous people and sinners, we need to forgive each other for wrongs that others have done to us. We need to forgive each other according to the gospel of the Lord.

We are indebted to God for our sins, but the Lord came to this world and forgave all our sins by the baptism He received from John the Baptist and His blood. The Lord saw our sins and our helplessness, so He wiped them all out from His end. Because the Lord knew that we could not be righteous even if we devoted our life to it, He washed out all our sins once and for all by the Truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. God, the Father sent His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, had Him take on the sins of the world by His baptism, be crucified and risen, and saved us perfectly from all our sins. Thus, Jesus Christ became our eternal Savior, who saved us from our eternal sin.

We have met the Lord, who is alive, by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Do you believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit as your own salvation in your heart? —Yes.— Have we received the remission of sins by believing that Jesus forgave all of our sins by the gospel of the water and the Spirit? —Yes.—

Then, since we have been forgiven of the sins of the world by

amazing grace, we need to forgive the wrongs that others have done to us. The fourth topic of the Lord's Prayer is to forgive each other. Carrying out this prayer the Lord commanded us is the proper way of our spiritual life.

Here in the fourth part of the Lord's Prayer, what we need to be clear on is not that we receive remission of sins by saying prayers of repentance. Some look at this passage that says *"And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors,"* and say, "Look at this. You receive remission of sins when you say prayers of repentance." But this is not the case. Such fallacy is due to their misunderstanding of the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

This line exactly says that those who have received the remission of sins by the gospel of the water and the Spirit should forgive each other and cover the insufficiencies of each other. The sins of a man cannot be remitted just by forgiving them by lips, but require a lawful atonement: A lawful animal without blemish, transferring of the sins by laying of hands on, and its vicarious death that pays the wages of sins. Jesus Christ has completed all the premises of our mutual forgiveness by taking away all the sins of the world. Therefore, through our faith that gave us the remission of sins, we must write off each other's wrongdoings as we live.

We Must Pray That God Will Protect Us in Every Way

In Matthew 6:13, it says: *"And do not lead us into temptation,*

but deliver us from the evil one." Temptation means running into difficulties. So, "lead us not into temptation" means praying to prevent us from being thrown into confusion and difficulty. When we pray before God the Father, we have to pray like this: "God the Father, do not let me run into difficulties, protect me in every dangerous situation. God, please bless me, keep me from going wrong because I have too much worldly material or do not have enough material, keep me from evil ones, and do not let me fall into its temptations." We must pray often not to lead us into temptation.

We must carefully pray from the first prayer to the sixth prayer everyday. If a man falls into temptation, it becomes burdensome to the mind, and he ends up dying. Therefore, we must pray to God everyday not to run into difficulties.

In addition, we must get out of the difficulties in our hearts by having fellowship of faith and truth with brothers and sisters in the church of God. God's Church is a great place for fellowship among born again Christians. It cannot be possible to have a sincere and earnest fellowship among people who are not yet born again. However, in God's Church, there are as many people to have fellowship with as you want.

And, when you try to have fellowship with someone, you had better do this with someone who is in a little higher spiritual level than yourself. It is because such persons can share their spiritual knowledge and experiences, which are realistic and affordable to, in detail with you. It is good for us since they make it easier for us to eat spiritual food of faith by talking to us, and they can relate to us in the way that is very much like our

own situation. There is much food of faith for people who are ahead. However, if we have fellowship with someone who is too far ahead in faith, it is not beneficial to us since they may share too hard a spiritual food for us to digest.

This could be compared to when we first learn to ride a bicycle. The best teacher to a child who is just learning to ride a bicycle is their older sisters or brothers, who have also just mastered riding, rather than their parents. The one who can explain at the level that the child can understand best is someone who has just gone through the same thing. If a father was going to teach a little child how to ride a bicycle, he might bring a big bicycle that is at his level and dispirit the child who is trying to learn. The child can learn faster by watching their older sisters or brothers riding a little bicycle and be encouraged with the thought 'I can do that much.' The older siblings can help the child with realistic instructions. The big bicycle of the father may stupefy a child who learns to ride it from his father even before they get on the bicycle.

This is the same with our fellowship in faith. The one who can help us grow in faith step by step in the most realistic and matter-of-fact way at my level is someone who just went through the same path. Fellowship is most beneficial when it is with someone who went through the same thing immediately before me.

We must always pray 'do not lead us into temptation and keep us safe' and 'deliver us from the evil one' with faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The biggest danger when we are in the hand of the evil one is that we do not even realize that

we are in danger. How dangerous is that? Therefore, we must pray that we do not fall into the hands of the evil one, and that God saves us from the evil one. And, if you feel that you are in temptation, get out of it as quickly as possible with your faith.

Matthew 6:14-15 says, *"For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."*

We must forgive each other. As a matter of fact, those who are born again are good at forgiving. However, even among us, the righteous people, what is the most difficult part is forgiving someone. Perhaps that is why our Lord reiterates it here. Do you forgive easily or not when you see others' faults, mistakes and weaknesses?

Since some things are irrevocable, we may be hurt in our hearts, but we forgive easily. When the other person truly repents from what they have done and turns their heart around, there is nothing that we cannot forgive. When they come back and turn around their behavior, there is nothing we cannot accept.

However, there are many who cannot do this. Those who fall into the temptation of the evil one lead others into temptation rather than forgiving them. Therefore, we must not lead others into temptation owing to the difficulties and situation we are in. Those who make their fellow believers confused and stand against God will surely end up in destruction.

We must not lead our religious life to show off our faith. To make a long story short, whether it is right or wrong, we must

consider it before God. When we do that, if we realize from our hearts that we have done wrong, all we have to do is acknowledge it and admit that it was wrong, saying, "It was wrong." If we hear words of apology or forgiving or admitting the wrongs they have done, we now must stop being angry from our hearts and forgive. Jesus said, *"But let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No.' For whatever is more than these is from the evil one" (Matthew 5:37).* We do not need explanation or excuse. The only thing we have to do is to consider righteousness before God and admit our wrongs if there has been any wrong.

When we hear the full story from a brother, if he is wrong, all we need to do is tell him 'that is wrong' and for him to admit it. And all he needs to do is consider these things before God, look to the Lord who has blotted out even these faults with His baptism and blood on the Cross, and stand on faith again. Whatever wrong we have done, we just need to stand on faith in the righteousness of God, thank God who wiped out our sins, and then seek God's guidance through the Holy Spirit to do better in the future.

Summary of the Lord's Prayer

We must pray according to the first prayer topic, "Our Father in Heaven, Hallowed be Your name." To a sinner who has not yet been born again, the first part of the prayer, "Hallowed be Your name," means to pray "Help me receive the remission of

sin so that I can glorify God's name." But to us, the born-again who have already received the remission of sin, this means to pray "Help us to live a suitable life, a righteous life that will glorify God, and also live that way." However, those who are not born again must pray first for the remission of sin so that they may glorify God.

Therefore, the righteous must pray as such: "Please let me live a holy life. Please let me live a life of faith. Please do not let me blemish Your name." Walking up to a sinner and approving their faith in order to work together as a righteous person is ungrateful behavior to God that taints God's name. We must not do that. We must fight against those who stand against God. Making peace with them and seeking fellowship with them is a big sin that is against God. Therefore, working for the gospel with faith in union with those who have faith is righteous. Harmonizing our hearts with sinners is falling for evil and blemishing the Lord.

What would become of us if we collaborate with a spy who comes into our country to sneak out important information? This would make us just as bad as the spy and a traitor who sells out his country. This is something that a traitor does, who does not know where he should belong and collaborates with the enemy to sell his own country and is a big sin that cannot escape the punishment of death.

The second line of the Lord's Prayer is "Your Kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven," and this is for the righteous to pray for the souls who have not received the remission of sin yet. It is to pray that the will of God will be

done on earth.

Then, what is God's will? It is that every life receives the remission of sin. We must ask God for help with that. We must pray for workers and worldly materials, and then, we need to devote all of ourselves to the Lord to do His work. We must devote all of ourselves and our time and effort as well as everything that belongs to us so that the will of God will be done on earth. We must live for the work that will lead everyone to the remission of sin. We must pray for it everyday, and make efforts that God's will be done on earth by giving our heart and body in reality.

Some people, after they receive the remission of sin, ignore the Lord's admonition that He taught us to pray for the Kingdom of God. If a man who has received the remission of sin does not pray for the spreading of the gospel or does not unite with God's Church for this purpose, then he is sitting in the place of an evil man. A man like that should not expect the blessings for the flesh and soul from God. Therefore, in reality, those righteous people who do not live and pray for the righteousness of God are living outside of God's will, and are not in union with God's will.

We must pray for our daily food every day, which is the third prayer topic. "Give us food, so we do not starve. Give us the food for the flesh and spirit. Bless our business so that we can do the work of God." We should pray for His provisions in order to serve the gospel of the water and the Spirit. This is the third part of the prayer.

The fourth part of the prayer is that we must forgive others

who have done us wrong just as the Lord forgave all our sins by the water and the blood. Among the brothers and sisters in our family who have received the remission of sins, and the male and female servants of God, we must forgive each other's wrongs just as the Lord blotted out all our sins. When one says, "This is wrong," the other person should admit, "Ah, yes, I am wrong." Then, we must forgive each other from our heart. Even if I do not talk about it anymore, I believe that you all easily forgive. That is why you have lived faithfully until now, isn't it?

We must pray that we do not fall into temptation, that we do not run into difficulties, and that the Lord will keep us safe. And the sixth part of the prayer is "Deliver us from the evil one". We must pray that we, the born again, do not fall into the hands of evil ones or be captivated by them, and that God will deliver us from the evil ones when we are in the hands of the evil ones.

Then, the Lord said, "We must forgive each others mistakes." This means that righteous people must forgive each other.

We, the righteous must always pray according to the way the Lord taught us to pray and believe in it. We must pray for such topics everyday. In addition, we must live in that way everyday. We must pray for to forgive each other, for not to fall in temptation or evil, for daily food, and for the Kingdom of God on earth. Not only that, we must try to live such a faithful life by faith. We must live a life of prayer for the areas we fall short in order to glorify God. The one who say prayers everyday as the Lord taught us is the 'person of faith.'

Dear fellow Christians, if we take today's Scripture passage to those who are not born again yet, they interpret it differently.

However, when we the born-gain take the passage and examine and interpret it, I believe they also admit that what I have said so far is not wrong, but right. Do you believe that? —Yes.—

The first prayer topic that He says to the ones who are born again is "Hallowed be Your name." However, in our everyday life, do we perhaps do things that blemish God's name rather than glorifying His name? Are you and I people who can do a 100% effort all the time? Even if we cannot glorify the Lord, at least we should not blemish the Lord's name. This means, rather than being a stumbling block to what God's Church is trying to do, we must respect, love, unite and collaborate with His Church and its ministries so that God's name can be hallowed.

Dear fellow Christians, we must truly pray for the brothers and sisters, for the male and female servants, for the expansion of God's Kingdom, for the life that does not blemish God's name, and for our daily food. We must also forgive everyone who has done us wrong from our hearts, just as our Lord wiped out all our sins. We must pray that we do not run into trouble.

Let us pray that our hearts do not fall into temptation. If we do not listen to the Word, our hearts fall for temptation and run into trouble. When we have not heard the Word, the spiritual food, our hearts become unhealthy. When that happens, we fall for temptation, in other words, trouble. Our carnal thoughts come up and control the spiritual thoughts. When this happens, since we, who are righteous people cannot follow the desires of the flesh with a 100% result, our hearts are in trouble because we have to go back and forth between flesh and spirit. Therefore, we must take heed not to fall into such a situation.

In order to prepare for spiritual health, we must come to the church of God and hear the Word. Regardless of who preaches the Word during the service, the Word is preached for a week in God's Church. Even if there is not any particular realization, we can at least get rid of the dregs while listening to the Word. We can only get rid of the dregs of carnal thoughts and faults by hearing the Word. Just as the flowing water does not become rotten because the water has the ability to purify the dregs and impurities as long as it flows, the Word of God can get rid of the dregs in our hearts as long as it flows as the living water in our hearts. When we are rid of carnal thoughts, new spiritual thoughts come up and occupy the vacant place, so our mind is kept safe and protected.

Therefore, we must examine as often as possible whether we have been negligent with any prayer topics that are written in the Bible. If there has been anything in which we have been negligent, we must stop it from now on. We must start praying for these areas, and take the more heed of these areas. This is why the Lord said not to show off when we pray, and taught us how to pray in a few different sections.

In the Lord's Prayer, everything is covered. This shows how we can live a life of prayer. In reality, the first part of the prayer is already answered for us. The remission of sin in the first part of the prayer is fulfilled, but now we must pray so that we can live a holy life. Therefore, we must hear the Word and spread the gospel everyday to maintain holiness, so that we do not become those who obstruct the glory of God. In order to avoid being one of those who obstructs the glory of God, we must pray

everyday to the Lord to keep us safe and bless us.

Not only do our carnal bodies have to eat, but also our spirits have to eat. To the righteous people, who have received the remission of all their sins, hearing the Word and praying could be their spiritual food, but in reality, what is true spiritual food for them is spreading the gospel. If it stops at hearing the Word and carving it in our hearts, it cannot be food that gives strong health. High quality nutrient that truly gives health to our hearts is faith that acts. When we believe in the Word from the heart and act on that faith, it truly becomes our faith, and that we can stand strong in faith, and in that way we become full spiritually so that high quality necessary nutrients spread throughout our body, and we can grow as people of faith.

If an evil one causes disturbances, we must unite and repulse the evil, and if someone among us fell in the hands of the evil one, we must unite to help him. We must unite and defend ourselves by praying, "God, Please stop this spiritual storm from the evil one. Please help each one of us."

We must think about prayer topics of which we have been negligent, and if there really has been an area where we have been negligent, we must turn around and live a righteous life.

The Lord advised us to hold each other, love each other, encourage and admonish each other, as the end draws near. We, the righteous ones, who are born again, must fill our hearts with faith and pull each other along and bestow a generous and loving heart. If someone is in trouble, rather than taking advantage of his situation, we must put ourselves in his situation and pray that his trouble will be resolved. That is what we

should do as people of God. We must think of it as our own trouble, and interact with considerations such as "What would it be like if it were my situation? What would I do?" Even if the other person does not act as we would and does not lead a righteous life so that it would be hard to tolerate, we must pray and accept him with a hope that he would turn around.

Since we are humans with many shortcomings, we often make indescribably awful mistakes. Even then, since God is the Judge for the final judgment, it is no great matter if we turn around by holding onto the Word that wiped out even such sins with the faith in God. That is because if God says it is nothing, then it is nothing. We must accept each other within the faith that believes in the Lord's heart by which we are all accepted.

Regardless of what it is, we must make a final decision on God-centered criterion, prayer centered around God, lives centered around God, and live according to the Lord's Prayer. We should not be those with a weak faith, who merely understand the Lord's Prayer, but rather become those with strong faith that have a right mind, who act on faith in the prayer. That is when we all become those who live according to the Lord's Prayer by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

I cannot give thanks enough to God, who helps us live according to the Lord's will. ✉

The Lord's Teaching on Prayer (2)

< Matthew 6:5-15 >

"And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words. Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him. In this manner, therefore, pray:

Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.
Your kingdom come.
Your will be done
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
As we forgive our debtors.
And do not lead us into temptation,
But deliver us from the evil one.

For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

I hope you all are people of prayer. I hope you become people of faith by praying and experiencing the answers from God. I hope you become people of strong faith and give many people help, just as Peter said, *"Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk" (Acts 3:6).* I also hope that you pray for what you need and receive it.

Humans are always insufficient, and therefore we must constantly pray. This is why Paul said, *"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks."* You must learn the prayer that you pray through faith in God. If you do not develop a habit of praying out loud when you pray together for a prayer topic, you cannot pray boldly when you need to pray for yourself later.

Prayer is the breath of life and a blank check. This means whatever you ask God, He will give it to you. Since God is the Father of the righteous, when we pray, He listens and gives us the answer.

We Must Ask God for Help with the Faith in the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit

Matthew 7:7-12 tells us about prayers: *"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him. Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets."*

This passage is saying that when we truly ask in faith, God the Father will give it to us. The Lord taught us how to pray and that the Father knows everything we need, but we must still pray to God, and only then God listens to us and gives us an answer. Although we need to learn the grace of God through His gospel, we must also learn the life of fellowship with God. We need to learn through our faith that if we, the righteous pray to the Father, He will answer our prayer.

When God the Father is the Father of those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, why would He not give good things to His children who ask in need? We must believe that God is our Father and gives good things whenever we pray. We must pray with the faith that believes in it. Those who know how to pray to God fervently in faith can pray for their brothers and sisters and for the salvation of other souls. What makes a

man a man of faith is trying to pray in the righteousness of God. The faith of those who believe in the true salvation of the Savior cannot but grow gradually while they are experiencing the power of fervent prayers. Therefore, we must learn about prayers through faith.

Even though we were delivered from our sins once and for all by the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we must pray to God "incessantly" just as we constantly breathe. If we pray to the Lord for help constantly, He listens to us. We must live as we develop a relationship with God through faith, communicate with Him, constantly ask Him for help, and receive His help.

I hope that you become people of prayer, and that I am also become a person who prays through faith. I also hope that both you and I learn to pray, so that we become those who pray with faith and experience the answers. I hope that you and I ask God for many things, so that we can be rich in faith, wealth, health and God's righteousness and that we can share these with others. I hope that God gives us these blessings and makes us blessed as we become the people of true prayers.

We Must Ask for Faith That Exalts the Holy Name of God the Father

In today's scripture lesson, the Lord taught us what to pray for and how to pray first. He says, *"In this manner, therefore, pray. Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name" (Matthew 6:9).* The Lord tells us to pray first for this part: *"Our Father in*

heaven, hallowed be Your name." We must pray first that the name of God the Father be hallowed.

In order to do that, what kind of faith do we need to have? Surely, we must have the faith that believes in the gospel of salvation that gives us the remission of sin. In order to have that faith, we must understand and believe in the gospel of the water and Spirit, which the Lord said to Nicodemus (John 3:1-17).

Therefore, if we are to hallow the name of God the Father who is in Heaven, we must first be someone who has received the remission of sin before God. This means we must be those who believe that God the Father and Jesus Christ are God who made you and me, was baptized by John the Baptist to save you and me from all sins, and became the Savior, who was crucified. The faith that can call the Father of Jesus Christ our Father is the faith that believes in the gospel of the water and Spirit. This is the only way we can legitimately call God *"Our Father in heaven,"* and pray as we call Him lawfully. And only by this faith, we receive the qualification that enables us to pray to God since God is the Savior and Father to you and me. Since those who receive remission of sins have this faith, they can pray *"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name."* Therefore, the Lord taught us to pray first what is most suitable to such faith.

"Hallowed be Your name" means we must not blemish His name. If so, what is not blemishing the name of the Father? Here, "Hallowed be Your name" means what kind of faith we should have in order to glorify God and live a life that does not blemish God's name. This means that in order to do that, we must have the faith in the salvation from all sins that God gave us: "The Lord has

saved us from all sins of the world by giving us the righteousness of salvation and making us believe in the righteousness of God. He has made us sinless with the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Therefore, we are people of God." We must go in front of God the Father with this faith whenever we pray.

We must all have the faith that believes in the gospel of the water and Spirit. We must firmly keep our strong faith in the gospel of the water and Spirit that the Lord spoke of. Therefore, the Lord says to pray to have the holy faith that enables us to receive the remission of sin.

We Must Believe That Everyone in the World Will Accept the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit So That the Kingdom of God Will Be Established Quickly on Earth

Secondly, He said, *"Your Kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."* This means all humans must become people of God, so the Kingdom of God will come. Truly, even before the Creation, God had planned to make us people of God in Christ by the gospel of the water and spirit, created man within that providence, and saved those of us the sinners from all our sins. And He gave His perfect salvation to us who believe in the Truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Therefore, we, who became the people of God by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, must live a life that prays and works hard so that the Kingdom of God will come quickly.

We must do this so that the number of people who have received the remission of sin will increase. We are sure that the Lord will come back in the near future and that He will give blessings and rewards to us who are faithful to His Great Commission. We must pray for the quick establishment the Kingdom of God so that God will accomplish all His plans predetermined in Jesus Christ.

We must live by the faith and pray for the people to receive the remission of their sins and for the expansion of the Kingdom of God. We must work hard to spread this gospel of the water and the Spirit to every country in the world, so that all those who are to believe will believe and come back to God to glorify Him. We must make the unbelievers repent quickly before God to receive His perfect salvation. This is what the passage *"Your Kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven"* means.

Therefore, we must pray and work hard according to the Lord's Prayer. We must pray that He will open the door so that the gospel of the water and the Spirit will quickly be spread. And we must pray for this mission: "Please keep us safe and bless us so that we can do the work." *"Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."* Truly, just as the remission of sin is fulfilled in our hearts, we must live a life of prayer so that the gospel of water and the Spirit will be fulfilled in the hearts of many of those who have not heard the gospel. We must live as we pray that God gives the faith to all the brothers and sisters in God, and that He blesses us so that we can spread the beautiful gospel of the water and the Spirit all over the world and glorify God with true faith.

We Must Pray for Our Daily Food

Third, the Lord told us to pray for our daily food: *"Give us this day our daily bread."* We can live only if we also have our spiritual food. So, God told us to pray for spiritual food. He said that we must ask for our daily food everyday. We must pray for our daily food "God help us that we can eat the spiritual food and live."

God told us to pray for our daily bread, so we should pray like this: "Father God, please fills us with worldly material so that we do not lack any materials for flesh and spirit, that He blesses us so that we can share what we have with others rather than borrowing from others. Let me become a man of faith who tries to attend every meeting and share fellowship with the other born-again saints in order to eat spiritual food."

Dear fellow Christians, can we live one day without eating spiritual food? Can we live even one day without doing God's work? Our Lord said, *"I have food to eat of which you do not know" (John 4:32).* The food for us who are born again is doing God's work. When we do the work of God, it becomes food in our hearts and the Holy Spirit in your hearts rejoices. When you become irritable even though you have received the remission of sin, try doing God's work. When you serve God, your body may be tired, but the Holy Spirit in you rejoices. Our hearts are glad because the Holy Spirit is pleased. This is the spiritual food.

We can also eat spiritual food when we meet our brothers and sisters and have fellowship with them. This is because during the fellowship, the mind and will of the Holy Spirit were

interchanged each other through the body of our brothers and sisters. But, this does not mean that we must sever our lives from the world. This means that we live in this world, but we must meet other righteous people as often as possible.

And we also have to pray and read the Bible to eat our daily food. Who can always do well on eating spiritual food everyday? But we can eat the spiritual food and maintain our spiritual strength by coming to church. This is why we have to attend every worship service and meeting of God's Church. Gathering together is good and also it is a great blessing to eat spiritual food. This is also doing spiritual work. Psalms 133:1 says, *"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is. For brethren to dwell together in unity!"* All the gatherings and services in church are not randomly planned with no significance, but are systematically organized so that we can eat together the daily food that is hard to eat alone. Therefore, by coming to this meeting, we can eat much food.

Dear fellow Christians, since He said to pray to God for our daily food rather than complaining of a shortage of food, we must ask for help as we pray: "Give me the daily food, God, give me the blessings to earn much material so that I will not lack in worldly materials. Give me the spiritual food and faith, and bless me so that I can do the work of God with faith. Give me blessings for flesh and spirit." We can receive food only when we ask for help.

We must ask for food for the flesh and for the spirit. We must do the work of God and be glad in it. We must pray, seek, knock and ask for these. We must ask actively, for Jesus promised us

saying, *"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you" (Matthew 7:7).* We ask with our hearts, acknowledge with our mouth and act it out to seek, ask and receive. If we look up, pray, and seek how and through what God will give us, we will receive it. That is how we live everyday. Therefore, the Lord told us to pray for these things.

We Must Forgive Each Other As the Children of God the Father

The fourth part of the prayer is *"And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one."* This means that since God forgave all of our sins, there should not be anything we, the born-again, do not forgive each other for. If there is any evil carnal mind in our heart that cannot forgive others, you should pray: "God, keep me safe and deliver me from the evil one so that I do not fall for evil, and give me the heart and faith that forgive." This means that when we do not have the strength to follow God's will, we should ask God for help and live by the help from God.

In addition, there is no one whose life of faith is perfect from the beginning. When you look at yourselves, do you see many shortcomings of your own? —Yes.— Do we have more wrong doings than righteous doings? —Yes.— Dear fellow Christians, do not be discouraged. If we make mistakes, have shortcomings, and are conscience stricken, but do not have the strength to

make it right, what do we do then? We call on God again.

"God Father, make me someone who is a person of blessing, a person of faith, a person of joy. Give me the faith." Should we not ask God for help like this? Is it not true? That is all we have to do. When we ask God for help, does He give us help or not? —He does.— When He does, do we become people of faith or not? —We do.— Therefore, I hope you become people of faith, who seek and live with faith rather than people who look back at the past discouraged, are remorseful of the present, and give up the future. The past is the past and the present is the present. The past is not so important just as the song says: "Do not ask about the past."

God is powerful, so He likes people who ask Him for much. He is offended when we do not ask. When we ask God for what we need, He is pleased and thinks, 'You know that I am powerful, you know that your Father is rich. It is commendable.' We should ask for good things as well rather than saying 'I can do it myself' because then the Father's dignity is lost. God, who saved us, likes it very much when we ask Him to give us things. Ask Him to give, give, and give. We should ask everyday "Give us our daily food," and ask Him to give us blessing whenever we open our mouth. If this was biological father, he will slap us because we ask him to give everyday, but our spiritual Father is not like that. Rather, He is pleased that we ask Him to give us what we need to work for the gospel of the water and the Spirit everyday.

If your biological father gave it to you yesterday, and you ask the same thing to him again today, he surely becomes angry, so the biological son cannot even ask because he is afraid. We

examine the mood of our father and mother and think 'Oh, if I ask to give today, I will be slapped,' and if he looks to be in a good mood, only then do we go up to him and we barely receive anything. However, our spiritual Father is not like that. If we ask as soon as we open our eyes 'give me,' and during our sleep 'give me,' then God is pleased and says, "Yes, I will. I will give it to you, but you cannot use it at random, but use it properly, Okay?" and gives it to us at once. This is the reality.

God the Father, who saved you and me, loves more those who ask more. If you do not have faith, ask Him, "Give me faith. Give me. Give me." Then, you will know, in no time, God has given you faith. You can feel this, "O my! I have faith, I can believe, I used my faith. I have faith!" Do not be reluctant to ask God binding by your own thought. Just ask Him anything boldly as if you have entrusted God with it. The Lord likes it that way.

Dear fellow Christians, do you know how faith that was not there before comes to being? It is because you ask to "give me the faith, give, give it to me," and so God gave it to you. We received it because God gave it to us. There is no other way to have faith. It is also because God saved us and became the Father to you and me. We did nothing more than ask, "Give us Lord. Give us."

When we teach little children about prayer, the children pray, "Jesus, give me cookies. I pray in Jesus name. Amen" and open their eyes. When they open their eyes, if there are no cookies, they exclaim, "There are no cookies," and start crying. In such a case, I explain, "Hey, you rascal, how can He, even though He is God, bring cookies when you have just opened your eyes after

your prayer? God is listening now 'Ok', and thinks in His heart 'I will give it to him', and commands the angels to bring you the cookies."

Even though God does not give immediately when we pray, we experience that He gives the to right man in the right place, and we can testify that He gives. This is why we must always pray to give us much.

Do you not have many necessities? If there is anything that we need or we lack for the flesh or spirit, we must pray for them: "Give us faith. Give us blessings. Give us fullness of the Holy Spirit. I heard that there is fullness of the Holy Spirit—give us that. Help us live for righteousness. Give to us." If we pray like that, even though it is a prayer of an immature child, since the Father knows what the child needs, He gives what the son needs to the right man in the right place.

This is why praying is not hard. Just saying "give me" well is praying. Do you think like this? —"Well, I am all grown up. He said not to say the same thing over and over. And the Bible says that I should go to my room to pray, but if I go to my room, I cannot pray, but only become sleepy." Praying and asking for help always in our heart "give us, give us" is praying.

Since I have started praying, I found out that He does not like prayers with florid phrases. When we make a fuss with "Our holy, benevolent, graceful and omnipotent God, the Father…," then God becomes impatient, saying, "What is the ultimate purpose then?" No matter how much we make a fuss with fluent speech skills, if we do not tell Him the purpose, it is nothing. When we are desperate out of absolute necessity, the main

subject comes out immediately. "Give me this." It is better to have one short sentence when we ask. When we make it unnecessarily long just to look good, we come to forget what we pray for. 'What was I praying for? Oh, damn it. I don't know.' Then we pray for something that is off-the-wall, and end up praying for someone else, and do not get to the necessary prayers for ourselves. Do you not sometimes do that?

When we first opened the mission school, we used to pray sitting around in a circle after having a class. We sometimes prayed in unison and sometimes we took turns praying. We were praying so long, usually over two hours, that our backs hurt. However, we prayed diligently. The prayer leader kept giving out prayer topics, and we all went around in prayers. Some brothers and sisters complained that their backs hurt due to such a long prayer meeting.

I was told an episode that a certain elder of a church once prayed in a early morning worship service for over three hours excerpting passages from Genesis to Revelations. His prayer never ended so that everyone at the church went home to have breakfast and came back, he was still praying. In general, people like that do not pray much at home or anywhere else. They pray for a long time to compensate for their lack of praying when they are asked to pray during services. However, that is not how we should pray. A short prayer is a good prayer. If we stretch it as if we stretch a rubber band, we forget what we are really praying for.

Sometimes, we pray in union with a few prayer topics. If the prayer leader says many topics all at once, to be honest, sometimes I cannot remember the earlier prayer topics and only

remember the later ones. When that happens, I start praying for the later ones first. "God, give me this, give me that," when I pray as such, I sometimes can remember the earlier prayer topics.

"God the Father, give us our daily food, give us the worldly material necessities today, give us health, give us the strength to do the work of God, give us blessings, give us faith, help us carry out righteousness with faith. Help us not to waste our life." —We pray laying out the main subject in this manner.

Praying in faith is not hard. If we have been saved, then God is our Father. Being embarrassed for calling the Father "Father" is stranger. 'Is Jesus the Father? Is Jesus' Father the Father? If the Holy Spirit is God, then is the Holy Spirit the Father?' When you think about it like this, this gives you a headache. Dear fellow Christians, the Triune God is all our Savior and all our Father. Some people, after believing in Jesus for 20 years still do not understand this, so they are still confused about whether God is the Father, or Jesus is the Father, or the Holy Spirit is the Father. They all mean the same thing.

Jehovah God means "God the existing One." God is not a creation. Jesus is our Savior and the Holy Spirit is God's Holy Spirit, so they are all the same God in their Divinity and there is no need to make it complicated. Just believe that "God said so, therefore it is right." If we are surely born again and have received the remission of sin, everything is allowed to you. Knowing that, I hope you all become God's saints and male and female servants of God, who always pray for daily food.

Let's stick to the main topic again. We are talking about His teaching: *"Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors."*

There are many wrongs that others do to us, and many wrongs that we do to others. However, did God or did He not wipe out all of our sins and others' sins? —He wiped them all out.— When He blotted them all out, should we not forgive from our hearts those who do wrongs to us? —We should forgive them.— This is the premise to pray, *"And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors."* When God has forgiven all of our sins, if we cannot forgive each other, it is not proper as children of God. This is why He said this.

Therefore, we must pray when we have gone down the wrong way and the evil mind becomes strong and we fall into evil, and try to punish the others, and try to win others, and bear someone a grudge: "Do not let me fall into evil. Do not let me fall into temptation and do not let me run into trouble due to my carnal temper, which becomes a stumbling block for the gospel rather than benefit. Do not let me fall for temptation and run into trouble so that the church, other Christians and I, my self, will not be harmed by it. Protect me from falling into evil. Help me control my heart. Give me strength. Give me strength that can carry out the works of God's righteousness."

He told us to forgive, love, tolerate and pray for others. We must pray for everyone: "God, Give him the faith so that he will be saved from all his sins. His behaviors are kind of so-so, but please save him." We need to pray like this. Can we pray for everyone in the world or not? —We can.— We can forgive and love all in our heart within the beautiful gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Truly, righteous people should not fall into evil. It is good to

fall into righteousness, but is it good to fall into evil? Should we get drunk and make disturbances and beat people up? No, we should not. If you have that kind of energy, use it for the work of God. We should use that energy to diligently do the work of God, and diligently work for the will of the Lord rather than fighting. This is why God tells us to pray for these things so that we do not fall into evil. We should not fall into evil.

There are many outrageous people in this world. When we come across such people, if they do not seem to be anyone who may be beneficial to us, it is wise to bring down our separation before these people and avoid them.

Why did God add this verse at the end of the Lord's Prayer? *"For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."* This means that a righteous person must live as a righteous person with faith. If we received the remission of all our sins before God, we also must forgive all our brothers and sisters as well as all those who are yet not born again. If we do not have a forgiving heart, we must ask for help: "Father God, give me forgiving heart." To command us to live like this, God added this teaching at the end.

Is praying hard or not? It is not hard. The essence of prayer is faith—faith that God is my God, my Savior, and my Father. He created us and saved us from all our sins. If so, we, the born-again are His people, His household, and His children, so that it is only natural that we call Him Father. In addition, it is righteous to thank Him that we are His people.

We must pray that we do not fall into evil and temptation and go down the wrong path. Jesus teaches us what to pray first: *"Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."* Is there anything you need? Then, pray and live for the Kingdom of God first. Your Father will give everything to you. This is God's promise.

So, we must believe this, seek the work of God first even though we truly have shortcomings, try to live by God's will first, and ask God for help. We should always have a desire to grow in spirit and be faithful to God's works by receiving His grace and help even though we have shortcomings. Do you understand? —Yes.— Do you believe? —Yes.—

When we pray all together, we must pray carefully out loud. When you do that, your thoughts are organized so that you develop the faith, saying, "I prayed like this, and I believe like this." And when God answers, we know that "the answer is coming from God because I prayed like this," and our faith grows. This is why it is good to pray neatly with our mouth.

In addition, when we pray, it is possible to pray same things over and over, but we should not pray in formality. Sometimes, the heart says this way, but some outrageous things can come out of the mouth. When that happens, we must correct it with words. God sees, knows, and works in the center of our hearts, but it is important to confess correctly with our mouth as well. Therefore the Bible says, *"For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."*

And the Lord says, *"Therefore, whatever you want men to do*

to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets" (Matthew 7:12). If we truly want to receive something, we must pray. If we truly want to have faith before God, want to live with faith, want to live righteously, want to have life in abundance for the flesh and spirit, we must ask often for many things.

Let us live with such faith. Let us live with such faith and welcome the Lord when He comes back. This is my faith and this is my prayer before God. And I believe it will be done.

While we are devoting ourselves to spreading the true gospel worldwide through the literature ministries, an enormous amount of money will be needed. As for the finances that are necessary for the publication, I believe that God will take care of it for us. God has supplied all our needs so far, and will surely support us sufficiently. We have been able to do His works well, and there have arisen countless co-workers among the born-again through our Christian literature. But the devil also knows this, and tries to hinder our ministries. I am afraid that the devil may thwart this work and give us many difficulties. Therefore, we cannot but pray to God for His help and protection.

When we publish books, we work with those who are born again in most cases, but sometimes, we also work unavoidably with those who are not. When we were editing the French edition of our first book, we put in tremendous amount of effort, but we found a mistake on the cover that is absolutely off from the original book. Of course, the French translator might do his best in his own way, but made a critical mistake, making the entire effort come to nothing. Therefore, we should pray to God to prevent such loss from now on.

Right now, English versions and Spanish versions of our gospel series are most popular. The next popular version is French. What does this mean? In areas where God works greatly, the devil also works hard to thwart our works. This is why we must pray to God to protect us from the evil ones, and to supervise and reign over these people who are working together with us, so that everything will go well. We should also pray to God to help and protect all the brothers and sisters and the male and female servants, who are devoting themselves to this precious mission. This is why we pray.

You must pray for yourselves as well. God will be glorified when you lead a faithful life! Also you need to lead a righteous life of faith if others are to be saved through you, and this is the only way you would be blessed in your flesh and spirit. This is why we pray. We must know the necessity of prayers and live as we pray with faith.

Let us live as we ask with prayers of faith that always believe in God. We must live as we pray that God blesses all male, female servants and all God's people in areas where we work for the gospel, and that He blesses and provides everything so that the spread of this gospel of water and Spirit will be done powerfully. ✉

Live with Your Hearts on the Lord

< Matthew 6:21-23 >

"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!"

Today's scripture lesson says, *"The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light."* Our hearts are fickle as the rainy summer weather. The mind of a man is, also, like that. However, the Lord said, *"The lamp of the body is the eye."* What the Lord means by this is that the whole body will be full of light if our eye is good, and that we must consider how we should put focus in our mind that comes and goes.

Since the eye is the lamp of the body, when the eye is good, the whole body is full of light, but when the eye is bad, the whole body is full of darkness. When our heart is gloomy, everything we see is dark. But, if we meditate the gospel of the water and the Spirit once again, our heart lightens up. When the Lord talks about the eye of a person, He makes mention of our heart of faith.

Our hearts are not steadfast. The heart of you and me comes and goes. Our hearts are subject to being swayed at times. When we do meditate on the gospel of the water and Spirit, our heart loves the Lord, but soon after, we are prone to love the world due to our carnal thoughts. We are talking about what our hearts should be considering.

The eye is the lamp of the body. Therefore, we must think about the Lord and pour our hearts into spreading the gospel of the water and the Spirit. When we think about how perfectly our Lord has cleansed our sins, we realize how our hearts have been cleansed. Just as our Lord said in the Old Testament, *"Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isaiah 1:18),* the Lord has wiped out our sins perfectly by taking on the sins of the world through His baptism from John the Baptist and being crucified, in the New Testament.

We must concentrate on the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Although our heart goes back and forth occasionally between the Lord and the world, we must focus our mind into the spread of the gospel of the water and Spirit. We thank the Lord for wiping out the sins of your and me. We must keep in our heart that the Lord has blotted out all our sins, which had covered our heart like a thick cloud (Isaiah 44:22). Our hearts are lit up when we think about the Lord, who wiped out our sins as such.

"The eye is the lamp of the body." Since there is no other way without the Lord that our hearts and souls can be lit up, our hearts become hearts that are spiritually full of light before God when we think about the Lord. Our hearts go back and forth

between spiritual and carnal, but when we put our heart on the Lord, who wiped out our sins, and think about the gospel that tells us the Lord took on the burden of everyone's sins and blotted them out all at once, we cannot but give thanks to God, and love the Lord even more.

Therefore, we desire even more to spread this gospel of the water and the Spirit to others. When we pour our hearts on the Lord, and His righteous deeds that the Lord wiped out our sins, our hearts lighten up, and, as a result, many souls receive salvation. When we think about the Lord and thank Him with faith, our hearts become saturated with the Holy Spirit. This is that they become moist with an abundant blessing of salvation spiritually in the light. Then, our hearts become righteous, good, and beautiful in God's eyes, and they come to have big ambitions to do the righteous works.

We can leave our hearts in the dark or in the light. Where should we leave our hearts? Surely, there is no mistake that we need to put our heart in the area where the Lord has wiped out our sins. In addition, since our Lord not only wiped out our sins, but also made us children of God, we must concentrate our hearts on His heavenly Kingdom.

We must thank God with our faith for his blessings that saved us, who could not but die from our sins and become children of the devil, by sending Jesus Christ, and having Him baptized, taking the sin of the world to the Cross, and bled to death wiping out all our sins once and for all. It is very important on where we set our hearts on. It is whether our hearts cling to the blessings of salvation that God gave us or to unrighteous carnal thoughts

that come from the world and flesh. Depending on where we set our hearts, the results differ greatly. We can decide this way or that way, and even though we have swaying hearts, I want to tell you that we must put our hearts on the salvation that God gave us. We must devote our hearts to the fact that God gave us the Kingdom of Heaven and the blessings of God.

When we devote our hearts to the area where God has blotted out all our sins, like a thick cloud, and make it as white as snow, and pray to God, God listens and answers our prayers. We must devote our hearts to God and to spiritual work with the belief that God is pleased in our work of spreading the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Then, we can experience how our hearts lighten up and how much the work of God progresses. We can become the men of His blessing by being used for the joyful and blessed work of God.

Dear brothers and sisters, when we devote our hearts to the spread of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, our hearts are glad. When we live in this world, we sometimes become discouraged and sometimes fall into our carnal lusts. There is no righteous person, who does never fall. However, even though we are such beings, what is important is on where we set our hearts' concern on. Where does each one of us focus our hearts on? If, by any chance, you have it in the dark, I hope you bring it out to the light.

We try to spread the gospel to the rest of the world. How should we? I feel anxious just like the Israelites felt when they were facing the impregnable wall of Jericho when they first entered the land of Canaan. The first obstacle to the Israelites

was the wall of Jericho. The wall of Jericho was very solid and secure. It could not be overthrown with spears and swords. Since it was built with very large rocks, it could not be easily collapsed. People of Jericho were up on the top of the fortress, so regardless of all the efforts of the Israelites to collapse the wall, they could just watch and ridicule the Israelites from the top. As they put wheels on big tree trunks, the soldiers tried to push and break and crush the city gate, but it was not possible since the fortress was too secure. However, the city was crushed down when the Israelites had faith in God and obeyed His Word of promise thoroughly.

We are in need of the same faith. In our time period, if we do not put our hearts on God, we cannot carry out our mission of spreading the gospel of the water and the Spirit. However, if we put our hearts on God, I know it is possible to spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit to the rest of the world. If we do not have the faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we cannot spread the gospel, and, as a result, this world will head for destruction.

When we tried to spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit to the rest of the world so far, there were many difficulties. We decided to publish our mission books that are about the gospel of the water and the Spirit in many different languages and send them to everyone in the world. Therefore, the books of the gospel have been translated into many different languages of the world. By publishing and distributing them, we have been able to spread the true gospel to the entire world.

Now, when we think about spreading the gospel of the water

and the Spirit to the rest of the world, and devote our hearts to it, our hearts will be lightened. You and I are still in the flesh, so if we devote our hearts to the Lord, our hearts are glad and they become suitable to work for the gospel before God. On the other hand, if we do not devote our hearts to spreading the gospel, but to the worldly things, our hearts become immeasurably filthy. Although our hearts go back and forth between that of flesh and spirit, it is important to fix our hearts on the gospel of the water and the Spirit. As it is written, *"For where your treasure is, there your heart will also be,"* depending on where we put our hearts, we can become people of light before God or we can become useless people. When we devote our hearts to God, we can be useful people to God and other people. And we can be the blessed ones like Abraham and God's workers who can share with everyone the gospel that gives life.

Let us put our hearts on God. Although we live in this world, we must fix our hearts on God. Although our hearts go back and forth, I hope that you put your hearts on the gospel of the water and the Spirit and the blessings that the Lord bestowed on you rather than on the world. How many blessings of the flesh and the spirit has God given us through the gospel of the water and the Spirit? Also, through this gospel, how much has He given us the blessings of salvation? When we think about that, we cannot help devoting our hearts to God. It is worth devoting our hearts to God. It is also worth devoting our hearts to the gospel. It is worth devoting our hearts to the great salvation that wiped out all our sins. It is proper to thank the Lord and glorify the Lord, and it is worth working for the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

We also thank God for making us His children. The Lord gave us Heaven and it is justifiable that we devote our hearts to the Lord.

I hope you fix your hearts onto the Lord. Your hearts and my heart can sometimes be capricious and go back and forth, but we should always turn our hearts to God and live for the work of the Lord. As we walk on the street, if we see something nice, our eyes and hearts follow it for a while, but we must take our heart back immediately and give it to the Lord.

In Matthew Chapter 6, the Lord specifically talks about materials: *"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."* What is the treasure in our hearts? What is the treasure to you and me? Is it the Lord? Is it the blessings from the Lord? Or is it this world? Is it the money in this world? Which is it?

The treasure is the Lord. If you believe the treasure is any kind of material, please turn your mind around. In reality, materials are not as valuable as the Lord. This is because the master of all materials is the Lord. However, can we live without the materials? We cannot. On the other hand, are materials not from the Lord as well? It is from the Lord. He says, *"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."* Therefore, if you put your hearts on God, everything comes to you. Everything will be provided to you in the way of righteousness.

However, some false preachers will teach this verse as "if you just give big offerings, it means you have big faith." "Do not lay up for your treasures on earth, but in heaven, in other words, give big tithe and offerings to the church." And they put

"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" in the offering envelop and shove it in.

This is a false teaching. The purpose of worldly churches is to prosper in this world, therefore, all they care about is raking in money. It is fortunate if they use it for righteousness, but they use it to fill their desire of greed. They are so good at raking in money, they quote this kind of the Bible verses to ask the Christians for money, and make them bring all the installment savings in their names to the church.

Some preachers push for building new churches by taking money from the church members. Is this righteous? *"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."* Since all they are concerning about is the church building, that is their treasure. The church members brag about their $15,000,000 church building as if attending such a church is something very honorable and proud. If we x-ray their thoughts, it is probably empty. Their hearts are, of course, empty, too. Since what they put their hearts on is the $15,000,000 church building, they cannot see that Jesus has blotted out all their sins, like a thick cloud with the gospel of the water and the Spirit. There are many pitiful people who cannot see that God has made them His children and given us the Kingdom of Heaven.

On the contrary, to us, who are born again, our Lord is the treasure. All the blessings of mercy our Lord has bestowed on us—such as His salvation, making us God's children, giving us the kingdom of Heaven, wiping out our sins, and making us the righteous—are our treasures. There is nothing more valuable than these. As a hymn sings, "♫I'd rather have Jesus ♪ than

silver or gold," there is no honor in this world that is more valuable than having the Lord Jesus. There is nothing more valuable than the salvation that the Lord gave us.

Therefore, you and I must spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit to the hearts of people. We must take hold of our hearts that go back and forth and give it to the work of the Lord. If we give the Lord our hearts, we will not be doing useless work, but be able to go to Lord's Kingdom. We sometimes do useless things, but if we do more of the useful work then we will be praised by God, and respected by people.

Matthew chapter 6 talks about this subject very deeply. *"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."* You and I must put our hearts on Him and on His work. We must seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness. How did God save us? He wiped out our sins white as snow by the water, the blood and the Holy Spirit. He has blotted out all our sins, like a thick cloud, as white as snow. We must thank God and thank the Lord who is our perfect Savior. And we must seek first His Kingdom in our hearts.

It is the will of God that the gospel of the water and the Spirit is spread out to the entire world, so that those who are to believe in it, believe in it, and those who do not, do not. We must give equal opportunity of hearing the gospel to everyone to fulfill the will of God. We must do such work.

By the way, the true treasure to you and me is the Lord. Put

your heart on the Lord. Although we are people who have many shortcomings, let us fix our hearts on the Lord. Let us set our hearts on the Lord and spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit as often as possible.

Halleluiah. We thank God for helping us put our hearts on the Lord. ✉

Do Not Worry about Your Life, But Trust Only in God

< Matthew 6:25-34 >

"Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things.

Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."

We, the born-again are also prone to worry about the future even after having received the remission of sin. These are worries such as how I am going to live from now on, what I should do to eat, what I should do to wear, what I should do to make money, and how I should live. In this way, in our hearts, we have worrying hearts about the future. I see that those among the born again who are still young are apt to worry about the rest of their lives because they do not understand that God helps them and they have not experienced that God leads their way. Of course, it is only natural that we worry since we are human.

Every one that is born into this world works hard for himself. They have not been living by the faith in God, and had the habit of living by relying their own efforts and strength, so even after they are born again, the first thing they worry about is what they should eat, what they should drink and how they should live. However, the Lord tells us what the born-again should think about first: *"Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness."* He says, "Seek the Kingdom of God, the righteousness of God. First unite with the church and seek the work that does the work of God, His Kingdom, and saving people. Pray! Then, I will fill all your needs in the areas of the flesh such as what to eat, what to drink, and how to live."

I also thought about my future as soon as I was delivered from sins. "How should I live? What shall I eat? What shall I wear? What shall I do for a living?" I worried about such things.

If there had been certain sets of things that I had to do, then I could have done that, but when there were not any certain fixed things, I didn't know what to do at that time. Those who had saved some money before receiving the remission of sins may be less confused. However, someone who has been only in academia before receiving the remission of sin such as me is even more confused. I could not but worry about how to live in this world.

The young brothers and sisters in our church, who are students or the beginners in the real world, could also be discouraged by the thought of how they can live in this world. What should we do to eat? What should we wear? There are many such worries.

However, the Lord says to all of us, "Do not worry about such things. That is what those who have not been born again worry about." Then we can have the heart in our mind, "Our Lord is just clueless about our situations. This is a problem of reality, and how can we not worry about that? The problems of food, clothes, and place to stay depend on it right now. How can we not worry about that?" However, the Lord firmly says to us, The Lord says, "That is what the Gentiles worry about. Do not worry about how you can live. Think about the righteousness of God first and living your life as you carry out His righteousness." The Lord says, *"Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?"*

In fact, if we believe what the Lord said, there is nothing we

can argue against Him. We worry about our lives, but the Lord scolds us in straight talk, "Do not worry about the materials. That is what the Gentiles ask for. That is what those who have not been born again ask for. Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin. If God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you. O you of little faith?"

Dear fellow Christians, how do the lilies in the field grow? Does it automatically start a sprout and grow and blossom? It is because God sows them, gives them sun light as they need, and gives them rain and makes them blossom. The Lord says that God takes care of such grass of the field, then how much more He would take care of you, who are a righteous person.

Dear fellow Christians, there is much difference between the worries we have and the assurance that comes from God's Word of the Truth. We are worried so much about our future now, but there is not much we can say since He shuts us up by simply saying, *"Consider the lilies of the field."* God gives sunlight and rain to raise the lilies so well. Then, would He not take care of us, who are His children? Have the faith that trusts in God. Then, you can communicate with God.

What shall we do to communicate with God? There is no other way except to believe in God's Word. When we believe in His Word as it is, we can communicate with Him by faith. If God says so, when we believe in Him according to His Word that 'God will clothe me, feed me, help me live,' we can relate to God and become one, be able to communicate with Him, and be answered as our faith.

Consider the Lilies of the Field

Do you have faith that confesses like this?—"God raised the lilies of the field. I am one of God's people, a child of God, and God is my Father and shepherd, so I believe that He will feed me and clothe me." The only way to shake off worries is to believe. "God, I believe in You!" There are no other words than this before God. There are no other words we can say.

Dear fellow Christians, when the Lord says one thing, can we say something else arguing against that? In today's scripture passage, God promises us that He will provide everything we are in need of when we first seek His Kingdom and His righteousness. When we take this passage to ourselves by faith, we cannot say something else. We cannot make any excuse other than that we do not have faith. "I can raise the lilies of the field. If then, can I not raise you? I can raise an annual plant, if then, can I not raise My children?" Now, believe in Him.

If we believe this, we may not think this way: "Rain is something that God makes to come from the sky anyway, and the sun light is something that He gives anyway, and therefore the grass grows, but we cannot live just with rain and sun light only. Do You not know, God, how hard we have to work to live?" Of course there is no way God does not know. If the Lord says He knows us all, then we must believe that God will also give the ability, wisdom, blessings that will enable us to live in this world as well. If the Lord took a lily to make an argument to tell us that God provided everything for the right time, then we can believe that God will provide

everything at the right time to us, who are God's children.

The Lord gives us another example to evoke our faith in Him, saying, *"Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?" (Matthew 6:26)*

However, some people of unbelief interpret this verse absurdly, saying, "Look! Look at the bird in the air! How diligent they are! If we work hard in this world as those birds that fly in the air, we can live well in this world." They put up arguments such as this. Since these people do not have faith, they make arguments such as this, "Ah, if a man works hard, then he can have enough food and live in abundance."

Arguments like this are different from the argument of faith that the Lord has told us. Who could not say that when we work hard, we do not have to worry about food? However, does everyone become rich just because he works hard? That is not the case for everyone. There are so many people who work at their place of employment for months or even over a year, but have not yet been paid.

"Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?" What the Lord has said by this verse is not that we can have food when we work hard. The Lord says that God our Father, who saved us, provides us with what is needed to eat, drink, and wear to maintain our lives in this world. This means that God will feed us and clothes us, the righteous. This means that God will take care of any righteous one who lives for the spread of the gospel. The main point of

this verse is that: "When you are my children, would I starve you, not clothe you? When you are my children, while you live in this world, while you have your life, while you have works to do in this world, would I not take care of you?"

I also felt absurd when I read this passage before I was born again. But that is not the case anymore. When I first met the Lord, I did not know what to do. So, I first thought that I was going to have a business to earn a living. As a matter of fact, I had no other plans in my mind. Truly I was dismal when I first met the Lord through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Because of the worries of how to live, what to eat, and what to wear, the worries of how to spread the gospel after receiving salvation took a back seat. How I should unite with God's church also took the back seat, and I was in agony about what I should do when I was busy trying to make a living for myself. But the Lord says, "That is what the Gentiles ask for." However, I rebelled against His Word very often saying, "That is your logic and my logic does not follow that right now."

When I looked ahead for how I should live from then on, it was dark. When I looked around my circumstance, it was even worse and I did not know what to do. I did not know anything at that time, but one thing I was sure of was that God became my Father and that the Lord had blotted out all my sins. And then, the Lord said, *"If you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move."* This meant that the Lord gave me the gospel of the Truth that enables me to live with faith. And He also said to me, *"Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."*

"Ah! This is the way I can live!" I made up my mind to devote myself to God's work. I held onto this word and started to pray for everything that I needed. I prayed: "Father God, I do not have any money. God, I want to spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit, but I do not have any money. Give me money. Give me materials. I do not have a building. Give me a church building. Give me the souls. I am trying to prepare books to spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit, but I do not have a press. Give me a press."

Now, my little faith had grown and I ask for something big doing the work of God. I have experienced that God has answered to everything—whether it is big or small. This makes me grow gradually as a man of faith. This means that we become men of faith without realizing it.

When something happens, I come to think: "God gives if we pray! And there is nothing of which the brothers and sisters need to worry! God helps! God helps the brothers and sisters! If the brothers and sisters are in trouble and have difficulties, God gives if we pray!" Our faith grows gradually as long as we pray in faith. This is why the Lord says, *"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:6-7).* Our God is able to give to us exceedingly abundant above all that we ask or think (Ephesians 3:20).

Since we believe this, we ask the Lord boldly. Rather than starting on something on our own, rather than trying to apply

every human means, we pray: "God! Give us this. We really need it." Now even if we cannot see any positive sign with our eyes, we ask God to give us. Why? It is because prayers make things happens, so it is better than our own ways that we try. When I was born again, I was planning to run a pot sales business to earn my living. But as my faith grew, I came to pray rather than trying to do something on my own.

If we have faith in God, we first pray to God for His help. Even if there are no answers, we diligently pray. "God, Do this for us. Do that for us." When we pray for a long time and constantly, we see that God answers. Then we receive the answer, and pray again with another prayer topic. As such, we experience that we receive answers from God. Therefore, we become people of faith. We come to have the stronger faith that believes in God. We come to believe firmly that the Lord feeds us, clothes us and makes us live. When we live for the righteousness of God, we develop our faith in God.

Therefore, when we work for the righteousness of God, we do not worry much about what we should eat from now on, or what we should drink and wear. Whenever we need something, we turn to prayer: "God, give to us again. Give our brothers and sisters materials. Give us health. Give us this. Give us that." We turn to prayer. This doesn't mean that we have to just sit and pray, and do nothing of our own. We have to pray first, and then seek for God's righteousness. Then, God gives us what is needed to eat, drink, and various other things needed to live as well as everything else. I hope you believe that He gives everything.

In reality, we have been able to live and do His work well

until now, because God has provided everything for us. Therefore, for the future as well, God will truly give us the righteous what we need to wear, eat, and drink, which are essential to our lives. Not only these, everything else that we ask for the Kingdom of God, God gives in abundance.

Brothers and sisters, this is why it is a blessing to live in God. We do not live with what we have, but with the faith in God. This is why the righteous can live with wealth for the flesh and spirit. If we truly live with the faith that believes in God, we live in abundance for the flesh and the spirit.

God told us: *"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."* This means we must live in union with His Church for the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, for the gospel, and for the salvation of the souls of the others. The Lord says for us to live for the gospel of the water and the Spirit. This means that God will give everything if we live for the righteousness of God. This is the promise of security that God assures you and me. This is the covenant that God made with those of us, who are born again. If we give our hearts and live for God's gospel, God will surely guarantee our lives by supplying what to eat, drink, and wear. God will at least guarantee that we live with wealth for the flesh and the spirit.

Dear fellow Christians, live for God. Are you nervous about your life? Live for the gospel of God. Live for the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Fix your mind on the work of God. If you do that, your future is guaranteed. When are we most worried as humans? When our materials, no matter how small it is, that we

lived on are going to run out, we feel most insecure. We feel rather comfortable if all we have runs out and we are empty-handed. Since we have nothing to save and have no reservation for anything, it is easier to try again with faith in the Lord. However, we are more insecure when we do not completely run out and try to live with what is still left. How nervous do we become in a fear that we might lose even what is left?

Dear fellow Christians, whether we have anything left, or do not have anything left, just live for the Lord, for the gospel, and trust in the Lord. Then the Lord fills us not only with what we have, but with abundance. It is because our Lord fills us in abundance when we live for the gospel, and helps us to live as we manage with what we have.

That's it. Bear this in mind today's scripture passage: *"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."* This is because if we live for God, God cannot help giving us everything of which we are in need.

There was a brother, who was a tailor. One cannot make much money being a tailor. He said that he had to stay up several nights to make one suit. So when he did much work for the church, he ran out of all his funds. Then, he started praying before the Lord. Since then, people ordered a lot of training clothes rather than suits. Some company started ordering training clothes by the bulk of several hundred or several thousand, so when he started the business, he started making plenty of money. Therefore, he could still live even as he was serving the Lord.

Living is living whether he makes suits or training clothes, but there are many brothers who can serve the Lord even more because they prayed when they were in trouble. In reality, there are many examples like that. Anyone who has lived for the Lord has that experience. We, the righteous do not only live by what we have. We serve the Lord with what the Lord has provided because the Lord fulfills us. If we live only with what we have, then we shall run out soon.

There was a widow in Zarephath in the Old Testament. At that time, there was a severe drought for years from God. Because of the famine, she ran out of everything and the last thing left was only a handful of flour in a bin. When she mixed the flour with water and kneaded, there came a lump of dough that would quench the hunger of only two or three people. She rolled the dough with a roller to make bread. The Jews make bread to eat. They roll out the flour dough to make it flat and when the fire goes out and there is only a charcoal fire left, they put the dough on it.

When she was going to make a loaf of pan-cake like bread for the last time for her and her son to eat, she thought that they would starve to death after that. Then a servant of God, Elijah, appeared.

"Woman, do you have anything to eat?"

"Yes, I have this much flour."

"Then bake that and bring it to me, so that I may eat."

Dear fellow Christians, because the servant of God told her to bring it to him, she did. She thought that she was going to eat this last piece with her son, and this was all she had, she gave it

to the servant of God to eat. The widow gave the servant of God the last piece that she had. It seemed that there was no hope for her. However, something incredible happened at that time. The servant of God prayed after eating it. Then, the flour did not run out in the bin. The Bible records this.

Dear fellow Christians, the Bible says, *"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."* Those who are not born again swindle others out of their money with this verse. This happens frequently in everyday life. But in reality, leading the souls to live by faith and to serve the gospel of the water and the Spirit is not deception, but the Word of God. If we truly live for the Lord, the Lord truly provides for us. Believe it. You have to believe it.

Dear fellow Christians, repeats after me. "Lord I believe in You!" You may still feel insecure, right? Then you can shout it out. "I believe!" Have you lived with your strength until now? Then hold onto God even more with faith. If you hold onto something more desperately, it still runs out. You cannot prevent it even with your fairly strong power. This is why the Lord tells us to live by the faith.

We should live with the heart for the Lord and serving the Lord whether we have much or not. Then the Lord will surely provide you with whatever you need. If we serve the Lord, then He has the responsibility to provide for us. He supplies us abundantly, because He can be served continuously by us. Since He is omnipotent, He will surely fill us even if it is just to keep His covenant if nothing else.

Our life does not depend on our will, but on our faith. We,

the servants of God as well as all the brothers and sisters, should live by faith—the faith that experiences what God has done for them when they lived for the Lord. If we live for ourselves, our faith cannot grow. When we live for the Lord, our faith in the Lord can gradually grow. Dear fellow Christians, do you know that blessings of God are like a bonus to the people who live by faith? A bonus is something given in addition to what is usual or expected.

God gives many bonuses besides His salvation. We live because God gives us many blessings as a bonus. If He does not give us any bonus, but only gives us what we deserve, then we cannot live. If only we receive what we work for, would lazy ones not all die? God gives many things in bonus, and that is a portion of His blessings. And we live along with God who gives us His grace. Therefore, we live by the faith that believes in God, who saved us.

Dear fellow Christians, if we believe in God, then, God works in us. Believe in God. Believe in God even if it is hard. God's promise is that He will listen to us if we believe in Him. *"Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."* Experience how God gives "all these things" to you as you live. I mean you should experience how God fulfills, how He provides for you. How can you experience God's blessings of fulfillment and provision through His mercy if you have not lived by faith?

Dear fellow Christians, live by faith: "I believe in You, God! I believe that you will clothe me, feed me, and that I do not live with a naked body, that you will clothe me and let me live so

that I am not ashamed. And I believe that you will feed me. I believe that you will let me live my life."

Believe like this. If you believe, God will have to give it to you. Is our God a God who cannot do that? Is He a God who cannot feed? God is a God who is powerful enough to do all that. Therefore, we must get rid of our own measures, and believe and trust in God the Omnipotent. Believe the Word. Trust! Trusting in the Word is faith. Dear fellow Christians, do you understand?

Do You Still Have Worries about Your Future Life?

Do you still have worries about your future life? I also had many worries when I was a senior in college especially, that is, when I was about to graduate. When I was a freshman, I went to school like a bull. I had nothing to worry about. "Hey, let's go eat some pancakes." I was unconcerned, but by the second semester of my sophomore year, I started getting worried. 'I will be graduating soon. Oh, then what will I do. Oh…I really was quite troubling.' When I thought about it, it really was a great trouble. I came to lose even my appetite.

In reality, not only students, but also everyone cannot but worry about 'how should I live' and 'how should I eat,' even after they are saved. However, it is a new start for those who are born again. If we are born again, what we did in the past, what kind of jobs we had, how we lived do not matter any more. However you lived with whatever in the past, now that you are

born again, you must make a new start. We are making a new year. A new era!

In Exodus 12, it is written, *"This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you" (Exodus 12:2).* God gave a new calendar to the Israelites in commemoration of their exodus from Egypt, escaping from their slavery. The Exodus was the new start of the Israelite's history. They crossed the Red Sea, the sea of death, and came to set their first steps toward the Promised Land. They were not the people of Pharaoh any more, but became the people of God instead.

Like this, from the moment we were born again, we are the new creations. That is why we should start a totally different new life. It is not an extension of our past life. We are now people who died with Christ and rose again with Him and have a new life. As it is written, *"Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:4).*

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17). All things have become new to the born-again. We study with new things, we go to work with new things, we serve the Lord with new things, and we live with new things. Let's live with new things from then on. In some sense, the life of the born-again may seem like simply an extension of their past life, but in reality, when God see us, it is a totally different way of life, and a beginning of a new life. All is new.

We are new creations once we believe in the gospel of the

water and the Spirit, and delivered form all our sins. You and I are now new creations. Now, old things have passed away. All your weaknesses, your fear, and your old way of life that used to rely on only human ways are gone. Now you became a new creation. Now we live through faith.

Dear fellow Christians! We will live by faith as in this verse, *"Now the just shall live by faith."* First is by faith, second is by faith! Third and fourth is also by faith. When falling, we shall live by faith, and when walking stiff, we shall live by faith—whatever situation we are in, we live by faith. This is what faith is all about. Faith made us live. Faith has made us alive! This is the correct answer. This is why the Bible tells us this message, today's scripture passage, *"Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear' Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."* This means not to worry about the future. Why? It is because it is up to the Lord. This is why the Lord told us not to worry about the things in the future. What would be accomplished because we worry about the future?

The Lord says to us, *"Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."* We should live today or tomorrow with faith. We challenge the future with faith before God. We ask God with faith, "God! Do this for me. Do that for me". Prayer is challenging with faith that one believes in God and believing that He will do it for us. That is all we can do, and our own will and oath for what we will do for the future are useless. We cannot guarantee our future or ourselves anything. Nothing is

for sure. That is why God, the Lord of all hosts, told us the scripture lessons today, so that we do not have to worry about what to eat, drink and wear.

Dear fellow Christians, we should not worry about how we shall live, how our flesh will be taken care of. Let's not worry. *"Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?"* This is how tall I am, but would I get taller even 1cm because I worry? Would it happen if we worry about it all night like this, 'This is what I want to be!'? There is nothing that works because we worry. Do we gain bread, or do we earn any money?

We should not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition present your requests to God. Pray fervently and ask with faith in God. That is what we have to do. Believing and praying are what we have to do. If you are worried, ask God for help. Trust in God. Fellow Christians, live your life by believing in God. Do you understand? —Yes.— We live if we believe, but we die if we do not believe.

Dear fellow Christians, if you do not believe in God, you die. If you rely on all the possessions you have, they will run out. Just as the peapod opens up and the peas run out, they all run out. How many peas does a peapod have? Does it have a hundred peas? No, only four or five peas. Dear fellow Christians, let's think about it. Can you live your entire life with only what you have, such as, your power, your ability, your health, and your wealth? I mean you should count whether or not you can do all the human obligations to your children, to your parents. Dear fellow Christians, can you count? No matter how much wealth we have, if we have life with only that, we cannot live. Then what is

it that we need? We need to have faith in God and His Word.

There is one thing that I really want to shout out to you. That is to believe in only God. Even in you cannot see God with your eyes, and having faith in Him seems to be too ungrounded, you should believe in Him. Just believe in Him. That's it.

The Bible states, *"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good testimony" (Hebrews 11:1-2)* Even if no evidence is seen to the eye, and no tangible thing to grab onto with the hand, we must ask God for anything with faith: "God, give me. I believe! Take care of all of my needs—food, clothes, and housing problems in my life. Help me live a worthy life." If you believe in Him and pray for His help, He answers. However, if you do not believe, and live relying on your own strength, your own calculations, then you die. You will lose even the small amount of what you have and become a real beggar.

The verse *"the just shall live by faith"* means that the only way a righteous person can live is by faith. *"The just shall live by faith" (Romans 1:17, Hebrews 10:38).* Dear fellow Christians, there is nothing but the faith that believes in God. Dear fellow Christians, do you believe? Faith is not for something that belongs to others. You do not raise your faith to give it to someone else. The faith is yours.

We can live only by believing in God and God's Word. It works out according to our own faith in God and His Word. It is more important to believe in God's Word, to pray with faith in God, and to live as we follow His will rather than worrying about anything. ✉

Sufficient for the Day Is Its Own Trouble

< Matthew 6:34 >

"Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."

The Lord said, *"Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."* The biggest enemy to the righteous who live a life of faith is worry. It is not even today's worry, but worry for the future. To us, the righteous, the worries about the future are from our own shortcomings and weaknesses. Therefore, we may say, "This is who I am now, then, how can I not worry about tomorrow?"

It is only natural that we worry when we look at ourselves. However, if we see our shortcomings of today and look at ourselves, who do not seem to have the possibility of having any better futures, and predict our future, we cannot but worry about it. And this can make us give up our life of faith. This is because since we think that we know ourselves very well and that there is no guarantee that the future will be better, so when there is no hope, we come to fall on worries. And these worries wither away our faith thoroughly and make us fall on

the fatal worries—"Should I give up my faith?"

However, our Lord says this. *"Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."* If we have anything that lacks now, we face it everyday for what lacks everyday. Tomorrow will worry about its own things, and sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

What happens when we fall on worries by looking at our own weaknesses and shortcomings? Just as a small yeast makes the entire bread rise up, to us humans, and even to the righteous, our hearts become covered with the shade of worries.

There is no one without weakness. Everyone has it. If we look at ourselves as 100%, let's consider that someone is worrying about his present situation and about the future as the amount of 10% out of 100%. Just 10% out of 100% is in problem, but the rest 90% is okay. However, because of this 10%, we have an illusion that we only have things that we need to worry about. This 10% is overtaking the other 90% with the thought that we are lacking, weak, always make mistakes, cannot do anything, and the future cannot really be any better. As a result, this makes us someone who cannot do anything, that is, the enervated person.

However, in reality, our Lord said, *"Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."* What the Lord said here is: "Is there anything you lack? If you have trouble today because of what lacks, it is enough trouble and you do not have to worry about what is going to lack in the future. Do not bring

the troubles of the future into the present and suffer from them in anticipation." The Lord says that tomorrow will worry about its own things.

What is in this teaching? When we see our lives as 100%, if there is 10% out of 100% that worries us, we only need to be troubled with that amount for the day. Of course, this does not mean that there will be no worries in the future. This does not mean we do not have any area where we are weak or lack. We all have that. However, if the weakness shows up, we only need to be troubled from the very areas that the weaknesses show up for the day. There is no reason why we need to bring up future worries into the present and worry now in anticipation. Our Lord is saying that we do not need to be frustrated with ourselves, thinking that we are a crippled person, who cannot do anything, and give up on ourselves because we are discouraged that we cannot live a life of faith anymore.

You and I are righteous people. However, we are not perfect in everything. Everyone has defects and weaknesses. When we first experience it, when we are just born again, it is ok. Why? Because we have still hope. It is ok because we have hope that it will change. But, as we live more and more in our lives of faith, it is not ok anymore. Just because we live a life of faith, our flesh does not change. Even Paul could not say that he had no shortcomings. Rather Paul said, *"O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?" (Romans 7:24)* We can find that he also was in his worries and weaknesses.

Therefore, when we find out about something that worries us, we must not bring in what should be in the future and die from

the burden of worries. If we are going to be troubled because of some problems or our weaknesses, we can be in trouble whenever it shows up rather than give up the life of faith or die because we are lacking. This is the word of encouragement from our Lord. *"Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."* We can be bold by believing in this teaching.

We, the righteous are to live for God and His righteousness. Even though we, the righteous have negative sides of our own, our lives are beautiful when we are in union with God's Church. We, the servants of God also live for the Lord. We also have many shortcomings, worries, and weak areas. However, as a result of that, do we just suffer from them, and cannot move ahead? That is not so. We do stop worrying about them, and go ahead by faith in His Word.

No matter how hard we try to hide our weakness, we know that we cannot change ourselves, and, as a result, we can give up our life of faith. That's why our Lord said, "Why do you worry, Do not worry for tomorrow. Do not worry in advance about what might possibly happen again tomorrow. When such things happen, and suffer because of it, it is enough to suffer that day." We must not die today because of that, thinking that we do not have any hope, or give up our life of faith as we carry the heavy burden of worries, or grieve and lose our strength or die.

You and I all have weaknesses of the flesh. We all have shortcomings. One day's suffering is enough for the day and there is no need to carry future suffering all at once and die. When we see perfectionists, we sometimes see that they

anticipate themselves in the future and give up the path that they have not even been to. They look at themselves, count it like this: "I am such a person. I am really not fit for the Lord's work and Lord's Kingdom. And it is not in my nature to live a life of faith." This 10% worries can make them despair, and eventually quit their lives of faith, saying, "I am not fit for it, so I am going to give up my life of faith."

Therefore, you should know that this is the scheme of the devil. Not to fall on such worries, the Lord said to us, *"Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."* Even though we are not perfect people in our flesh, because Jesus has blotted out all our sins, all we have to do is suffer from the present troubles from moment to moment. If there is something that we really need to suffer, it is enough to suffer that day. Of course, we sometimes cannot but feel desperate because the 10% worries overwhelm all the rest 90% of our life of faith. But we must blow out the small flare of worries before it burns out all of our faith. We have to reaffirm that Jesus took all our weaknesses and shortcomings along with our sins when He was baptized by John the Baptist.

We must listen carefully to what the Bible says in Matthew 6:34. Every one of us, the righteous, who thinks deeply about himself must listen carefully to the Lord's teaching. We must listen carefully to what Jesus says about not worrying about tomorrow. There must not be such a thing as looking at himself for tomorrow, worrying about it and giving up his life of faith. If we lack today, we suffer a little today, and if there is something

tomorrow that lacks, suffer a little more tomorrow. We must not be like a perfectionist, who thinks "Oh, no. It's impossible for me to follow Jesus," and kill himself just as Judas did, and become foolish Christians or God's workers. Do you understand what I am saying?

In reality, are there areas where you worry about the future and tomorrow? Yes, surely there are. The biggest one might be looking at ourselves and worrying about it. Because we are people, and especially the righteous ones among them, we worry a lot. If we worry about tomorrow, we die spiritually. We die now. Dying today without even having lived tomorrow is truly foolish.

What stumbles our faith is the worries of the world. It is worrying about tomorrow. It is the worries that we do alone hiding in our hearts and not telling anyone. The worries about our own today's weaknesses and shortcomings, and possible repeats of them tomorrow make us collapse. Are we going to carry the burden alone and die alone, saying "I cannot tell anyone about this"? That's not the will of God.

As in the Pilgrim's Progress that is about going toward the Kingdom of God, we are the pilgrims. Peter also called the saints *"as sojourners and pilgrims" (1 Peter 2:11).* We are the pilgrims and travelers to the Kingdom, who live in this world as the wind that passes by. A traveler suffers moment-to-moment and day-to-day troubles. We cannot be travelers if want to worry about 'where am I going to sleep, where am I going to rest.' It is not wise if we bring our suffering up in advance and suffer them all at once and die. We must shout out in our heart, *"Therefore*

do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."

We have to confess in faith, saying, "It is true. Our Lord's teaching is true. It is so. Our Lord taught me that when suffering comes, I just have to face it day to day and it is not wise to bring up future suffering and suffer it now in advance. Truly, just as the Lord teaches, I suffer my sufferings day to day, and if God allows any trouble to come to me, and I then just suffer it on the day that He allows it."

We do not know what happens tomorrow, and do not know how hard it will be no matter how big of a shortcoming shall be exposed. Worries may rise from day to day, but I hope you are not impeding the Lord's will because of such worries. We, the righteous people live by the Lord's will at least 90%. It is only about 10% of us that is buried in our own weaknesses. Everyone is buried in his weakness about 10% anyway. Therefore, we should not be killed as a result of that. We should not kill ourselves because of that, either. It is written, *"Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."* Are you sure that it is sufficient for you to suffer just today's trouble? Yes, we are.

Dear fellow Christians, do you have suffering? Do you have worries? —Yes.— If we have sufferings today, we must suffer only for it today. Then it is over. Tomorrow is a new day. I say this to all the saints and the male and female servants of God: The Lord has told us, *"Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the*

day is its own trouble." How great a truth is this? So precious is this admonition!

If our Lord has not said this, we would still be bound with our present weaknesses and even die from the overwhelming worries by anticipating our weaknesses of the future, saying, "I must do the same thing in the future." This is the same pessimism that Judas Iscariot had. Judas was remorseful seeing that Jesus had been condemned, and then he threw down the thirty pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself, saying, "I am a person who should die like this." Did he seem conscientious by that? No! That is not the will of our Lord.

Killing yourselves to take responsibility for what you have done is not the only way to offer obedience before the Lord. *"Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."* Our life is troublesome and imperfect. Such is our life. If we must suffer because we are not perfect, then we should only suffer for the moment when our imperfection shows up. I hope you do not become one of those suffering in advance and die, or give up your faith today for your fear of the future.

We must not be the masters of ourselves. The Lord is the only Master of all of us. It is correct that the more we live a life of faith, the more we feel our insufficiencies. However, we must not worry about what would happen to us tomorrow. Tomorrow is tomorrow and now is now.

This is all that I can share with you. If you understood one thing, I believe my preaching has been successful. This is why I always repeat the same teaching again and again within a sermon.

Truly, we are those who cannot but die with all our worries for tomorrow. You and I cannot but be such beings if we are only in our fleshly thoughts. However, our Lord has saved us, who are like that, with His Word of the water and the Spirit. And He admonishes us, *"Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."* Our Lord has saved us from our worries and our imperfection. He saved you and me. Dear fellow Christians, is it not right? —Yes.—

Those who give up their life of faith look ahead at what might happen tomorrow and worry in advance and have given up their life of faith. There is a great possibility that such people will increase. This is why our Lord says this. *"Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."* We must only suffer today what is necessary for us to suffer this day. There is no one who does not have that much suffering, and the Lord God has made us the righteous who can overcome all of our sufferings with faith. Whether the sufferings are from our own shortcomings, or from the persecution the Lord allowed, we just have to suffer from them that day and there is no reason why we need to worry about them in advance. This is faith. Our Lord took over all our weaknesses. Our God not only has saved us from all our sins, but also from all our worries. When we believe it and follow the Lord, we feel that there are no worries, concerns, fear or grief at all.

If we did not have this teaching today, there is a great possibility that we will say, "Oh, I give up right now. Oh I will

die now!" in our life of faith. When it is near the Lord's coming, I am sure that we will see many such people. It is because the anticipation of this time makes everyone expose the more shortcomings. Our worries increase because of the world being chaotic and it is difficult to live, but you must not worry about tomorrow's worries in advance today and die to today. I hope you become those who worry about tomorrow's troubles tomorrow. I also hope you believe that sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

Sufferings and worries do not last forever. What lasts forever to us, who have received the remission of sin is the Lord, the salvation and the Kingdom of Heaven. Worries are temporary and do not last. Just as a day can be clear or cloudy or rainy or sunny, we are not always worldly or always spiritual. Even though we are insufficient, we the righteous are not always disobedient. Even though we are insufficient, we are following the Lord's will. Jesus has already taken care of all our shortcomings. Therefore, I hope you live by the faith in the Lord's teaching. We thank the Lord for giving us such a teaching so that we do not fall in our worries. How great is this teaching to us, who are living in the last days, we are truly thankful.

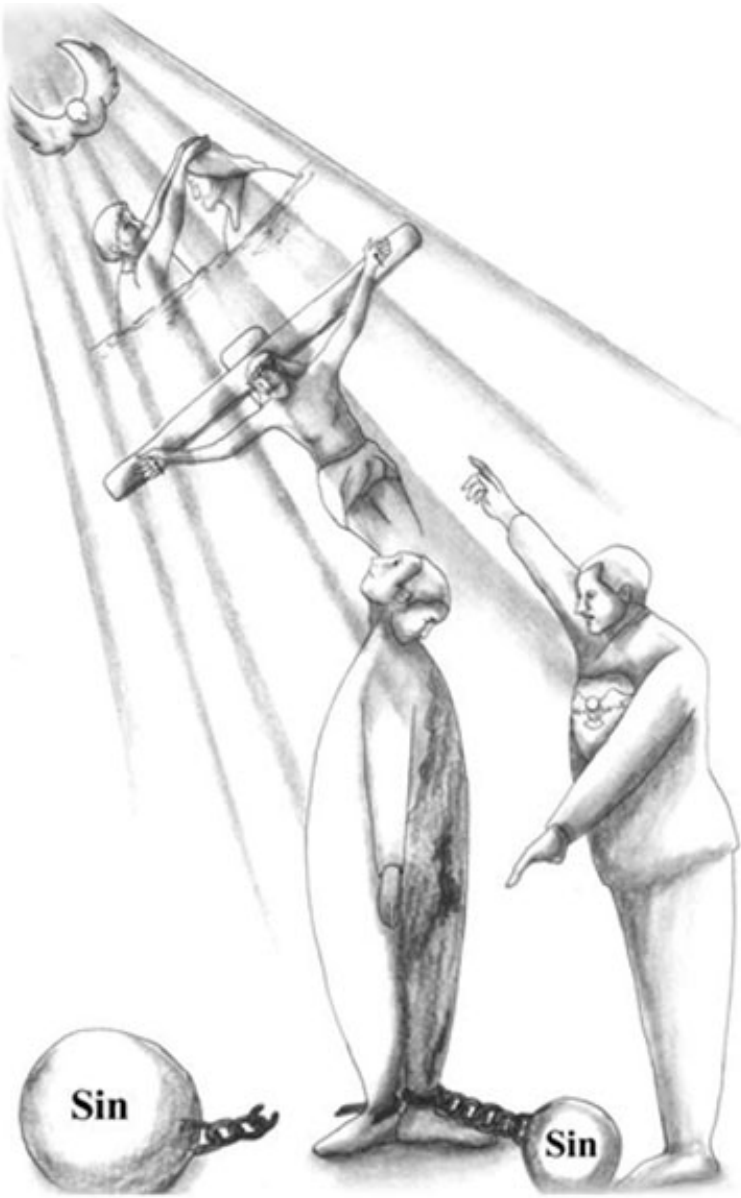
We have sufferings everyday, but one day's suffering is enough for that day. And we must live for the blessed work of God everyday by believing that He gives us new strength everyday to overcome all the troubles and problems that hinder us from working for the gospel.

Halleluiah! ✉

CHAPTER

7

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

By Believing in the Power of the Gospel, We Must Enter by the Narrow Gate

< Matthew 7:13-14 >

"Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it."

In today's scriptural passage, our Lord commanded us to "enter by the narrow gate." What, then, is this narrow gate that He would tell us to enter by it? And what did He mean by the wide gate? All of us must now walk on the narrow and difficult way. To do so, we must believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit even more ardently, and we must walk only by our faith in the Word of God. Sure, we could leave the narrow way and turn to the easier, wide way, but we must not do this, for the Lord has told us to walk on the narrow and difficult way.

There are many in this world who do not like to enter by the narrow gate through the difficult way. Because the way seems too narrow, difficult, and dangerous for them, and only a few come to find on it, they are reluctant to embark on it, and they

even think that anyone who is on this way can only be foolish. However, such a faith is not of a wise believer.

It is on the narrow way that the wisdom that leads to life is found. Those who are on this way to life are clearly wise. So such people do not hesitate to embark on this way, though they may be only a few. While it is true that there are many in this world who do not like the narrow way, this is not the case for everyone. Although their number may be very small, there actually are people who look for the narrow way and are glad to walk on it. For everyone, to be saved from his sins, he must absolutely enter by the narrow gate.

The Narrow Way Is the Way of Truth, the Way to Eternal Life

Countless people in this world profess to believe in Jesus, but many of them are actually walking on the wide way from their failure to realize and believe that Jesus took upon all the sins of the world by being baptized by John the Baptist. Those who are walking on the narrow way know that they are on the right way to eternal life, for they believe in the truth that the baptism of Jesus took away all their sins once and for all.

But who among the Christians of this world knows this mystery of the narrow gate and the difficult way? Even the so-called evangelicals of this age do not know that Jesus took upon the sins of the world through the baptism that He received from John the Baptist. The significance of the baptism of Jesus is that

it holds the amazing truth of salvation, which is that Jesus bore the sins of this world and was crucified for us.

Yet the nominal Christians who believe in Jesus as if they were merely practicing one of the many religions of the world think that it was only on the Cross that Jesus forgave all their sins—such Christians know that their sins remain intact in their hearts. Among the so-called evangelicals, many claim that one can become sinless just by believing in Jesus as the Savior. They even mock us, saying, "All that we have to do is believe in Jesus as our personal Savior. So why do we have to know and believe in this gospel of the water and the Spirit?" They insist that it's okay to just believe themselves to be sinless, and thus, are refusing to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. But in fact, they are actually walking on the wide way of the world, following and assimilating with the majority of the secularized Christianity.

If the Lord spoke to us about the gospel of the water and the Spirit, then we must be glad to receive the power of the remission of sin by believing in this gospel of salvation as it is. By believing and spreading the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we are in fact walking on the narrow and difficult way. Those who are walking on the narrow way must admonish those who are on the wide way to return to the Word of God and follow it. No matter what the circumstances may be for the believers of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, when the Lord Himself has told them to go on the narrow way, then they must walk on this narrow way by faith.

Yet since so many Christians have made so many

compromises with the people of this world to walk on the wide way, how could they ever receive the remission of sin into their hearts? Such Christians who are living their lives while compromising with the people of the world still have their sins intact in their hearts, and they are only walking on the wide way to ultimately reach their destruction, despite professing to believe in Jesus as the Savior.

The Apostle Paul said, *"Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?" (Romans 6:3).* He also said, *"Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His" (Romans 8:9).* The results of believing in Jesus as the Savior are to be saved from sin, to become sinless, and to have the Holy Spirit dwell in the heart.

Though the Holy Spirit cannot be seen by our eyes, He is the Spirit of Truth that descends on those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit given by Jesus. And the role of the Holy Spirit is to bear witness to such believers of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, assuring them, "The Lord has perfectly saved you from all your sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. You are therefore now sinless."

For He is the Spirit that bears witness to the Word of Truth in the hearts of the believers of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, it is no longer possible for any sin to be found in their hearts. He dwells in the hearts of the born-again, and lets their minds have the concrete testimonies of salvation. The Holy Spirit bears witness, in other words, that all the sins of this world were passed onto Jesus' body when He was baptized by

John the Baptist. The Holy Spirit empowers those who walk on the narrow way, giving them faith, leading and teaching them in all things with the Word of truth, and holding them steadfast. By reminding us of the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit that has washed away our sins, the Holy Spirit strengthens our souls, minds and bodies. He testifies, in short, that Jesus was baptized for us and died on the Cross for us.

Those Who Believe in And Follow the Gospel of Truth Are the Ones Who Are Walking on the Narrow Way

Those who walk on the narrow way are spiritual priests that deliver those who have fallen into their destruction from their sins. They are the very believers of the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit. And the Lord is pleased with such people who are on the narrow and difficult way. No matter how difficult this way of the righteous is, because it is the way that saves others from their sins, we must all go on this way. And we must serve the gospel day and night to deliver from sin all those who are yet to receive the remission of their sins. Those who are still on the wide way, in other words, must be led by us so that they may also enter into the narrow gate. Such people, who are walking on the wide way, must remember that though this way may be comfortable for them, if they continue to follow it, they will ultimately end up on the way of destruction.

Here, those who are walking on the wide way refer to the

hypocritical Christians who have compromised with the people of the world and are as a result walking on the path of their own destruction. They are the ones who stand against the gospel truth of the water and the Spirit, claiming that it is right for them to still have sin despite believing in Jesus.

What did our Lord say about such people who are on the wide way? He said, *"Wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it."* Put differently, there are many Christians whose sins remain intact and are falling into their destruction, even as they profess to believe in Jesus, from their failure to know the gospel truth of the water and the Spirit. Yet it is this false faith of theirs that attracts people, and it is their wide way of destruction that people follow.

They teach that all that Christians have to do is just be virtuous. But such is a seriously flawed teaching that deviates far from the truth. This kind of teaching is quite different from the gospel truth of the water and the Spirit that has made us sinless. Despite this, the people of this world find the faith of those who do not believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit more attractive. Although such nominal Christians have not received the remission of their sins even as they attend church, they still gain the approval of the secular people if they just live virtuously. But God does not approve this kind of faith as the right faith.

Therefore, those of us who have chosen the narrow way are living our lives in God's Church that preaches the gospel of the water and the Spirit, His Word, and following His will. We have

heard and believed the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, and we have thereby been saved from all our sins and become sinless once and for all. And after being saved from our sins, we have become God's workers who lead other souls to the way of life. Thus we have become the ones who are walking on the narrow and difficult way.

However, most Christians do not believe in Jesus for the purpose of being washed clean from their sins, nor do they want to become righteous. It is deeply disturbing to see that such a kind of faith is becoming increasingly more widespread, and that its supporters are so boastful while walking on the wide, secular way. They always blow their own horns, regarding themselves as very wise. They don't even realize that it is wrong for them to walk on the wide way, and yet perversely, they continue to denounce the born-again who are walking on the narrow way to be foolish.

Even Christian leaders are oblivious to the fact that they are actually walking on the wide road without even realizing. For them, to be recognized by others and gain worldly reputation is one of the most important matters, and quite unfortunately, their faith also attracts and draws many people, just like a politician who is good at showmanship is able to draw many voters. They know well what people like and want to have. They say what pleases people rather than what pleases God. They are false teachers and the servants of Satan. The true servants of God never do what these false teachers do. As the Apostle Paul said, *"For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I*

still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ" (Galatians 1:10).

Therefore, we have even more reason to cast aside the faith of the world and follow the gospel of the water and the Spirit that leads us to this narrow way that pleases our Lord. To do so, we must believe that the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the truth that puts us on the narrow way, and we must follow it as such. Placing our faith in the written Word of truth, all of us must follow this way. We must understand why our Lord told us to enter by the narrow gate, and we must follow it by faith. We must realize why the Lord said that few find this narrow way that leads to the gate of life because of its difficulty, and we must follow and serve the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Those of us who have been born again have already come into the narrow gate, for we believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. And we are also walking on the narrow way together with the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

The righteous who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit simply cannot embark on the wide way, for it is written, *"Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever" (1 John 2:15-17).*

I give all my thanks to our Lord who has put us on the narrow way. ✉

What Shall We Do If We Were Forsaken by the Lord On the Last Day?

< Matthew 7:21-23 >

"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'"

Everyone born in this world is bound to fall in love at least once. This is how a man and a woman become one in marriage. But for most people, there is also a form of love that is called an unrequited love. There is one-sided love, in other words, that has little to do with how the other feels and what his intentions are. Few such loves actually bear complete fruits; in most cases, it ends as a one-sided love benefiting only one person. In such cases, it is generally forgotten in time, only remaining as a distant memory of heartache long ago, but there is also a stalker's love that is far worse than unrequited love. These are

people who are obsessed with the object of their love, no matter how they are often rejected time after time. In extreme cases, such an obsessive love leads one to kill the very person whom he loves.

These stalkers often think and believe that the other person actually loves them as well, when in fact this is not the case at all. They are suffering a form of mental illness.

In love, the will of each other is critically important, just as a clapping sound can be made only when both hands are involved. Loving someone earnestly but all on one's own cannot be a right love. When even the unrequited love between humans is meaningless like this, how far less meaningless would it be that a sinner tries to love God arbitrarily and audaciously?

God told us that He loves everyone equally. He blesses and loves those who understand His love correctly and accept it thankfully by faith. He brings salvation from sin unconditionally to them. However, to those who otherwise fail at this, He brings His wrath on them and rebukes them. The reason for this is because the love that the latter have for God is flawed. God said in Matthew that He does not know such people.

When the people said to Him, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?" the Lord declared to them, *"I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!" (Matthew 7:23)*

Let's consider for a moment what would happen when those who do not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit go before God with all their sins intact. They will address the Lord

as if they were addressing another human being. We can imagine the following conversation taking place between such a person and the Lord Jesus.

"How are you, Lord? Back when I was living on the earth, I always thought that You were beautiful, but it's even a greater honor for me to finally meet You like this. Thank You, Lord. You've saved me like this. And though I might have a few sins with me, since I believe in You, I am sure that I've been saved. Well, I will then now go to the beautiful place that You've prepared for me over there. Farewell, and I'll see You again later." As this man tries to leave His presence, the Lord calls him back, as He has a few words to say to him.

"But hold on! Those with sin cannot go to that place!"

"Well, it's true that I still have my sins with me, but I think that I can still go there, since I believe in Jesus as my Savior."

"No, that is not how it works! You still have your sins with you, don't you?"

"Well, yes. I still have my sins."

"So how can you even dare to go to the place that I've prepared only for the sinless? Hark! Throw this guy into the never-ending fire to suffer forever! And before they do this, you should confess your sins first."

Then, the man comes to confess all the sins that he had committed before with his mouth wide open and without hesitation, saying, "Well, when I was living in the past world, I committed such and such sins…."

The Lord then says to him, "Okay, that's enough. You are more than qualified to go to hell. Since you have sins, go to hell,

where it's nice and warm for such a man like you."

"What? But back in the world I believed in You! I prophesied in Your name! I witnessed to so many people! I sold my house to serve You; I helped orphans so much; I diligently went to every morning prayer meeting; I healed many sick people; I fasted for you and sacrificed so much for you!" By now, thinking that all this is simply too unfair, he is gnashing his teeth so ferociously that it sounds as if his teeth are falling apart—we can imagine that dentistry would be booming in hell! But seriously, for all sinners, whether they had believed in Jesus or not, if they did not believe in Jesus within the truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, then they are all bound to be cast into this place of everlasting fire.

In Jeremiah 17:1, God said, *"The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron; With the point of a diamond it is engraved On the tablet of their heart, And on the horns of your altars."* Judah here refers to the royal tribe among the Israelites, and God used this word to represent the people of all Israel. And further more, it applies to all human beings, as the Bible stands for the Representative Principle; for example, Adam is invoked as the representative of mankind (Romans 5:18).

Diamonds are crystalline forms of carbon cube, and they are the hardest natural substance known in the world. So when it says here that people's sins are written on the tablets of their hearts with the point of such a diamond, this cannot be erased unless they are washed clean from all their sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Therefore, for the sinners who have not yet received the

remission of their sins, all the sins that they have committed are written on the tablets of their hearts. No matter how they might be well-versed in systematic theology, are experts in the Calvinist theology, hold doctorate degrees in theology, teach theology at seminaries as professors, or hold high positions in churches, the sins that are written on the tablets of their hearts cannot be blotted out by believing anything other than the gospel of the water and the Spirit. This is why when such people pray to God, we see them confessing themselves to be sinners, for the tablets of their hearts are filled with their sins.

Because sinners cannot have fellowship with God in the Truth even if they want to, they frequently commit themselves to mountain prayers, fasting, speaking in tongues, and seeing visions in order to meet the Lord through the so-called mystical experiences. But in the end all these things are in vain, and all that they have done is live through a deluded life of faith that deceived their own hearts.

The above passage from Jeremiah also says that the sin of Judah is engraved on "the horns of [their] altar." The horns of the altar here refer to the Books of Deeds. There are two books in the Kingdom of God: the Book of Life and the Books of Deeds (Revelation 20:12). In the Books of Deeds, God has written each and every iniquity of all sinners in full detail.

Therefore, if these sinners do not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, they will never escape from their sinful status while in this world. All who seek to blot out the sins that are written on the tablets of their hearts, no matter who they are, must believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, that Jesus

has saved them in the most appropriate and fitting way, by taking away all their sins through the baptism that He received from John and the blood that He shed on the Cross. Then, their names can be written into the Book of Life, and only then can they become the people of God.

Are Your Names Now Written in the Book of Life?

Everyone is bound to stand before the judgment throne of God once. Let us imagine here that a believer of the gospel of the water and the Spirit is standing before God on that day. God commands his angels, "See if his name is found in the Book of Life." So the angels check, and sure enough, his name is written in it.

God then says to him, "My dear child, when you were back on the earth, you washed away all your sins by believing in the gospel truth of the water and the Spirit that I had given you freely. You then labored hard for Me, and shed many tears for Me as well. I will make sure that no more tears will ever come out of your eyes. There will be no more such sufferings, nor will Satan trouble you ever again. Well done, my child."

The Lord then commands His angels to crown him.

"Thank You, Lord; it is such an honor for me!"

"Bring a crown for him and put it on his head!"

"I am utterly grateful, Lord. Saving me from my sins alone is enough for me to be infinitely indebted to You, and yet are You are now even crowning me for the small labor that I did for

You? Thank You, Lord. It's enough that You've saved me. That I can enter Your Kingdom to live there forever is a sufficient reward for me. So can I then enter Heaven now?"

"Sure! Bring an angel! Let the millionth son of God ride on his back."

The appointed angel comes forth and says to him, "Here I am, my lord! Please get on my back."

"It's very cushy. Let's go to somewhere beautiful."

The angel carefully starts to flip his wings to fly.

"Would you like to go for a drive, my lord?"

"Wow! It is so wonderful here! How big is this Heaven?"

"Well, I've been flying around here for billions of years, but I still haven't seen the end of it."

"Really? You can put me down now. I must be heavy for you."

"My lord, we never run out of energy here in Heaven."

"Is that so? Thanks. Let me put my first step on Heaven's ground. So where are all the righteous who came here prior to me?"

"They are there."

"Let's go there to see them."

So the believer meets all the righteous who have gone before him, having eternal fellowship with them to all his heart's desire. All these things may seem like a fantasy, but they are what will actually happen to those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. How blessed are those who have been saved by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit!

However, there are so many spiritual idiots in today's

Christianity who are too stubborn to accept God's free gift of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Such people, even though they believe in Jesus, have actually misbelieved, as they do not know the gospel of the water and the Spirit. It is tantalizing to see how desperately they are sticking to their fraudulent faith when the true gospel is shown to them so obviously.

If people want to be truly saved from their sins, then they must believe with their hearts in the gospel truth of the water and the Spirit, which tells us that Jesus accepted all the sins of the world by being baptized by John the Baptist (Matthew 3:13-17) and vicariously bore the punishment of our sins by shedding His blood on the Cross in our place. We cannot try to enter Heaven by believing in anything that comes along, because God is just when it comes to the issue of sin and salvation, and He is not merely a goodhearted man at your next door who always tolerates anyone and everything.

Let me tell you a funny story. Someone went to Heaven, and in one corner all that he saw was tons of ears and lips piled up. When the person asked an angel about the reason for this, the angel explained to him that they were here in Heaven because only the lips and ears were saved. When we believe in the Lord, it is absolutely necessary that we believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit from the depth of our hearts, and thereby be saved by this faith from all our sins once and for all.

Many Christians who still have their sins intact before the Lord even as they presently believe in Jesus think that they will have no problem entering Heaven despite the fact that their sins are still with them. But our Lord will tell them, "I cannot

consider you to be sinless when you in fact still have all your sins with you. I had already remitted away all your sins with the gospel of the water and the Spirit while you were in the world, and yet you refused to believe in this gospel with your hearts. Do you see what I mean? Hark! Now cast these people who rejected My love into the everlasting fire!"

If there is sin in your hearts even as you believe in Jesus, then while you are still on this earth, listen to the gospel of the water and the Spirit, believe in it, and receive the remission of your sins that God has given you so freely out of His abundant grace. You must realize that the souls that do not do so will all be cast into the eternal fire of hell in the next world.

Those who claim to be sinless even as their sins remain in their hearts are doing nothing more than making a mockery of God and trying to deceive Him. When the day comes for God to judge this world, they will realize just how huge a difference there is between the sinful and the sinless. On this day, they will all realize why the Lord had admonished them so earnestly to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and receive the remission of sin. And then, they will all lament in regret for not having believed in it.

Every Christian may equally believe in Jesus as the Savior, but there exists an immense difference of faith between those who have received the remission of sin and those who have not: the former will be welcomed into Heaven, but the latter will be cast into hell. If you do not now recognize that the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit is the truth of the remission of your sins, then later on the Last Day, it will surely be too late for you.

Is there sin in your hearts even as you believe in Jesus as the Savior? If so, you, too, are also sinners. Jesus is the Savior who condemns those who say that they have sin. Does this then mean that it would be okay if we would just blindly insist that we have no sin? This is not the case. We can become sinless only when we truly believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit with our hearts and are washed from all our sins once and for all. Heaven is a place that can be entered only by those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that has completely blotted out all sins.

Prepare the faith that saves you from your sins *now*, with the gospel of the water and the Spirit. If you put this off until later, it will be too late. Before it's too late, believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit now and be ready! If you do not accept into your hearts the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the truth of the remission of sin, you will then be imprisoned in hell. All sinners will be imprisoned in hell, but the righteous will dwell in Heaven.

Who would have known that receiving the remission of sin by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit would be this precious? Those in this world who have heard the gospel of the water and the Spirit and believed in it are all truly fortunate ones.

I praise our Lord with this gospel. I thank the Lord once again for saving us, who had all been sinners, from all the sins of the world through the gospel of the water and the Spirit once and for all. You, too, must believe in the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, now! You will then all become God's own children forever. Hallelujah! ✉

Faith That Can Do The Will of God the Father

< Matthew 7:20-27 >

"Therefore by their fruits you will know them. Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!' Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall."

Our Lord said to His disciples, "By their fruits you will know them." For the disciples of Jesus, the fruits here refer to the final settlement of their faith. Simply put, being saved from sin as a

result of believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the fruit that God approves, and the question is whether or not we have such fruits. The way to become true saints before God, not liars, is found in the faith that believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. In other words, when we believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, we can become the true people of God rather than false prophets. Also, for our faith to bear real fruits, not just chaffs, our hearts must believe in God's gospel Word of the water and the Spirit.

Our Lord said, "Every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit"—so we can also know them by their fruits.

Can We Be Saved from All Our Sins and Become God's Children Just by Calling on the Name of the Lord?

Today, I wish to share with you the kind of faith that can do the will of God. In Matthew 7:21, Jesus Himself said, *"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven."* Those who enter the Kingdom of Heaven by the will of the Lord are the very ones who have received the remission of their sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Saints are those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The fruit that is born from believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit is being remitted from all sins and becoming righteous. Therefore, only those who do the will of God the

Father can enter Heaven. We must realize the reason why our Lord said, *"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven."*

Here in this passage, Jesus says, "He who does the will of My Father can enter Heaven." Who, then, are such people who do the will of God? They are the ones who obey the will of God the Father. The Bible says, *"This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:39-40).* God really wants to save us all sinners from sins.

Who, then, obeys this will of God the Father, which is to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit? First of all, they are the ones who believe that God the Father sent His only begotten Son Jesus Christ to this earth, and that by having His Son be baptized by John the Baptist, the Father made Jesus take upon all the sins of the world once and for all. And they are the ones who also believe that God the Father made Jesus carry the sins of the world to the Cross, be crucified on both His hands and feet, and shed His blood to death, thereby washing us from all our sins and bearing all our condemnation of sin.

Believing in this truth of salvation is the faith that believes according to the will of the Father in Heaven. Those who do the will of God the Father and believe accordingly will all enter Heaven, for they believe in the gospel of the water and the

Spirit, the very will of the Father. This is the ultimate providence of God the Father. All of us must have a clear understanding of this, and we must all become such saints who believe in this gospel of salvation, because only by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit can we become God's children, be remitted from all our sins, and eventually enter Heaven.

What did our Lord mean when He said to all of us, "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven"? The meaning of this passage is that those who try to enter Heaven without the faith that wholeheartedly believes in the remission of sin set by God the Father—that is, in the gospel of the water and the Spirit—cannot ultimately enter Heaven. In other words, our Lord is teaching us here that just because people call on His name, blindly saying "Lord, Lord," does not mean that they have the faith that enables them to enter Heaven, but only those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and have thereby been saved from all their sins—that is, who do the will of God the Father—can enter into the Father's Kingdom.

The reason why many Christians, despite believing in Jesus as their Savior, cannot enter Heaven in the end is because they do not have this faith that believes in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, which can give them the perfect remission of sin. By giving us the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit and making us believe in it, and having us completely acknowledge this gospel in our hearts, our Lord has now enabled us to enter Heaven by faith. If all of us indeed have this

faith that believes in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, then there is no reason why any of us would not be remitted from our sins, nor is there any reason why we would not be able to enter Heaven.

If we have faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, then this means we all have the faith that enables us to receive the remission of our sins and be justified, as well as to become God's own children, enter Heaven, and dwell by Him. In short, those who have this faith that believes in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit can all enter Heaven because they have been remitted from all their sins, while many Christians who do not have this faith cannot ultimately enter Heaven even as they believe in Jesus as the Savior, because they have remained as sinners by not believing in this gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Our Lord said that to enter Heaven, we must do the will of the Father. When you have this faith that believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, it is only possible for you to do the will of the Father. Even though we cannot but commit sins by instinct until we die, we can be washed from all our sins before God when we believe in this gospel Word of the water and the Spirit and recognize it.

Doing the will of God also means doing His good works, that is, winning souls by spreading the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Therefore, if we want to follow the will of God the Father, first of all, we have to believe in His absolute truth, the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Unless we do so, we cannot do what is right, for all our sins would still remain intact in our

hearts. Put differently, we have to be born again first to do the good works of God (Ephesians 2:10).

Whoever believes in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit that we have spread has the ability to do the will of God the Father. As such, those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and recognize it have become the ones who spread this gospel of the water and the Spirit to all sinners in full conviction. And although they may be persecuted and face difficulties from preaching this gospel of truth, in the end, they have all become the very people who do the will of God the Father. When we have this faith that believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, then we have become such people who do the will of God successfully.

On the other hand, if we do not believe in the God-given gospel of the water and the Spirit, then we cannot do the will of God the Father. If we do not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and are therefore not saved from our sins, then even if we want to live according to the will of the Father in Heaven, we cannot avoid but continue to live in the bondage of sin. But because we believe with all our hearts in the gospel of God, the gospel of the water and the Spirit, all of us have become the ones who do the will of the Father by serving God through the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Brothers and sisters, when did we come to have the correct knowledge of the will of God? It was when we were able to discover the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit from the Word of God and believed in it. If we do not believe in the Word of God, then neither can we know the will of God the

Father, nor do His will in this world. We must realize that even if we were to feed the hungry, nurse the sick, and care for orphans, all in our bid to love our neighbors to do the will of God the Father, this is actually far different from doing the will of God the Father. In doing the will of God, our good deeds of the flesh cannot replace the faith that believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that our Lord has given us.

No virtuous deed in this world can ever replace the work of faith that believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the Father's will, which delivers sinners. That we have been able to do the will of the Father by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and spreading it throughout the whole world cannot be replaced by any good deeds that we may do in our flesh. Realizing this amazing truth once and for all, we must never again let our faith be confused about the will of the Father.

However, there are so many people in this world who are trying to replace the will of the Father by doing good deeds in their flesh. But it is because we have received the remission of our sins by believing in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit from the Word of God that we have become the ones who do the Father's will and been able to serve the gospel of the water and the Spirit throughout the whole world.

When it comes to our spiritual lives of faith, we must believe that it is right for us to do the will of the Father by believing in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit. To do so, we must first know the true gospel. How can it be possible for a sinner to do the will of God when he doesn't even know exactly what it is? If we do not know what kind of faith allows us to live

according to the will of God the Father, then we can never have the strength to do the will of the Father in Heaven.

Therefore, we must first attain the ability to do the will of God the Father by believing in this gospel that holds the righteousness of God. In short, if we do not have faith that believes in the gospel of the Spirit, then, we will eventually be cast aside by God, because such a faith of ours has nothing to do with His will. That's why we must examine ourselves whether or not we truly believe in the Word of God, whether we indeed believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit with our hearts.

Those who do not live according to the will of God will end up leaving His Church, because they cannot overcome their petty, carnal lust of flesh above all else. Or, they will ultimately end up as false prophets who seek after their own will in the name of Jesus Christ by presenting themselves as being in sheep's clothing. But, because the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the will of God the Father in Heaven, those who believe in this gospel of truth can receive the strength to follow the Father's will by the power of the Holy Spirit as they live their lives.

If we truly want to know God's good will toward us and follow it, then we must first believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit. If we indeed believe in the Word of God as the truth, then even if the Bible does not seem to be plausible, we must still yield to the gospel of the water and the Spirit revealed in the Word of God. If all of us believe in the will of God manifested in the Bible, then we can all please Him by doing His will, for the faith of such people is bound to stand

firmly forever. Just as pine trees stand straight and shoot toward the sky, those who believe in the Word of God have the invincible power to follow the will of God.

If your faith depends on the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the Word of God, and you have thereby received the remission of your sins, then this empowered faith will always give you the very strength to do the will of God the Father. Even if you have glaring insufficiencies when others see you, if you have this faith that believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, then you can have the authentic faith that Abraham had. By believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, all of us must come to have this faith that remits away all our sins and enables to enter Heaven. We will live our lives obeying and doing the will of God the Father, and we will all ultimately enter His Kingdom.

You and I must therefore always hold onto our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit steadfastly. Rather than holding onto our circumstances, we must keep our faith in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, and we must faithfully spread the gospel and wait for the Lord until the day He returns.

Even the righteous who have received the remission of sin by faith always face many ups and downs. Just as there are the four different seasons of spring, summer, fall, and winter in the nature, the righteous also face different circumstances at different times—sometimes warm and refreshing, at other times lethargic and painful, and yet on another occasion peaceful.

However, our faith can differ from our circumstances at anytime. Even though our circumstances change so much like

this, our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit never changes under any circumstances, always protecting us and keeping us from all curses. If we believe in the Word of God, then because of this faith, we will never be spiritually dried or frozen to death in our winter, nor die from heat in the summer, nor fall into nihilism in the autumn, nor be drawn into the world in the spring. No matter how many ups and downs we may experience in our spiritual lives, we can always do the will of God forever. If we have the faith that believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, then we can overcome all our difficulties, and with this faith we can ultimately live the most precious lives before God the Father by doing His will.

The gospel of the water and the Spirit is sufficient to turn all of us into those who live according to God's will. This is why you and I must always defend our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the Word of God. By doing so, we can live in obedience to the will of God the Father. Are you now abiding in the Word of God? Or are you, imprisoned by our own circumstances, not able to live by believing in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit? If the latter, then ask yourselves whether you really believe in the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit or not. We must believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit found in the written Word of God, and we must live in the power that this gospel brings to us. Clearly, by receiving the power of God through our faith in the definite gospel of the water and the Spirit, we must all live our lives fruitfully in joy.

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We Must Believe in the Powerful Word of God

One thing that I absolutely want to ask you to do is to hold onto the written Word of God with your faith, to its each and every passage. I have no more ardent desire than for you to believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, the Word of God, for unless you do so, your faith is bound to fail at any given time because of the sins that you commit, and you yourselves are bound to perish because of such sins. All of us must steadfastly hold onto the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit. Without doing so, we cannot stand upright even for a day—nay, not only can we not stand, but we cannot live at all, bound to walk in the valley of death.

The Apostle Paul frequently made mention of *"work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope" (1 Thessalonians 1:3)* as the essential virtues of the born-again saints. Even if we have the hope to enter Heaven, and the love that we have received from God, we are nothing unless we have the faith that believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, for only this gospel of the water and the Spirit empowers us to live such a virtuous life. If you do not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, then all the blessed scriptural Word of prophecy would not be yours, but someone else's.

You may believe that you will all enter Heaven in a distant future, but unless your hearts do believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and hold onto it right now, your life might as well be over. We cannot continue to live without the true faith that believes in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit. If

we are not provided with the Word of God, and if we do not feed on it right now, our souls are bound to starve to death.

Upon what is true faith founded? True faith must be founded upon the written Word of God.

When I was not yet born again, I used to think that I would have had the true faith if I had offered all my possessions to God. But I worried that if I let go of everything I had, and as a result I have nothing left after giving it all to God, I would have a hard time trying to get by in this cold and selfish world. By the way, even though I couldn't offer all my belongings, a life of poverty had always been an ideal of the Christian faith to me.

And, before I was born again, I always thought that being filled with my own emotion was faith itself. So I used to do everything, such as attending all church meetings, fasting, and helping the needy etc., to uplift my emotion of love and piety. But such a legalistic faith made me so tired that I could not live by faith any more. Unless I was filled with my own emotions, I felt like my heart was empty, as if something was missing, and I thought that this was an indication of my lack of faith.

Where, then, did I find my true faith, completely different from this empty one I had before? I found it in the written gospel Word of the water and the Spirit. Because the Word of truth that holds the gospel of the water and the Spirit was written in the Bible, by believing in this Word of God, I could be remitted from all my sins, and by this faith I could tell everyone about the greatness of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. By believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, in other words, I could do the will of God the Father and stand boldly

before Him. To this day, the Word of God has sustained me in this way, so that I may continue to dwell in Jesus Christ. Had I not had this faith in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, the Word of God, then my soul would have still been bound in Hades.

Dear fellow Christians, if there is no Word of God in your hearts, then what do you believe in? It means that you actually believe in your own emotions. Our eyes of the flesh do not see our God, whom you profess to believe. Then based on what will you believe in God?

You would have no other choice but to rest your faith on your prayer experiences, on whether your prayers are answered or not, but what if God is not satisfied with your prayers and does not answer you? Lest we go astray, God does not answer us what we ask Him on quite a few occasions; how could you then believe in Him? How could you believe in God and follow Him in faith?

If we lay our foundation on our devotion or emotion, then we will ultimately fall into our own devotional acts that we cannot keep on sustaining, and consequentially fall into unbelief and waste away our faith in God. This is why God has provided us with His written Word. By giving us this written Word of God, He has enabled us to meet Him in the gospel of the water and the Spirit by holding onto this Word of God; to have hope by believing in His promise; and to do the will of God to the end.

We must hold onto the Word of God and believe in it. Only then can we really become the people of faith who truly believe in His Word and have faith even as small as a mustard seed; and

just as our Lord said that we could move a mountain into a sea if we have faith as small as a mustard seed, we can all become the people of faith who can win the whole world to Christ. Therefore, you and I must hold onto the Word of God steadfastly, and we must all believe in His Word exactly as it is. Then, we will become the ones who do the will of the Father, and as a result of this, we will all enter Heaven.

Jesus Christ admonishes us to bear the fruits of true faith. As only a live and healthy tree can bear fruits, only those who have eternal life by believing in the Word of God and who are in right relationship with God can bear the fruits of the true faith. It is those who believe in God's Word that can live their lives by their faith in God; it is they who can do His work; it is they who can do good deeds; and it is they who, regardless of their insufficiencies, can follow God by believing in His gospel.

If we do not have this faith that believes in the Word of God, then we cannot follow His will. All this is entirely possible for us regardless of our circumstances, if we would just hold onto the Word of God. If you do not have any great faith, then hold onto even the edge of the Word of God, as if the woman who had suffered from a hemorrhage for twelve years held onto the garment of Jesus. If someone has faith as small as a mustard seed that holds onto the Word, then he is a man of faith. And with this, he is actually doing the will of the Father. All of us must become such people of faith who believe in the Word of God, not the faithless.

It Is Most Essential for Us to Believe in the Power of the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit

Who really believe in God and are standing firmly on the rock of faith? They are those who believe in this written Word of God. And who are unable to do this? They are those who do not believe in this written Word, and therefore, listen to the Devil instead. As a result, such people become enslaved as the Devil's own servants.

Referring to the believers in His Word, Jesus said, *"Whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock."*

In the old days, when people built a house, they placed large rocks on its four corners as cornerstones. These rocks were buried in the ground half way, with their remaining half protruding above the ground. On these rocks, large tree trunks were raised as pillars, with crossbeams connecting them together, and it was on this basic structure that the house could be built solidly.

What, then, is solid faith? The rock here refers to one's faith in the Word of God. Jesus said that he who hears and does the will of God is like a wise man who built his house on the rock, for he founded his faith on the rock-like Word of God. True faith is to believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, the Word of God.

We are prone to lay the foundation of our faith on our experiences. For example, most Christians are enthusiastic about the testimonies of what someone saw in visions or listened in his prayers. And they are anxious to experience something mystical. This is how the Christian mysticism has come to prevail in today's Christianity. But you should know that faith based on such mystical experience only lasts until the next experience, and that what our eyes see is not what is believable. Why? Because these things are not eternal, as they last just a short while only to disappear in the end, and because believing in what is not perfect does not constitute the true faith.

Faith in God means to believe in the absolute and forever-unchanging Word of truth, and believing in this Word of God is what is meant by truly spiritual faith. Those who are saved by believing in God's gospel, the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, and thereby do the will of the Father, are the very ones who have true faith. We can know and believe in God correctly only when we believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

The gospel of the water and the Spirit that our Lord has given us never changes. To believe in what our Lord said is none other than the very faith that believes in this true gospel. It is this faith that God approves. And when we believe in this Word, no matter how our emotions, circumstances, or anything else ever tries to shake us, our faith that holds onto this Word can never be shaken, for the very foundation of our faith is never shaken. This is why you and I must believe in the Word of God. Brothers and sisters, do you really believe in God's Word? Do you really want to hold onto the Word of God? It is my sincerest

prayer that you would indeed hold onto God's Word for the rest of your lives.

Those who did the will of God all believed in His gospel of the water and the Spirit. The people of faith, such as the Apostles Paul, John and Peter, with whom we are well acquainted, often made numerous references to the Word of the Old Testament. And they were the men of faith who believed firmly in the Savior manifested in the Old Testament and waited for Him. In their days, there was no New Testament. But as they believed in the written Word of the Old Testament and in Jesus Christ who came by water and blood (1 John 5:6), the Holy Spirit dwelt within them and worked in their lives, and from the very day they met Jesus, they were then able to follow the Lord.

We really must believe in the unchanging written Word of God. By doing so, we must all become the people of faith who are never shaken before God. And by doing so, we must follow the will of God, live the kind of life that pleases Him, and become the ones who bear spiritual fruits. Those who believe in the Word of God have no worries even when the floods come and the winds blow.

But those who do not believe in this Word of God, the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, all fall when the floods come and the winds blow, and great is their fall. The reason for this is because their faith in God is founded on their own thoughts. In the Bible, sand or soil denotes man-made thoughts. For instance, Genesis tells us that when the ancient people built the Tower of Babel, they used bricks and tar to build it. What are bricks made of? They are made of the sand and the soil of the earth. What the

Word of God tells us here is that they built the Tower with their own man-made thoughts.

In today's world also, there are those who build their houses of faith with such bricks made by mixing sand and cement, all to challenge God, when they are supposed to build their houses of faith to be a dwelling by believing in the God-given Word through pure innocence. To believe with impure man-made thoughts, and to believe in mankind's own wisdom, their own abilities, and their own power—these are all no more than building a house on the sand. But to believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, the Word of God, is the very faith that is like the rock.

For our faith to become solid as the rock, we must return to the kind of faith that believes in each and every passage of the written Word of the Scriptures. When we do so, our faith will be strengthened. But if we do not do this, and instead believe in our own thoughts and in our own circumstances, then we will fall, and fall greatly, as Jesus Himself told us. Believing in our own thoughts, in other words, only means that our faith will collapse sooner or later. So what about you, then? Do you really believe in the written Word of God? If yes, then all of you are the people of faith, just like Abraham.

God had commanded Abraham to leave his country, from his family and from his father's house, to a land that He would show him. Did God then appear before Abraham like an apparition? No. It was through His Word that God spoke to Abraham. Abraham, in turn, held onto what God had told him and went to the place that God had directed him. Without the

Word of God, Abraham always felt lost. So he built an altar at all times, offering burnt sacrifices to God and praying there.

In one of those occasions when Abraham built an altar and gave his offering of faith to God, God appeared before him again, and this time as before, He did not appear like a ghost. How easy would it be to believe in God if He would indeed appear before us like the ghost that appeared before Hamlet? Anyone could then know God and believe in Him easily. But we find it hard to believe in God precisely because He does not appear in His full image, and because we can only hear Him speaking to our hearts through His Word. Abraham, however, managed to hear what God spoke to Him. Now as then, God still does not appear before us in His image, but He equally makes Himself manifest to us through His written Word. Just as God had spoken to Abraham through His Word, so does He speak to us through His written Word.

For us to believe in God's Word is none other than faith. If one has faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, then he is a man of great faith. I myself, who believe in the Word of God, is a man of great faith, and so is each and every one of you—all of us are the people of faith who can transform the whole world. And just as Abraham was blessed by God, you and I can also receive the same blessings that he has received.

However, if we do not believe in God's Word, then our faith is like that of Lot. Those who, despite being saved from all their sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, nonetheless follow the dictates of their own circumstances are not the people of faith. While Abraham diligently followed the

Word of God, Lot followed what his own circumstances urged him to do.

Lot had become rich while living with his uncle Abraham. But he gradually came to think that if he continued to dwell with his uncle, he would end up losing too many cattle. Moreover, while his uncle had been a great help for Lot before, now Abraham's help seemed only cumbersome for him. So Lot looked for an excuse to leave his uncle, and just as he had hoped for, one day such an excuse arose: There was strife between the herdsmen of Abraham's livestock and the herdsmen of Lot's livestock, for their possessions were so great that they could not dwell together.

So Abraham thought, "I see that Lot now believes in his own circumstances. When he left Ur of the Chaldeans, our homeland, he had relied on me, and he had followed me by trusting in the God whom I believe in, but now that he has become rich, he is doing whatever he wants to do all on his own." Abraham then said to Lot, "If you so wish, feel free to leave me. If you take the right, then I will go to the left; or, if you go to the left, then I will go to the right. Decide whatever you want; here or there?" Lot then chose the plain of Jordan.

The place that Lot chose was the very land of Sodom and Gomorrah that would eventually face its condemnation by fire and be destroyed. But before this destruction came, it was an extremely fertile land, like the Garden of Eden. It seemed to be such an ideal place to raise cattle. Abraham then said to Lot, "Since you chose that place, I will choose its opposite." So Abraham chose the opposite of what Lot chose, going into the

mountainous areas instead of the fertile plain of Jordan. Why? Because Abraham knew that Lot's heart was not right.

God then appeared before Abraham and said to him, *"Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are—northward, southward, eastward, and westward; for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever" (Genesis 13:14-15).* God indeed blessed Abraham just as He had promised, giving him the Promised Land.

Abraham, the father of the Hebrew nation, had actually been no more than a wandering nomad who had left Ur of the Chaldeans into the land of Canaan. The word 'Hebrew' means "the man who passed over, namely, the Euphrates." The reason why this Abraham, a stranger in the land of Canaan who was ostracized and bullied, could become a man of faith was because he believed in God.

You and I are also the people of faith, because we believe in the written Word. Does this written Word ever melt away and change because it is summertime? Does it ever get frozen and broken apart because it is wintertime? The heavens and the earth may change, but this Word never changes, and not a jot or a tittle of the Word will ever disappear till all is fulfilled.

Matthew 7:22 says, *"Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?'"* This is what many such faithless people, those who do not believe in the Word written by God, will say. Just how many Christians are living their religious lives without believing in this written Word of God? On that day, many of them will say, "Lord, Lord," but

they had not really believed in God, but believed in their own circumstances just like Lot.

Many Christians actually do not believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit. Instead, they believe in their own thoughts in vain. Many of them believe in their own thoughts, in false signs, and in the power of demons. There are many so-called "blind Christians" in this world who believe not based on the Word of God, but based on the false teachings and the power of demons. Among those who are not born again, countless people are possessed by demons, and quite perversely, they profess to believe in Jesus based on such a demonic power that they have received. Does this sound far-fetched for you? Well, but isn't this exactly what today's main passage says? Indeed, this is what the above verse of Matthew 7:22 says: "Have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?"

The demon-possessed are good at recognizing demons and even casting them out. They are good at prophesying. Don't some fortunetellers seem to have an uncanny ability to predict the future sometimes? Those who prophesy in the name of the Lord, cast out demons in His name, and do many wonders in His name are the same as these demon-possessed sorcerers. There are many places where such people, possessed by demons, utter all kinds of unintelligible, incoherent, and completely garbled nonsense.

You might have heard of a heretical group called "Vineyard Fellowship." They insist that when the 'Holy Spirit' comes upon them, they go into fits of uncontrollable laughter, make animal

sounds like sheep, horses, or even roaring lions, and experience what they call "spiritual drunkenness," where they lose their sense of balance, the results of which contribute to the hysterical laughter.

Everyone who goes to their gatherings must be demon-possessed, or otherwise he would not last for long in that group. Those who are not born again see no joy to believe in Jesus unless they are possessed by demons. Their religious lives, in other words, offer them no joy at all unless they are demonically possessed.

Before you were born again, had some of you, then only Christian sinners, ever spoken in tongues? For many such misguided Christians, unless they speak in tongues, something is not quite right for them, as if a certain excitement is missing from them. So they keep repeatedly uttering all kinds of nonsensical, completely incoherent and meaningless words over and over, and they believe that this is what speaking in tongues is supposed to be.

But in fact, this only means that evil spirits have entered them, causing them to continue to utter totally incomprehensible words that make absolutely no sense at all. In other words, they feel good because they are drunk with the power of demons. Those who claim that their bodies can levitate independent of their will by some unknown power, that their knees float above the floor by at least 10 inches when they hop on their knees; those who claim that they have no fear at all when they hole up in the remotest of mountains to pray; those who say that supernatural power emanates from them; those who say that

they want to grab someone, anyone, and just lay their hands on them and pray—such people are all demon-possessed. When such people see other demon-possessed people, they say, "Get behind me, Satan! In the name of Jesus, get out!" They say this because they think this is how demons are cast out, but in fact the only reason why any demon is cast out is because it is weaker than the demon possessing the one who is exorcizing it.

Like this, those who do not believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit all practice lawlessness. This is why man must hold onto the Word of God. We must hold onto God's Word everyday. We must hold onto it until the day our Lord returns. At all times, we must always hold onto this Word that has brought salvation to us. This Word has the same power now as before, for it is the living and dynamic Word of God. The power, truth, strength, love, and salvation that are held in this Word are always there.

This Word therefore transforms our hearts. And it gives us strength and holds us steadfastly with faith. As such, it is by believing in the Word and holding onto it that we come to have the real faith, and it is by having such faith that can move even mountains, just as our Lord said, that we are able to do the will of our Lord and follow him until the very end. And the result of all this is to become the servants of the righteousness of God, the workers for His Kingdom.

Given this, it is absolutely indispensable that all of us have this faith that believes in the Word of God spring forth through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. If you believe in the Word of God and hold onto, you will all become His own people. You

will then also become the ones who can do the will of God the Father. If you really believe in the Word of God, then you should all know just how exhaustively the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit covers the whole Bible.

But even if you have already received the remission of your sins by believing in this gospel, do continue to hold onto the written Word of God, for if you fail to do so, your faith will go astray at any time. Unless we hold onto the Word of God, we are bound to hold onto our own flawed thoughts instead, and it will be impossible for us to always stand upright before God. But by hearing and reading the Word of God through His Church, we can always gain new strength, receive the Word of power at all times, and always follow the Lord by faith.

Believe now that you can all do the will of God the Father by believing in the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit! ✉

We Can Enter Heaven Only When We Know The Will of the Father And Believe in It

< Matthew 7:21-27 >

"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!' Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall."

In the above scriptural passage, our Lord said, *"Not everyone*

who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven." The Lord said here that not just anyone who claims to believe in Him can enter Heaven where He is, but only those who do the will of the Father can enter Heaven. On the last day of judgment, when many who had believed in Jesus protest to Him and say, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?" our Lord cannot but say to them, "You practiced lawlessness, and so I never knew you. Depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!"

Our Lord said to all of us, *"Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall" (Matthew 7:24-27).* Like this, Jesus said here that those who hear the Word of our Lord, and believe in it and obey it, are like the wise man whose house of faith is built on the rock, while those who do not do are bound to see their faith crumble down.

What our Lord is saying here is that the blessed are none other than those who hear His Word with their ears and believes in it with their hearts, thereby being saved from all their sins and doing the will of God the Father. On the other hand, if one hears

the Word of the Lord and yet does not believe in it with his heart, then his life of faith is all in vain.

Those who hear our Lord's Word and live their lives by faith are like the man who built his house on the rock. Have you been saved from all your sins by believing in this Word of God, the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit? Those who have been remitted from all their sins once and for all by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit come to live their lives by doing the will of the Father with this faith rooted in the Word of God. Such people not only spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit to everyone throughout the world, but they also come to truly love their brothers and sisters of faith. In other words, because they believe in this gospel of the water and the Spirit, the Word of God, they want to show their true faith with their acts.

Our Lord said to all of us, "Be the ones who believe in the Word and practice it." Although there are many Christians in this world who claim to believe in Jesus, few of them have actually been washed from all their sins white as snow, and become righteous, by truly believing in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit. Nonetheless, there still are people who have received the remission of sin by hearing and believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, who have thus defended their faith and put their faith into actual practice. And more and more people who are realizing that the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the true gospel.

But if one believes in this gospel of the water and the Spirit with his heart, then he must preach it to others—those who

otherwise do not actually spread this gospel will see their faith crumble down. Yet there are quite a few people who say only with their lips that they believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, when in fact they do not believe in it with their hearts and cannot therefore show their faith with their acts.

Such people preach that even false gospels are true. They cannot help but preach like this because they do not have the faith that truly believes in the gospel of water and the Spirit. But we cannot preach any other gospel but the gospel of the water and the Spirit, for this gospel alone is the true gospel.

We Must Believe in the Power of the Water and the Spirit

Our Lord said, *"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven."* In other words, those who really believe that the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the true gospel bear its witness to others. Therefore, those who do not spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit to others do not have any righteous deeds with them, nor do they do the will of God the Father, and hence they will be rejected by our Lord. In the end, their faith is one that ultimately flounders. Because such people's sins remain in their hearts, they all remain as sinners even as they claim to believe in Jesus. No matter how enthusiastically they have led their lives of faith, they are all no more than sinners. Because they do not really believe in the

gospel of the water and the Spirit, they cannot show the true deeds of their faith. Therefore they cannot avoid being abandoned by our Lord on the last day.

What causes heartaches for the righteous who have been remitted from all their sins? Their hearts are hurt when they see some people, even as they claim to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, do not actually believe that only this gospel is the truth, nor spread it as such. Why? Because this raises serious doubts as to whether or not they wholeheartedly believe in the gospel as they claim. All of us must know and believe in the true gospel of the water and the Spirit as it is. It bears to remind you once again what our Lord said here: those who do not believe in the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit—that is, those who do not do the will of His Father—can never enter Heaven.

This is why our Lord will declare, *"Depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness,"* to all those who claim to believe in Jesus as the Savior and yet do not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, nor preach it. Were they to really believe that the whole gospel of the water and the Spirit is the real gospel of truth, they would have preached exactly according to the truth. The reason why they neither believe nor preach like this is because they do not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit as the eternal love of God.

Because they do not really believe in Jesus according to the Lord's Word of salvation and His law of salvation, they have no deed that shows that they have lived according to the will of the Father. They might say, "Have we not prophesied in the name of

the Lord, cast out demons in His name, and done many wonders in His name?" But in the end, they have not believed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and they have performed only false miracles.

Our Lord will ask such people who practiced lawlessness instead of believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, "What have you done for Me? Did you perform miracles and signs? Apart from these, did you really believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that I had given you, and did you live your lives by this faith? Did you truly believe that I bore the sins of the world by being baptized by John the Baptist, that I shed My blood on the Cross for you, and that none other than this was the very salvation that blotted out all the sins of the world? And did you spread this to others? You did none of this, and yet just how many times did you practice lawlessness by invoking My name? I know very well that you blasphemously performed false miracles in My name. So depart from Me!"

We Must Not Be Deceived by Liars

Throughout the world, there are many who perform miracles and signs in the name of Jesus. In churches led by such people, the main purpose of their worship services is only to perform miracles. Why do they seek after signs so much during this hour when the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit must be preached to them in detail, and when all that the congregation has to do is just respond to it with faith? What we must realize

here is that it is the demon-possessed who perform many false miracles. Those possessed by evil spirits, in other words, deceive their followers by pretending to perform miracles and signs, thus robbing them of their senses and extracting even more material offerings from them. These are precisely the work of Satan's servants. All such miracles are no more than an illusionary show. This is why Jesus said that when such people say to Him, "Have we not cast out demons in Your name," He will declare to them that He never knew them. On this last day, the Lord will cast out all those who have sin, without any exception.

Demons cannot be seen by the eyes of the born-again. But those who are not born again can hear demons and see their images. This is because there are sins in their hearts. In the hearts of such sinful people, evil spirits can come in and work in them freely. As such, the demon-possessed can easily commune with demons. It is in those who still have their sins intact that demons work and bear their evil fruits.

What people must really do, instead of seeking after false miracles, is to believe that Jesus took upon all their sins by being baptized by John the Baptist, and that He bore the condemnation of their sins with His own bloodshed. Far from participating in the works of demons, we must believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and devote all our strength to its spreading. Because Jesus took upon Himself all the sins of the world by being baptized by John the Baptist and bore all the condemnation of sin on the Cross, we have been saved from all our sins and have become sinless by faith. Since our Lord has

washed away all our sins with the gospel of the water and the Spirit, those who believe in this are all cleansed, and therefore the evil spirits can never dwell in their hearts. For the believers of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, there is no work of Satan at all.

This is why our Lord said, "He who does the will of My Father in heaven shall enter the Kingdom of Heaven." What we must consider here is what exactly the Father's will is. The will of the Father is for us to be saved by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit: Jesus Christ, our Savior, has blotted out all our sins by being baptized by John the Baptist and crucified to death on the Cross. Such faith is the very faith that believes according to the Father's will. Our God the Father has washed away all our sins, in other words, by sending us His Son, making Him accept the sins of the world by having Him be baptized, and making Him shed His blood on the Cross.

When we believe in this truth, we can be washed from all our sins and enter the eternal Kingdom of God to live happily forever. We the righteous will live there altogether happily and forever. The Lord has saved us from our sins with the gospel of the water and the Spirit. For us to believe in Jesus as the Savior through the gospel of the water and the Spirit is none other than to believe according to the will of God the Father and to do His will.

Yet there are many who, from their failure to believe so, cannot escape from their sins even as they believe in Jesus as the Savior, and are thus rejected and destroyed for their sins in the end. They are forsaken, in other words, because they do not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit as the real truth

until the very end. Because they do not believe in this gospel of the water and the Spirit and are thus unable to do the will of the Father by faith, when the last day comes, their faith, which they had come up with in their own thoughts, will all crumble down and collapse. It is because people do not believe in God's gospel Word of the water and the Spirit that they are rejected by Him on the last day. The same is true for you as well—if you reject the gospel of the water and the Spirit now, then you yourselves will be rejected by God later on.

Our Lord Jesus said that the angels would come forth at the end of the age, separate the wicked from among the just, and cast them into the furnace of fire (Matthew 13:49-50). Brothers and sisters, who are the wicked among the righteous? Our Lord has told us clearly and explicitly that it is with the gospel of the water and the Spirit that He has saved us from our sins. Yet in spite of this, there are still those who do not believe in this gospel, who not only make compromises with the world, but even take its side. The wicked are none other than such people.

Brothers and sisters, there are no two true gospels. Nor is Jesus two, but there is only one Jesus. There is no other way for us to enter Heaven but only by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the gospel with which Jesus has remitted away all our sins. This gospel of the water and the Spirit has blotted out all your sins.

You must realize that if you believe in this truth, the way will be opened for you to live according to the will of God the Father. The gospel of the water and the Spirit will indeed let you recognize what the will of God the Father really is. ✉

Beware of False Prophets Who Are Only after Your Money

< Matthew 7:13-27 >

"Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it. Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore by their fruits you will know them. Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!' Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will

liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall."

With the faith that believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, our Lord has given us the ability to discern true prophets from false ones, and His true Church from false churches. In Matthew 7:15-20, Jesus said, *"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore by their fruits you will know them."*

Our Lord told us to beware of false prophets. And just as He warned us, we must indeed be wary of false prophets. When a pastor fails to preach the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, the Word of God, to his congregation, then he is not fulfilling his proper ministry. How can such a pastor call himself a true minister of God, when he does not even solve his

congregation's problem of sin with the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the Word of God?

Such liars are only interested in how they appear on the outside, hypocritically pretending to be serious and holy when they preach, and ultimately, all that they preach to their congregations is for them to abide by the ethics and morals of the world. Morals and ethics, of course, should not be ignored. But what pastors must do is not to just emphasize ethical life, but they must preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The reason for this is because people need to be washed clean from all their sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, for they sin everyday.

'False prophets' here are all those who stand opposite to the truth. Pastors themselves must have been remitted from all their sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Anyone who ministers as a pastor or a preacher without knowing the gospel of the water and the Spirit and without being born again are all pitiful false prophets. The Bible calls such people 'false prophets.'

Our Lord said to us, *"Beware of false prophets."* We must indeed beware of such people. You must all stay away from these liars in this world who are not able to solve the problem of your sins.

The Bible tells us in Titus 3:10-11, *"Reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition, knowing that such a person is warped and sinning, being self-condemned."* This passage refers to those who still have their sin intact with them even as they claim to believe in Jesus. Their faith advocates that

it is right for them to remain sinful even though they believe in Jesus; they are, as such, actually committing a grave sin against the Lord. How can they still be sinners when they claim to believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior? By professing this kind of faith, all that they are doing is sinning against the Lord on their own.

When they say that their sins are with them before the Lord, this only shows their mistaken belief that they are still to be condemned for their sins. Yet they think that considering themselves as sinners before the Lord is the right way to believe. Such believers, however, are not the true saints before God, but they are no more than liars. Jesus told us to beware of such false prophets and their followers.

We must keep in mind always anything of which the Bible warns us: to watch out for all such people as false prophets, false pastors, and false preachers.

Jesus Said That We Can Discern False Prophets by Their Fruits

Referring to false prophets, our Lord said, "You will know them by their fruits." It is by their fruits that we can discern false prophets. What kind of fruits, then, reveals false prophets? Our Lord rhetorically asked, "Do men gather grapes from thornbushes?" Just as thornbushes cannot bear good fruits, the pastors who have not been remitted from their sins and therefore still remain sinful cannot possibly lead people to be born again.

They bear only sinful Christians, while the born-again workers bear sinless saints and nourish them. If a pastor cannot turn sinners into sinless saints through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, he is clearly, then, a false prophet.

Just as the Lord said that a tree is known by its fruits, if his fruits of faith are all far removed from those of the righteous who have received the remission of sin, then we can know that they are liars and false prophets. False pastors put on sheep's clothing and mislead their followers, deceiving them with their smooth words. Many are deceived by such false prophets, for outwardly they look as if they are very holy. Therefore, the Bible warns us not to be deceived by such liars, saying, *"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light" (2 Corinthians 11:13-14).*

Faithful enough to their calling as false prophets, they only teach their congregations to live virtuously, not to commit sin, and to be kind to others. But inwardly, they are like ravenous wolves who exploit their congregations for their money. Their sermons invariably reach the same conclusion, telling their congregation to live virtuously, and that all that they have to bring to God is just money. They may give many different sermons to their congregation, but in the end, all their sermons boil down to telling their followers to offer lots of money to God. They give such sermons for what is a patently obvious reason: they themselves want to get paid more. They don't care about their congregations' salvation. They don't care what will

happen to their Christian sinners including them at the last day. They don't want to listen to us no matter how earnestly we have tried to share the true gospel of the water and the Spirit with them. Such pastors are invariably the false prophets without any exception.

The Bible tells us that we can know false prophets by their fruits. We can discern them by seeing whether or not they preach the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, the Word of God, and by examining whether there is anyone among their followers who came to believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit and receive the remission of sin through them. Of course, they preach the Word of God apparently, but no work of salvation arises out of what they preach. By believing in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, we not only can know whether they are true prophets or false prophets by their faith, but also cannot be deceived by such liars. The gospel of the water and the Spirit is the barometer that sets apart false prophets. Therefore, we, the born-again of water and the Spirit (John 3:1-10) are God's own people and His servants who can discern bad trees from good trees.

Let us now examine the characteristics of false prophets in more detail. The first characteristic of a false prophet is that each one of them has sin before God. Therefore, if a certain minister is a sinner before God, then he is a false prophet. Such one would no doubt tell his congregation day after day to come out to God only with money. And he would not be interested in the gospel of the water and the Spirit at all, nor would he believe in it. Such a pastor is a false prophet. Such prophets see their

congregations merely as the source of their wealth. Whether their followers are born again or not is of no interest to them, and all that they are interested is in money.

I am not sure if you have heard such a sermon before, but every sermon given by false prophets has something to do with money in one way or another. Their sermons might go like this: "Brothers and sisters, we must live according to the Word of God. In Deuteronomy 28, God said that if you honor your parents and keep the Law, He will give you such and such blessings." But even as they open their sermons like this, in the end, they are all bound to say that God's blessings are conditioned on how much money we offer.

But this is not the way for us to receive heavenly and earthly blessings from God. On the contrary, all blessings come from the faith that believes in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, the Word of God. It is to those who hear and believe in this gospel Word of the water and the Spirit that God gives His blessing of salvation, as well as all the blessings of the earth. However, the conclusion of the false prophet's sermon invariably revolves around money. They may speak of the Law, but when they say, "Serve God well; give offerings to your church; and respect your pastor," what they are really saying is, "Bring a lot of money; if you offer wads of money to God, you will be blessed." This is how they try to deceive you. And all their purposes in ministry lie in money. They teach people to give even greater offerings, saying, "The more offerings you give, the more you get blessed and the faster your faith grow."

But those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and understand its message are not deceived by such liars.

We Must Escape from the Deception of False Prophets

Jesus said, *"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves."* False prophets are like wolves. They stand before the flock in sheep's clothing, but their hearts are that of a wolf, revealing sharp teeth that are ready to devour the flock, as they are obsessed with money. According to the Bible, all false prophets are no more than wolves. Far from spreading the gospel of new life to their flock, they lead their followers to believe in something other than the gospel of the water and the Spirit. And by doing so, they only exploit their congregation who are dying covered by sins in their hearts. Those who do these things are none other than false prophets.

Not everyone realizes that false prophets are good for nothings. But, because the false prophets of this world are so skilled at deception, and because people are prone to be deceived so easily by such false prophets, they can easily seduce many people into a wrong faith with their slick tongues. Nowadays, confusion reigns in many people's mind, as there are too many lairs encircling potential saints. But the fact of the matter is that liars exert nothing but bad influence on everyone.

Even the things of this world have imitations. For instance, some meat shops put up plastic imitation meat on their window display. At first look, you may think it is real meat, since it looks so fresh and nice and appeals to your appetite. But once you look at it more closely, you can realize that this is not real meat, but only an imitation. You may then feel like you had been duped. The same goes for bread: as there is real bread baked with flour, so is there imitation bread made of plastic. Can any of you eat this imitation bread? Of course not. It's simply uneatable, as it was actually made with plastic only to look like real bread. But no matter how really good it looks, eating plastic can only cause serious health problems or even death. This false bread is exactly like everything that false prophets preach.

Brothers and sisters, no matter how appealing the leaders of your churches are, no matter how much they love you, and no matter how nicely they treat you, if they fail to preach to you the gospel Word of the remission of sin that enables you be born again of water and the Spirit, you must all realize that they belong to false prophets. All such people are false prophets who are no more than spiritual wage earners. The Bible tells us clearly to beware of these people.

Our Lord described false prophets as ravenous wolves. Are you still under the care of such false prophets? These people are not only exploiting your money, but even more gravely, they are also stealing your souls. All that such false prophets want is to extract as much money out of you as possible, to build a bigger and better church building, while whether your souls are heading toward the fire of hell or not is of no interest to them

whatsoever. What, then, now, should you do? You must know a tree by its fruits. Anyone who speaks of only money whenever he opens his mouth, whose words inevitably revolve around his greed for money, is no more than a wage earner and a false prophet.

As such, we can know false prophets by their fruits. What, then, are the fruits of these prophets? They are the fruits of deception that defraud people's souls. Their fruits, in other words, are bad in and of themselves. False prophets are willing to say that you are sinless, and that everything is fine, so long as you would only give them money. And they say that all is okay if you would just give your prayers of repentance, be sanctified, and, of course, bring a lot of money to church. All these are the fruits of the false prophets.

How do their bad fruits appear then? The fruits of their wicked ministries appear as ceaselessly trying to enlarge their congregations only in number when they run their churches as if they are running a business. What schemes do they employ to draw more people to their churches? Among others, one of the most egregious schemes is offering worldly prizes and rewards as an incentive for their followers to bring more people into their churches. For instance, they would offer the prize of a large refrigerator for someone who brings in 20 new members a year to the church; a high efficiency air-conditioner for someone who brings in 30 new members; a subcompact car for someone who brings in 50 new members; and a family sedan for someone who brings in 200 new members a year. Offering prizes in this way, false prophets extort their followers to bring in ever more

members into their fold. You may think this is all too unbelievable, but I am not, here, making up this story, but it is what is actually happening in some Christian communities around the world.

Just how wicked is this? Is God's Church no more than a shopping mall or a bank? And having thus drawn them into church membership, what do the false prophets then do to them? God would approve them were they to preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit and help their followers to receive the remission of sin, but we can see all too clearly that money is their only interest.

So now that false prophets have drawn in souls into their churches, how do they then preach to them? "Jesus loves you. Incidentally, for those who came to our church for the first time, we will give you a luxurious, premium parasol to each sister, and to each brother, an extra large umbrella so that you can use it with your girlfriends." They figure that if these new members come to their churches for such prizes, eventually becoming deacons and elders—even as they do not know the gospel of the water and the Spirit—and fill the church coffers with all kinds of offerings—from tithes to offering of thanksgiving, to this offering and that offering—until the day they die, then all in all, it would be an extraordinarily profitable venture.

For such false prophets, today's small investment effectively translates into tomorrow's immense profit. This is why false prophets hold such gatherings with prizes; were they otherwise to suffer a loss, there is no way that they would do this. Of, say, 500 such new members, even if just 10% of them stick around,

then it's still quite profitable, given how these 50 members would be filling the church coffers for their entire lifetime. None other than these are the fruits of the false prophets.

In Korea, such commercialization of Christianity has been so rampant that a while ago, there was even a song that poked fun at this. Its lines went something like this: "They told us to come to their church; and they told us to believe in Jesus; then they asked for money, money, and more money." All that false prophets ever speak about is money, money, and even more money. One of them might say, "So let us build a holy temple and dedicate it to our God. Brothers and sisters, God wants to bless us here. In the Book of Haggai, God told the Prophet Haggai to build His Temple. And God also said that those who do not unite their effort to this endeavor will all be cursed. The passage also tells us that to those gave much to build the Temple, God also gave great blessings. You should pay attention to this passage from the Book of Haggai!" So he writes the passage from Haggai on a banner and puts it up high, brings in a revivalist preacher to stir up emotions, and passes around collection dishes. He then tells deacons that they should pay for around 300 square feet of land each; elders to pay for at least 1,500 square feet; and ordinary members to pay for 5,000 bricks. Forming a construction committee, he starts to squeeze out money from his congregation like there is no tomorrow.

Brothers and sisters, if a larger church building is indeed necessary before God, then it must be built. I am not saying that this in itself is wrong. But if there is no real need for this, if the current church building is big enough to accommodate all the

congregation, must a larger one still be built? False prophets are so keen with money that they find every excuse to extract more and more money from their congregations, and the drive for this unnecessary and gratuitous church expansion is no more than such an excuse. They keep saying that we must offer them loads of money to serve the Lord well, and if someone indeed does their bidding, they declare without delay that his faith is great. Some of them even put up a graphical chart to record everything, showing which deacon gave how much offering and how much tithe. They make it impossible for those without money to even come to their churches. This is the very faith of false prophets, and this is none other than their fruits.

We Must Do the Will of the Father God

We want to do the will of God the Father. We must not carry out our own will obstinately, but do every good work according to the will of the Father. Who can do the will of the Father God? Only His children can. Who is willing to do the will of the other one's father? The ones who are willing to follow their Father's will are His sons only. Therefore, only the believers in the gospel of the water and the Spirit can follow the will of the Father. And, because we have received the remission of sin by thus believing, and become His sons, we are following the very will of the Father God. To do the will of the Father is for us to receive the remission of sin by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and to let all people be delivered from all

their sins. This is what 'doing the will of the Father in Heaven' means.

However, there are so many false prophets in today's Christian community. They practice lawlessness instead of doing the will of God. God will surely reject all such liars on the last day. These false prophets will then protest to Him when they are rejected, "But Lord, why are You rejecting us, when we have worked tirelessly for You? Have we not prophesied so much for you? Have we not prophesied so that everyone would believe in You? We cast out demons in Your name, healed the sick, and we built and dedicated the largest church all to You! And we sent out thousands of missionaries from our denomination, and we planted thousands of churches all around the world! How can You then say that You do not know me when I did all these things for You? Isn't something wrong here? Isn't this just too unfair? Aren't you doing something gravely wrong to me? Are You suffering from Alzheimer's disease?" Saying to the Lord, "Have we not prophesied, cast out demons, and done many wonders?" they will advertise themselves as God's faithful workers, and protest to God.

But our Lord will say to them, "Who told you to serve Me, you who practice lawlessness? Who told you to spread My name? Who told you to teach the Word? Did I tell you to build churches? Did I tell you to cast out demons? Who told you to work by stealing My name, you who practice lawlessness? Who told you to labor? Who told you to devote yourselves? Depart from Me you evil-doers, for I have nothing to do with you! Had you not done all these things, it would have been much easier

for My real servants to spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit, but all that you have done is to hinder their efforts. You ended up doing the works of Satan as the servants of the Devil. Now together with the Devil, be cast into the everlasting fire of hell, you the servants of Satan! Listen, angels! Let these Satan's servants be thrown into darkness!"

What we must realize here is that these false prophets and those who are not born again will all be forsaken by our Lord. Their final end is to be cast into the everlasting fire of hell. We need to recognize that among today's religious people, there are many who will be thrown into this place.

"We'll know for sure only when we are actually in hell! But I heard that hell was already all filled up. Will there be room for me? Perhaps God will send me to Heaven instead, since there is no vacancy in hell!" There are many who say such audacious, reckless and foolish things. They need not worry, for though there are countless people bound to hell, hell itself is wide enough to accommodate all of them and yet still have some room left.

Take a look at the stars of the sky. It is more than likely that some stars we see now had actually existed billions of years ago and already disappeared. Do you know just how big this galaxy really is? When we look up the galaxy in the night sky, for many of its stars, it took them billions of light years for its light to reach us and be seen by our eyes. And just how many stars are there? When this is the case, would there not be enough room in hell to receive you?

God is everlasting, and His omnipotent divinity abides in the endless universe. Our Lord is omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent. There is no place in the universe where He is not, and there is nothing that He cannot do. Do you then still think that our God would be forced to let sinners come into Heaven because He could not find enough room in hell to put all sinners and false prophets? If someone only thinks twice about God when he looks up the sky or the wonderful phenomena of nature, he will give up his unbelief, saying, "Oh my God, there is nothing else to do but believe." God said in His Word, *"For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse" (Romans 1:20).*

We must know false prophets, and by what lies the misled are deceived. If we just follow them blindly, we will all end up in hell. Our Lord said, *"Whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock."* As Jesus said that whoever hears the Word of God and does it is one who built his house on the rock, there is no one else who hears and does the Word of God apart from the born-again. Only those who have been washed from their sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit can do the will of the Father.

Only the born-again build the house of faith in the Kingdom of Heaven. By believing in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit and standing firmly on the Word, with this faith we are all building our house of faith. Such a house that is built with faith

never flounders. Later on, even when floods overwhelm this world, hurricanes rage on, and we are hit by tidal waves, because we have built our houses on the rock, and because this rock protects us from all the waves, these houses will never fall down. In contrast, those who believe in Jesus without being born again have built their houses on sand, on their own thoughts, and therefore when the Day of Judgment comes, their houses will collapse, and great will be their fall. No matter how well they might have built their houses, because they had built them on sand, when the floods come and water seeps in, their foundation will be swept away and the houses will collapse spectacularly.

Brothers and sisters, all of you must beware of the false prophets who do not know the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, and therefore have not been born again, and who lead people to the wide way of destruction.

A Good Tree Bears Good Fruits

A truly good tree bears good fruits. Since the tree itself is good, it is bound to bear good fruits. The born-again are like trees planted by a river, always bearing good fruits according to the season, no matter how insufficient they might be. A good tree, if it is nurtured with fertilizers and water by the farmer, bears good fruits without fail. It is not so much because the righteous want to bear good fruits, but it is because they hear the Word of God and believe in it that they bear the fruits of His

righteousness. It is only from the righteous that the good fruits come. Every good tree bears good fruits.

What about you then? Are you spiritually good trees? Have you become the people of God who have received the remission of sin by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit? Have you been saved from your sins by believing in this gospel of the water and the Spirit, and have you thereby become righteous? It is only the righteous who are true saints before God. Only the believers of the gospel of the water and the Spirit can become God's servants.

Just as Jesus said that a tree is known by its spiritual fruits, all those who keep talking about only money are false prophets. But those who preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit and bear the fruits of righteousness are true prophets. When pastors are obsessed only with money and raise all kind of racket to build their churches even as many of their congregation have been laid off and are struggling to meet their ends, how could we describe them as good trees? Is God really pleased when they complete their scandalous and needlessly big churches? Is He pleased with the blind Christians who fill the huge churches?

Brothers and sisters, of all people, at least you must believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and spread it to everyone. For all of us, our lives on this earth is only ephemeral, and in no time we will all find ourselves standing before God. A life that is spent spreading the gospel of the water and the Spirit so that others would receive the remission of their sins is the right life to live before God. Those who guide others so that they would reach the righteousness of God by hearing the gospel of the

water and the Spirit with their ears, understanding it with their heads, and believing in it with their hearts, and so that they would be saved from their sins by confessing it with their mouths—none other than these are the good trees that bear good fruits.

In this age and time, all of us must spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the Word of God, to everyone in this world. We must teach others who the false prophets really are. Lately, we have been distributing our gospel newspapers, and we have frequently been getting phone calls from our readers, asking us to teach them who the false prophets are.

For us to spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit is like delivering them to God from the exploits of liars. We must teach everyone who the liars are and what is the correct faith, and preach the true gospel of the water and the Spirit to them, so that all who believe would be saved from their sins.

What we must realize is that the narrow way, the difficult way, is the way that leads us to life. Yet there aren't that many people who knock on the narrow gate of life and seek it. Still, we must continue to spread the gospel truth of the water and the Spirit to everyone. And we must alert all those who are heading toward their destruction that they are now being deceived by false prophets. This is what you and I who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit must do. Our Lord said, *"I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life" (John 8:12).* And our Lord said that we, the righteous, are also the light of the world. He also said, *"No one, when he has lit a lamp, covers it with a*

vessel or puts it under a bed, but sets it on a lampstand, that those who enter may see the light" (Luke 8:16). We must shine the light of faith that knows and believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, so that all would see this light, come to it, and have this light also.

In conclusion, let me reiterate the key admonition that I have made to all of you. In these end times, we must fulfill our duty to spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit. We must do the will of God the Father continuously, no matter how difficult our circumstances are. The darker this world is, the more we must spread this gospel, for it is during these end times when there are even more people who must be delivered from the sins of the world and its false prophets. Let all of us, then, keep on planting the seed of the gospel of the water and the Spirit with even greater determination and devotion. ✉

CHAPTER

8

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You can download Rev. Paul C. Jong's Christian
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The Healing of Spiritual Lepers

< Matthew 8:1-4 >

"When He had come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed Him. And behold, a leper came and worshiped Him, saying, 'Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean.' Then Jesus put out His hand and touched him, saying, 'I am willing; be cleansed.' Immediately his leprosy was cleansed. And Jesus said to him, 'See that you tell no one; but go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.'"

They say that a leper hardly feels any subjective symptoms of leprosy until three years have passed since the virus first infected him. But from the fourth year, some objective symptoms appear slowly. And it takes three more years that he can no longer hide his infection from others, as its symptoms are fully revealed. This is the nature of leprosy.

Today's scriptural passage describes Jesus' healing of a leper. The event described in this passage actually happened, and through it, God is revealing the nature of our sins, and He is also telling us the truth that He has completely solved this problem of our sins.

The leper in today's passage did not hide himself but came before Jesus as he wanted and asked Him to heal him, for he earnestly longed to be cured from his illness. This leper had faith that Jesus could heal any diseases, and that no one else but Jesus could cure him from his illness and make him clean. Jesus saw the faith of this leper and He fulfilled his wish, the same as in the case of the centurion later. We have to keep in mind here what Jesus really wanted to heal was not the physical illness per se, but the disease of sin.

Leprosy, here, indicates that in our hearts and bodies, there are sins that are just like this disease. From the very moment we were born from the wombs of our mothers, we were all born with 12 diseases of sin. When we were just babies, we did not realize that we were such wicked sinners, but once we grew up to a certain age, we came to realize our true selves, and we could not hide this from God. Then, we came before Jesus in faith, and said to Him, "If You are willing, You can wash me clean from all my sins." This is how you and I have received the remission of our sins. When we have such faith that Jesus can heal us from all our sins, we can withstand any embarrassment.

Did Jesus heal this leper at once, or did it take more time for Him to heal him? The Bible says that Jesus healed him all at once. You must therefore realize that Jesus has not healed you from your sins in several steps, but He has healed you once and for all through the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit.

A woman suffering from a hemorrhage was healed and the fountain of her blood was dried up all at once when she touched Jesus' garment by faith (Mark 5:25-34). Naaman, the

commander of the army of the king of Syria, was also healed from his leprosy at once when he obeyed God's Word by faith (2 Kings 5:1-14), and the leper in today's passage, too, was healed at once as soon as Jesus' hand touched him. If we only have faith in the Word of God, then we can all come to know and believe in the power of salvation that has made all our sins of mankind disappear, and by this faith, we can all receive the everlasting remission of our sins once and for all. Everyone's disease of sin can never be healed step by step, but it is cured all at once by faith in His Word.

The Difference in the Faith of the Religionists And That of Those Who Believe in the Power of the True Gospel

The difference between the religionists and the people of true faith is this: The religionists, because of their ignorance of the truth, mistakenly think that they can be remitted from their sins by saying the prayers of repentance everyday, even as they dwell in sin day after day, but in contrast, the believers of the gospel of the water and the Spirit are now living amidst God's blessings as His own children by having been absolved from all their sins once and for all.

The Bible clearly declares that everyone can be saved from all his sins only by faith in His Word. If we could have solved our heart's problem of sin on our own, through such means as our own strength, our own works, our own prayers of

repentance, and our own virtuous deeds, there would have been no need for Jesus to come to this earth. And if we could have solved the problem of sin through such efforts, we would never have been able to meet Jesus during our entire lifetime.

No one can solve the problem of his sins on his own, no matter what he does and how hard he tries, and the key for the solution is found only in believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Humans are such beings that cannot avoid but commit sin no matter how hard they try not to, and therefore they must instead believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. If one realizes clearly that the prayers of repentance can never make his sins disappear, and that thus he cannot solve the problem of his sins all by himself; if he instead comes before God and confesses to Him that he is a grave sinner; and if he believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, then there is no sin whatsoever that cannot be washed away. When sinners come before Jesus and ask for His mercy, Jesus will surely solve away all their sins once and for all through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, just as He had healed the leper all at once.

It is when our true selves are fully revealed before God as sinners and we desire the salvation of Jesus that the Lord remits away all our sins by giving us the gospel of the water and the Spirit. You need to realize that only those who ask for God's mercy, saying, "Lord, have mercy on me. I cannot but go to hell because of my sins," can be delivered from all their sins and become His own children. For all sinners, when they admit their fundamental selves as sinners and ask the Lord for His mercy, God will bestow the everlasting remission of sin that He has

already fulfilled through the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Romans 3:10 says, *"There is none righteous, no, not one."* With this passage, the Apostle Paul referred to those who have not yet received the remission of their sins. It was to make sinners perfectly sinless and turn them into God's children that Jesus came to this earth. But unfortunately, most Christians are still found to be the half-sinners. Though in this world there may be half-remission of sin or the half-righteous people, in the Kingdom of God, there are no half-righteous people, nor half-sinners. Who are the half-sinners? They are those who try to be forgiven form their sins by saying the prayers of repentance everyday. It is not by giving such prayers of repentance that all our sins are blotted out, but by believing in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit.

Jesus is the One who has completely healed mankind from their diseases of sins with the gospel truth of the water and the Spirit. Jesus did not differentiate between original sin and personal sins when He spoke of sin, and He did not approve the faith of those who believe that although Jesus took away their original sin, they must be forgiven of their personal sins through repentance. Those who believe so are hurting God's heart and will be destroyed, for they will remain and live the rest of their lifetime as sinners.

God does not accept such half-faith. If one believes in Jesus, then he must believe in Him 100%; alternatively, if he does not believe in Jesus, then he does not believe 100%. There is, in other words, no such a thing as 50% faith. What is the so-called "the doctrine of justification"? It is 'the credo of being regarded

as righteous by faith'—that is to say, they believe that Christians can be called to be righteous because of their faith in Jesus even though they still have their sins intact. What a nonsense it is! Our Lord does not approve a sinful man as sinless just because he believes in Jesus. When we come to know the gospel of the water and the Spirit from the Scriptures, we know that the Bible tells us that once our Lord removed our sins from us and completely blotted them out, all the sins of everyone have already disappeared. What has thus washed away our sins is the baptism that Jesus received (1 Peter 3:21).

Generally speaking, most of today's Christian leaders say that Jesus took away original sin, but we must be remitted of our personal sins separately by giving our prayers of repentance. The Bible, however, does not differentiate between 'Sin' and 'sins,' in other words, original and personal sins. Before Jesus, all sins, both great and small, whether original or personal, are equally manifested as 'the sins of the world' (John 1:29). Just as sewage water, tap water, and the water running in a creek are all the same water, all sins are the same sins of the world. As it is written in the Bible, *"They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch" (Matthew 15:14),* because their leaders themselves have not been born again, they do not know how to solve the problem of sin, and this is why they believe in such groundless doctrines telling them God will forgive their sins whenever they give their prayers of repentance.

Everyone Must Believe in the Power of the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit

What, then, is the true repentance for the remission of sin? It is to turn back from their flawed knowledge and mistaken beliefs and to believe in what is right. Mankind's sins cannot be forgiven just by asking the Lord everyday to forgive them.

The Lord says, *"For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings" (Hosea 6:6)*. Our Lord Jesus came to this earth out of His compassion for all the souls that are bound to hell for their sins. The will of God the Father was to make the sinful beings sinless through Jesus Christ, to sanctify them, and to thereby enable them to take part in His Kingdom. This is why our Lord came to this earth and completely fulfilled the will of the Father through the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Romans 6:23 states, *"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."* Though our God is the God of love, He cannot avoid but send all those who have sin to hell, and His love is to give the remission of sin to the believers of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, so that He may dwell with them forever in His Kingdom. God has given us, in other words, the gift of the remission of sin that has turned us sinless.

Nowadays, there are too many Christians who believe in Jesus on their own, in whatever way they want to, all based on their own thoughts. Say that someone is now standing before the Lord after spending his entire lifetime in religious devotion and

piety, faithfully offering tithes, donating a lot of money to his church, regularly attending morning prayer meetings, and so forth. He may say to the Lord exultantly, "Lord, here I am. This sinner of so many iniquities now stands before Your presence!" What would the Lord say to him then?

In Matthew 7, Jesus said, *"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'"* This is what our Lord will say to him. Our God is neither the Father of sinners nor their Lord, but He is the Father of the righteous and the Lord of those who have been born again and received the remission of their sins. Even if this man says to the Lord, "Lord, do you not know me? For You, I devoted my entire life to testify as to Your name," God will only say to him, "How dare you pretend to be My son when you have sin. All that awaits you is hell, you who practice lawlessness!"

Therefore, what all sinners must do first is to believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit right now and receive the remission of their sins by faith. This is the most beautiful and precious faith. The false Christian leaders may gather all kinds of sinners who have not received the remission of their sins into their churches. But can anyone really call them as saints? How can there be a 'sinful' saint? Anyone who has sin is not a saint, but merely a sinner. One can be called as a sinless

saint only after he has received the remission of sin by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

It is written in Hosea 4:6, *"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; Because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children."*

The beginning of all knowledge is to know God, and yet countless people are unable to put down their flawed and deluded knowledge and are living as hypocrites. This is why our Lord will say to them when the last day comes, "I do not know you."

The only way for a sinner to become sinless is to believe in the Word of the remission of sin. We must have faith in the Deity of the Lord as well as our faith in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit. Yet many people have instead ignored the power of the gospel of Jesus' baptism and His Cross, wasting away their lives in their futile pursuit of illusive incremental sanctification based on their fallacious belief that they can be gradually cleansed from their sins.

Christianity is not a religion where one is to reach his salvation through his own effort and discipline, as Buddhists emphasize that one must try to be a man of virtue and mercy. But, it is impossible for a human being to become absolutely sinless no matter how hard he tries to be virtuous. The true Christian faith is one that believes in the salvation of grace, of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, which flows from above without any human effort—that is, it is the faith that believes in the love of God that has delivered us from drowning. Just as the

leper was immediately healed of his sickness by the love of our Lord and the power of His truth, we, too, can also be saved from all the sins of our hearts as soon as we believe in the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit and recognize our Lord's love for us.

In the Old Testament, God Showed His Salvation through Moses

What the Lord said to the leper after healing was this: *"See that you tell no one; but go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."* The gift that Moses commanded here refers to a lamb, that is, a sacrificial animal.

"Now the LORD called to Moses, and spoke to him from the tabernacle of meeting, saying, 'Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When any one of you brings an offering to the LORD, you shall bring your offering of the livestock—of the herd and of the flock. If his offering is a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male without blemish; he shall offer it of his own free will at the door of the tabernacle of meeting before the LORD. Then he shall put his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it will be accepted on his behalf to make atonement for him'" (Leviticus 1:1-4).

Regarding the gift that Moses commanded, verse 2 above says, *"You shall bring your offering of the livestock—of the herd and of the flock."* By giving the Law, God enabled mankind to

realize that they are sinners, and then through the sacrificial system of the Tabernacle, He gave the people of Israel the statue that they should be remitted from all their sins by passing them to such sacrificial offerings. God so loved us and wanted to save us from our sins that He established the sacrificial system with such offerings as lambs and bulls that would have to die in our place.

In this sacrificial system, 'the laying on of hands' was very essential. This meant "to pass over" or "to transfer." When a man possessed by a demon lays his hands on someone else, the latter equally turns into a demon-possessed man, for the laying on of hands means "to pass on." Therefore, when a sinner of the Old Testament times laid his hands onto the head of the sacrificial lamb, all the sins in his heart were passed onto the animal (Leviticus 16:21). After that, he had to kill the lamb to draw some blood, and then the priest took some of its blood with his finger, put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and poured all the remaining blood at the base of the altar. And the priest had to burn the animal on the altar for a sweet aroma to the Lord. This was how the Israelites received the remission of their sins during the Old Testament times (Leviticus 4:27-31).

The blood put on the horns and the base of the altar was the life for the wages of sin. The Bible states that the life of the flesh is in the blood, and that it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul (Leviticus 17:11). The horns of the altar of burnt offering implied the Books of Judgment (Revelation 20:12). Every transgression is to be written on the Books. And the sinners will be judged according to their works, by the things

that were written in the books. This is why we have to receive the perfect remission of our sins while we are living in this world.

In this New Testament age, then, by what kind of faith have we received the remission of our sins? Where can we find evidence that we have been saved from our sins? The evidence of our salvation from all sins can be found only in our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit; it is not through the visions, the ecstasies, or other tongues that we can attain the confirmation of our salvation. Only by the Word of God can we realize how we are sinners, and testify how we have been saved from all our sins. This Word of testimony is the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit.

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). God the Father gave His only Son Jesus to save us from all the sins of the world. How did He save us from sins? Jesus thus fulfilled all the righteousness of God by coming to this earth, becoming our own sacrificial offering like the sacrificial lambs and goats of the Old Testament, actually accepting the iniquities of sinners onto His body through His baptism, and thereby blotting out the sins of the world. This truth was shown through the daily offerings of the Old Testament. We must realize just how Jesus Christ accepted all the sins of mankind that we commit everyday when He came to this world. Only then can we be freed from all the sins of the world.

The Old Testament's Offering of the Day of Atonement

Let us now turn to Leviticus 16:29-34. *"This shall be a statute forever for you: In the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, whether a native of your own country or a stranger who dwells among you. For on that day the priest shall make atonement for you, to cleanse you, that you may be clean from all your sins before the Lord. It is a Sabbath of solemn rest for you, and you shall afflict your souls. It is a statute forever. And the priest, who is anointed and consecrated to minister as priest in his father's place, shall make atonement, and put on the linen clothes, the holy garments; then he shall make atonement for the Holy Sanctuary, and he shall make atonement for the tabernacle of meeting and for the altar, and he shall make atonement for the priests and for all the people of the assembly. This shall be an everlasting statute for you, to make atonement for the children of Israel, for all their sins, once a year."*

This passage describes the offering of the Day of Atonement that God had permitted to the Israelites for the sake of those who could not offer sacrifices everyday, where the High Priest could give sacrificial offerings once a year for the entire people of Israel. Through this annual sacrifice, God had bestowed the blessing of the remission of their yearly sins to the people of Israel.

Leviticus 16:6-10 states, *"Aaron shall offer the bull as a sin offering, which is for himself, and make atonement for himself*

and for his house. He shall take the two goats and present them before the Lord at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. Then Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats: one lot for the Lord and the other lot for the scapegoat. And Aaron shall bring the goat on which the Lord's lot fell, and offer it as a sin offering. But the goat on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat shall be presented alive before the Lord, to make atonement upon it, and to let it go as the scapegoat into the wilderness."

God, in other words, had given the sacrificial system that allowed the Israelites to receive the remission of their sins through their faith by passing not just their daily sins, but all the sins of the entire year onto the sacrificial offering once and for all. Aaron here was Moses' brother, and he was also the High Priest. Aaron brought one of the two goats into the court of the Tabernacle and passed all the iniquities of the people of Israel onto it by putting his hands on its head. Having thus passed the Israelites' sins onto the sacrificial goat all at once, the High Priest then killed this goat, took its blood inside the veil—that is, into the Most Holy—and sprinkled it on the mercy seat and to its east for seven times. Even the High Priest could not enter inside the veil unless he was atoned by laying his hands on of a sacrificial animal and brought its blood with him.

The Tabernacle was divided into the Holy Place and the Most Holy, and the High Priest could enter into the place where God's Ark of the Testimony was placed only when he had the blood of the sacrifice that had received the laying on of his hands. It was by seeing this blood of the sacrifice that God permitted Aaron to enter into the Most Holy. So Aaron killed the sacrificial goat

that had accepted the sins of all the people of Israel with the laying on of hands, took its blood into the Most Holy, and sprinkled it on the Ark of the Testimony seven times. As golden bells were attached on the hem of the robe of the High Priest, they rang when he sprinkled the blood, and hearing this sound of ringing bells, the people of Israel could confirm that the blood of the sacrificial animal that had accepted their sins was indeed being sprinkled, and thus reaffirming the remission of sin in the hearts of the believers.

"And when he has made an end of atoning for the Holy Place, the tabernacle of meeting, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat. Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, confess over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, concerning all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat, and shall send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a suitable man. The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to an uninhabited land; and he shall release the goat in the wilderness" (Leviticus 16:20-22).

The one goat that was "for Jehovah" was offered as a sin offering, by which atonement was made. But the sins of the Israelites must also be visibly banished from them, and therefore the High Priest also had to lay his hands on the head of the other goat by confession of their yearly sins, and then let it be "sent away for Azazel" into the wilderness (see Leviticus 16:8-10 of the American Standard Version). Here the scapegoat, *'azazel'* in Hebrew, means 'to be set out' for the total separation of sin.

Taking one of the two goats as the scapegoat, the High Priest laid his hands on its head and passed all their sins to it by

confessing over it all the iniquities of the people of Israel as they were all watching outside the gate of the court of the Tabernacle. It was then released into the wilderness by the hand of a suitable man to die. This sacrificial goat, in other words, was to shoulder all the sins of the Israelites that it had accepted by the laying on of the High Priest's hands, and it was to die in the wilderness for sure. By the releasing of the scapegoat into the wilderness, God had freed all the people of Israel from their sins. This is the very sacrifice that God commanded Moses to offer. It was through the laying on of hands and bloodshed that God had enabled all the people of Israel to receive the remission of their sins.

The sacrificial system of the Old Testament was one that taught the truth that God would send Jesus, and that as His Lamb, Jesus would accept and shoulder all the sins of every sinner living in this world through His baptism, and that He would thus wash away all mankind's sins, both of their daily lives and their entire lifetimes. All the people of the Old Testament believed that it was through the sacrificial system of the Tabernacle that their remission of sin was brought to them. Now, the people of the New Testament also have countless sins, whether committed intentionally or unintentionally, and they need to find out how they can solve the problem of these sins, and how they can be remitted from them all.

The New Testament's Offering of the Great Atonement

The Old and New Testaments of the Bible match with each other (Isaiah 34:16). What part of the New Testament then matches with the Old Testament's offering of the Day of Atonement? Let's examine what exactly Jesus first did to blot out all our sins.

"Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. And John tried to prevent Him, saying, 'I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?' But Jesus answered and said to him, 'Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.' Then he allowed Him. When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased'" (Matthew 3:13-17).

God sent His Son Jesus as the One who *"will save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21).* The One who had created the universe, in other words, personally came to this earth through the Virgin Mary incarnated in the flesh of a man as the Lamb of sacrifice. The ministry of Jesus began with His baptism. By "then" in the above passage, it refers to the year when Jesus turned 30. This was the year when Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist.

Who was John the Baptist? *"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" (Matthew 11:11-13).

As the above passage tells us, Jesus said that "among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist." The one greater than all the prophets on this earth, greater than Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Elijah, and greater than even Moses, was none other than John the Baptist, the representative of all mankind.

In the Old Testament, the high priesthood was to be succeeded by one of the male descendants of Aaron when he got to 30 years of age. Just as the High Priest, Aaron's descendant, had passed all the Israelites' sins to their sacrificial goat by laying his hands on its head, so did God raise a representative of mankind called John the Baptist to pass their sins onto Jesus, so that God could blot out all our sins of every mankind living on this earth. God had sent John the Baptist to this earth, in other words, as the last prophet. The last High Priest was none other than John the Baptist, a descendant of Aaron.

"There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah. His wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.... He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, 'to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,' and the disobedient to the

wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord" (Luke 1:5-17).

God had passed all the sins of the people of Israel on the Day of Atonement only through the High Priests, the descendants of Aaron in the Old Testament. Now, above passage shows that God chose a descendant of Aaron in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, to pass all the sins of everyone in this world as He had promised. That's why He sent John the Baptist to this world six months prior to Jesus to turn many to the wisdom of the just and to make ready a people prepared for the Lord (Luke 1:17). In other words, John the Baptist was the greatest of all those born of women.

Like this, God raised John the Baptist as the representative of mankind, and it was through him that He passed mankind's sins onto Jesus. John the Baptist also came before Jesus as a witness; from the Word, we also need to find out how John the Baptist bore witness. For the people of Israel, it was because Aaron had passed their sins that they could see the evidence of the fact that all their sins were indeed passed on. Likewise, the fact that John the Baptist passed all our sins of mankind to Jesus Christ is the very evidence that shows how our sins have been blotted out.

As mentioned before, and as shown in Matthew 3:13-17, Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist. This baptism is very important to every Christian. Christians have generally been baptized by water. However, they often receive their baptism without even realizing its meaning. So baptism is given to whoever promises to keep the Ten Commandments, and to faithfully attend Sunday church services, and recognizes the

Lord as his Savior. In this world, even among Christians, it is extremely rare to find anyone who truly knew the meaning of baptism when he was baptized.

Jesus came to this earth and was baptized by John the Baptist; what we need to realize here is why Jesus had to be baptized. Every Christian who professes to believe in Jesus must ask, "Why did Jesus have to be baptized, when He was sinless?" Yet those who have not received the remission of their sins know nothing about this question, no matter how fervently they might believe in Jesus. Only those who have received the remission of their sins can give the correct answer to this question.

Jesus is the heavenly High Priest while John the Baptist is the representative of mankind, the earthly High Priest. John the Baptist had the authority to pass all the sins of mankind to the Lamb Jesus, and Jesus, as the High Priest of the Kingdom of God, was given the role of blotting out all the sins of mankind by sacrificing His own body, not the blood of animal, as their offering—that is, by accepting all the sins of mankind and giving up His body to God as their sacrifice. The High Priest of the Kingdom of Heaven is Jesus (Hebrews 5:10, 6:20, 10:9-14).

Jesus said in Matthew 3:15, *"Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness."* He was baptized in the Jordan River, the river of death. To baptize, *'baptizo'* in Greek, means to immerse, to submerge under water, to cleanse by dipping or submerging, to wash, or to make clean by passing over filth. Therefore, baptism has the same meaning as 'the laying on of hands' in the Old Testament. Just as sins were passed with the laying on of hands, all our sins of mankind were

passed onto Jesus when John the Baptist baptized Him. It was because all the sins of mankind were passed onto Jesus that He was vicariously condemned in our place as our own sacrificial offering and was buried. Like this, the very event through which Jesus accepted all the sins of mankind from John the Baptist was none other than His baptism.

It was to fulfill all the righteousness of God to every one of us, and to completely blot out all the sins of every human being, that Jesus came to this world and was baptized. Do you think that Jesus was baptized just because He was humble? This is not the case at all! Jesus said to John the Baptist solemnly, *"Permit it be so now."* When Jesus said this, He meant, "You shall pass the sins of mankind to Me and I shall shoulder them; what I must do is to remit away all mankind's sins by becoming your own scapegoat before your eyes," for it was to take upon all the sins of mankind that Jesus had come to this world.

People are bound to hell because of their sins. They are agonizing with worries because of their sins, and have been deceived by Satan because of their sins. Jesus is the One who came to this earth to save such people like us from our sins, to make us righteous, and to turn us into God's own children. When Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist and came out of the water, the Holy Spirit descended upon Him from Heaven like a dove and testified that He was the Son of God. The Holy Spirit was the One who bore witness to the Truth. God the Father Himself testified that His Son Jesus accepted all the sins of mankind once and for all by being baptized.

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten

Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." That God sent Jesus to this earth, passed all the sins of mankind to the Son, and sacrificed His Son to give us eternal life and make us sinless—none other than this is the significance of the very event of baptism. Through His baptism, Jesus accepted our sins from John the Baptist, the representative and the last High Priest of mankind, was immersed into the water (signifying His death), and then came out of the water (signifying His resurrection). Through this baptism, a form of the laying on of hands, John the Baptist passed our sins to Jesus. The sins of the world, in other words, were actually removed from mankind to God Himself.

It is because the sins of mankind were actually passed onto Jesus that God says that we are now without sin. Had Jesus not taken away all our sins when He came to this earth, then regardless of how much we believe in Him, we would have had no choice but to remain as sinners. Having blotting out all our sins through His baptism and bloodshed, God admonishes us, *"Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you and your house will be saved"(Acts 16:31).* By believing in the baptism and blood of Jesus, we must be washed from all of our sins once and for all.

"The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, 'Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!'" (John 1:29) John the Baptist continued to shout to the people that the sins of all mankind were all passed onto Jesus through His baptism. The one who shouted, "He is the very Son of God, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world," was none other than this John the Baptist.

Jesus shouldered the sins of the world by being baptized and carried them to the Cross. About 1,975 years have passed since the time Jesus took away the sins of the world. Jesus who took upon the sins of mankind had to give up His life on the Cross. Jesus took upon all the sins of the world. Through His baptism, Jesus took away the sins of our fathers and mothers also, for they, too, are the people of the world. All the sins that we commit from our birth to our death, whether committed intentionally or unintentionally, belong to the sins of the world. These sins were also passed onto Jesus through the laying on of the hands of John the Baptist. The sins that we had committed in our teen years are also the sins of the world, and so they, too, were passed onto Jesus. Jesus, in other words, did not just take away the sins of a few special people, but through His baptism and bloodshed, He took away all the sins that everyone in this world commit throughout his entire lifetime until his death, and washed them all away.

However, only those who believe in the gospel truth of the water and the Spirit, that Jesus accepted our sins through John the Baptist and has remitted them all away, can receive the remission of their sins by this faith. They are the only ones who can be saved from all their sins by faith. But, unfortunately, most people still remain imprisoned by their sins because they do not believe in this gospel of the water and the Spirit. God's door was already opened long ago, but people are still bound to perish because the doors of their hearts are not opened yet, and because they do not believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit.

The sins that we committed from birth to 20 and when we were 21–30 years old are also "the sins of the world," and so these sins were all passed onto Jesus, and the sins that we committed when we were 31–40 years old are also "the sins of the world," and so they, too, were all passed onto Jesus. He is the Son of God who took upon each and every one of our sins. Are not the sins that people commit when they are 41–100 years old also the sins of the world? Jesus also took upon all these sins through His baptism, for they are also the sins that we commit in this world. Because the love of Jesus is eternal and boundless, He did not divide our sins into original and personal sins, but He accepted all our sins through His baptism and shed His blood on the Cross to His death.

Had Jesus not come to this earth, had He not been baptized, and had He not shed His blood, then our faith of the remission of sin would have been all in vain, the death of Jesus Christ would also have been in vain, and for us to believe in the Lord and suffer for Him would all have been in completely futile.

Were the sins of your children passed onto Jesus through His baptism? Let's confirm this. Aren't your children living in this world? If they are living in this world, that it is only too clear that their sins were also passed onto Jesus. The proof for this is the baptism that Jesus received from John the Baptist, and the condemnation of their sins is the very blood that Jesus shed on the Cross (John 19:30-34). The sins of your grandchildren, and the sins of the their descendants who are not even born yet, were all passed onto Jesus through His baptism, and this Jesus shouldered all our sins and remitted them all away on the Cross.

Though we commit sins everyday because of our weaknesses, such sins that we commit are also the sins of the world, and therefore Jesus took them away through His baptism and blood.

John 8:31-32 state, *"If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."* The truth here is none other than the very righteous act of Jesus that He fulfilled with His Word. It is deeply disturbing that most Christians still believe such false doctrinal or denominational teachings that they must keep the Sabbath and say the prayers of repentance everyday to be forgiven for their sins. They believe that Jesus took away their original sin, but He did not take away their personal sins. This is why they have no other choice but to become even more sinful sinners as time passes by. Their efforts may seem admirable, but as far as their salvation is concerned, this is not really where their devotion should lie.

What we must do is to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and to thereby receive the remission of our sins. This is the will of God for us. The more we try to keep the Law, the more difficult it is for us to do so, and we end up discovering ourselves that we are in fact becoming even more of a sinner before God. But by believing in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit that the Lord has given us, we can all indeed be saved from all the sins of the world. Hallelujah! ✉

“Only Speak a Word”

< Matthew 8:5-10 >

“Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, saying, ‘Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented.’ And Jesus said to him, ‘I will come and heal him.’ The centurion answered and said, ‘Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, ‘Go,’ and he goes; and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes; and to my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he does it.’ When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!’”

Whenever the believers of the gospel of the water and the Spirit gather together, everyday is a celebration for us. When we think about how God has blotted out our sins and ruminate on the gospel of the water and the Spirit once again, we are all laughing in joy.

As the centurion in today’s scripture passage confessed his strong faith in Jesus, saying, *“But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed,”* there are people of faith in the Bible who also believed only in the Word of God and followed the

Lord. Blessed are those who have the true faith in the Word of God. And the faith of this centurion is the same faith of those in our age who believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit.

The centurion took pity on one of his servants who fell ill, and he came looking for Jesus and asked Him to heal the servant. And Jesus answered his request. When we examine this passage from the Bible, we understand that the centurion’s mind-set was one that believed in Jesus as the Son of God, and God Himself as well. We can see that he believed in Jesus to be the very God who brought the dead alive and created the universe with His Word. We can witness here as to the greatness of the centurion’s faith.

The centurion said to Jesus, *“Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed.”* Why did he say this? The centurion said this not because he was afraid of Jesus coming into his house, but because he believed in the greatness of God, His holiness, and His omnipotence. If everyone had this mind-set of being ready to revere God and honor Him, he would received the same blessings from God that the centurion was given. What are these God-given blessings? They are the blessing of the remission of sin and that of faith to live on this earth for the righteous work of God. And all these come from our faith in the Word. This was the faith of the centurion. Though we may have nothing to show before God, if we only have faith in His Word, then the blessings of faith will come to us in abundance, just like what happened to this centurion.

The passage about this centurion speaks to all of us that faith in God’s Word is the authentic faith before God, and that God is pleased with such a faith. This faith comes when we believe in God, who does everything and fulfills everything just with His Word. In other words, the Word of God is the only basis of our whole faith. If we know the Word of God and have faith in this Word, then we will all receive amazing blessings in our lives, just as the centurion did.

That the centurion had such faith was a great blessing in itself. Those who revere God also know the power of His Word, and by believing in this Word of God, they can also be saved from all their sins and receive eternal life. It is by His Word that we are saved from the sins of the world, receive the remission of our sins and eternal life, and follow the righteousness of God in faith. This faith in the Word of God brings a wonderful and blessed life to every one of us without fail.

Our Lord said, *“You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32).* We may not know the entire Word of God in all its profundity, but if we believe in this written Word of God, the Word then works in our hearts tangibly and concretely, transforms our minds and souls, and guides us to know and believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, so that the souls that had once been bound to hell would now reach and enter Heaven instead.

If we do not have this faith in the Word of God, then it is completely futile for us to believe in Jesus as our Savior. This kind of faith is no more than believing in Jesus based to one’s own thoughts, something that can only constitute a self-made

religion that one practices on his own accord. But unlike this kind of faith, the faith of the centurion was one that believed God’s Word.

The centurion’s faith was like that of Abraham. Our fathers of faith all believed in the Word that God spoke. Abraham followed the Word of God, and Isaac had the same faith that his father had. Abraham believed in God’s Word of promise as it was, that He would give the land of Canaan to his descendents, and he transferred this same Word of promise to his son Isaac. And to his descendants, God has indeed permitted this land that constitutes today’s Israel. By believing in the Word that God spoke, Abraham became the father of faith.

The most amazing work that God has done to us is that with His Word, He has turned sinners into the righteous. What Word of God, then, makes sinners righteous? How can sinners turn into the righteous? Do people receive the faith of power and become righteous just by attending church, giving fervent prayers, speaking in tongues, or believing in the miraculous power to heal illnesses? When people say that they recognize Jesus as the Savior, is this the same as receiving Him? One cannot believe in the Word of God based on their own emotions, their own devotion, or their own thoughts.

One comes to have faith in the Word of God only by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, that Jesus Christ the Son of God came to this earth to save sinners, was baptized by John the Baptist and shed His blood, and has thereby delivered them from all their sins. Yet despite this, we see many people who claim that they have become God’s

children by their prayers and supplications to Him out loud with all their sincerity in repenting from their sins with their tears. We often see that among the Christians who have been attending church for quite some time, those who shed tears when praying to God are somehow approved as God’s true believers, even as they show no interest in the gospel truth of the water and the Spirit. In this age and time, Christianity has become corrupted into a mere religion of the world that purports to protect all believers with its doctrines.

Today’s Christianity Has the Kind of Faith That Has No Correct Answer

Today’s Christianity is drifting away in a wrong current. The sad reality is that many Christians are now following the mistaken faith of the charismatic movement, mysticism, and materialism. Such pagan beliefs have now become rampant in Christian communities. These Christians may all find some comfort and satisfaction for their minds when they are inside such religious communities, but when they return to their homes and societies, they cannot avoid but to return to their old, unbelieving selves and continue to live empty and confused lives, for the Holy Spirit and the Word of God are still missing from their hearts. Although they claim to believe in Jesus, they do not know the authentic gospel of the water and the Spirit, and therefore they have not received the remission of their sins into their hearts. As a consequence, neither have they received the

Holy Spirit nor do they believe in the Word of God, and this is why they cannot outgrow their old selves.

To believe in God is none other than to believe in His Word. Jesus said that the faith of the centurion who believed in the Word of God was great. Those who do not believe in the Word of God cannot understand the faith of those who believe in God’s Word and follow it. In particular, people who follow the charismatic movement claim that those who cannot speak in tongues have not received the Holy Spirit, saying, “What is the evidence that indicates one has received the Holy Spirit? What does it mean to become God’s children? What is the proof of salvation? None other than to speak in heavenly tongues is the proof of being born again and having received the Holy Spirit.” But this is not true at all.

Such people make a huge commotion wherever they pray. But statistically speaking, it is said that over 99 percent of such people are simply uttering pure nonsense. In other words, their weird behaviors are surely from Satan, not from God. What makes this even more troubling and tragic is that these people are sure that they have received the Holy Spirit, and that they are exerting such satanic confusion in the name of the Holy Spirit.

It is by receiving the remission of sin through one’s faith in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit that one receives the Holy Spirit, as the proof of this remission of sin. Speaking in tongues is not a basic gift that everyone who has received the Holy Spirit can exert. It means no more than speaking in different regional languages (Acts 2:8). During the Apostolic age, the disciples of Jesus spoke in tongues to bear witness to

the gospel (Acts 2:11), and to have a very close and personal fellowship with God (1 Corinthians 14:2). But in this age and time when the Scriptures have already been compiled, there is no longer any special need for us to speak these different regional languages (1 Corinthians 13:8-10). Therefore, even those who do not speak in tongues have now been enabled to speak the truth of salvation by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

When today’s Christians speak in tongues, this does not mean that they have received the remission, nor does it mean that they have become God’s children. Speaking in tongues and seeing visions do not mean that one is born again, nor does having the spiritual gift of healing mean that one has faith in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit. In short, such people are holding onto these mystical signs as their salvation because they have no idea how they can be born again.

These are what Satan gives to the sinful. Mystical faith can last only a few years at most. Once they lose their so-called ‘power,’ they make every effort to recover it. So, they look all around for so-called ‘men of power’ to receive the laying on of their hands. But because their faith is all in vain, they ultimately end up becoming Satan’s servants. The fact that they are pursuing such signs and miracles is the proof that they have no faith in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit in their hearts.

There is a huge difference between the faith of those who believe in visions and supernatural powers and that of those who believe in and follow the Word of God. Compared to the faith of

the centurion, the faith of today's misled Christians who seek after miracles cannot even reach the sole of his feet. Their faith is entirely different from the centurion's faith that believed in and followed the Word of God.

The faith of the centurion was one that simply said, *"Only speak a word, and my servant will be healed."* His faith, in other words, was one that believed in the Word of God—that is, in what Jesus Christ said to us. This indicates that faith in God's Word is the true faith. To believe that everything will be fulfilled exactly according to the Word of Jesus, no matter what He might have said to us, is the true faith. The faith that wholly believes in the Word of God, in other words, is the faith of the centurion.

We, who have faith in the Word of God and thus have received the remission of sin by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, do not fall into this kind of faith that seeks after signs. Above all, this kind of faith is not compatible with our faith, for we are of an entirely different seed from those who are seeking after miracles. Therefore we cannot work with such people to spread God's gospel. The faith of the centurion is the same as our faith, which believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. When we live our lives led by the Word of God, then we come to live the lives of the prophets that went before us. The Holy Spirit worked in these prophets' lives, and He is equally working in our lives also.

I can only thank God when I think about just how He has given us such a great grace of salvation through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and how He has enabled us, unlike

those who are following signs and miracles, to believe in His Word and follow it. That our faith is true, and that we have become righteous, are only because we believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, the Word of God. Whoever denies his own thoughts, humbly listens to what His Word says to him, and believes in the true gospel Word of God, can indeed turn into a righteous person. This is the power of God, and this is the power of the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit. By believing in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, we can all become God’s own children, enter the Kingdom of Heaven, and live beautiful, happy, and blessed lives.

We, the true believers also say to the Lord, “Only speak a word.” Because our Lord has spoken the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit to us, the remission of all our sins has been fulfilled with the Word of God, for this is the very truth of the water and the Spirit.

Seeing the faith of the centurion who believed in His Word, Jesus said, *“Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!”* There is nothing that a paralyzed person can do on his own. Nor can a spiritually paralyzed person make his sins disappear by his own will or prayers. This is why God spoke about the faith that enables one to receive the perfect remission of sin only by the Word of God.

We have received the gift of the remission of sin by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit in His written Word. For all people, their sins can be washed away only by believing in the Word of God. It is because the centurion believed in the Word of Jesus that he said to Him, *“Only speak a word, and my*

servant will be healed," and it is because of this that Jesus approved his faith.

No effort of our own can ever blot out all our sins. Only by believing in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit written in the Word of God can we be washed clean of them. It is only by believing in this Word of God, the gospel of the water and the Spirit, that we can be saved from all our sins. Anything else cannot lead us to salvation from all our sins. We can never receive the remission of sin and be born again apart from the written Word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The salvation that is received in dreams or visions is not salvation at all.

However, there are still many Christians who are becoming even greater sinners after believing in Jesus. Is it natural that a believer in Jesus should become more sinful as time passes by? The Bible states that the Lord had purged our sins with the Word of His power (Hebrews 1:3). Then, what is the Word of His power? It is none other than the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Therefore, those who ignore the Word of His power cannot but remain as sinful Christians no matter how earnestly they believe in Jesus. As all that Jesus has done for us is written in the Word of God in detail, it is by believing in this Word of God that we can become righteous, and it is by this faith in God's Word that the righteous can live under God's blessings.

For those who do not believe in the truth of the remission of sin contained in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, any and all of their experiences are simply false. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life for all genuine believers. No matter how

ardently one may give his prayers of repentance during worship services, if he leaves out the Word of His power, then his sins just cannot be washed away. It is not by the prayers of repentance that one can receive the remission of his sins and enter Heaven, for our own devotion, efforts, and works cannot blot out any of our sins. Any faith that is not based on the Word of God belongs to Satan. No doctrine that came out from the thoughts of man, not the Word of God, can ever wash away our sins. Without faith in the Word of God, no soul can be saved from his sins, no matter how he might have the power to drive away demons, or even if he is martyred. The remission of sin that we receive on our own based on our own thoughts is all bound to change, for it is not based on the true faith.

The Bible also states that we cannot be born again of blood, or of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man (John 1:13). Some people boast of the rich tradition of their faith by saying, "I have believed in Jesus since when I was in my mother's womb." Some others would say, "My family has believed in Jesus for 5 generations." Can these people be born again by such sense of superiority? No, these people cannot become God's own people.

The Lord tells us that He will test such people's faith, and cast them away for their lawlessness. Their pride per se might not be the problem here, if they believe according to the Word of God. Rather, it is because they believe in Jesus according to their own thoughts instead of His Word of Truth that God said that He will cast them out into darkness, saying, *"Depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!" (Matthew 7:23)* What is

meant by “lawlessness” here? It refers to the lawless acts of those who claim to believe in Jesus as their Savior and to exercise all God’s powers even as they do not believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit.

God’s Church is the gathering of those who have been born again of the water and the Spirit. In other words, It is the gathering of the sinless, who are called to be the saints of God (1 Corinthians 1:2). The place that enables people to put down their own thoughts, believe in the Word of God, and receive the remission of sin, is God’s Church. Going to church does not mean going to the Kingdom of Heaven. Yet there are people who say that because they believe in Jesus and are members of the so-called ‘orthodox’ church, they will all go to the Kingdom of God even if they still have sin. Those who take pride in such so-called orthodox denominations of this world identify themselves boldly as the redeemed sinners.

Everyone claims that his denomination is orthodox. But did God say that He would take to Heaven anyone who just professes to believe in Him even if there is no authentic faith in his heart? Nowhere in the Bible is this written. You might as well look for yourselves and see if there is any such suggestion written in the Scriptures. You will surely discover that nowhere is this written.

Before God, saints are those who are sinless; that is, those who have become righteous. People who boast about the orthodoxy of their denominations say, “We are sinners, but because we believe in Jesus, God considers us as righteous. So this is why we believe. Believing in Jesus does not mean we are

sinless. How can we say that we are sinless, when in fact we commit sins everyday? But because we believe in Jesus as our Savior, God considers us to be sinless. This does not mean that we have been saved because we are sinless. Though we still have sin even after believing in Jesus, thanks to our faith in Jesus, we have been called as God’s children, and we can therefore enter His Kingdom.”

Those who have this kind of faith only believe in their own thoughts; what they have is not the salvation that is received by believing in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit. As such, all that they are doing to God is merely confessing their unrequited love for Him. Such people have not been saved from their sins. Those who have not been saved from their sins testify themselves that their hearts still have sin. This is the proof of the fact that they are sinners. Though they believe in Jesus as their Savior, anyone who has sin written in the tablet of his heart is bound to hell.

Having blotted out all the sins of this world with the gospel of the water and the Spirit, Jesus told us to receive the remission of our sins by believing in this true gospel. God is pleased with those who have been freed from their sins and become righteous by believing in Jesus as their Savior. This is why God has prepared Heaven for these righteous people. But the religionists who have not become righteous cannot please God. They confess, “Lord, I believe that you took away all my sins. But please wash me from my personal sins that I continue to commit everyday. Please forgive these sins.” If this is what your faith is like, then you are someone who does not know God’s gospel of

the water and the Spirit, nor believe in it, someone who is actually committing the sin of turning God into a liar.

Christians throughout the World Must Kneel before the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit

There are people who accuse the believers of the gospel of the water and the Spirit as being heretics. Of course, the faith of the sinless may seem to be rather strange in their biased eyes. But according to the gospel truth of the water and the Spirit, it is they who do not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and whose hearts therefore still remain sinful, that are heretics who will ultimately perish. Heretics are none other than those who are warped and sinning, being self-condemned before God (Titus 3:11). Those Christians who say that they still have sin before God are actually committing sin before Him. If you still have not received the remission of sin owing to your ignorance of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, then repent now and believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. It is never too late. True repentance means turning back from the wrong way and having faith in the truth, the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Those who condemn themselves even as they believe in Jesus are the very heretics. There is no condemnation in Jesus Christ (Romans 8:1). We must reach the proper understanding of this truth by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Those who have sin before God cannot lead other sinful souls to the Word of God, and all that they can bear are just sinners who

believe in vain according to their man-made thoughts.

But those who have received the remission of their sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit can help others who still remain sinful become without sin by the written Word of God, for it is by faith that they have received the remission of their sins. Therefore, those who meet the righteous who have been remitted from their sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, can hear the Word of being born again from them, come to believe in Jesus, and be also turned into the righteous.

Those who have become righteous by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit are not heretics, but they are true believers. They are the blessed who have been born again by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The most blessed way to the born-again is to follow and unite with the leaders of God’s Church, and to preach the true gospel of the water and the Spirit to all the sinners of the world. Christians who still remain as sinners should come before the righteous who have received the remission of sin by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and they should accuse us openly that the righteous are heretics. For them to throw such accusations behind our backs is only foolish and cowardly.

What kind of faith is the right faith? The centurion was a Gentile, but he believed in the Word of God as it was. Because he thus believed in this Word of Jesus, his faith was approved. But those who boasted of their orthodoxy, that they were the true followers of Judaism, were all abandoned. The Pharisees were sinners, for they failed to recognize Jesus properly as the Savior.

Faith in the Word of God leads us to the faith that saves us from all our sins, and it is by believing in all the Word of God that our lives are blessed. True faith is to believe in the Word of God and to obey it. And to such true believers, the Word of God is fulfilled as they believe. It was because the centurion had this faith that God said that his faith was great.

God has given us this faith with the grace of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. And we also have personally experienced that the Word of God was fulfilled according to the written Word. Yet it saddens us when we see that few people have this kind of faith that the centurion had. They must believe in the God’s gospel of the water and the Spirit. When they believe in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit, the Word of God, then they will be healed all at once from their spiritual leprosy according to this faith. The faith that is most approved by God is none other than the faith that believes in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit that He spoke, as it is.

The faith that believes in the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit that has made us sinless is the faith of the centurion that God approved. To the righteous who believe in His Word, God has given the blessings of the remission of sin, and of becoming His own children, and I thank the Lord for this. Having become sinless by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we have now been qualified to do the righteous works for the sake of others. Just as our Lord says that the righteous shall live only by faith, let us forever believe in Him in our lives.

May the Lord lead you also. Amen. Hallelujah! ✉

Follow the Lord First

< Matthew 8:18-22 >

"And when Jesus saw great multitudes about Him, He gave a command to depart to the other side. Then a certain scribe came and said to Him, 'Teacher, I will follow You wherever You go.' And Jesus said to him, 'Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.' Then another of His disciples said to Him, 'Lord, let me first go and bury my father.' But Jesus said to him, 'Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead.'"

It is written here, *"Then a certain scribe came and said to Him, 'Teacher, I will follow You wherever You go.'"* Jesus then said to the scribe, *"Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."* This man called as a scribe, in worldly terms, was a high-ranking public official. This man of a high position chose to follow Jesus, saying to Him, "Teacher, I will follow You wherever You go." This man had a great respect for Jesus, and he really wanted to follow him. He must have truly realized who Jesus was, and he must have thought that there was no one in this world who was greater than Jesus.

But Jesus said to him, *"Foxes have holes and birds of the air*

have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head." Hearing this, the scribe probably gave up. Though he respected Jesus as a man, he gave up the moment he realized that he had nothing to gain from Jesus. The scribe expected that he might gain something from Him as one of His disciples even though he initially wanted to follow Jesus out of his respect for Him. But Jesus said to him that the Son of Man had nowhere to lay His head. Hearing this, that Jesus had not a single plot of land, neither his own home, nor anything else in this world, the scribe gave up.

When one of the disciples of Jesus said, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father," Jesus said to him, "Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead."

A disciple is one who follows his teacher. When it comes to following the Lord for us, what Jesus said here is rather shocking. Jesus is telling us that the worldly people cannot follow the Lord even if they want to, and that there is nothing that they can gain by following the Lord. In fact, what worldly things could anyone gain by following the Lord? As Jesus said that the Son of Man had nowhere to lay His head, the worldly people have no reason to follow the Lord.

To Follow the Lord, One Must Love the Gospel

One of the disciples here asked Jesus to allow him to first bury his father and then follow Him. Since his father had died, was it not only proper for him to first bury him and then follow

the Lord? This would indeed be the right thing to do when judged based on the ethics and morality of this world. But in the Bible, Jesus said, *"Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead."* How, in other word, could someone calling himself a disciple of Jesus follow the Lord only after taking care of all his carnal affairs? If one really wants to follow the Lord, then he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow the Lord (Mark 8:34). The Bible is telling us here that if we really desire to follow Jesus Christ, we can do so only if we let the worldly people take care of their worldly affairs.

Let us think about this carefully. When you try to follow the Lord, there are many obstacles of the flesh that hinder you from abiding by your faithful discipleship. When someone meets the Lord and wants to follow Him, the first obstacle to his way is the issue of his family. If he does not take care of his family, then he feels sorry for them, and he thinks to himself that he should be taking care of them and helping them.

After I was born again, there was a time when I actually faced the same problem. My older brother passed away suddenly, leaving his wife, two sons, and two daughters, for a total of four children behind, all by themselves. I had loved and cared deeply for these nephews and nieces from the day they were born. But the great turning point was that soon after my brother passed away, I came to be born again. I then had a sense of duty for the lost souls, and I felt a strong desire to follow the Lord. My heart just wanted to spread the gospel to even one person and help him receive the remission of his sins.

But there was something that was holding me back. Given

my nephews and nieces, I felt that I had to make money to take care of them. There was no compulsory clause that required me to do this, but I had this desire deep in my heart. So I began to anguish over what I should do. Grown-ups can obviously take care of themselves, but since my nephews and nieces were still just children, living with their heartbroken mother without their father, I felt obligated to be kind to them and to take care of them. And for me to take care of them, I had to make money. Making enough money to support all five of them, including my sister-in-law, was no easy task for me. A considerable amount of money would be required to feed all four children, to clothe them, and to put them through school. But I also had to preach the gospel. If I were to serve the gospel, I could not take care of them, and if I were to take care of them, then I could not preach the gospel. So I kept thinking and anguishing for a long time over what I should do.

After a while, I eventually made my decision. The conclusion that I reached was this: although it was important for me to take care of my nephews and nieces, I could help them later on when I could afford it, but God's works had be done now and could not be put off, for if I did not preach the gospel, then many souls in this world would die in sin. My dilemma over what I should do was then resolved. Instead of spreading the gospel, if I were to make money and take care of my family, this would have been for the carnal happiness of only four, five people at most. But if I were to serve the gospel and follow the Lord, it would bring many people to life and serve the true happiness of the many. So after careful consideration, I reached my final decision

and said to myself, “I am sorry to my nephews and nieces, but I just can’t do this. It’s not because I do not love them. I do really love them, but there is little that I can do. I only hoped that they would work hard and overcome these adversities, and that God would bless them and help them.” I then stood up to follow the Lord.

Many such things happen to us as we live our lives in this world. After being born again, just how many times have we asked, “Let me first bury my father”? Though we have been born again by believing in Jesus, aren’t there so many things of the flesh that we need to do? How many people do we have that are in need of our care? The disciple in today’s passage said, “Let me first go and bury my father,” but if he were to take care of all his carnal affairs, then when would he find the time to do the works of God? When would he have enough time? That’s why Jesus said to him, “Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead.” He said this because this was the truth.

No man can do two things well all at once. Though we want to take good care of both our carnal affairs and spiritual works, we can never achieve these two things at the same time. Even if someone is talented enough to take care of two things simultaneously, when he is hung up on one thing, then he is bound to be unfaithful with the other work. This is because regardless of how gifted he may be, there is a limit to his ability. Let me show you an example. Back in the old days when we were still in school studying for exams, we often focused on certain subjects. When we placed a greater weight to a particular subject and devoted more of our study time to it, it was only

natural that we would not be able to study the other subjects with the same intensity, and we were bound to spend less time and pay less attention to them. All this is because we are finite beings.

So before God, we must consider the following passage as a matter of actuality: "Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead." We need to realize the meaning of this passage and follow it. To bury one's own father is only proper. It is something that we must all do. Is there anyone among us the born-again who would not give a proper funeral to one of his family members that passed away? Everyone does this. But the Lord spoke to His born-again disciples about what it is that they must first do, what the disciples who truly follow Him must first do.

What must the righteous do first? They must first do the works of God, follow the Lord, serve the gospel, do what the Lord wants them to do, and be led to wherever He leads them. This life of discipleship is to follow the Lord. After being born again, whether we remain as the disciples of the world or become the disciples of Jesus is determined by whether we decide to follow the Lord or the world and its secular values. The people of this world think that the disciples of Jesus are extremely petty, utterly infantile, and cunning, as if they were nobody. They think like this based on their worldly standards and on their own, but the true disciples of Jesus could not be more different. The disciples of Jesus think on a much higher plane than the disciples of the world, their goals are noble, and their hearts are as big as the seas. Born into this world once,

everyone must live a meaningful life, and to live this life is the life of discipleship.

Whose Disciples Are You?

Are you the disciples of Jesus, or are you the disciples of the world? Put differently, do you follow the world, or do you follow Jesus? Those who follow Jesus leave everything of this world aside and seek to serve the gospel of our Lord. It is those who live like this who are the Lord's disciples. In God's Church, there are some laymen believers who are serving the Lord while living their social lives, taking care of their families, and carrying on with their works and businesses diligently. This, of course, is also the life of our Lord's discipleship. But there also are those who follow Jesus and serve the Lord's gospel wholly and exclusively. They are the true disciples of Jesus, and they are living the proper life of discipleship.

No matter what, a disciple follows the footsteps of his teacher. Jesus' disciples like to do what Jesus wants them to do. Therefore, those who have decided to believe in and follow Jesus must follow the Lord forever. Jesus said here, "Follow Me," and it is indeed a great joy to follow Him. What a great teacher is Jesus, how almighty is He, and just how good is our Lord? If we really follow the Lord, we will never ever be regretful.

If we follow the Lord, He will never cast us out, nor will He ever betray us. And following the Lord is never in vain.

This is why the Lord Jesus told 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)*. He still tells us, today's disciples, to make disciples of all the nations.

We must really think about what the true discipleship is, and examine carefully whether or not we are indeed living this life of discipleship. Laying aside our busy schedule and urgent tasks for a while, we must think about this issue seriously. We must reexamine our mind before the Lord whether we are pleased with our decision to be His disciples, and whether we are ready to please the Commander who has enlisted us as His good soldiers (2 Timothy 2:4). We must confirm that the life of His discipleship is the most precious and worthy one for us to live. And then, we must set up our hearts as His good disciples once again.

My dear fellow Christians, the scribe wanted to follow the Lord, but he was unable to do so. He failed to do so because the Lord had told him that there was nothing for him to gain by following Him. He said, "I have nothing, but if you still want to follow Me, then follow Me. I have no possession in this world. But in truth, I am the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven, the Lord of all hosts, and the King of kings. Yet I have nothing of this world. Foxes have their holes and birds of the air have their nests, but I have nowhere to lay My head. So if you want to follow Me with your worldly lusts, then do so while you are fully aware that you will not gain anything of this world. If you

want to follow Me even as you realize this, then follow Me."

But to His disciples, Jesus said, "Follow Me. Let the dead take care of the affairs of their dead ones, and follow Me." Who are the dead here? Are they not those who have not been born again? They are the people who do not believe in Jesus and His true gospel of the water and the Spirit. The world may be full of obstacles, and it may be hard for us to follow the Lord, but as you live your lives, remember what our Lord said here: "Follow Me."

It is my hope and prayer that you would always remember in your hearts that the Lord has told you to follow Him, and that you would indeed do so. ✉



Rev. PAUL C. JONG

The author has been preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit to the lost souls of the world for nearly two decades so far.

The founder of The New Life Mission, he is presently fostering many disciples of Jesus at The New Life Mission School.

Having established mission-oriented churches, he is spreading the gospel through his written works.

His books have now been translated and are read in over 96 major languages of the world.

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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.

Excerpts from the book

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