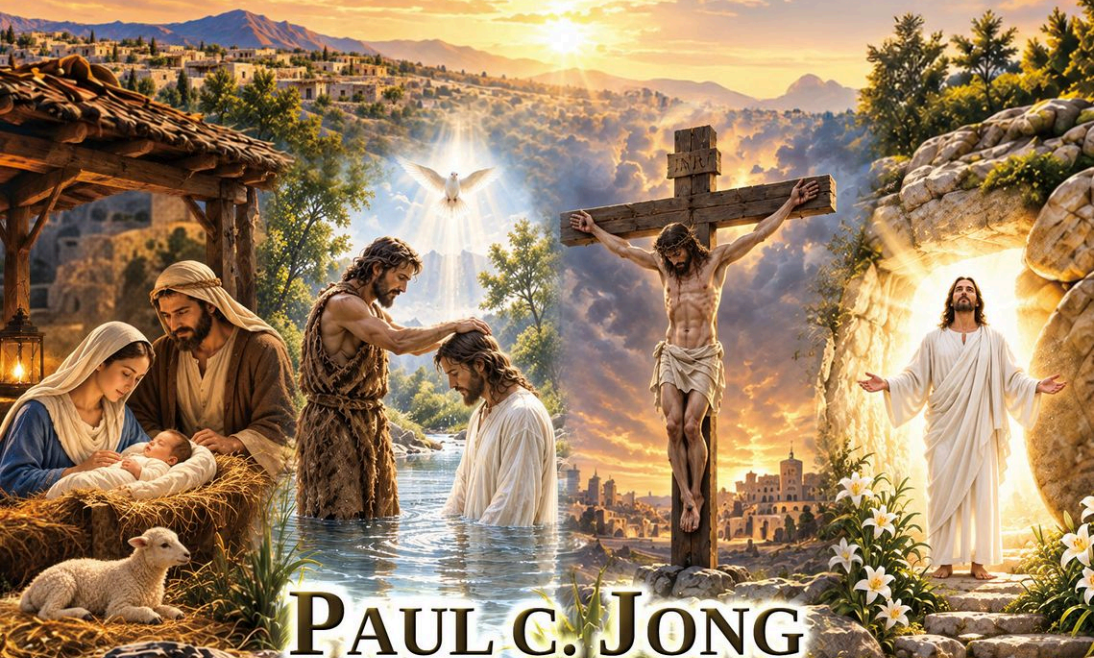
Sermons by Paul C. Jong

The Gospel of the Water and the Spirit

The Gospel of John Volume 2

Chapters 7–13



PAUL C. JONG



“If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink” (John 7:37)

If sin still remains in a person’s heart even though he says he believes in Jesus, that soul is still thirsty.

Sin is not washed away by remorse or resolutions. That is why Jesus had all our sins passed on to Him through the baptism He received from John the Baptist, received that judgment on the Cross, and rose again from death. Whoever turns from trying to wash away his sins by his own efforts and believes in this gospel of the water and the Spirit receives the remission of sins and, just as the Lord promised, receives the Holy Spirit as a gift. This book invites thirsty souls to Jesus, the fountain of living water.

This is a book that everyone must seek out

and read now,

before the Antichrist appears,

as this world is heading toward destruction.

<u>You must believe now.</u>

FREE BOOK / DONATION

From THE NEW LIFE MISSION

https://www.bjnewlife.org

E-mail: newlife@bjnewlife.org

The New Life Mission is looking for coworkers to collaborate in postal ministry or book distribution ministry to effectively spread the gospel. Those who are interested in this ministry are asked to first read Paul C. Jong's Christian book series, then visit **www.bjnewlife.org** and apply to become a coworker to become a qualified partner.

Dear Readers of This Book:

First of all, we are delighted that this book has reached you well, and we give great thanks to God.

Our 'The New Life Mission,' established in 1991, is carrying out a literature mission ministry that translates and distributes Pastor Paul C. Jong's spiritual sermon collections into multiple languages worldwide.

Pastor Paul C. Jong has been easily and clearly conveying Jesus' salvation work according to the Word of the Bible to this day, so that many people can receive true remission of sins and return to God through just this one book. And together with his fellow workers, he continues to make tireless efforts even now to spread the gospel of water and the Spirit throughout the world.

[Ministry Introduction]

- **Pastor Paul C. Jong's thematic books:** Over 110 volumes written (continuously being published)
- **Translation languages:** Approximately 110+ languages
- **Single-language books:** Approximately 1,700+
- **Bilingual books:** Approximately 370+
- **Daily website visitors:** Average over 20,000 (supporting 27 languages)
- **Daily e-book downloads:** Over 3,000 copies
- **Daily audiobook downloads:** Over 5,000 copies

[Ministry Channels]

- **Download Services**

Free: E-books and audiobook files provided on 'The New Life Mission' homepage / Official Wix blog

Paid: Amazon, Apple Books, Google Books, Kobo, Spotify, Apple Music, etc. (printed books, e-books, audiobooks)

- **Other Content:** YouTube & Blog (Sermons, Bible studies, testimonies, etc.) / SNS (Facebook, Instagram, etc.)
- **Offline:** Worldwide network of partner churches and co-workers

We ask that you recommend this book and 'The New Life Mission's website to many people around you so that lost souls can return to God. (For those who have purchased printed books from Amazon or purchased ePub e-books, audiobooks, etc. through paid sites, leaving warm reviews on the respective purchase platforms would greatly help our mission.)

- Recommend Pastor Paul C. Jong's books and website (www.bjnewlife.org) to acquaintances around you
- Participate in the ministry by writing book reviews on purchase platforms

Please join us in this beautiful literature ministry so that the gospel of truth may reach lost souls in these last days. We pray that God's blessings will be with you.

Sermons by Paul C. Jong

The Gospel of the Water and the Spirit

The Gospel of John

Volume 2

Chapters 7–13

PAUL C. JONG



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

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

The Gospel of the Water and the Spirit: The Gospel of John Volume 2
Copyright 2026 Hephzibah Publishing House
First Edition: 2026
Published: October 2026

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means — electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise — without the prior written permission of the publisher and copyright owners.

Scripture quotations used in this book are from the '*New King James Version (NKJV)', 'American Standard Version (ASV)'*.

ISBN 978-89-282-6348-6
Illustration: Young-ae Kim
Reviewed: Elizabeth
Translator: Elizabeth
Printed in South Korea
Cover art generated with AI and retouched

Hephzibah Publishing House
A Ministry of THE NEW LIFE MISSION
Seoul, Korea

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

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

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We offer a prayer of thanks to the Lord for giving us the Word of salvation and blessing us with the gospel of being born again by water and the Spirit.

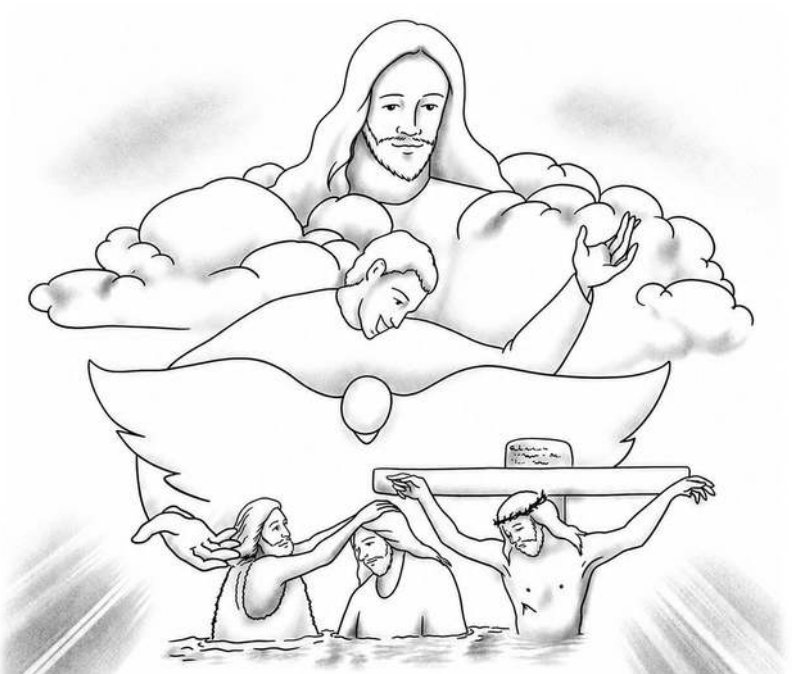
I would also like to thank God's servants and brothers and sisters for their invaluable service in publishing this book. We all worked hard to write this book.

I hope and pray that this book will help many souls be born again, and I would like to express my sincere gratitude once again to everyone who worked hard with me.

I sincerely hope that the Lord will allow the gospel of being born again by water and the Spirit to be spread throughout the world through those who believe in Jesus.

PAUL C. JONG

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



Remission of sins



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

Preface

Jesus Christ, who loves us to the end

Even though Jesus knew the weaknesses of His disciples, He loved them to the end. He also knew that Peter, who had said that he would lay down even his life for the Lord, would soon deny the Lord. Yet the Lord gave Himself in order to bear their sins and give them life. We, too, receive the remission of sins by believing in this salvation the Lord accomplished, and come before God.

John recorded the love of Jesus like this: *"Having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end" (John 13:1)*. This love appears in the fact that Jesus, knowing that the time had come for Him to return to the Father, washed the feet of His disciples. The sermons on John chapters 7 through 13 contained in this book follow the words the Lord spoke and the works He did leading up to that time. On the last day of the feast, Jesus called out to those who were thirsty and promised the Holy Spirit whom those who believe would receive; He did not condemn the woman caught in adultery; and He opened the eyes of the man who was blind from birth. He also called Himself the door of the sheep and the good shepherd who lays down His life for the sheep; He raised the dead Lazarus to life; and He said that the time had come for Him to die like a grain of wheat. These words show how the Lord saved us from sin, and how those who have been saved live following the Lord.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

The Savior who sets sinners free

There are many people who, while saying that they believe in Jesus, still have sin remaining in their hearts. They know the word that God loves the world, but they do not clearly know when and how their own sins were removed. So they repeatedly regret their wrongdoings and make new resolutions, but the sin deep in the heart is not removed by human resolutions and efforts.

We need Someone who will save us from sin. We need a Savior who will bear, in our place, the sin that cannot be resolved by pulling ourselves together, and its judgment. When we look at ourselves honestly in the light of the word of God, we come to admit that fact. The law exposes even the sins we had kept hidden. The people who were accusing the woman who had been caught in adultery and brought there also went away one by one before the word, *"He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first" (John 8:7)*. Even a person who compared himself with others and considered himself all right has no choice but to admit, before the word, that he is a sinner.

Jesus said, *"If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink" (John 7:37)*. The One who gives salvation to people who cannot wash away their sins by their own strength is Jesus Christ. To come to the Lord is to know who He is and how He saved us, and to accept that word.

However, there were people who heard the word near the Lord and yet did not accept Him. They thought they knew God, and they considered that they also knew well what was right. While they disputed where Jesus came from and kept an eye on people's opinions, they failed to recognize the very Savior who was right before them. Their example makes us, who read the word, look back on ourselves. We must examine whether, while

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

putting forward our familiar knowledge and our long life of faith, we are missing the word the Lord is letting us hear. We must know and believe in our own hearts who He is and what He accomplished for us.

Jesus Christ is God, who made us, and the Son of God, whom the Father sent. He put on human flesh and came among us in order to save sinners. God, who knows our sins, came Himself to take those sins upon Himself. God the Father sent the Son, and the Son gave Himself according to the Father's will. In the work of salvation that Jesus carried out, we come to know God's love toward us.

By receiving baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River, Jesus had all the sin of mankind transferred to Him once and for all. He bore all of it: the sin we brought with us from birth, the sins we commit as we go on living, and even the sins we will commit in the days remaining ahead of us. And in the body to which that sin had been passed on, He was nailed to the Cross, shed His blood, and died. The Cross was the judgment for the sin that had been passed on to Him through the baptism He received from John, and Jesus received in our place that judgment which we should have received. And He rose again from death in three days, revealing that He is God, and became our eternal Savior. This is the gospel of the water and the Spirit that has given us life.

The sin of the world that the Lord bore includes the sins of each one of us. The Lord had the sins we know about, and even the sins we had not realized, transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John, and He received the judgment for them on the Cross. The basis of the remission of sins lies in this salvation the Lord accomplished. By believing that fact, we are justified before God.

"You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free"

(John 8:32). The Lord promised this freedom to those who abide in His word. We are set free from the condemnation of sin by believing the truth that the Lord has removed all sins. While admitting the weaknesses of the flesh that are exposed even after we have been saved, we can rely on the Lord, who bore even those sins, and turn back from the wrong path.

Concerning the rivers of living water that the Lord promised on the last day of the feast, the Bible makes clear, *"This He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive" (John 7:39)*. At that time, because Jesus had not yet been glorified, the Holy Spirit had not yet come. This is because, although the Lord had already received baptism from John and had the sin of the world passed on to Him, it was still before He died on the Cross and rose again. After salvation was fully accomplished, God gives the Holy Spirit as a gift to those who have received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The Holy Spirit does not work apart from Jesus, but testifies in our hearts to the work in which Jesus had our sins passed on to Him, was judged, and rose again. Therefore, we must also base our assurance that we have received the Holy Spirit not on special feelings or mystical experiences, but on the salvation Jesus accomplished and on His promise. The rivers of living water are the peace that the Holy Spirit gives to people who have no sin in their hearts, and that living water also flows to other people through the gospel.

The love of the Lord, who washed away even weakness

As Jesus washed Peter's feet, He said, *"He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean" (John*

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

13:10). Being already bathed means that, because Jesus had the disciples' sins passed on to Him through the baptism He received from John, they had already become clean; and the feet point to the sins they would commit as they lived on this earth. Through that baptism, Jesus bore even the sins the disciples would commit in the future. His washing their feet was something He did so that, even when they fell because of their weakness, they could believe in the salvation the Lord had accomplished and follow Him again. The basis of the salvation that raised Peter up again also lay in the fact that the Lord had washed away all his sins.

We, too, need this faith. There are days when, even while loving the Lord, we put our own desires first, and even while hearing the word, we cannot lay down our stubbornness. If, every time that happens, we try to wash away our sins anew with prayers of repentance, our hearts become bound again to our own efforts. The Lord had even those sins transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John, and was judged on the Cross. Therefore, we can admit our wrongs and turn back, believing in that gospel. The reason a person who has fallen can follow the Lord again is that the salvation He accomplished is perfect.

Jesus said to His disciples, *"You also ought to wash one another's feet" (John 13:14)*. When we see the faults of a brother or sister, if we merely bring those faults to light and condemn that person, we cannot build that person up again in faith. We should point out the wrong so that the person may know it rightly, and confirm together through the gospel that that sin, too, has already been passed on to Jesus. It is not we but Jesus who washes away that person's sins.

Jesus said, *"As I have loved you, that you also love one another" (John 13:34)*. The standard for loving one another is

the love the Lord has shown us. If we remember that we, too, are people who live by the same grace, then even when our brothers and sisters reveal their weaknesses, we can correct them with the word and help them to follow the Lord, believing together in the gospel of the remission of sins.

The sheep that hear the voice of the good shepherd and follow Him

Jesus called Himself the door of the sheep, and said, *"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep" (John 10:11)*. That the good shepherd lays down His life refers to the work in which Jesus had the sins of the sheep passed on to Him through the baptism He received from John, received the judgment for those sins and died on the Cross, and rose again. Through that sacrifice, we became the Lord's sheep. The Lord also said, *"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me" (John 10:27)*. The voice of the shepherd that the sheep recognize is the gospel of the water and the Spirit that saved us. Even after being saved, the sheep need the shepherd. The Lord feeds us and leads us with the word, and He said that no one can snatch out of the Lord's hand the eternal life He has given. Therefore, we discern and listen to the voice of the shepherd rather than the words of men, and following that word, we carry out the work entrusted to us today.

This faith becomes our hope even in the face of death. In the household at Bethany where Lazarus had fallen sick and died, Jesus said, *"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live" (John 11:25)*. And by raising Lazarus from the tomb, He revealed that He is the Lord of life. That Lord, with our sins passed on to Him, died on the

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Cross and rose again from death. By believing in that Lord, we have obtained eternal life, and we are waiting to put on the resurrection of the body in the time to come and to live with the Lord. Because we believe this promise, we hold on to the hope the Lord has given us even in the face of the death of the flesh.

A life of following the Lord with the new life we have received

Jesus said, *"Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain" (John 12:24)*. The grain of wheat is Jesus Himself, who, with the sin of mankind passed on to Him through the baptism He received from John, died on the Cross and rose again; and we who have received the remission of sins are its fruit. After coming to know the One who gave His life for us, we cannot live only for ourselves. So those who have been saved preach the gospel to people who are still in sin, and serve that work together with those who believed before them. They offer to the Lord the time, material resources, and strength they are able to offer, so that the word of life may be preached to others.

Even while walking that path, our hearts often turn toward the comfort of the flesh and the approval of men. Jesus said, *"He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life" (John 12:25)*. If we clutch the life we have received and live only for our own flesh, that life remains a single grain as it is, without fruit. We must follow the Lord, who gave us eternal life, and serve together so that that gospel may be preached to other souls as well.

I hope that, through the word of the Gospel of John contained in this book, you will know and believe in Jesus Christ more

clearly. I hope that those of you who are still bearing the burden of sin will receive the remission of sins by believing in the salvation the Lord accomplished, and that those of you who have already been saved will abide in that word and follow the Lord. I hope that you will give thanks to the Savior, who gave Himself for us, and that, with the love you have received from the Lord, you will care for one another and serve the gospel.

The Lord loved us, knowing what kind of people we are. Knowing all about even tomorrow's weaknesses, which we do not yet know, He accomplished a perfect salvation. Those who believe in that salvation live the rest of their lives enjoying the life the Lord gives, loving the people beside them, and serving the work entrusted to them. Jesus Christ, who loved us to the end, is the Savior on whom we will rely through all those days. ✉

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Contents

Preface ---------- 7

Sermons on John Chapter 7

Sermons by Paul C. Jong

1. The Lord, who carried out the Father's will for us to the end (John 7:1–9) ---------- 21
2. The faith that believes the word of the Lord rather than the words of people (John 7:10–13) ---------- 30
3. Look at the righteous work of the Lord, who gives life to people (John 7:14–24) ---------- 37
4. The faith that knows the Savior whom the Father sent (John 7:25–36) ---------- 46
5. Jesus, who gives rivers of living water to those who believe (John 7:37–44) ---------- 55
6. The coming of the Holy Spirit (John 7:37–39) ---------- 64
7. Rivers of living water that overflow from the heart (John 7:37–53) ---------- 82
8. Faith that believes the word of the Lord rather than the authority of men (John 7:45–53) ---------- 102

Sermons on John Chapter 8

Sermons by Paul C. Jong

1. The Lord, who bore our sins and delivered us from condemnation (John 8:1–11) ---------- 113

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

2. Whoever believes in the salvation Jesus accomplished gains the light of life (John 8:1–12) ---------- 124
3. The true testimony of the Lord, who gives the light of life (John 8:12–20) ---------- 148
4. The only Savior, who delivered us from sin (John 8:21–30) ---------- 158
5. Abide in the word of truth by which the Lord saved us (John 8:31–36) ---------- 169
6. The eternal Son of God, who makes us free (John 8:31–59) ---------- 187

Sermons on John Chapter 9

Sermons by Paul C. Jong

1. The Lord, who opened our eyes and let us see salvation (John 9:1–12) ---------- 203
2. He saved those who deserved to be cursed (John 9:1–7) ---------- 214
3. Go, wash in the pool of Siloam (John 9:1–7) ---------- 228
4. The faith of living as disciples of the Lord, who saved us (John 9:13–34) ---------- 244
5. The person who believes in the Son of Man and follows Him (John 9:35–41) ---------- 257

Sermons on John Chapter 10

Sermons by Paul C. Jong

1. The sheep who come in through the door of salvation and follow the shepherd (John 10:1–6) ---------- 271
2. The good shepherd, who gave His life for us (John 10:7–18) ---------- 281

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

3. The Lord, who is the good shepherd
(John 10:1–18) ---------- 292
4. The faith that recognizes the Savior even amid slander
(John 10:19–21) ---------- 317
5. My sheep hear My voice, and they follow Me
(John 10:22–29) ---------- 325
6. The Lord, who gives us eternal life and keeps us
(John 10:22–39) ---------- 338
7. The people who met the Savior through true testimony
(John 10:40–42) ---------- 349

Sermons on John Chapter 11

Sermons by Paul C. Jong

1. The Lord, who wakes up those who sleep, and the hope
of the resurrection (John 11:1–16) ---------- 359
2. Jesus, who saves our families
(John 11:1–46) ---------- 371
3. The Lord works in living faith
(John 11:1–44) ---------- 398
4. The faith that now believes in the Lord, who is
the resurrection and the life (John 11:17–44) ---------- 415
5. The person who believes in his heart
what the Lord has done (John 11:45–46) ---------- 428
6. Jesus, who became the sacrificial offering
of atonement for us (John 11:47–57) ---------- 436

Sermons on John Chapter 12

Sermons by Paul C. Jong

1. The fragrant oil offered to the Lord, who gave me life
(John 12:1–8) ---------- 449

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

2. The evidence of life that leads people to believe in Jesus (John 12:9–11) ---------- 458
3. The King who came humbly and saved us (John 12:12–19) ---------- 465
4. Let us have hope in the Lord of the resurrection (John 12:20–26) ---------- 474
5. The Lord, who became a grain of wheat and gave us life (John 12:20–43) ---------- 487
6. Jesus Christ, who solved the problem of death (John 12:20–33) ---------- 500
7. The word of everlasting life that Jesus preached (John 12:44–50) ---------- 517

Sermons on John Chapter 13

Sermons by Paul C. Jong

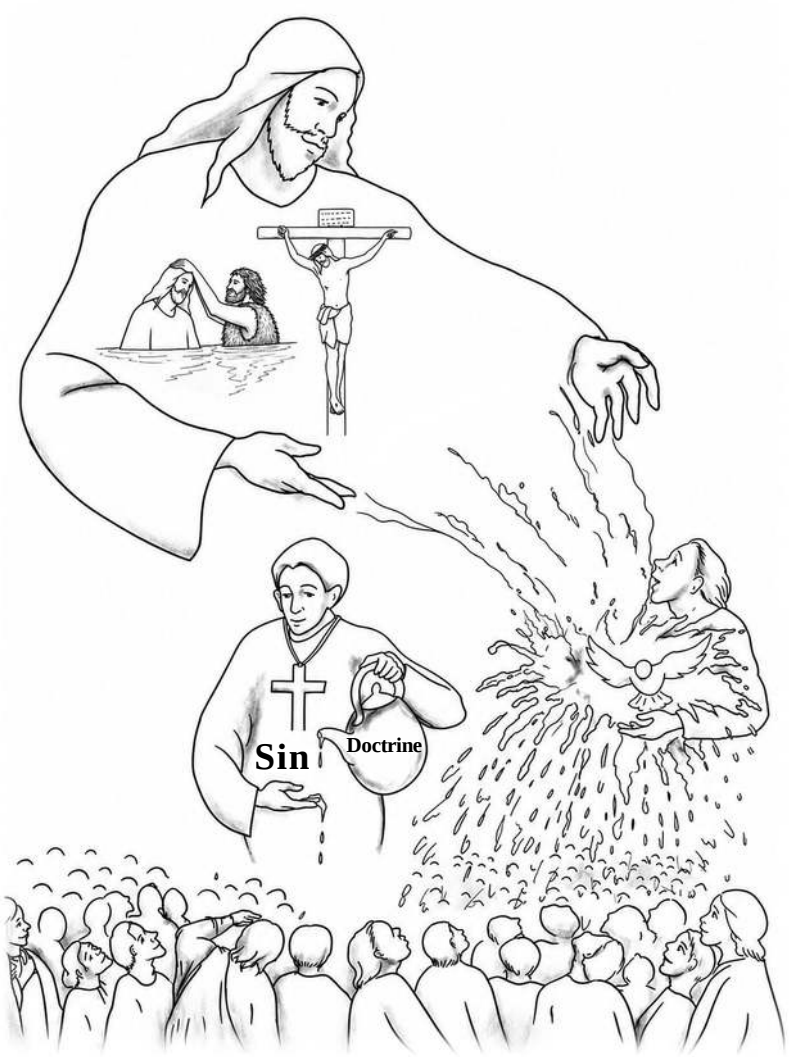
1. The endless love of the Lord, who washed away all our sins (John 13:1–11) ---------- 529
2. Preach the gospel revealed in the washing of the feet (John 13:1–17) ---------- 539
3. He has already washed away even our actual sins completely (John 13:1–17) ---------- 567
4. A life of serving one another by following the Lord, who washed away sin (John 13:12–20) ---------- 590
5. The Lord, who saved us even though He knew of the betrayal (John 13:21–30) ---------- 601
6. The Lord, who knows our weakness and leads us to follow Him (John 13:31–38) ---------- 610

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

CHAPTER

7

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



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

Sermon 1 by Paul C. Jong

The Lord, who carried out the Father's will for us to the end

< John 7:1–9 >

"After these things Jesus walked in Galilee; for He did not want to walk in Judea, because the Jews sought to kill Him. Now the Jews' Feast of Tabernacles was at hand. His brothers therefore said to Him, 'Depart from here and go into Judea, that Your disciples also may see the works that You are doing. For no one does anything in secret while he himself seeks to be known openly. If You do these things, show Yourself to the world.' For even His brothers did not believe in Him. Then Jesus said to them, 'My time has not yet come, but your time is always ready. The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify of it that its works are evil. You go up to this feast. I am not yet going up to this feast, for My time has not yet fully come.' When He had said these things to them, He remained in Galilee."

John chapter 7 begins with the words *"After these things."* In chapter 6, after performing the sign of the five loaves and two fish, Jesus said that whoever eats His flesh and drinks His blood obtains eternal life. Hearing that word, many disciples went away. By chapter 7, the Lord's death has come one step closer. Verse 1 makes clear the reason why Jesus did not want to walk

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

in Judea, saying, *"Because the Jews sought to kill Him" (John 7:1)*.

Jesus knew that He would be put to death. He knew that the Jewish leaders would hand Him over, and that He would be hung on the Cross and die at the hands of the Gentiles. His staying in Galilee was not a matter of hiding to escape death. Knowing that being put to death was the Father's will, He was waiting for the time to fulfill that work. Today, in this word, we see not so much where Jesus was as what He walked that path for.

The brothers who, at Jesus' side, did not know that will

The Feast of Tabernacles drew near. The Feast of Tabernacles was a feast kept for a week in remembrance of how the people of Israel dwelt in booths while they passed through the wilderness after coming out of Egypt. The people built booths and stayed under them, ruminating on the grace of God, who had led His people in the wilderness. As that feast approached, Jesus' brothers spoke to the Lord. Let us read verses 3 through 5.

"His brothers therefore said to Him, 'Depart from here and go into Judea, that Your disciples also may see the works that You are doing. For no one does anything in secret while he himself seeks to be known openly. If You do these things, show Yourself to the world.' For even His brothers did not believe in Him" (John 7:3–5).

These brothers were Jesus' younger brothers in the flesh. Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of Mary's body, and after that, Mary bore several children to Joseph. They knew what their older brother was doing. Yet these same brothers

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

pressed Him, saying, *"Depart from here and go into Judea" (John 7:3)*, and, *"Show Yourself to the world" (John 7:4)*. What they meant was, "If You say You will give Your flesh and blood so that people may obtain eternal life, why do You stay in Galilee? If You really are such a One, go up to Jerusalem and show Yourself openly." On the surface it sounded like advice, but within it there was mockery. The Bible clearly reveals the reason. They did not believe in Jesus.

Since even His brothers did not believe, how lonely the Lord's heart must have been! The Lord had to do a work that others did not know. He had to fulfill the Father's will among people who did not understand even when He spoke the word, and who, far from being of one heart with Him, mocked Him instead. Even though He was surrounded by many people, there was no one who knew His heart. Though it is hard for us to fully fathom that heart, we who do the work of the gospel while not being understood even by those close to us can feel it a little.

What the brothers wanted was power displayed before people. But Jesus was not One who came to make His name known. He came to give up His own body in order to give life to people who were under sin and death. The Bible testifies of this, saying, *"Who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification" (Romans 4:25)*. Though the brothers watched that work from close beside Him, they did not know what the Lord had come to do.

We too, while saying that we know the Lord, sometimes regard Him only as One who fulfills our wishes. When things go well and we are recognized by people, we rejoice that the Lord is with us, but when things do not go as we wish, we doubt what the Lord is doing. At such times, what we need is not so much to demand more from the Lord as to know rightly what the Lord has done for us. Jesus is the Savior who came to deliver us from

sin. When we believe this, our hearts turn to how precious the Lord's grace is rather than to how much we ourselves are noticed, and the heart that wanted Him to go along with our will is changed into a heart that follows the will of the Lord who saved us.

Jesus, who followed the Father's time rather than people's urging

Let us read verse 6.

"Then Jesus said to them, 'My time has not yet come, but your time is always ready'" (John 7:6).

The brothers told Him to go up now and show Himself, but Jesus said that His time had not yet come. What kind of time is the *"My time"* that the Lord spoke of? It was not this Feast of Tabernacles, but the Passover that would come after it. At the Passover, a lamb of sacrifice was needed to take the place of the people's death. The Lord knew that at that Passover He would be put to death in Jerusalem as the sacrificial lamb that removes the sin of mankind. So He waited a little longer, and when the time came, He was hung on the Cross as the Passover drew near.

The Jewish leaders were already seeking to kill Jesus because He had healed a sick man on the Sabbath and had spoken of His relationship with God in a way that made Himself equal with God. But the Lord saw that death differently. Through the baptism He had already received from John at the Jordan River, Jesus had had their sin and the sin of all mankind passed on to Him. So now He had to die for them in order to receive the judgment for that sin. The three years of work that continued from the Jordan River were the work He did with this death before Him. We too, when we know that something

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

unexpected is about to come upon us, feel that we must finish well even the work we were doing before we go. Knowing the time when He would die, the Lord, before He departed, preached the word He had to preach and taught and led His disciples. How solemn and resolute His heart must have been!

Let us read John chapter 10, verses 17 and 18, to see how the Lord gave up His life.

"'Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father'" (John 10:17–18).

Jesus laid down His life of Himself according to the command He received from the Father, and the power to take it again was also with the Lord. Both His not walking in Judea in verse 1 and His not following His brothers' words in verse 6 were acts of following the time the Father had set. Neither people's intent to kill Him nor the brothers' urging could bring that time forward. The Lord went when He had to go and stayed when He had to stay.

We often hurry. When the results we want are not seen quickly, we regard it as though nothing is being accomplished, and when people do not recognize us, we think that what we are doing now is in vain. Even while laboring for the gospel, if we let our circumstances steal our hearts, we get carried away when things go well and are easily distressed when things become hard. But a person who does the work knowing what pleases the Lord is different. Even if there are people who hinder him and the fruit that is visible right now is small, he continues that work by faith. That is because the Lord whom we serve walked according to the Father's time rather than people's urging.

The Lord, who revealed the evil of the world and saved sinners

Let us read verse 7.

"The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify of it that its works are evil" (John 7:7).

Jesus spoke of one reason why the world hated Him. It was because He testified that the works of the world are evil. The world lives regarding its own thoughts and deeds as right. It gladly listens to words that exalt it, but it hates the word that exposes its evil before God. The Lord did not call evil good in order to win the hearts of such people. Because of that one thing, the world hated the Lord and in the end sought to kill Him.

The brothers' situation was different. Not yet believing in Jesus, they were looking at the Lord with the thoughts of the world, and they had no occasion to clash with the world and be opposed by it. So the Lord said that the world could not hate them. The brothers could go up to the feast whenever they wanted, but the Lord had to walk according to the will of the Father who had sent Him.

In the light of this word, we too look back on ourselves. We cannot make ourselves righteous before God by the good deeds we have done or by religious zeal. If we push the word away when it exposes our sins, we also become distant from the grace of the Savior who removed those sins. It is the person who admits his true condition just as it is who comes to believe in the salvation the Lord accomplished.

The Lord, who called evil evil, came in a human body to save those very evil people. Jesus had all the sins of the world transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John, and, bearing those sins, He was hung on the Cross and shed His blood, and so received in our place the judgment that we should

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

have received for those sins. He was buried, and three days later He rose again from death and became our eternal Savior. Whoever believes in this gospel of the water and the Spirit in his heart has all his sins washed away once and for all, receives the Holy Spirit as a gift, and becomes a child of God. The Book of Hebrews testifies of that grace as follows.

"By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Hebrews 10:10).

The ground on which we have been sanctified does not lie in us. It lies in the sacrifice of Jesus, who had all the sin of the world passed on to His body through the baptism He received from John at the Jordan River and offered that body once and for all. Through that sacrifice, the Lord delivered us from sin, judgment, and destruction and let us enjoy eternal life.

When we preach this gospel, we too go through what the Lord went through. When we preach that Jesus has already removed all our sins through the baptism He received from John, His death on the Cross, and His resurrection, and that therefore those who believe have no sin, there are people who turn their backs on us and hate us. The Lord, too, was hated because of that testimony. Since the Teacher went through such things, it is only natural that His disciples go through them. The reason the Lord had this word recorded is to comfort His people, who will go through the same things on this earth, and to let them know that the way of living by faith is right. So there is no reason for us to hide sin in order to make it pleasant to hear, or to change the salvation the Lord accomplished into human effort when we preach it.

However, what we need is not so much a harsh heart that seeks to defeat people as a heart that wishes that person, too, to receive the remission of sins and become a child of God. The more we know the heart of the Lord, who loved us and gave

Himself up, the more we come to preach the truth clearly and to hold an earnest heart toward souls.

The faith that knows the Lord's heart and takes on the work entrusted to us

Let us read verses 8 and 9.

"You go up to this feast. I am not yet going up to this feast, for My time has not yet fully come. When He had said these things to them, He remained in Galilee" (John 7:8–9).

Jesus sent His brothers up first and stayed in Galilee. Verse 10, which follows, records that after His brothers had gone up, the Lord also went up, not openly but in secret. So this staying of His did not mean that He would not go to the feast at all. It means that He did not entrust Himself to the way and the time His brothers demanded, but moved according to the Father's will.

In this way, the Lord did not abandon the work given to Him, even while He was not understood by people. Even though He knew that there were those who sought to kill Him, He walked the way of saving us to the end. Even when circumstances changed, His heart remained the same. Our salvation is not something the Lord cared about for a moment and then passed by; it is something He went through because He loved us, even though He knew that He had to give up His own body.

Fleshly thoughts arise even in us who have received the remission of sins. We want to be recognized as much as we have labored, we wish things to work out according to our own will, and when difficulties arise, we feel like laying down the work given to us. At such times, look again to the Lord, who gave Himself up for us. Look back on whom the work you are now doing is for, and on what grace the Lord has bestowed on you

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

that you do this work.

When we labor knowing the Lord's will, we put our hearts into it. We do not stop at finishing the work given to us, but hope that through this work even one person will hear and believe the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Whether it is preaching the gospel or helping that work from behind, when we think of the souls the Lord loves, we come to regard even small tasks as precious. It is not by this service that we obtain salvation. We follow the Lord out of thankfulness for the grace we have already received. Weak as we are, it is hard for us to endure long by our own strength. But when the Lord gives us strength, we too can take on that work.

Jesus did not abandon the Father's will because of His brothers' unbelief, and He did not withdraw His love toward us because of the world's hatred. Staying according to the time and going up according to the time, He at last accomplished completely, on the Cross at the Passover, the work of saving us from sin. The One whom we believe in and rely on today is this very Lord.

Let us lay down the desire to show ourselves before people, and let us deeply consider the heart of the Lord, who, though He knew the time when He would die, loved us and steadily took on that work. I hope that, with the strength given by that Lord, who moved not according to our time but according to the Father's time, we too will become people who think and act according to the will of God and do the work of the Lord. ✉

Sermon 2 by Paul C. Jong

The faith that believes the word of the Lord rather than the words of people

< John 7:10–13 >

“But when His brothers had gone up, then He also went up to the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret. Then the Jews sought Him at the feast, and said, ‘Where is He?’ And there was much complaining among the people concerning Him. Some said, ‘He is good’; others said, ‘No, on the contrary, He deceives the people.’ However, no one spoke openly of Him for fear of the Jews.”

At the Feast of Tabernacles, talk about Jesus went back and forth among the people gathered in Jerusalem. Some said He was a good man, and others said He was one who deceived the people. Completely opposite words came out about the same Jesus. Yet, although there was so much talk, no one spoke openly about Jesus. It was because they feared the Jews.

Hearing stories about Jesus and believing in Jesus are two different things. Thinking well of Him and accepting His word are also different. Today’s passage, while showing the many voices surrounding Jesus, asks according to whose words we are looking at the Lord. Whatever people said, the Lord was

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

carrying out the work of salvation that the Father had entrusted to Him. The One we believe in is not a Jesus made by people's assessments, but Jesus Christ, who spoke and who Himself saved us.

The Lord, who did not follow the demand to reveal Himself

Let us read verse 10.

"But when His brothers had gone up, then He also went up to the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret" (John 7:10).

Earlier, His brothers had urged the Lord to go up to Judea and show Himself to the world. The Lord sent His brothers up first, and after they had gone up, He followed them up. And even then He went up not openly but in secret. He did not go up showing Himself before people, as His brothers had wished.

That does not mean, however, that the Lord only stayed hidden. If we look at verse 14, which follows, when it was the middle of the feast, the Lord went up into the temple and taught. He did not whisper in back alleys but preached the word in the temple with nothing to hide. During His work, the Lord spoke openly of the fact that He was the Savior, performed signs, and taught about heavenly things and about sin.

Here, look at two kinds of quietness side by side. The Lord went up quietly according to the Father's time, but in the temple He clearly taught the Father's word. The crowd in verse 13 feared the Jews and could not speak openly. Though both look quiet on the outside, the one is a quietness that followed the Father's will, and the other is a silence that came from fear of the Jews.

Rumors about Jesus and the faith that believes in Jesus

Let us read verses 11 and 12.

"Then the Jews sought Him at the feast, and said, 'Where is He?' And there was much complaining among the people concerning Him. Some said, 'He is good'; others said, 'No, on the contrary, He deceives the people'" (John 7:11–12).

During the feast, the Jews looked for Jesus, saying, *"Where is He?" (John 7:11)*. Among the crowd there was much murmuring. People each spoke about Jesus, saying that He was a good man or that He was one who deceived the people. But who Jesus is is not determined by whichever side's words sound louder. We know who the Lord is by the words He Himself spoke and the works He did.

The Lord, who went up to the temple in the middle of the feast, taught the same thing again and again in the face of such words from people. As is also revealed in verses 28 and 29 of this chapter, what the Lord said most emphatically was one thing: that He is the Son of God sent by the Father, and that He is God. But the crowd, even while saying He was good or bad, saw Jesus only as He appeared on the outside. Jesus is God, who, being the Creator who made all things, came clothed for a while in a human body.

Calling Jesus a good One seems better than denouncing Him as one who deceives. But if we stop at the assessment that He is a good man, we cannot know the purpose for which the Lord came. The very name "Jesus" means Savior. The Lord is the Son of God, who came to save us from sin. A faith that does not know Jesus as God but merely calls Him the Savior in a religious way is no different from the assessment that He is a good man. When we know and believe that Jesus is God, the weight of all that He

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

did after coming to this earth becomes different.

Even today there is much talk about Jesus. Some say He is One who gave excellent teachings, and some say He is One who solves difficulties. But if we decide by our own thoughts, "This is who Jesus is," and then believe, the words the Lord actually spoke do not get through to us. A person who has made a religion out of his own thoughts holds on to his own thoughts no matter what the Lord says and whatever work He does. Faith is correcting our thoughts in the light of the Lord's word and following the written word. The one who knows and believes that what God says is all right is all right, and that what God says is not all right is not all right, is the one who believes in God.

Let us read John chapter 12, verses 44 through 46.

"Then Jesus cried out and said, 'He who believes in Me, believes not in Me but in Him who sent Me. And he who sees Me sees Him who sent Me. I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness'" (John 12:44–46).

To believe in Jesus is to believe in the Father who sent Him, and to see Jesus is to see the Father. Then what do we see in the work Jesus did? We see the love of God, who gave up His Son in our place. Through the baptism He received from John, Jesus had all the sins of the world, that is, even the sins that were in our hearts, transferred to Him. In the body in which He bore those sins, He was hung on the Cross and received the judgment for those sins, and He rose again three days later. In this way God gave us life through His Son. Those who believe in this love have all their sins washed away once and for all, and the Holy Spirit comes to dwell in their hearts. Hearts that had been tossed this way and that by people's words also find peace at that time.

Therefore, the ground of our faith lies not in people's good assessments but in the salvation the Lord accomplished. If we

do not believe the word but believe in Jesus only as a good One, sin still remains in our hearts no matter how long we attend church. When we believe in our hearts the word that the Lord already had our sins passed on to Him at the Jordan River and received the judgment for those sins on the Cross, we receive the remission of sins. The Lord came as the light with the purpose that we who believe would not remain in the darkness of sin.

So we should not immediately follow someone's words just because he criticizes this gospel, nor should we regard something as the right gospel solely because many people praise it. The Bible is the standard of our faith. Whatever people may say, open the Bible and confirm what the word says about who Jesus is and how He saved us. People's words change, but the salvation the Lord accomplished remains the same.

The mouth shut by the fear of people, and the heart that believes in God

Let us read verse 13.

"However, no one spoke openly of Him for fear of the Jews" (John 7:13).

The crowd, too, had various thoughts about Jesus. But they feared the Jews and could not speak openly. They worried about what might come back on them if they took Jesus' side and spoke.

The Gospel of John shows a similar scene again later on. Let us read chapter 12, verses 42 and 43.

"Nevertheless even among the rulers many believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God" (John 12:42–43).

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Even among the rulers there were many who believed in Jesus. But if they said they believed in Jesus, they could be put out of the synagogue by the Pharisees and receive hatred and ridicule. So even though they believed, they could not say that they believed, and there were also some who did not believe at all, for fear that they would suffer loss if they believed. Verse 43 reveals the reason. It is because they loved the glory of men more than the glory of God. In the place where they should have respected the word of God more, they were more conscious of the eyes of people.

We, too, know this fear. “If I say this, what will that person think of me?” Even though we know that the word is right, this thought comes first. It seems that if we keep still, at least we will not suffer any loss. As this goes on, the question of whether we are accepted by people becomes bigger than the question of whether we believe the word. In fact, even for those who have been saved, speaking out the gospel openly is something that makes them feel ashamed and tremble. Yet they can still speak because they believe in God. Those who believe in God believe His word, and so they can preach boldly.

People’s praise lasts only a moment. People may give a little recognition for a while, but as time passes, they forget it all. To be recognized by God is to be truly recognized. So, rather than glory before people, desire to be recognized before God.

When people’s words are frightening, let us look to the Lord who saved us. Even while He was being called one who deceived the people, the Lord taught the Father’s word in the temple.

Our boldness does not come from stubbornness. When we are certain through the word that the Lord has already washed away all our sins, our hearts stand firm. Then, if anyone asks, we can clearly speak of the grace we believe in, and if we hear words

that misunderstand the gospel, we can calmly preach the salvation the Bible testifies of. Leading those who have not yet met God to that grace is the work we who have met God must do.

A life that relies on the Savior without being shaken by rumors

At that feast people said many things about Jesus, but those words could not change who Jesus truly was. The words that He was a good man did not accomplish the Lord's salvation, nor did the accusation that He was one who deceived tear that salvation down. The Lord preached the word He had received from the Father and accomplished the work of giving us life.

Fear arises even in those who live by faith. At such times, to rely again on the Lord who saved us is faith. As we hear the word, it is good to look into ourselves, asking, "The word of God says this, but what am I doing now?" When the desire to look good to people comes first, ask God for help, and subdue that desire yourself.

Our confessing the Lord is not in order to obtain the remission of sins by it. It is because we are thankful for the salvation the Lord has already accomplished. People's murmuring did not give us life. What gave us life is the gospel of the water and the Spirit that the Lord accomplished.

Dear fellow believers, let us not stop at hearing much talk about Jesus. Let us believe the words Jesus Himself spoke. Let us not give our hearts over to people's assessments, but let us hold fast to the love of God, who saved us. And taking as our standard not the words of people who murmur but the written word, let us speak openly about how the Lord saved us. ✉

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Sermon 3 by Paul C. Jong

Look at the righteous work of the Lord, who gives life to people

< John 7:14–24 >

“Now about the middle of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and taught. And the Jews marveled, saying, ‘How does this Man know letters, having never studied?’ Jesus answered them and said, ‘My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me. If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority. He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who seeks the glory of the One who sent Him is true, and no unrighteousness is in Him. Did not Moses give you the law, yet none of you keeps the law? Why do you seek to kill Me?’ The people answered and said, ‘You have a demon. Who is seeking to kill You?’ Jesus answered and said to them, ‘I did one work, and you all marvel. Moses therefore gave you circumcision (not that it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and you circumcise a man on the Sabbath. If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath, so that the law of Moses should not be broken, are you angry with Me because I made a man completely well on the Sabbath? Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment.’”

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

When Jesus taught in the temple, the people were amazed. But that amazement did not lead to faith. They set their hearts not so much on what Jesus was saying as on where He had learned to say such things. Even when the Lord made a sick man whole, rather than rejoicing in that grace, they became angry on the grounds that He had done it on the Sabbath.

Even while hearing the same word and seeing the same work, people can judge wrongly. Once a person has settled that his own thoughts are right, he ends up denouncing even the righteous work that God does. In today's passage, Jesus makes clear where His teaching came from, and He exposes the contradiction of the people who were holding up the law and seeking to kill the Lord. And He tells them not to judge by appearance but to judge with righteous judgment.

Jesus, who teaches the word of the Father

Let us read verses 14 through 16.

"Now about the middle of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and taught. And the Jews marveled, saying, 'How does this Man know letters, having never studied?' Jesus answered them and said, 'My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me'" (John 7:14–16).

The Feast of Tabernacles was a feast kept for a week. In the very middle of it, the Lord, who had gone up in secret, this time taught openly in the temple. The Jews marveled. It was not merely that they found it a little strange. In their eyes, Jesus was a man who had never gone to school and had not grown up in a renowned family. They simply could not understand how such a man could teach the law more deeply than anyone. In the words *"How does this Man know letters, having never studied?" (John*

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

7:15) there was contempt mixed in along with that amazement.

But the reason the Lord knew that word is clear. The One who gave the law was He Himself. Since God, who gave the word, had become a man and come, it was not a matter of asking from whom He had learned. The Lord knew that word better than the teachers of the law, and He taught it, piercing through to its core. People measured the Lord by the path of learning that they themselves recognized, but the Lord was One who went far beyond that yardstick.

The Lord did not put forward His own learning, but said, *"My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me" (John 7:16)*. What the Lord taught was the word that God the Father had spoken. The content of that doctrine was salvation. Just as Israel had been delivered from Egypt, He was speaking of the salvation by which all nations would now be delivered from sin.

We who hear the word, too, have a heart that looks first at the conditions that show on the outside. We try to decide whether to accept a person's words by looking at how famous he is, how many people follow him, and where he studied. But such conditions do not make truth. Our faith stands on the word that God actually spoke.

The heart that seeks to do God's will and the heart that seeks its own glory

Let us read verses 17 and 18.

"If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority. He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who seeks the glory of the One who sent Him is true, and no unrighteousness is in Him" (John 7:17–18).

Jesus said that a person who seeks to do God's will comes to know whether this doctrine is from God. The direction of the heart with which we hear the word is important. A person who has already settled his own will and looks only for words to back it up does not yield his own assertions even before the word of God. A person who seeks to know and follow God's will turns back from his own thoughts in the light of the word.

Here, the heart that seeks to do God's will does not mean a heart that has kept the law perfectly and become qualified. Right in verse 19, the Lord said that none of them kept the law. The heart that seeks to do God's will is a heart that lays down the desire to establish its own righteousness and believes and accepts what God says is right.

The Lord also made clear whose glory He sought. The Lord did not speak in order to defend or exalt Himself. He preached the will of the Father who sent Him and sought the Father's glory. That is why there was no unrighteousness in Him.

Think about it. Since He knew that He would soon be killed, He could have kept His mouth shut, pretended not to know, and then been killed when the time came. But the Lord spoke and taught to the end. It was for us, who could live only by hearing that word. Because He had put on a human body, He also knew the weakness of the flesh, but because the nature of God was in Him as well, He taught without wavering even in the face of denunciation and murderous intent. In those steps of His there was not the slightest hidden motive for His own sake.

The people who boasted of the law while failing to see themselves

Let us read verses 19 and 20.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

"Did not Moses give you the law, yet none of you keeps the law? Why do you seek to kill Me? The people answered and said, 'You have a demon. Who is seeking to kill You?'" (John 7:19–20).

They were a people who had received the law from Moses. But receiving it and keeping it are different. That law says, *"You shall not murder" (Exodus 20:13)*. Yet among them were those who were holding up the law and seeking to kill Jesus. It was because Jesus said that He Himself was the Son of God, and said that whoever eats His flesh and blood has eternal life. Among the people who claimed to keep the commandments, the very thing that commandment forbade was being plotted.

The crowd shot back as if shouting, *"You have a demon" (John 7:20)*, and asked who was seeking to kill Him. But verse 1 already records that the Jews sought to kill the Lord. Contrary to the crowd's rebuttal, the plan to kill Jesus really existed, and the Lord, who is God, knew all about it. The Lord's words exposed the murderous intent hidden beneath the outward show of holding up the law.

When a person holds on to the law as his own boast, he easily finds the faults of others but does not see his own sins. The Bible makes clear the purpose for which the law was given, as follows: *"By the law is the knowledge of sin" (Romans 3:20)*. A person who hears this word rightly, instead of putting forward his own righteousness, comes to know his own sins and realizes that he needs a Savior. Yet from among the people who claimed to hold fast to that law came those who sought to kill that very Savior.

So when you hear the word, first examine your own heart. Look back to see whether you are pushing away the Lord's grace while considering yourself right, and whether you are denouncing God's work because it differs from your own standard. What makes us stand before God is not our religious

boasting but the salvation the Lord has bestowed.

The contradiction of performing circumcision even on the Sabbath while being angry at the work that gave a man life

Let us read verses 21 through 23.

"Jesus answered and said to them, 'I did one work, and you all marvel. Moses therefore gave you circumcision (not that it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and you circumcise a man on the Sabbath. If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath, so that the law of Moses should not be broken, are you angry with Me because I made a man completely well on the Sabbath?'" (John 7:21–23).

The one work the Lord spoke of is the work in chapter 5, when He raised up on the Sabbath the man who had been sick for thirty-eight years by the pool of Bethesda. But behind that one work was the single purpose for which the Lord came to this earth. It is the work of delivering us from sin, curse, destruction, and death and giving us eternal life. The Lord came to do that work, and He knew that He would be killed because of that work. The whole path, beginning at the Jordan River and reaching to the Cross, was this one work. That the people were angry over His healing a sick man on the Sabbath was also, in the end, because the Lord did the work of giving life to people.

Jesus spoke, citing the circumcision they practiced. Circumcision began with the fathers before Moses, and the law commands that circumcision be performed on the eighth day after a child is born. If the eighth day fell on a Sabbath, they performed circumcision even on the Sabbath. It was so as not to break the law. While saying that it was right in this way to

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

circumcise one part of a person's body on the Sabbath, they were angry at the work by which the Lord made a man's whole body well on the Sabbath. By the very law they themselves kept, the Lord showed that their judgment had gone wrong. The One who had not broken the law was branded as one who broke the law and suffered slander and mockery—how great that anguish must have been! Even so, the Lord did not stop that work of saving mankind from sin.

Circumcision is a cutting off. It is a sign of being cut away from the body and set apart. We see the true cutting off to which this circumcision points at the Jordan River. Through the baptism He received from John, Jesus cut away from us the sins we would commit from our birth until this flesh dies, and took them away onto His own body. Then, bearing those sins, He went to the Cross and received the judgment for those sins in our place. Unlike the circumcision that was performed on one part of the body, the Lord made a man's whole body well, and He also took away our sins, leaving none behind.

We are often lenient toward familiar things and strict toward unfamiliar ones. We take for granted the things we have been doing, while judging things that differ from our own thoughts to be wrong even before examining them. Even when a person who was in sin has believed this gospel and received the remission of sins, we may hold on only to what kind of person he used to be and doubt the Lord's salvation. But examine by the word who it is that saved that person and what he believed. The salvation the Lord carried out takes precedence over our long-held assessments.

See rightly the salvation the Son of God accomplished, and believe it

Let us read verse 24.

"Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment" (John 7:24).

What is righteous judgment? This word asks them as follows: "Do you really keep the law? Are you really righteous?" While trying to obtain salvation by keeping the commandments, they mistakenly thought that they themselves were people who kept the law. In that delusion, they rejected the word by looking only at the outward appearance of His not having studied, and, holding on only to the fact that He had healed on the Sabbath, they branded the One who gave life to a man as one who broke the law.

Who was the One they judged in this way? He was the Creator who made them, and their God, who had especially loved them, the descendants of Abraham. That God came to His own people, but His own people shunned Him, and among them there even arose those who branded Him as one who broke the law and sought to kill Him. It is just as the beginning of the Gospel of John says: *"He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him" (John 1:11)*. If we see Jesus only as a man, we end up regarding even the salvation He bestowed as one of the works of man. When we know that Jesus is the Son of God and is God, we can see His words and works rightly.

Look at the righteous work that the Lord did. The Lord did not save us by roughly covering over our sins. Through the baptism He received from John, He had all the sins of the world passed on to Him, and with the body onto which those sins had been passed, He hung on the Cross and received the judgment for those sins to the end. And three days later He rose again from

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

death. Because He did so, the Lord could give us life. Whoever believes this gospel in his heart is cleansed from all sins, and because the Holy Spirit comes into his heart, he lives as a child of God. Enduring long, waiting, and bestowing salvation instead of judgment—this is the righteous work of the Lord, who gives life to people.

Therefore, the way we become righteous does not lie in how well we have kept the commandments. It lies in believing in Jesus, who took away our sins through the baptism He received from John and received the judgment for those sins in our place on the Cross. A person who knows this grace lays down his own boasting and turns back from the heart that used to condemn others easily. It is because he, too, is not someone who was saved by his own righteousness. Even after we are saved, our flesh is still weak, but that weakness cannot shake the salvation the Lord has accomplished.

We who believe this gospel today also sometimes receive unrighteous judgment from people. They measure us by outward appearance and rumors and reject the gospel we preach even before listening to it. But the Lord spoke this word also for the sake of us, who would go through such things. The purpose of believing in Jesus is that all people would believe the gospel of the water and the Spirit, be saved from sin, and become children of God. So even when we are in the place of being judged, we hope that those people will believe this salvation and receive life.

Even among the people who denounced Him and sought to kill Him, Jesus taught the word of the Father and did not withdraw His will to give us life. Do not judge the Lord by learning, outward appearance, or the thoughts familiar to you, but look at the Lord with righteous judgment. He is the Son of God, who made a man's whole body well on the Sabbath and who has completely saved us from sin and given us life. ✉

Sermon 4 by Paul C. Jong

The faith that knows the Savior whom the Father sent

< John 7:25–36 >

"Now some of them from Jerusalem said, 'Is this not He whom they seek to kill? But look! He speaks boldly, and they say nothing to Him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is truly the Christ? However, we know where this Man is from; but when the Christ comes, no one knows where He is from.' Then Jesus cried out, as He taught in the temple, saying, 'You both know Me, and you know where I am from; and I have not come of Myself, but He who sent Me is true, whom you do not know. But I know Him, for I am from Him, and He sent Me.' Therefore they sought to take Him; but no one laid a hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come. And many of the people believed in Him, and said, 'When the Christ comes, will He do more signs than these which this Man has done?' The Pharisees heard the crowd murmuring these things concerning Him, and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take Him. Then Jesus said to them, 'I shall be with you a little while longer, and then I go to Him who sent Me. You will seek Me and not find Me, and where I am you cannot come.' Then the Jews said among themselves, 'Where does He intend to go that we shall not find Him? Does He intend to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks? What is this thing that He said,

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

“You will seek Me and not find Me, and where I am you cannot come”?’”

When we read this word, we are apt to pass over it as if we were reading an old history book. Since we are not standing in that place, it seems like something that has nothing to do with us. But put yourself in that position and think about it. Among the people gathered for the feast are some who want to kill you, and even the common people all know that rumor. It is a place where the shadow of death is slowly closing in. It was in that very place that Jesus stood in the temple and cried out. Because He was soon to be hung on the Cross, He meant to reveal who He was.

Some of the people of Jerusalem thought they knew Jesus well. They thought that since they knew where He had come from, He could not be the Christ. But the Lord said to those very people that they did not know Him who had sent Him. While they claimed to know things about Jesus, they did not actually know who Jesus was.

People who thought they knew but did not recognize the Savior

Let us read verses 25 through 27.

“Now some of them from Jerusalem said, ‘Is this not He whom they seek to kill? But look! He speaks boldly, and they say nothing to Him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is truly the Christ? However, we know where this Man is from; but when the Christ comes, no one knows where He is from’” (John 7:25–27).

Some of the people of Jerusalem knew that the leaders were trying to kill Jesus. Yet even though Jesus was speaking openly in the temple, the rulers said nothing. So they began to wonder and went over it again and again, saying this and that. Could it be that the rulers truly knew this Man to be the Christ? But the rulers had not accepted the Lord. If we look at verse 32, they soon send officers to take Jesus.

They made what they knew their measuring stick. *"We know where this Man is from" (John 7:27)*. They meant that they knew all about Him: that He was the son of Joseph and Mary, that He had grown up in the town of Nazareth, and even how many brothers He had. They knew Jesus only according to the flesh. And because He did not fit their own idea that when the Christ came, no one would know where He was from, they concluded that this Man could not be the Christ. Those words in verse 27 are not the word of God but their own thoughts. Yet they made those thoughts their sure standard and pushed away the Lord who was right before their eyes.

The same thing happens today. If people know Jesus only as a figure in history, only as a man who grew up in Nazareth and did many good things, then even though they know much about Him, they do not know where He came from. They know the background of His flesh but do not know that He is the One who came from the Father. While looking at which leaders acknowledge Jesus and what many people say, they sometimes miss how the Lord Himself reveals who He is. Other people's judgment cannot believe in the Lord on our behalf.

The Son of God, who came from the Father

Let us read verses 28 and 29.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

"Then Jesus cried out, as He taught in the temple, saying, 'You both know Me, and you know where I am from; and I have not come of Myself, but He who sent Me is true, whom you do not know. But I know Him, for I am from Him, and He sent Me'" (John 7:28–29).

Jesus stood in the temple in the midst of the people who were trying to kill Him and cried out. He said that although they claimed to know Him, they did not know Him who had sent Him.

People knew Jesus as having come from Nazareth, but Jesus had come from the Father's side in heaven. The Lord was not One who came into this world by His own will. He was the Savior who, sent by the Father, came to do His will, to preach His word, and, following His command, to save us from sin, judgment, and destruction. He spoke of this fact again and again, both in parables and by pointing to the things before their eyes. He revealed who He was so repeatedly that He might even have seemed to be defending Himself. Yet they did not understand.

What did the Son of God, who was born of the Father, do on this earth? The Creator came as a man and, according to the Father's will, received baptism from John at the Jordan River, and at that time He had all the sin of mankind passed on to Him. When He went down into the water and came up, the Father testified from heaven, *"This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17)*. Bearing the sin that had been passed on to Him, that Son received the judgment for that sin on the Cross and died, and three days later He rose again from death.

Therefore, everything is decided by whether or not we believe that Jesus is God. Because Jesus is God, the salvation He accomplished through the gospel of the water and the Spirit is complete and eternal. Even though we are lacking and weak, that salvation does not change. When we believe in this Son as God and believe that He has removed our sins, we become sinless

children of God, and the Holy Spirit comes into our hearts.

Knowing this Savior becomes the strength of our lives. We are people whom God saved by sending His Son. Even when our hearts collapse because of our shortcomings, we can rise again if we look at who it is that saved us.

Even people's opposition cannot change the Lord's time

Let us read verses 30 through 32.

"Therefore they sought to take Him; but no one laid a hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come. And many of the people believed in Him, and said, 'When the Christ comes, will He do more signs than these which this Man has done?' The Pharisees heard the crowd murmuring these things concerning Him, and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take Him" (John 7:30–32).

When the Lord spoke of the Father who had sent Him, there were people who tried to take Jesus. But no one could lay a hand on Him. The Bible makes the reason clear, saying, *"Because His hour had not yet come" (John 7:30)*. The time of which He had said to His brothers in verse 6, *"My time has not yet come" (John 7:6)*, had not yet come. The Lord's steps followed the time the Father had set. His death on the Cross, too, was not a failure He suffered because He could not prevent it, but a sacrifice that the Savior, who bore our sins, offered of His own accord at that time.

Meanwhile, many of the people believed in Jesus. Their point was that even if the Christ came, He would not do more signs than this Man. The signs Jesus performed were too many to count. Yet the Bible recorded only a few of them, and there are records that relate even His raising of the dead in just a few

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

verses. It did so even though they were so many that, if they were all written down, there would be no place even in the world to put the books. It was because making many signs known was not the purpose. The Gospel of John reveals that purpose as follows.

"And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name" (John 20:30–31).

Signs point to the One who did those works. Do not stop at how many wondrous things you know, but believe that the One who did those works is the Christ, the Son of God, and have life. The faith of the multitude who believed, saying that even if the Christ came He would not do more than this Man, went only that far. That faith becomes complete when it grows to the point of knowing who He is and what He came to do. It is when we know Him as the Savior who, like the sacrificial offerings of the Old Testament, became the offering Himself and died, rose again, and saves those who believe.

When the murmuring that the people believed in Jesus reached the ears of the Pharisees, the chief priests and the Pharisees sent officers. To them, the very fact that the people were flocking to Jesus was a threat. In the very place where believers were appearing, opposition also arose. But that opposition could not make the Lord's truth false. Today too, when resistance arises where we preach the gospel, we do not take it to mean that God's work has failed. Our hope does not depend on people's reactions but lies in the Savior who loves us.

The Lord returning to the Father and the misunderstanding of those who do not believe

Let us read verses 33 through 36.

"Then Jesus said to them, 'I shall be with you a little while longer, and then I go to Him who sent Me. You will seek Me and not find Me, and where I am you cannot come.' Then the Jews said among themselves, 'Where does He intend to go that we shall not find Him? Does He intend to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks? What is this thing that He said, "You will seek Me and not find Me, and where I am you cannot come"?'" (John 7:33–36).

The Lord said that He would be with them a little longer and then go back to Him who had sent Him. He was now speaking of His own death. He meant that in a little while He would give up His body on the Cross, and that after that, even if they sought Him, they would not find Him. He was looking ahead to the way by which He would die on the Cross, rise again, and return to the Father. Both the place He had come from and the place He would return to were the side of the Father.

But the Jews heard these words as saying that He would leave for another land. They asked one another whether He intended to go to those dispersed among the Greeks and teach the Greeks—in plain terms, whether He was going into exile or something. The Lord was speaking of the Father who had sent Him, but they thought of a country on the map. Because they did not know where Jesus had come from, they could not understand where He was going either. Failing to understand even when He is speaking—this is truly a frustrating thing.

The words He spoke, *"You will seek Me and not find Me, and where I am you cannot come" (John 7:34)*, contain a warning. Afterward, in chapter 8, the Lord said the same thing

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

more openly. *"I am going away, and you will seek Me, and will die in your sin. Where I go you cannot come" (John 8:21)*. No matter how much people know about Jesus, if they do not believe in Him as the Savior whom the Father sent, that knowledge cannot wash away their sin. The Father's side, where the Lord is, is a place that only those who have had their sins washed away and have no sin in their hearts can reach.

But for those who believe in this Savior, there is a way to go to the Father's side, where the Lord is. The Lord said to His disciples, *"Where I am, there you may be also" (John 14:3)*, and He said, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6)*. The Lord, who said to those who did not believe, *"Where I am you cannot come,"* said to those who believe, *"Where I am, there you may be also."* The Lord's return to the Father means that He accomplished all the work of salvation and prepared the place where we will go. We do not try to ascend to heaven by human strength. We believe in Jesus Christ, who had our sins transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John, received the judgment for those sins on the Cross, rose again, and went to the Father.

The time during which the Lord said He would be with them *"a little while longer"* did not last forever. Later the Lord also said, *"While you have the light, believe in the light" (John 12:36)*. While He was there, if people believed in Him, they could be saved. After the Lord went away, He sent the Holy Spirit to the disciples, and that Holy Spirit is in those who have believed the gospel today and has them preach this gospel of the water and the Spirit. Whoever hears that gospel and believes it is saved from sin. So at least hold in your heart the desire for it. Now is the time to come before this word with the heart that you want to receive the remission of sins and want to become a child

of God.

That day the people of Jerusalem said they knew where Jesus had come from, but they did not know that He had come from the Father, and they could not understand where He was going either. For those who know and believe in their hearts this Savior, who came from the Father, washed away our sins, and returned to the Father, the place to which those people could not come even though they sought Him becomes the home they are to go to. ✉

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Sermon 5 by Paul C. Jong

Jesus, who gives rivers of living water to those who believe

< John 7:37–44 >

"On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, 'If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.' But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. Therefore many from the crowd, when they heard this saying, said, 'Truly this is the Prophet.' Others said, 'This is the Christ.' But some said, 'Will the Christ come out of Galilee? Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the seed of David and from the town of Bethlehem, where David was?' So there was a division among the people because of Him. Now some of them wanted to take Him, but no one laid hands on Him."

The Feast of Tabernacles was a great feast that the people of Israel kept in remembrance of the forty years they had spent in the wilderness. On the last day, when the people who had come up from all over the country were about to finish the feast and scatter, Jesus stood and cried out loudly, *"If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink."* The people were startled, and they

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

could not understand, wondering what on earth this meant.

Why did the Lord cry out like that at that time? Before the Lord, who had already had the sin of the world passed on to Him at the Jordan River, there now remained the Cross. Those who meant to seize and kill Him once the feast was over had already laid their plans. In that place there were people who listened to the word, people who argued over Him, and people who tried to seize Him. Looking ahead to the salvation He would soon complete, the Lord revealed in advance what He would give to those who believe in that salvation.

The Lord, who calls thirsty souls to Himself

Let us read verses 37 and 38.

"On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, 'If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water'" (John 7:37–38).

What a thirsty person needs is water. However much one hears about water, one's thirst is not quenched. The thirsty people the Lord called are people who suffer because of sin. I cannot tell you how painful it is when there is sin in the heart. To relieve that stifling feeling, people weep as they offer prayers of repentance, and they also pray, raising their voices as loudly as they can. Afterward their hearts seem refreshed for a while, but when they come out after the worship service, they become empty again. Once that time has passed, that is all there is to it.

Then what is it that the Lord tells us to come to Him and drink? It is the word of truth that the Lord has removed our sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. We drink that word by faith. Believing in the name Jesus is basic, and to drink

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

is to believe in the work Jesus did when He came to this earth. The Lord's call sounds as follows: "If you are suffering because of sin, come to Me and drink. I have removed all your sins."

Then how does one believe in the Lord? It is to believe the word that God has recorded for us just as it is. The Bible clearly tells us when, where, how, and why God removed our sins. Faith grasped through visions or feelings soon wavers, but faith that stands on the written word does not waver. When the word says that Jesus saved us in this way, whoever accepts it as it stands is a person who believes in the Lord.

The Lord told *"anyone"* to come. In Old Testament times, God called His servants one by one and had them work by the Holy Spirit. But now anyone who wants to receive the remission of sins can come to the Lord. The prophet Isaiah also cried out, *"Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; And you who have no money, Come" (Isaiah 55:1)*. It is not a salvation obtained by paying money or by good deeds, but a salvation in which we receive by faith the gift that God gives.

The Lord said that rivers of living water would flow out of the heart of the one who believes *"as the Scripture has said."* This means "just as it was spoken in the Old Testament." In Isaiah chapter 43 there is the following promise.

"Behold, I will do a new thing, Now it shall spring forth; Shall you not know it? I will even make a road in the wilderness And rivers in the desert" (Isaiah 43:19).

In the passage, the place from which the rivers of living water flow out is our heart. A heart that has sin is like a desert and like a wilderness. Even when we worship, our hearts feel stifled, and even when we sing praises, they are full of nothing but dry sand. Even if water is poured in, the sand soaks it all up, so no water shows on the surface. From such a heart, instead of living water, worry, anxiety, and concern pour out. The promise the Lord

made, that He would make a road in the wilderness and rivers in the desert, has been fulfilled in exactly such hearts of ours. Just as He said to the Samaritan woman, *"A fountain of water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:14)* has come to flow in the heart that was like a desert.

The Lord, who accomplished salvation, gives the Holy Spirit as a gift

Let us read verse 39.

"But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified" (John 7:39).

The apostle John added an explanation of what the rivers of living water are. They are the Holy Spirit, whom those who believe in Jesus would receive. And he says that at that time the Holy Spirit was not with the disciples, because Jesus had not yet been glorified. When He spoke this word, the Lord had already had the sin of the world passed on to Him through the baptism He received from John. But He had not yet been crucified on the Cross, had not died and risen again, and had not gone up to the right hand of God.

So at that time the disciples were extremely cowardly and spineless. When the Lord was arrested, they scattered, and even after He had risen again, they were gathered together behind shut doors out of fear. Then on Pentecost, the fiftieth day after the Lord rose again, the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples who were praying, in the form of divided tongues like fire. After that the disciples boldly testified of the gospel. The Holy Spirit came at Pentecost not because they had prayed for a long time. It was because Jesus had completely removed the sin of the world

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

through the water and the blood and had risen again that the promise God had made through the prophet Joel was fulfilled.

That salvation is as follows. When Jesus received baptism from John at the Jordan River, He had all our sins passed on to His own body. With that sin of the world on His body, He was nailed to the Cross, received the judgment for that sin in our place, and said, *"It is finished!" (John 19:30)*. And three days later He rose again from death and became the God of our salvation. The person who believes this in his heart receives the remission of even the sins of his whole lifetime once and for all, so there is no sin in his heart, and into that sinless heart the Lord gives the Holy Spirit as a gift.

Therefore the Holy Spirit comes only through Jesus. The Holy Spirit does not dwell in a heart that has not received the remission of sins. Today many people think of believing in Jesus and receiving the Holy Spirit as separate matters, as though they had nothing to do with each other. They regard being born again as the first experience and receiving the Holy Spirit as the second experience, and they think that if they just pray hard, the Holy Spirit will come down. But the Holy Spirit is received together with that faith when we believe the gospel of the baptism Jesus received from John and of the Cross. The risen Lord, too, came to His disciples, wished them peace, and gave them the Holy Spirit.

"So Jesus said to them again, 'Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.' And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit'" (John 20:21–22).

The Holy Spirit is not One who comes as some kind of feeling. Rather, God has put His stamp on our hearts with the Holy Spirit and sealed them, saying, "This person is Mine." That Holy Spirit testifies within us of what the Lord has done.

Through the word He reminds us again and again, "When the Lord received baptism from John, He bore your sins, and He died on the Cross, rose again, and became your Savior." So He stands as our guarantor, saying, "You have no sin; you are a child of God." Here lies the reason our hearts are refreshed. The Holy Spirit does not work separately from Jesus but testifies of the work of Jesus Christ.

The living water that flows in the heart that believes and follows the word

Peace flows in the heart of a person who has received the remission of sins. Because there is no sin, the heart is at ease, and that peace flows like a river. Now, though there may be times when we agonize over the work of serving the Lord, we do not agonize over sin again.

Even when we fall short and make mistakes, this river does not run dry. It is because the Holy Spirit reminds us through the word, "The Lord bore even that sin when He received baptism from John." Even when there is so much work that we say it is killing us, the fact that we have no sin remains just the same. Even if there are no cattle in the stall and the crops in the field do not do well, even if storms rage and our circumstances are complicated, the heart of a person who has received the remission of sins ultimately returns to peace. The composure to think that if something cannot be done today, it can be done tomorrow also comes from here.

However, even a person who has received the remission of sins loses that refreshment and feels a parched thirst in his heart if he follows the flesh. When he becomes bound up in material things, puts forward his own righteousness, and begins to show

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

off, from that moment sand pours out of his heart again. When he walks according to the Spirit, the living water flows refreshingly again. So the apostle exhorts as follows.

"I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh" (Galatians 5:16).

Even if there are times when you are steeped in fleshly thoughts, refresh your heart thoroughly from time to time. All you need to do is return to the thought of believing the word of God and asking the Lord. When the Holy Spirit lets you know through the word, "This is wrong," acknowledge it just as it is. It is not that a wrong is cast off just because you struggle to cast it off; rather, when you acknowledge the wrong as wrong, you gradually get free of it from there. This is not a struggle to obtain salvation again but a return to the grace already received.

This river of living water changes us. A person so short-tempered that he could not bear even five minutes learns to wait for others, becomes gentle, and comes to have compassion on other people. This is the fruit of the Holy Spirit being borne. And this river overflows and reaches even other people. When we preach the gospel, refreshment arises in the heart of the person who hears and believes that word as well, and through that person the gospel flows on to yet another person. The more we unite our hearts with the church and serve the gospel, the more this river overflows.

Know rightly and believe in Christ, who gives living water

Let us read verses 40 through 44.

"Therefore many from the crowd, when they heard this saying, said, 'Truly this is the Prophet.' Others said, 'This is the

Christ.' But some said, 'Will the Christ come out of Galilee? Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the seed of David and from the town of Bethlehem, where David was?' So there was a division among the people because of Him. Now some of them wanted to take Him, but no one laid hands on Him" (John 7:40–44).

Even after hearing this amazing promise, the people's reactions were divided. Some said that He was truly the Prophet, and some said that He was the Christ. Others objected, asking how the Christ could come out of Galilee and whether it was not written in the Scripture that the Christ comes from the seed of David, from Bethlehem.

The word of Scripture they spoke of was not wrong. The Gospel of Matthew records the birth of Jesus as follows.

"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" (Matthew 2:1).

The Gospel of Luke also records that because Joseph was of the house and lineage of David, he went to Bethlehem with Mary, and that Jesus was born there. Jesus was the Christ who came as promised. The problem lay in the fact that they judged by looking only at the outward appearance of His having grown up in Galilee. They knew the verses of Scripture, but they did not recognize how that word had been fulfilled in Jesus. If we use the Scripture as a tool to defend our own thoughts, we can oppose the Lord, the Master of the word, even while speaking the word. Even with the One who gives the water right before their eyes, they turned away from that water.

Among them were some who wanted to seize Jesus, but no one could lay a hand on Him. Earlier, too, the word said, *"Because His hour had not yet come" (John 7:30)*. Even amid the people's disputes and opposition, the promise of living water

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

given to those who believe stood just as it was.

Today, too, there are many who are thirsty. We, too, once lived with hearts like a desert, and then we heard and believed this gospel and drank the living water. Let us not let the work of the Lord—who took away our sins as He received baptism from John at the Jordan River, paid the full price of those sins at Golgotha, and then rose again—go in one ear and out the other like the arguing crowd, but receive it by faith and drink it. And let us preach this gospel of the water and the Spirit that we have received, so that the river of living water flowing within us may flow on even to our thirsty neighbors. ✉

Sermon 6 by Paul C. Jong

The coming of the Holy Spirit

< John 7:37–39 >

"On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, 'If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.' But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified."

Confusion about receiving the Holy Spirit

The Bible says, *"Taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thessalonians 1:8)*. When we think about this word, we come to realize that we who have been born again are not just ordinary people but people who have been saved from all the punishment of God. That is why it is truly something to be thankful for that we have received the remission of sins, and we can see that those who have received the remission of sins are truly precious people and people who have received great blessings.

The longer I go on believing in Jesus, the more I come to know that this salvation I have received from God is so great. I come to know that this salvation is so great, so precious, and so valuable. Is it the same with you? What we have received before God is truly great and precious, but at times I am concerned

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

whether we may be regarding it as too small, as if we had received something that everyone commonly receives. But this salvation we have received before the Lord is so great, and you are people who have received truly great blessings.

Now I intend to preach the word about how one receives the Holy Spirit. Until now, I have mainly preached the blessing of being born again of water and the Spirit. So countless people have heard the gospel of how one is born again of water and the Spirit and how one receives the remission of sins, have believed it, and have received the remission of sins. But now I think that I must preach what one must do to receive the Holy Spirit.

The reason is that people today think of believing in Jesus and receiving the Holy Spirit as separate things. When people accept and believe this gospel of being born again of water and the Spirit and receive the remission of sins, they think that by that they have received the remission of sins, and they think that the Holy Spirit must be received separately. Those who think this way are the overwhelming majority. Among those who believe in Jesus throughout the whole world, only very few believe that as soon as they were born again God gave them the Holy Spirit, so that they received the Holy Spirit together with being born again; the many others think of it twofold, with receiving the remission of sins as one thing and receiving the Holy Spirit as another.

That is why some people call receiving the Holy Spirit “the second experience.” They think that being born again is the first experience, and the second experience is receiving the Holy Spirit. So people have fallen into great confusion. After they believe in Jesus and are saved before the Lord, they strive to receive the Holy Spirit. You yourselves will know well how hard they are striving. It is a truly frustrating thing in God’s sight. I cannot tell you how wrongly those who say they believe in Jesus

understand the Holy Spirit.

So I intend to preach what the Bible says one must do to receive the Holy Spirit. I also intend to preach how the Holy Spirit has worked together with this gospel, and from when the Lord poured out the Holy Spirit in fullness upon all who believe in Jesus.

"Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water"

First, let us look at this word. Jesus said, *"He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water" (John 7:38)*. Here the words *"as the Scripture has said"* mean 'just as the Bible has spoken.' It means that, just as it is written in the Bible, rivers of living water flow out of the heart of the one who believes in the Lord. That is, rivers of living water flow out from the heart of the person who has believed in Jesus Christ and received the remission of sins.

What kind of person is someone who has received the remission of sins, someone who believes in the Lord? He is someone in whose heart the Holy Spirit is present, so that the Holy Spirit flows down like a river within him. He flows refreshingly at all times. You who have been born again, are you experiencing the Holy Spirit flowing like a river in your hearts? Those who have received the remission of sins experience the Holy Spirit flowing like a river. This is the word of the Bible, and it has actually been fulfilled in my heart and in yours.

Before I met the Lord, rivers of living water did not flow within me. If you ask what flowed, sand kept trickling down. Gravel and sand were mixed together, and even chunks of rock fell. The troubles of the world, worries, anxieties, and all kinds of illnesses were in this heart. So when some doctor appeared

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

and gave a lecture on health, saying that people with such-and-such symptoms had such-and-such a disease, as I listened, I too had some of those symptoms. Then I would worry, "I must have cancer." Also, when people who claimed to read faces appeared and said that people who look like this are like that, the thought would come to me, "That's right, I guess my fate has been like that from birth." All kinds of anxieties were flowing within me. Inside me there was a thudding sound of gravel and stones falling. I lived with so many anxieties like that.

But after I met the Lord, just as it is written in the Bible, the word that said, *"Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water" (John 7:38)*, and the word that said, *"If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink" (John 7:37)*, were fulfilled exactly. When I came before the Lord, accepted the salvation and the remission of sins He gives, and believed this word, rivers of living water overflowed within me. Even now the rivers of living water are still flowing. Just as a river keeps flowing through all four seasons, rivers of living water are flowing in the heart of the person who has received the remission of sins and met the Lord. It is a truly amazing blessing.

The Holy Spirit, whom He gave after being glorified

The word goes on to explain, *"But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified" (John 7:39)*. What does the word *"the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified" (John 7:39)* mean? It means that although the Lord had already had the sin of mankind transferred to Him through the baptism He received

from John, He had not yet gone to the Cross and died. It is because He had not yet died, nor had He risen again from death, that the word recorded it this way.

That is, the words *"the Holy Spirit was not yet given" (John 7:39)* mean that when Jesus was on this earth, the Holy Spirit was not in the hearts of Jesus' disciples the way the Holy Spirit is now in you and me. That is why Jesus' disciples were very cowardly and afraid. Peter said, *"Even if all are made to stumble because of You, I will never be made to stumble" (Matthew 26:33)*. Yet after saying that, before that night had even passed, as soon as things happened, he immediately denied Jesus as many as three times. In the end he denied Him: *"He began to curse and swear, saying, 'I do not know the Man!'" (Matthew 26:74)*. The disciples, who had said they would follow Him even at the cost of their lives, also all ran away, just as the word says: *"Then they all forsook Him and fled" (Mark 14:50)*. There was even a time when a young man who had been following Jesus was seized and *"left the linen cloth and fled from them naked" (Mark 14:52)*. I cannot tell you how craven they looked.

In fact, until the Holy Spirit descended at Pentecost in Acts chapter 2, Jesus' disciples were this craven. They were craven until the Holy Spirit descended at Pentecost. What does this mean? It means that the time when the Holy Spirit first came upon all who believed in Jesus on this earth, simultaneously and in fullness, was after Jesus Christ came to this earth, received baptism from John and had all the sin of mankind transferred to Him, was nailed to the Cross and died, and rose again from death. From that time on, our Lord gave the Holy Spirit to those who believed in Him.

This is truly important. This is an important fact that draws a clear line on this issue. Now I will continue the word by asking myself questions and answering them with the Bible. The

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

resurrection of Jesus Christ is recorded in all four Gospels. But it is in John chapter 20 that, after Jesus Christ rose again, He met His disciples and told them to receive the Holy Spirit.

After Jesus died on the Cross, the disciples were about to be scattered in all directions. Although they had heard the word that Jesus would rise again in three days, they did not believe that word, and each of them thought of a way to survive. Later, some of the disciples even went back to fishing. On the evening of the day Jesus rose again, the disciples were gathered in a certain house. They were trembling with fear that the high priests might seize them and kill them as they had killed Jesus. Even if someone merely knocked on the door, their hearts sank. The word records, *"Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, 'Peace be with you'" (John 20:19)*. The doors had been locked, yet Jesus came inside.

And Jesus said, *"'Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.' And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained'" (John 20:21–23)*. This word, *"He breathed on them, and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit'" (John 20:22)*, is a very important word. As to when the Holy Spirit came upon this earth in the New Testament age, it was after Jesus Christ rose again that Jesus Christ gave the Holy Spirit to His disciples.

The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament age and in the New Testament age

From the Old Testament age until Jesus Christ came to this earth, the Holy Spirit also worked on this earth. As for how He worked, He did not work on many people all at once at the same time; rather, God appeared to the prophet Isaiah and spoke, and He also appeared to servants such as the prophet Jeremiah and the prophet Daniel and spoke. The Holy Spirit appeared to such special servants of God and spoke. And the Holy Spirit moved that person's heart. Because the Holy Spirit is God, He moved people's hearts, caused them to know God's heart, and had them speak His will.

So in the Old Testament age, and until Jesus Christ rose again and told His disciples to receive the Holy Spirit, it was not that the Holy Spirit always dwelt within people's hearts and worked there. The Holy Spirit came and worked on that person's outer man and inner man, moving his heart and also governing his outward circumstances, and so conveyed God's will to people.

So, while it is true that the Holy Spirit worked on this earth, the work in which—as with you and me in the New Testament age—the Holy Spirit comes upon our hearts as soon as we believe in Jesus Christ, dwells forever with the saints who have received the remission of sins, and becomes their teacher to speak to, teach, guide, comfort, uphold, and bless them is different. This work began when, after Jesus Christ received baptism from John, died on the Cross, and rose again from death, He said to His disciples for the first time, *"Receive the Holy Spirit" (John 20:22)*. The Holy Spirit officially came upon this earth after Jesus Christ rose again. Jesus Christ officially gave the Holy Spirit to those who had believed in Jesus and received the remission of sins.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

The Holy Spirit, who comes through Jesus

So we must ask this question: "Through whom, and when we believe in whom, does the Holy Spirit of God come?" The answer is within this question. Through whom does the Holy Spirit descend? Through which servant of God does He descend? Does He descend if we pray a lot? The Holy Spirit is given to us through Jesus. I am saying that the Holy Spirit is given to us through Jesus.

The Holy Spirit is not One whom God the Father scatters on just anyone, apart from Jesus, saying, "Receive!" The Holy Spirit is not One who is given that way, as if scattered on just anyone. The Holy Spirit is given only through Jesus.

But when it comes to receiving the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of God, people think that the Holy Spirit descends if they simply pray to God. But the Bible records that after Jesus Christ rose again, He said, *"Receive the Holy Spirit" (John 20:22)*. And the book of Acts records that on the Day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples and the crowd of about a hundred and twenty people gathered there. The Bible says that the Holy Spirit always descends through Jesus and that Jesus gives the Holy Spirit.

To speak of it more deeply, the Holy Spirit is always given by Jesus to the person who has believed in Jesus—who has believed the gospel of the water and the Spirit that Jesus gave—and so has received the remission of sins in his heart. To put this another way, if one does not accept in one's heart the gospel of the water and the Spirit that Jesus gave, one cannot receive the Holy Spirit. Through whom is the Holy Spirit given? The answer is that He is always given through Jesus. This is truly a great discovery and a great word.

Because it is said that the Holy Spirit came on the Day of

Pentecost, people say that the Holy Spirit came while they were praying earnestly and that various phenomena appeared, and so they think that if they simply pray, no matter what, and simply ask for the Holy Spirit, no matter what, the Holy Spirit will come; and they believe so and ask accordingly. In their thinking, Jesus has nothing to do with it. Christian believers throughout the whole world today regard Jesus as having nothing to do with receiving the Holy Spirit. To them, Jesus has to do only with receiving the remission of sins. It is as if, once they have received only the remission of sins, they say, "Jesus, please go and sit over there to one side for a while. Now I still have a second piece of business left. Now I must receive the Holy Spirit, and I receive the Holy Spirit if I just pray before the Father, no matter what. Jesus, You gave me only the remission of sins, so please just sit down for a while." And then, in order to receive the Holy Spirit, they call on God the Father and desire to receive the Holy Spirit.

Receiving the Holy Spirit while setting Jesus aside is something that cannot be said at all according to the Bible. It makes no sense. Just as one must enter a house through the door, so for us to receive the Holy Spirit, we must believe in our hearts the remission of sins that Jesus gave, and it is as the result of that faith that we receive the Holy Spirit from God as a gift.

Because we know this as the right answer and speak of it, it seems to be nothing special. But why has Christianity today become so muddied and dark? Why can Christianity not become the light of the world? Why is it that people, even while believing in Jesus, cannot welcome the true Holy Spirit into their hearts, and why is there sin in their hearts? It is because they misunderstand the Bible, and especially the Holy Spirit who descended at Pentecost in Acts chapter 2.

Do you know why the Holy Spirit descended at Pentecost in

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Acts chapter 2? The Bible says that, in order to fulfill the promise He had made through the prophet Joel, God poured out the Holy Spirit upon about a hundred and twenty people who had believed in Jesus Christ and received the remission of sins, when they were gathered together.

Pentecost, the fulfillment of the promise

First, let us look at what happened at Pentecost. *"When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them" (Acts 2:1–3).*

Then Peter goes on to say: *"But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, 'Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words. For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams. And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy. I will show wonders in heaven above And signs in the earth beneath: Blood and fire and vapor of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD. And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved"'" (Acts 2:14–21).*

I am now speaking about the cause and the motive of the

Holy Spirit's coming, and through whom the Holy Spirit descends. That is why I read this word. The Holy Spirit came on the Day of Pentecost. And concerning this coming of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, Peter said, *"This is what was spoken by the prophet Joel" (Acts 2:16)*. Let us look together at the prophecy the prophet Joel proclaimed. *"And it shall come to pass afterward That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your old men shall dream dreams, Your young men shall see visions. And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days. And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: Blood and fire and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD. And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance, As the LORD has said, Among the remnant whom the LORD calls" (Joel 2:28–32).*

Through the prophet Joel, God said, *"And it shall come to pass afterward That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your old men shall dream dreams, Your young men shall see visions. And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days" (Joel 2:28–29)*. As I said earlier, until Jesus Christ rose again, the Holy Spirit came down upon God's special servants, moved them in a special way, and used them. But it was on this Day of Pentecost that the Holy Spirit first came down widely upon the many people who believed in Jesus, that is, upon all the saints. This was the fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel chapter 2.

What is the reason the Holy Spirit came on the Day of Pentecost? It is because Jesus Christ had all the sins of this world

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John, bore those sins and died on the Cross, and rose again from death. Because He removed all sins completely with the water and the blood and rose again, He could now pour out the Holy Spirit upon people. So on the Day of Pentecost, the fiftieth day after Jesus died on the Cross and rose again, Jesus Christ sent down the Holy Spirit upon those who believed in Jesus as their Savior, believed the water and the blood as their salvation, and so truly believed in Jesus with their hearts. He sent Him down upon those people, about a hundred and twenty of them, all at once and in fullness.

Jesus Christ poured out the Holy Spirit. The One whom Jesus Christ sent down after He died on the Cross, rose again, testified for forty days, and ascended to heaven is the Holy Spirit. This Holy Spirit is not One who has nothing to do with Jesus. It was not that God the Father sent Him down directly without going through Jesus. It was Jesus Christ who sent Him down. God the Father sent His own Son, Jesus Christ, to this earth and saved us.

After rising again, Jesus Christ said, *"As the Father has sent Me, I also send you" (John 20:21)*, and He promised that before long He would pour out the Holy Spirit, the Helper, and that when the Holy Spirit came, living water would flow like a river out of their hearts. The word of prophecy in the Old Testament and all the words Jesus promised to His disciples were fulfilled when the Holy Spirit descended upon this earth after Jesus Christ rose again, testified for forty days, and ascended to heaven, and ten more days had passed—that is, on the fiftieth day after He died on the Cross and rose again.

Upon whom did the Holy Spirit come? He came only upon those who believed that Jesus came to this earth and removed all their sins completely with the baptism He received from John and the blood of the Cross, and who believed in that Jesus as

their Savior. That is, He descended only upon those who believed in Jesus Christ, who saved them through the word of the water and the Spirit, as their Savior. So, as to upon whom the Holy Spirit descends, He descends upon those who have received the remission of sins.

Do you believe this? We must draw a clear line. The Holy Spirit did not come because they gathered and prayed on the Day of Pentecost. In the Old Testament, God promised through the prophet Joel, *"And it shall come to pass afterward That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh" (Joel 2:28)*. So in the New Testament age, after Jesus Christ removed all our sins with the water and the blood, died on the Cross, and rose again, He poured out the Holy Spirit upon those who believed in Jesus in order to fulfill that word of promise.

Therefore, the coming of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost was God, who makes promises, fulfilling what He had promised to us human beings. It is the fulfillment of the promise. The Holy Spirit did not come because people gathered, fell prostrate, beat the ground, and noisily prayed prayers of repentance. We must not draw conclusions from looking at only one or two verses of the Bible. We must see why the Holy Spirit descended on the Day of Pentecost and what Jesus Christ said about the Holy Spirit. What Jesus Christ said about the Holy Spirit is the truth.

Our Lord said, *"He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water" (John 7:38)*, and the word records, *"The Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified" (John 7:39)*. Do you believe that this word of the Bible is the truth? Jesus' disciples, too, were able to act as disciples of Jesus Christ only when, after Jesus Christ rose again and ascended to heaven, He poured out the Holy Spirit in fullness and the Holy Spirit came into their

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

hearts.

That is why the Lord said, *"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8)*. He was saying that when the Holy Spirit is in your hearts, you naturally become witnesses of the gospel.

Only to those who have received the remission of sins

That is why we must know rightly about the Holy Spirit. People who have not even received the remission of sins, who do not know the gospel of the water and the blood of Jesus Christ, and who have sin in their hearts even though they believe in Jesus, go up to the mountains recklessly and pray. In the dark they climb a mountain, grab hold of a big tree, and cling to it, saying, "Please give! If You do not give, I will pray until my bowels are torn apart," and "If You do not give quickly, I will bang my head against this tree."

But no matter how fiercely they scream and hold out, God does not give the Holy Spirit to such people. Instead, the devil appears there as if he were the Holy Spirit and says, "I am Jesus. I love you. Do you understand?" At that time a demon disguises itself as Jesus and enters the person's heart. That is precisely the devil. So it is truly foolish for a person who does not believe in Jesus wholly and has not wholly received the remission of sins in his heart through Jesus to ask for the Holy Spirit. Such a person knows neither the Bible nor Jesus.

People misunderstand. They misunderstand, thinking that, just as the Holy Spirit descended in fullness at Pentecost, if we

too just gather together and pester God to give us the Holy Spirit, God will be unable to endure it and will give the Holy Spirit. That is, they misunderstand, thinking that, just as in the parable, when the widow kept going to the unjust judge and pestering him, the judge said, *"Because this widow troubles me I will avenge her" (Luke 18:5)*, so if we make a fuss, God will be pushed by our pestering into giving the Holy Spirit.

They also understand and believe that, just as Jesus' disciples received the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost after quite some time had passed, one must first believe in Jesus and be saved, and then, after a good while, ask, "Please give the Holy Spirit in fullness," and only then does the Holy Spirit come. And so they end up receiving not the Holy Spirit but demons.

So let us first make this clear. The Holy Spirit comes only upon those who have believed in Jesus and received the remission of sins. And it is Jesus who gives the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not One who descends haphazardly upon anyone who asks, regardless of Jesus—upon just anyone, even without any qualification. The Holy Spirit is always given by Jesus, and Jesus gives Him only to those who believe that Jesus came to this earth and completely removed our sins with the water and the blood.

What authority do those who have received the remission of sins and received the Holy Spirit have? The Lord said, *"If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained" (John 20:23)*. The authority to remit sins belongs to those who have received the remission of sins and received the Holy Spirit in their hearts. The person who has received the Holy Spirit as a gift at the same time as receiving the remission of sins in his heart has the authority to preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit and remit the sins of all the people of this world. And he also has the authority to

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

leave their sins as they are if they do not listen to that gospel. It means that the authority concerning the kingdom of heaven and hell has been given to those who have received the remission of sins.

Jesus said to Peter, *"I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 16:19)*. That Jesus, who gave Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven, has also given the keys of the kingdom of heaven to you and me today, who, just like Peter, believe in Jesus as our Savior, have received the remission of sins just as he did, and have received the Holy Spirit just as he did. This is precisely the gospel. Those who have received the remission of sins and received the Holy Spirit in their hearts have the authority to preach the gospel and lead people to the kingdom of heaven, and also the authority to leave those who do not believe as they are, in destruction. Do you believe this?

To conclude, the Holy Spirit is sent by Jesus. To what kind of person does He send Him? He sends Him to the person who believes that Jesus is the Son of God, his own Savior, and God—to the person who believes that Jesus is the Savior and Lord who saved him by receiving baptism from John on this earth to have all his sins transferred to Him and wash them all away, by being nailed to the Cross and shedding His blood to receive all the punishment for all his sins in his place, and by rising again from death. When people believe this way in their hearts, Jesus gives the Holy Spirit to those who believe in Him.

This is exactly what is most confused in the doctrines of the Holy Spirit throughout the world today. Because this is so confused, nowadays when people are told to believe the gospel of the water and the Spirit, they dismiss it, saying, "Are you telling me to believe such a basic thing at this late date? I already believed thirty years ago." That is why so few people believe this gospel. This gospel of the water and the Spirit is true and is

the real gospel, but people endlessly misunderstand, thinking that the Holy Spirit is something received by praying, and that one can receive the Holy Spirit even without having received the complete remission of sins before Jesus. So today, because they do not believe or accept the gospel of the water and the Spirit that Jesus gave, they cannot receive the Holy Spirit into their hearts.

When we look into this, it is truly absurd. Many so-called believers in the world are telling stories more ridiculous than a comedian's. Although it is something one could find out right away by searching the Bible just a little, as if they cannot see the Bible, every one of them, a hundred out of a hundred, has written his own doctrine of the Holy Spirit in his own way. But what they have written is not proven by the word of the Bible. It is their own logic. Those who have received the remission of sins have received the Holy Spirit as a gift. The river of living water is flowing like a river in your hearts.

Rivers are not all the same: some rivers are dried up and trickle down like ditch water, and some flow silently and abundantly, more than deep enough to swim in. Some of you have such a river flowing in you. And some rivers barely flow, as if falling drop by drop through a thin pipe. These are people who have barely received salvation. There are also people in whom such a river is flowing. But what is certain is that this river is in all of you and in me as well. In those who have received the remission of sins, the river of the Holy Spirit is flowing. But in those who have not received the remission of sins, there is not even a drop of water; they are filled with nothing but sand and gravel, so that when they collide only sparks fly, and their insides burn, they fall ill, and they are half dead and dying.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Precious people saved from punishment

We are so thankful that we have believed in the Lord and been saved from all the punishment of God, that all of us are people who have been saved. Salvation is precisely being rescued from the punishment of God. Those who have not received the remission of sins cannot but receive punishment. The Bible says, *"Taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thessalonians 1:8)*. Do you think that those who do not believe in God are all right? There is punishment. There is terrible punishment.

You and I are people who have been saved from that terrible punishment. So even though we may look shabby, we are very precious people. Do not look at the things in the world and say, "How miserable I look," but look at yourselves, saved from the punishment of judgment, and look at the Lord, and give thanks. Even if you cannot give thanks in all things, I hope that you will at least be grateful for having been saved from punishment.

Do not undervalue too much what you have received. Do you think, "Do we really have to gather again to hear the word, just because we received this trifling salvation?" Why do you think that way? It is because you have received the remission of sins that you gather to hear the word. Do you think this is something given to just anyone? There are countless people in this world, yet you have heard and believed this gospel. Out of people more numerous than the grains of sand, you were chosen and chosen again to believe this gospel. God took pity on us and showed us mercy. It is the same with me. I, too, am truly grateful and thankful to God. ✉

Sermon 7 by Paul C. Jong

Rivers of living water that overflow from the heart

< John 7:37–53 >

"On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, 'If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.' But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. Therefore many from the crowd, when they heard this saying, said, 'Truly this is the Prophet.' Others said, 'This is the Christ.' But some said, 'Will the Christ come out of Galilee? Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the seed of David and from the town of Bethlehem, where David was?' So there was a division among the people because of Him. Now some of them wanted to take Him, but no one laid hands on Him. Then the officers came to the chief priests and Pharisees, who said to them, 'Why have you not brought Him?' The officers answered, 'No man ever spoke like this Man!' Then the Pharisees answered them, 'Are you also deceived? Have any of the rulers or the Pharisees believed in Him? But this crowd that does not know the law is accursed.' Nicodemus (he who came to Jesus by night, being one of them) said to them, 'Does our law judge a man before it hears him and knows what he is doing?' They answered and said to him, 'Are you also from Galilee? Search and look, for no prophet has arisen out of

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Galilee.' And everyone went to his own house."

The word He cried out in the face of those who sought to seize Him

The Bible is a record of the facts that took place at that time, so the subjective views of the person who wrote it are not contained in it. That is why he had no choice but to write, *"And everyone went to his own house" (John 7:53)*. Since meeting the Lord, I have truly been living a life that is like a dream. When I think back on the things that have passed, they seem so much like a dream, and I am so thankful. When I think of the grace God has given, I cannot express in words how many things I am thankful for. Is it the same with you, too? I am truly thankful, and thankful again.

This word is a very simple and clear word. It is what the Lord spoke, crying out in a loud voice, when He had come up to Jerusalem to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. At that time the Jews were trying to seize Jesus and kill Him. Because Jesus had healed many sick people, raised the dead, and performed the miracle of the five loaves and two fish to feed hungry people, a current was flowing within Israel to follow Jesus. It was a current that sought to set Jesus up as king and liberate this nation from being a colony. So the Roman army was also keeping its eye on Jesus, and whenever such a current arose, Jewish leaders such as the chief priests, tetrarchs such as Herod, and people such as Governor Pilate were most cautious and afraid. It was because this could lead to a riot.

At the time when Jesus was here, Israel was a colony of Rome. The Roman emperor sent a governor named Pilate and set up tetrarchs in each region to control and rule Israel. The

Jews had feasts such as the Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and the Feast of Tabernacles, and at those feasts all the people came up to Jerusalem, kept the feast, and then scattered. Because Jesus and His disciples had come up for this feast as well, the Jews thought of seizing Jesus and killing Him. Because of the things Jesus had done and the words He had spoken, disputes arose and conflicts arose. Jesus had spoken many words, and what He had spoken was actually coming to pass. Even though God the Father had sent Jesus to this earth and had Him work, people did not believe. Rather, they watched for an opening to find any fault in Jesus and tried to seize Him and kill Him.

Jesus said to those who were trying to seize Him and kill Him as follows: *"Then Jesus said to them, 'I shall be with you a little while longer, and then I go to Him who sent Me. You will seek Me and not find Me, and where I am you cannot come'" (John 7:33–34)*. He was going to be with them a little while longer and then leave, and He said that then they would seek Him and not find Him and could not even come where Jesus was. What could this word mean? So the Jews murmured among themselves, *"Where does He intend to go that we shall not find Him? Does He intend to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks?" (John 7:35).*

Then, on the day the Feast of Tabernacles ended, Jesus cried out in a loud voice. *"On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, 'If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water'" (John 7:37–38)*. The people were greatly startled. They could not understand it, wondering what in the world this was about. Dear fellow believers, what could this word mean? Have you ever experienced this word? Are you experiencing it even now?

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

The river of the gospel of the water and the Spirit

With what gospel did the Lord save us? He saved us with the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The Lord came to this earth, had the sin of the world transferred to Him once and for all through the baptism He received from John the Baptist, was hung on the Cross and died, and rose again from death to become our Savior. It is about this very work that the Lord is now speaking. When the Lord has been here a little while longer and then leaves, at that time people will seek Him and not find Him and cannot even come where the Lord is; but if anyone who is thirsty comes to the Lord and drinks, rivers of living water will overflow out of that person's heart. That is what He is saying. I know what this word means. I know the reason why the Lord spoke this way. And I am still living that way even now.

Within me, cool rivers of living water have been overflowing since long ago. These rivers of living water are none other than the river of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. This river overflows within me. Because I believe this word, rivers of living water overflow within me, so that whenever I testified of the gospel to you, the waters of this river reached even you. When you heard the word of the gospel, believed it, and received the remission of sins, your hearts too were refreshed, and the waters also overflowed from your hearts, so that this gospel was preached even to other people.

In serving this gospel until now, I have hardly ever testified of the gospel by my own strength. All I do is read the word of God and write a little of it down so that I will not forget the word. In my sermon notes only a little of the word of God is written; there is nothing else. Apart from looking up words I do not know in a Greek, Hebrew, or English dictionary, there is nothing. At the back of books there is often a list of the other books they

have quoted, but at the back of the books I have written there is no such thing. There is just one—the Bible, the Old and New Testaments. I preach the word of the gospel that the Lord saved us in this way. And not only when I preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit but also in the life I live, these rivers of living water overflow in me. For rivers of living water to overflow as one receives the fullness of the Holy Spirit means that one's heart is refreshed. It means that one's heart feels good. I am glad to believe the gospel of God and glad to preach it, and even if there is some lack in my life, I am content because rivers of living water overflow in my heart.

You too, if you believe the gospel, believe the word of God before God without selfish motives, and follow in faith though you are lacking, will experience rivers of living water springing up and overflowing in your hearts. I too have met the Lord and serve the gospel as I live in this world, but there are times when my wife and I quarrel, arguing back and forth over which of us is right. Even though I have to stand at the pulpit to preach in a little while, we are still arguing about who is right until that very time. As we go on saying, "You are right on that point, but you are wrong on this point," it does not end quickly, though it should end quickly. Can a person have a long quarrel with his spouse, then come out and stand before the saints with a bright face? To come out in the middle of a quarrel and calmly stand at the pulpit is something impossible before being born again.

But since I have to preach anyway, I come out and preach. I stand at the pulpit with a heart that says, "The matter I was arguing about with my wife a moment ago is not over yet, but that matter is that matter, and today I preach this word." What I mean is that within me the remission of sins has been accomplished, so I have no sin, and even if I was at fault, I acknowledge that fault as a fault, and because I believe that the

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Lord has removed even that sin completely, I can preach before the saints with a heart that has not a single sin. As I preach that way, I actually become joyful.

The Lord, who would accomplish our salvation completely

In the old days, I did not understand such words well. The Lord said, *"If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink" (John 7:37)*, and said, *"Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water" (John 7:38)*, and not long after, He was hung on the Cross and died. Why did He speak this way? He spoke this way because the Lord was going to accomplish our salvation completely. The Lord was born on this earth, received baptism from John, was hung on the Cross and died, and rose again from death, and so saved you and me.

Obeying the will of God the Father, the Lord put on a human body and came to this earth, and when He was about thirty years old He received baptism from John the Baptist and so had the sin of mankind transferred to Him once and for all. It means that when Jesus received baptism from John the Baptist, He had them all transferred to Him—the sins of all people, even the sins of the dictators said to be the most evil in history, even the sin of the very last person until this world comes to an end. That is why He bore that sin, went to the Cross, and was nailed there, and saying, *"It is finished!" (John 19:30)*, He died, and then rose again from death and became the God of salvation for you and me. Because that Lord has saved us perfectly, if we believe the gospel of the water and the Spirit that the Lord accomplished for us, rivers of living water will overflow from your heart and mine, even though we may be a little lacking.

So the heart is refreshed at all times. We always acknowledge our shortcomings, but we are not crushed to death or cursed because of those shortcomings. If we have done wrong, we only need to acknowledge what we did wrong. Since the Lord has borne even that sin, He has now made it possible for us to run at any time, by faith and through God, for righteous work and for the spread of the gospel. That is why these rivers of living water overflow. It seems that this is also why I have been able to quietly watch over people and wait for them for many long years. If it were not so, it would have been out of the question. My insides would have burned, and I could not have endured it. By nature I am impatient. Yet I have composure. Even when I have no composure of my own, the Lord is within me, the gospel of the water and the Spirit is there, and the Holy Spirit is there, so rivers of living water overflow, and that is why I have the composure to say, "If it does not work out today, I will do it tomorrow."

Do you know how tenacious people are? They are truly tenacious. Even so, because rivers of living water overflow within me, I have never once felt fear when I met adversaries and heard them challenge me, saying, "Isn't the gospel you preach wrong?" "I see. Let us calm down a little and talk it over step by step. It would be better to open the word and talk, wouldn't it?" If the person speaks a different language, I begin the conversation by saying, "Let us each open the Bible in our own country's language and talk." First I listen to everything the other person has to say, and then I speak. If, after reading the Bible, they say something different, I talk by examining what the subject is and what this sentence is saying, and I also open other Bible passages and talk.

The reason I have such composure is that the Lord is within me. There is nothing at all to be afraid of, and there is no need

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

to try to win in haste. I give the other person the chance to speak first, saying, “First ask me with the word. Then I will answer with the very word you have brought.” If you ask where such composure comes from, it is because the Holy Spirit is in my heart and the word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit is there. I can speak boldly because the Lord had your sins and mine transferred to Him when He received baptism from John, was nailed to the Cross and died, and rose again from death to become my Savior, and because He has put an end to every problem of sin, the problem of weakness, and everything that is not good, including curses.

“Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters”

The reason I have been able to live serving the gospel this way until now is that the Lord has been within me. The word that tells those who are thirsty to come and drink is also found in the Book of Isaiah. *“Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; And you who have no money, Come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk Without money and without price. Why do you spend money for what is not bread, And your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, And let your soul delight itself in abundance. Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live; And I will make an everlasting covenant with you— The sure mercies of David” (Isaiah 55:1–3).*

If we listen to the word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, by which the Lord came to this earth and saved you and me, and accept it in our hearts and believe it, our hearts are filled with rich things. It means to come and buy without money and without price. Salvation is obtained by faith; it is not obtained

by paying money, nor is it obtained by good deeds. It is one hundred percent by faith that we receive the gift of salvation by which God saved us. People weigh out silver for useless things and serve idols, asking that things go well for them, but do things go well just because they do so? It means that we should come to the Lord and incline our ears to the Lord. And it means that we should believe. Then the heart is enriched.

Next, the Bible records, *"But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified" (John 7:39).*

The heart of a person who has received the Holy Spirit

This is what happens to a person when he receives the Holy Spirit. When one receives the remission of sins, one receives the Holy Spirit, and when one receives the Holy Spirit, rivers of living water overflow out of his heart. However, the overflowing of this river is possible when one is united with the church. When we believe the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we receive the remission of sins and receive the Holy Spirit, and when we receive the Holy Spirit, He becomes living water flowing like a river in our hearts and refreshes our stifled hearts at any time. As for me, since I met the Lord, this river has always overflowed in my heart.

Before I met the Lord—before I met the word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit—my heart was always stifled. Even when I attended worship services, cried out "Lord!" together with others, and prayed in a loud voice as if my throat would burst, there was nothing but a momentary surge of emotion at

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

that time. When the service was over and I went outside, there was nothing. It was so empty. Even when I studied theology, my heart was so parched that it seemed full of nothing but bones. So, hoping I might receive grace during the worship service, I listened to the pastor's sermons and prayed prayers of repentance with all my devotion and strength. If my emotions welled up during the worship service, I considered that I had received grace that day, and if my emotions did not stir and it was flat, I thought I had come away empty-handed that day. I spent more than ten years like that. It was truly hard.

If living water does not overflow in the heart, it is truly hard. It is said that living water overflows in the heart of a person who has received the Holy Spirit, but to receive the Holy Spirit, one must receive the remission of sins in the heart. The word the apostles testified also says, *"Then Peter said to them, 'Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit'" (Acts 2:38)*, and *"Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19)*. It is when we believe in the remission of sins that Jesus Christ accomplished by having all our sins transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John, dying on the Cross, and rising again from death that we receive the Holy Spirit as a gift.

It was truly hard. Even now, when things are very hard, the way I used to live in the old days sometimes appears in my dreams. To preach one sermon, I would spread books out across the floor, take a notebook, copy down this and that, piece things together, and draw red lines under the parts I would emphasize. Even so, when I actually stood at the pulpit, the sermon did not go well. It was because it was not mine but borrowed. To preach one sermon, it felt as if my bones were drying up. Yet I cannot

tell you how well some people speak. Though they have not met the Lord and have sin in their hearts, their words flow like a clear stream. On the contrary, a person who has a conscience cannot even carry on such a false religious life properly. He is so tormented that he cannot bear it. As soon as he comes before the Lord, nothing but his wrongdoings comes to mind, so he says, "Lord, I did this wrong, and I did that wrong," and in the end he cannot even make a proper sound and mumbles. That is what happens when there is sin in the heart. It was truly agonizing.

In that way, I agonized a great deal in my heart and suffered because of sin. I could understand what most of the words of the Bible were saying, but the word *"He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water" (John 7:38)* was different. It felt as though not rivers of living water but sand was pouring out of my heart. For about the first five years after I first believed in Jesus, tears streamed down whenever I thought of Jesus and thought of the Cross. Thinking how painful it must have been for Him and how hard it must have been for Him, and saying that I was so thankful because He had carried the cross and died for me, I was thankful to the point of shuddering. A heart arose in me that seemed ready to leap even into fire for the Lord. But that too lasted only a day or two. On days when I committed more sins, the grace of the Cross seemed to grow deeper, so I would force it to fit the word *"where sin abounded, grace abounded much more" (Romans 5:20)*.

We are all lumps of sin born as sinners. This word does not mean that we should commit more sins. It means that because a person who has committed many sins discovers his own sins quickly, when someone preaches the gospel of the water and the Spirit to him, he quickly believes, thinking, "So the Lord has saved me, who was going to hell, like this with the gospel of the water and the Spirit," and thus receives more of God's grace and

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

feels the gift of salvation the Lord has given to be greater. But at that time it did not happen that way. There were so many words I could not understand, but the Lord met me through the word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. As I was reading the word, it dawned on me, "So this is how the Lord saved me." I came to know that the word *"thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness" (Matthew 3:15)* and the word *"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 3:16–17)* were about exactly this.

I realized, "So this is how Jesus fulfilled all righteousness. So He had all sins transferred to Him when He received baptism from John the Baptist. And so Jesus bore our sins, went to the Cross, was nailed there and died, and then rose again from death and became my Savior. Ah, so this was it!" Then the whole Bible became connected and threaded together. It was threaded together all the way from Genesis. Wherever I opened it, I came to know what the word meant. But was there anyone who preached this gospel? There was not.

Until I came to preach this gospel

I went to the evangelicals as well, but I did not hear this gospel. I had never once heard a sermon on the gospel of the water and the Spirit—that Jesus received baptism from John and had the sin of the world transferred to Him, bore that sin, went to the Cross and died there, and rose again from death. Yet those people said that one is without sin even by believing only in the

blood of the Cross. I met the Lord. But after I met the Lord, a burden many times heavier than the joy of receiving the remission of sins was laid on my back. It seemed that there was no one in the whole world who preached this gospel. There was no one among theologians, nor among pastors famous in the world. I agonized greatly before God, thinking that it would be a relief if there were someone, but what would I do if there were no one, and wondering whether there might be someone in America, whether there might be someone among the theologians of Europe, or whether there might be someone among the theologians of Asia.

Even so, I finished by praying as follows: "God, thank You. Lord, thank You for saving me with the gospel of the water and the Spirit. As far as I know, there is no one in the whole world who preaches this gospel of the water and the Spirit, so I will preach it. Lord, please help me." Then I thought, "I must be looking at the world too narrowly. What could someone like me know of everything? There must be much I do not know, so let me first find out what I can find out," and I pulled out all the Christian books I had and searched through them first. It was not in my books. Then I thought that I would go to the library, search as far as I could search, and do everything as far as I could.

You will know that before I met the Lord I asked pastors and theologians questions countless times. There I could not hear a single word of an answer; rather, I was treated as a fool. They did not say it openly, but behind my back they would have scolded, asking whether a theology student did not even know that and so was asking about it publicly, and they would have said that it was a disgrace for someone like that to be in their denomination. Their faces showed that they greatly disliked my asking such questions. I kept asking, "What was the baptism Jesus received from John the Baptist for? Please tell me about

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

that." Then the answer came back, "You are a student, and you do not know what even the Sunday school children all know? Look it up in a dictionary." I had looked it up in all the dictionaries, too. When I said that I understood the meaning of the words but did not know the meaning of what it was saying, they told me not to talk about such things in a public setting but to come to their office. It was because they were embarrassed that I kept asking in a public setting. So that matter ended that way. Those people did not even have the questions I had. They did not ask questions either.

After I met the Lord, I went to the library and searched through all the books. Still I kept searching, thinking, "It must be that I do not know. It must be somewhere. There must be such theologians, and I just have not met them." But searching was not the only thing that mattered, so I began to testify of the gospel. I could not just stay still. These days it is not easy to meet one person separately and preach the gospel, but in the old days, even while walking along the road, two people could sit down and share the gospel. I could preach it to anyone, whether a young woman, a married woman, or a soldier. It seems that people were pure in the old days. When I spoke the word and took questions and talked for an hour or two, people received the remission of sins. Their faces brightened, and rejoicing greatly, they said that sin had disappeared from their hearts. They said they were so happy and asked if they could buy me lunch, though it was late. We had met at eleven o'clock and talked for nearly three hours, so it was time to be hungry. So we would eat together.

That is how I came to preach the gospel. I had not resolved to preach it, but when I met people, I wanted to talk with them. When I saw someone carrying a Bible under his arm, the question "Do you know the Bible?" and, as Philip did, the

question *"Do you understand what you are reading?" (Acts 8:30)* came out on their own. What can I do about what comes out on its own? Sometimes at school, sometimes in a flower garden, sometimes on the street, sometimes in a restaurant, I preached the gospel regardless of the place. At that time I had strength, so I preached without ceasing. I preached by writing on a few sheets of paper in handwriting that was not even good. At first the listeners were almost worn out by it, but in the end they received the remission of sins.

When we are united with the church

Since the Holy Spirit has been in my heart, I have been able to do the work of God at any time, even when my lacking and weak sides are exposed. This is the power of God. Whenever I do something for you, I also do it with the strength God gives. Just as the word says, *"He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water" (John 7:38)*, rivers of living water truly flow out of my heart. You too have received the remission of sins, so isn't it so with you?

To make rivers of living water flow out more, we must be united with the church and serve the gospel more. At first, rivers of living water are just words, and they do not seem to overflow; we may simply be dazed at having no sin. Some people are so happy to have no sin that they laugh, some are dazed, and some are even more dazed than before receiving the remission of sins. They certainly have no sin, but it shows itself in a peculiar way in each one. Even so, when they stay with the church, worship together, and hear the sermons of born-again people, they receive grace. It is not only through the word that we receive grace; when we worship together—some preaching the word

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

and some hearing it during the worship service—the Holy Spirit works within our spirits and gives refreshment and grace to our hearts. That is why the Bible also says, *"Therefore 'Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you.' 'I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the LORD Almighty'" (2 Corinthians 6:17–18).*

When we who have received the remission of sins gather and worship, pray, and praise, the Holy Spirit works in our midst. That is what ministry is. It is not that I do everything; I only preach the will of God, follow it, and take part in leading, and when I testify of the word of God, the Holy Spirit gives grace in your hearts and leads you. That is why you receive grace even from talks that seem unremarkable. You will experience such things a great deal from now on.

The blessing of hearing the gospel from a person who has received the remission of sins, hearing the word of God from a person who has received the remission of sins, and being united with people who have received the remission of sins to serve the gospel and worship goes on and on. This is not something one feels only when one has received the remission of sins; one comes to feel it more and more while living. The more you unite your hearts with the servants of God and the brothers and sisters who have gone ahead, and with the people of God who faithfully follow for the gospel, the more you will experience the rivers of living water of the Holy Spirit overflowing in your hearts. It is truly an amazing thing. Even if the whole world came at me, I did not budge. There was nothing I feared. When I went to some city and was testifying of the gospel, even if someone tried to threaten me, I was not afraid at all. In fact, I do not even know how to throw a punch, and I do not know how to fight. Even so, I did not feel afraid in my heart at all. A person who has not

received the remission of sins is afraid when the other person does not accept him and threatens him. But to me, rather, that person looked pitiful. I thought he was doing so because he did not know.

If you know that I have met the Lord, and if you know how to see rightly what it is to be united with me even though I am lacking, there is nothing at all to hinder you from being united. If it were me, if a person like me were preaching the word and that person followed the will of God and lived for God, I would be united with him at once. I would say, "I will do it. Please tell me." One does not become united because one is told to be united. When you receive the remission of sins, you understand the sermons of a person who has received the remission of sins. A person who has not received the remission of sins does not understand well what a person who has received the remission of sins preaches.

That is, rivers of living water overflow. That is why I keep on preaching, isn't it? I open the same word and preach, and since I met you until now I have been talking about the gospel of the water and the Spirit. If neither you nor I had received the remission of sins, you would have said, "Please stop telling the same story. One more time and it will be several hundred billion times. We understand, so please just stop. Isn't it that Jesus came to this earth, received baptism from John the Baptist and had sin transferred to Him, was hung on the Cross and died, and rose again from death, and so saved us? We know that, so do not even talk about the water. Just call it the gospel; do not call it the gospel of the water and the Spirit." It would have been truly tiresome.

But I do not just call it the gospel; I call it the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Why is that? It is because the gospel of the water and the Spirit saved you and me. It is because rivers of

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

living water overflow in your hearts when you believe the gospel of the water and the Spirit. It is because our Lord saved us with the gospel of the water and the Spirit, so that even after we have received the remission of sins, every time we fall short, the Holy Spirit who is in our hearts tells us and proves to us through the word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit that Jesus had even that sin transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John. So even when we talk about the same gospel, if we say "the gospel of the water and the Spirit," everything comes to mind, so we feel good, and living water overflows from our hearts. That is why I keep speaking this way.

Some people count how many times the word baptism appears in my books and say that I talk about baptism so much but talk about the blood of the Cross only a little. But if there is baptism, the blood of the Cross is naturally there. Because Jesus had the sin of the world transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John, He could receive the judgment for that sin on the Cross. When I see such people, I understand them. I only wish that they would read the books a little more. It does not matter that those people say so. Rather, because of that, other people will also come to read more of the books that preach this gospel.

A life that acknowledges the testimony of the Holy Spirit

Indeed, the Holy Spirit is in the heart of a person who has received the remission of sins and testifies that the gospel of the water and the Spirit has saved you. The Holy Spirit testifies in your hearts that Jesus had all your sins transferred to Him when He received baptism from John, was hung on the Cross and

received the judgment for those sins, and rose again from death and became your Savior, and He testifies in your hearts of this faith that says, *"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16)*. Therefore rivers of living water—that is, the refreshment of the heart—overflow from your hearts.

But those who believe in Jesus must be pure in heart. Even if they have received the remission of sins, if their hearts are bound to material things and follow material things, and are bound to fleshly things and pursue them, then although they have received the remission of sins, rivers of living water do not overflow. There is no joy either. The Holy Spirit knows us well. So after you have received the remission of sins, He wants to do the work of pouring out the filth of your hearts and removing it. So the Holy Spirit exposes the things you have always been doing until now—that is, sins. When they are exposed, you may be even more tormented after receiving the remission of sins. Such things are not thrown away just because you try to throw them away. When you acknowledge what you did wrong as wrong and sin as sin, you will gradually get free from them. But if you do not acknowledge them, then although you may have received the remission of sins, you cannot get free from them, and the waters of the river of the Spirit of life cannot overflow.

The Bible records what the Holy Spirit will do when He comes: *"And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment" (John 16:8)*. When the Holy Spirit testifies of your sin, righteousness, and judgment, you must acknowledge it. Then you can walk with the Lord, be united with the church, and follow the Lord. You can live in joy.

There is truly so much to talk about. I am lacking, but I have walked with the Lord until now. Because I have walked with the Lord, I know it well. I am so happy. You will have many problems. Do not worry. When the Holy Spirit tells you that it is

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

a wrong, that it is a sin, acknowledge it. And live together, following the will of the church first. You will gradually get free. But if you keep trying to hide it, you will eventually go through great difficulty and get free only with hardship.

Some people interpret this word *"If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink" (John 7:37)* as follows. They understand that when they are tormented because they have sin, if they think of the blood of the Cross before the Lord, sing praises, and pray prayers of repentance, their emotions become full, and that this is exactly the rivers of the living water of life overflowing. But those who say so are still sinners. You too, before you received the remission of sins, probably thought it was living water overflowing when you thought of the blood of the Cross, wondering how painful it must have been for Him, repented of the sins you had committed, and shed tears as your emotions welled up, saying, "Lord, I love You." But that is not living water; it is only tears shed as emotions welled up. After a good cry, the heart may feel relieved for a while, but it lasts only for that moment. I too used to cry a lot during prayer time in the old days, but these days I do not cry like that; instead I laugh a lot.

People who are now living a religious life cry, stirring up their emotions with "Lord!" because it was said that those who are thirsty should come to the Lord and drink. But if you read the word that follows, it says that this is a word about what happens to those who have received the Holy Spirit, and that at that time the Holy Spirit had not yet come. The Holy Spirit comes upon those who believe in the remission of sins that Jesus accomplished through the baptism He received from John, the Cross, and the resurrection. Are you happy? I am happy, too. My flesh is weak, but I am happy. I am so happy. I am so thankful. ✉

Sermon 8 by Paul C. Jong

Faith that believes the word of the Lord rather than the authority of men

< John 7:45–53 >

"Then the officers came to the chief priests and Pharisees, who said to them, 'Why have you not brought Him?' The officers answered, 'No man ever spoke like this Man!' Then the Pharisees answered them, 'Are you also deceived? Have any of the rulers or the Pharisees believed in Him? But this crowd that does not know the law is accursed.' Nicodemus (he who came to Jesus by night, being one of them) said to them, 'Does our law judge a man before it hears him and knows what he is doing?' They answered and said to him, 'Are you also from Galilee? Search and look, for no prophet has arisen out of Galilee.' And everyone went to his own house."

During the Feast of Tabernacles, the chief priests and Pharisees sent officers to seize Jesus. But on the last day of the feast, those officers came back empty-handed. When asked why they had not brought Him, they answered, *"No man ever spoke like this Man!" (John 7:46)*. The leaders did not accept that answer but instead rebuked the officers.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

The officers were amazed at the word, and the leaders regarded that amazement as being deceived. Between them, Nicodemus throws in a remark. He asks whether it is in keeping with the law to judge a man even before hearing what he says and knowing what he has done. Today's word asks on what basis we judge Jesus and believe in Him. Is it the status and authority of men, or the words the Lord spoke and the work He accomplished?

The Lord's word of life, which is different from the words of men

Let us read verses 45 and 46.

"Then the officers came to the chief priests and Pharisees, who said to them, 'Why have you not brought Him?' The officers answered, 'No man ever spoke like this Man!'" (John 7:45–46).

The officers were men who had gone out under orders to seize Jesus and bring Him back. But instead of Jesus, they came back with a testimony about His words. While they were there, Jesus taught in the temple, and on the last day of the feast He stood, called out to those who thirst, and promised rivers of living water. Having heard those words, they could not lay hands on Him. The officers whom men with authority had sent out with orders came back held fast by the words of the Lord rather than by those orders.

The officers recognized that His words were different from the words of men. Jesus did not dress up His words to draw people's attention. He came from the Father and spoke the Father's will. Even when He taught in the temple during the feast, the Jews marveled at that teaching. Since He taught so spiritually, the hearts of those who heard Him could not help but be greatly

shaken.

Then what does that word say? It says that the One who is God put on a human body and came to this earth, received baptism from John and bore the sin of mankind, received the judgment for that sin on the Cross, and rose again from death, and so saved us. The joy the world gives lasts only a moment, and the words of men may give good lessons but cannot remove the sin in the heart. The word of the Lord teaches how a person who was dead in sin can come to life. It does not lay out a way for us to become righteous by our own strength, but leads us to believe in the salvation the Lord accomplished. When we believe that Jesus is God, and believe that this God has saved us through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we receive the remission of sins and receive the Holy Spirit. That Holy Spirit overflows in our hearts as rivers of living water.

Faith is not made complete by hearing the word and admiring it. When we do not stop at being amazed but come to know through the word who Jesus is and what He has done for us, and believe it, that word becomes life within us.

Status and knowledge cannot take the place of the truth

Let us read verses 47 through 49.

"Then the Pharisees answered them, 'Are you also deceived? Have any of the rulers or the Pharisees believed in Him? But this crowd that does not know the law is accursed'" (John 7:47–49).

The Pharisees did not ask what Jesus had said. They rebuked the officers, asking whether they too had been deceived, and asked them in return whether any of the rulers or the Pharisees

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

believed in Him. They put forward the fact that they themselves did not believe as the reason no one should believe in Jesus. It was not an answer to the word but words that pressed others down with status.

Even today, those who oppose Jesus act as if they had some great authority. But the One who has real authority is the Lord. It is because He bears with them and waits for them that they can still somehow stand. The truth of God is not something that people's status determines. Because Jesus is the One who came from God, that fact does not change whether people acknowledge it or reject it, and the salvation the Lord accomplished is also effective regardless of people's approval.

So ask yourselves. In whose name does the ground of your faith lie? The fact that some person is famous, that some church is large, or that you have attended church for a long time cannot guarantee that the gospel is true. The faith that has confirmed in the word what the Lord accomplished through the baptism He received from John, and why He was hung on the Cross, is true faith.

The Pharisees said that the crowd that did not know the law was accursed. It was a boast that they had knowledge of the law and others did not. But the law exposes anyone's sin and makes known that no one can become righteous by his own deeds. The very people who should have seen their own sins through the law were despising others with that knowledge. A person who has deeply understood the word comes to know even this: "I am someone who is going to hell." From then on, the groundwork is laid for believing in Jesus properly. In fact, receiving the remission of sins is not a difficult thing. It simply begins with one thing: admitting that we were born sinners, are still sinners now, and are people who will go to hell if left as we are. Only sinners can be saved, and only sinners can believe and become

righteous.

A person who believes by his own strength, saying, "I will believe in Jesus; I will follow Jesus," is a religious person. No one can receive the remission of sins with the character and religiousness inherited from his parents. So there are two times of believing. One time is believing as a religious person, and the other time is believing again after knowing the word of God, knowing who Jesus is, and knowing the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The remission of sins that God gives is not the privilege of people of high status but the grace received by all who believe this gospel. A person who has received this grace comes down from the place where he looked down on others and put himself forward. He becomes a person who gives thanks for this one fact alone: that God loved someone like him and washed away all his sins.

Look back on the verdict passed before even hearing

Let us read verses 50 and 51.

"Nicodemus (he who came to Jesus by night, being one of them) said to them, 'Does our law judge a man before it hears him and knows what he is doing?'" (John 7:50–51).

Nicodemus was a Pharisee and a ruler of the Jews. He was the man who had earlier come to Jesus by night and heard the word about being born again. He now asks his colleagues whether it is right to judge a man before hearing what he says and knowing what he has done. To the men who had been saying that the crowd that did not know the law was accursed, he was asking whether they themselves were in fact judging according to the law.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

But this one remark was not a confession that he would follow Jesus openly. He was still sitting among his colleagues, in a position where he was conscious of the eyes of others. That Nicodemus appears again after Jesus died on the Cross.

"After this, Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took the body of Jesus. And Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds" (John 19:38–39).

It was a time when many people who had usually followed the Lord around had scattered. While people were avoiding the man hung on the Cross, he stood on the side of the One who had already been condemned and spat upon. He brought as much as a hundred pounds of myrrh and aloes and buried the Lord's body together with Joseph. It was these two men who held the Lord's funeral. Nicodemus must have come forward like this because he believed that Jesus is the Christ. When the Lord has taught and made known the work He came and did, the person who believes that word is changed in this way. Nicodemus was the man who had earlier heard the Lord say, *"Even so must the Son of Man be lifted up" (John 3:14)*. He came before the Lord, who had been lifted up just as that word said.

The Lord, who had the sin of the world passed on to Him when He received baptism from John at the Jordan River, was lifted up on the Cross because of that sin, received its judgment, and rose again three days later. A person who has understood this word comes to follow the Lord rather than the verdicts of men. The man who had come by night to ask questions, the man who had said a word among his colleagues, at last stood by the Lord's side.

We, too, sometimes pass judgment before we have even

heard the word of the Lord. If the word does not fit the conclusion we have already settled on, we push it away, and we sometimes reject the gospel because it is something we are hearing for the first time. With such a heart, even if we open the Bible, the salvation that the word proclaims does not come in. To hear the word is not merely to listen politely to the end, but to know the work the Lord has done and accept it with the heart. Examine yourselves as to whether you have truly been born again, and whether you are someone who needs to believe again. If you come to know that your thinking was wrong, you need only believe the word of the Lord right then and there.

The assurance in the heart that believes the word of the Lord

Let us read verses 52 and 53.

"They answered and said to him, 'Are you also from Galilee? Search and look, for no prophet has arisen out of Galilee.' And everyone went to his own house" (John 7:52–53).

The leaders did not answer Nicodemus's question. To his words that they should first hear and look into the matter before judging, they asked back, *"Are you also from Galilee?"* They turned the question about Jesus into a question of whose side Nicodemus was on. While telling him to search the Scriptures, they rejected the very request to examine Jesus' words and the things He had done. Looking only for verses that support one's own conclusion is not examining the Scriptures but guarding one's own thoughts. Even if they tie Jesus to Galilee to belittle Him, at His very root He is still God, who came from the Father.

And the Bible records, *"And everyone went to his own house."* The Bible writes down what happened at that time just as it was.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

The feast was over, the dispute was over, and the people scattered. Those who had argued over Jesus throughout the Feast of Tabernacles in the end went home holding on to their own thoughts. One question remains for us, too, who have heard the word. What are we taking home with us today? A person who has met the Lord goes home holding the word that the Lord has removed his sins. For that person, life after meeting the Lord is like a dream.

We who believe in the Lord do not lose the assurance of salvation because of people's opposition. Even though the leaders who opposed Jesus gathered and tried to condemn Him, His salvation was accomplished according to the Father's will. Following the Father's will, the Lord had our sins passed on to Him through the baptism He received from John, received the judgment for those sins on the Cross, and rose again from death. Because we believe that God has removed all our sins in this way, our hearts are warm and settled, we have room to spare, and we can think of others. Though there are times when our bodies suffer, rivers of living water flow in our hearts.

Nicodemus's faith was not great from the beginning. But at the last moment he stood by the Lord's side. Our faith, too, does not depend on the status or praise of men but on the word of the Lord, who saved us. The closer the last days draw, the more people come to love themselves. But we who have received the remission of sins serve not by following our circumstances but by following the Lord. Even though we are weak, the Lord knows all that weakness, so we can serve His gospel until the day He comes. I hope that whatever the authority of men may say, you will hold on to the word of the Lord and stand by the Lord's side to the last day, as Nicodemus did. ✉

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

CHAPTER

8

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

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

Sermon 1 by Paul C. Jong

The Lord, who bore our sins and delivered us from condemnation

< John 8:1–11 >

"But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. Now early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people came to Him; and He sat down and taught them. Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman caught in adultery. And when they had set her in the midst, they said to Him, 'Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?' This they said, testing Him, that they might have something of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger, as though He did not hear. So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up and said to them, 'He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first.' And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground. Then those who heard it, being convicted by their conscience, went out one by one, beginning with the oldest even to the last. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, 'Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?' She said, 'No one, Lord.' And Jesus said to her, 'Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more.'"

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

When Jesus, who had gone to the Mount of Olives, came into the temple again in the morning, all the people came to Him, and the Lord sat down and taught them. Then the scribes and Pharisees dragged in a woman caught in adultery and set her in the midst. The place where the word was being heard suddenly became a place of trial. They condemned the woman by citing the law. But they had a different motive in coming to Jesus. They intended to use this woman's sin to obtain grounds for accusing Jesus.

But by the time this incident ended, an entirely different scene had unfolded. The people who had stood holding stones left one by one, and only Jesus and the woman remained. And the woman heard from the Lord the word that He did not condemn her. This word is truly precious to us as well, who are weighed down by sin. It is because it shows how the Lord saves a person whose sin has been exposed, and what we must believe to escape from sin and judgment.

Many people read this passage and say that Jesus is One who is full of love. That is true. But the Lord did not stop at having compassion on sinners; He Himself bore their sin and actually removed it. Today let us look together at how the love that saved the woman was accomplished.

Our sin exposed before the law

Let us read verses 3 through 6.

"Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman caught in adultery. And when they had set her in the midst, they said to Him, 'Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?' This they said, testing Him,

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

that they might have something of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger, as though He did not hear" (John 8:3–6).

The scribes and Pharisees said that this woman had been caught in adultery, in the very act. Since she had been caught in the act, the woman had no way of denying her sin. Putting forward the law of Moses, they asked what the Teacher would say, since the law said that such a woman should be stoned.

On the surface, it was a question asking for the judgment of the law, but the Bible makes it clear that they were testing Jesus in order to obtain grounds for accusing Him. Jesus had always gone to the sick and to sinners, healed them, and spoken of love. If such a Jesus told them to stone her, it would contradict the words He had spoken until then, and if He told them to let her go, He would become one who went against the law of Moses. The stones they held in their hands were aimed at Jesus more than at the woman.

In their hands, the woman's sin became a tool for attacking Jesus. They knew the sins of others well, and they also knew by which article of the law they would condemn such a person. But they did not look back to consider what that law was saying to themselves. People who should have realized their own sins before God made themselves judges and held on only to the sins of others.

We, too, easily recognize the faults of others. But what happens when we shine the same word of God on ourselves? It is only that we did not put them into action; what is exposed is how we coveted and hated in our hearts and how we followed our own greed rather than the will of God. The Lord said, *"Whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matthew 5:28)*. God sees not only people's actions but even their hearts.

The Apostle Paul explains the purpose for which the law was given as follows.

"Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin" (Romans 3:19–20).

The law stops every mouth and makes it known that the whole world is under the judgment of God. Both the people who dragged in the woman and we who read this word have our mouths stopped before the law, together with this woman. God gave the law so that we might know that we are sinners before God, return to God, and receive the grace of the remission of sins.

So do not shield yourself by saying that you have not committed as great a sin as that person. It is the person who admits that he is a sinner, with neither the ability to wash away his own sins nor the strength to deliver himself from judgment, who receives the grace of the Lord.

In the face of their question, Jesus silently stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger. Concerning where God records people's sins, Jeremiah speaks as follows.

"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" (Jeremiah 17:1).

God engraves the sins people have committed on the tablet of their hearts. People can deceive others and can deceive even themselves, but they cannot deceive in the face of sin engraved in this way. Whether anyone sees it or not, that sin remains just as it is. The Lord's writing on the ground calls to mind this work of God recording sin in people's hearts. While the Lord stooped down and wrote, the sins each of them had committed were

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

engraved on the tablets of the hearts of the people standing around the woman as well.

The word that the one without sin should be the first to throw a stone

Let us read verses 7 through 9.

"So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up and said to them, 'He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first.' And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground. Then those who heard it, being convicted by their conscience, went out one by one, beginning with the oldest even to the last. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst" (John 8:7–9).

Even while Jesus was writing on the ground, the scribes and Pharisees kept pressing Him, asking what He would do. Then the Lord raised Himself up and said that he who was without sin among them should throw a stone first. The Lord did not cover up the fact that the woman had committed adultery, but He questioned who was qualified to throw a stone. Because everyone is born with sin, there was no one in that place who would step forward as being without sin. With that one word, the verdict that had been coming down on the woman came down on all the people standing around her.

But in that place there was One who was without sin. It was Jesus, who spoke that word. A person who has sin can neither judge sinners nor save them. Only Jesus, who is God who made mankind and who came as the Savior, is truly without sin, and so He could speak this word. But He who was without sin, instead of striking this woman, was the One who would Himself receive judgment because of this woman's sin. The reason for

this is revealed in verse 11.

While the Lord stooped down again and wrote on the ground, the people were convicted by their conscience. It was because the Lord's word pierced straight into the sin each of them had been harboring in his heart. The people who had come holding up the law and speaking so boldly could do nothing in the face of that one word. They went out one by one, beginning with the elders even to the young. The longer a person had lived, the more sins he would likely have had to look back on.

No one can remove his own sin by dressing up his outward appearance and pointing out the faults of others, nor even by being convicted by his conscience. If you have come to know your sin, come to the Lord, who bore that sin. Our hope lies in how the Lord dealt with that sin.

Those people put down their stones and went out, and as they went, they took their own sins with them just as they were. Though they had come to realize their sins, they turned their backs on Jesus. But the woman remained before Jesus. After the words of those who had been condemning her had ceased, only the woman who remained in that place heard the word of salvation. When your sin is exposed, do not leave the presence of the Lord. The Lord, who saves sinners, is right there.

The remission of sins given by the Savior, who bore our sins

Let us read verses 10 and 11.

"When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, 'Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?' She said, 'No one, Lord.' And Jesus said to her, 'Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

more'" (John 8:10–11).

Jesus raised Himself up and asked the woman where those who had accused her were, and whether no one had condemned her. When the woman, who had thought that stones would soon come flying at her, looked around, there was no one. When the woman answered that there was no one, the Lord said that neither did He condemn her. To condemn is to pronounce that someone has sin. The Lord declared that He would not say that this woman had sin, and that He would not judge this woman.

Here we come to ask a question. According to the law, this woman was someone who should have been stoned to death. Because God is righteous, He cannot declare a person who has sin to be without sin. Then how could the Lord say that He did not condemn this woman, whose sin was clear?

It is not that the Lord, because He had authority, simply turned a blind eye just this once. Before Jesus met this woman, He had already received baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River and had all the sins of the world passed on to Him. The sins this woman had committed, and the sins she would commit in the future, were also included in them. Now the One bearing this woman's sins was Jesus. The One who would soon receive the judgment for those sins on the Cross was Jesus Himself. That is why the Lord could not condemn this woman. God loves us, but He loves us after He has removed sin.

This is the word Jesus spoke when He received baptism from John at the Jordan River.

"But Jesus answered and said to him, 'Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.' Then he allowed Him" (Matthew 3:15).

What the Lord called *"all righteousness"* was the work of having all the sins of people passed on to Himself and so making all people without sin. Just as in the Old Testament the sacrificial

offering had people's sins passed on to it through the laying on of hands, Jesus had the sin of the world transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John the Baptist, who represented mankind. The Lord, who thus bore the sin of the world, was hung on the Cross, shed His blood, and died, and so paid the full price of that sin. In the place where this woman should have died by stoning, the Lord was crucified instead. And three days later He rose again from death and became this woman's Savior and our eternal Savior.

The scene in this passage took place before the Cross. But because the Lord, who had already had this woman's sins passed on to Him, would soon also receive their judgment, when it is seen within God's eternal time, this woman's salvation was something already accomplished. The same is true of the salvation of us who read this word two thousand years later. Those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit have not obtained the remission of sins through the tears they have shed or the merits they have built up. They have obtained the remission of sins by believing in the salvation the Lord accomplished in this way. And God gives the Holy Spirit as a gift to those who have received the remission of sins by believing in this gospel, and seals their hearts.

Would this woman's sin have disappeared because she had apologized for her wrongdoing with tears on the spot, or because she had vowed never to sin again? Because the wages of sin is death, sin disappears only when its price has been paid. Apologizing for wrongdoing with words does not erase the sin engraved on the tablet of the heart. The One who saved this woman was the Lord, who would pay the price of that sin in her place.

The Lord wrote on the ground twice. God engraves on the tablet of a person's heart the sins he has committed, but after He

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

remits those sins, He erases them and engraves the word of salvation on that heart. Listen to the promise of the new covenant given through Jeremiah.

"But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more" (Jeremiah 31:33–34).

The Ten Commandments were written on tablets of stone, but this new covenant is the promise that God will put His law in our hearts. Both the law that exposes sin and this promise to save sinners came from the one God. God, who brought our sins to light, loved us and opened the way of salvation for us. Because the Lord fulfilled this promise, God remits our iniquities and remembers them no more. That is why, in the hearts of those who believe in this gospel, the word that the Lord has saved them is stamped like a seal.

Those who believe in this gospel cannot boast of their own righteousness. It is because, like the woman caught in adultery, we too are people who can live only if the Lord delivers us. The peace we have comes from the faith that the Lord bore our sins and received judgment in our place. That is why the Bible says, *"There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1)*. Today we who believe in this gospel also hear the word that woman heard.

The path that those who have received grace are to walk

Following the word that He did not condemn her, the Lord said, *"Go and sin no more."* He gave this command after He had saved the woman. The Lord did not first extract from the woman a promise that she would not sin in the future and then save her. The Lord, who had delivered her from the judgment of sin, was earnestly asking her not to go back now to the life in which she had followed sin.

The almighty Lord also knew that this woman was weak and would fall again. If one could be saved only by not committing sin again, then not only this woman but not a single person in the world could be saved. That is why the Lord, at the Jordan River, had already had even the sins this woman would commit throughout her life passed on to Him. The word to go and sin no more points to the path that a person who has been saved in this way is to walk.

We too reveal our weaknesses every day. Even if our shortcomings are exposed today, the salvation the Lord accomplished remains the same. Do not hold on to your wrongdoing using grace as an excuse; admit that what you did wrong was wrong, and turn back. And return to the word that the Lord has already removed even that wrongdoing, and confirm your faith again. The Holy Spirit, who is in those who have received the remission of sins, makes our hearts uneasy when we lean toward sin and causes us to turn back.

The Apostle Paul exhorts those who are under grace as follows.

"And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

righteousness to God. For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace" (Romans 6:13–14).

Those who have received the remission of sins are under grace. The Lord gave us life so that we could present our members to God as instruments of righteousness. Hearts that were weighed down by sin believe the word of the remission of sins and are set free, and people who were bound up only in their own problems come to wish that other souls, too, would receive this salvation. This is the power of the gospel that saved us.

What the Lord desired for this woman was that she leave the life lived in bondage to sin and live a life of making known the Savior who had saved her. Even after we have received the remission of sins, the way to keep far from sin lies in living a life of faith together within the Church of God, continuing to preach this gospel, and going forward by faith. The labor of serving the gospel out of thankfulness for the grace we have received is not paying the price of salvation. It is how those who have already been saved live together with the Lord.

The people standing around the woman knew only how to point out sin. With those words they could not save a single person. The One who saved the woman was Jesus. What we are to preach to people who are still suffering because of sin is also the gospel of the Savior who had their sins passed on to Him through the baptism He received from John, received the judgment for those sins on the Cross, and rose again from death.

Like the woman caught in adultery, we too were people who deserved to be stoned before the law. But the Lord, who received judgment in our place and rose again, says to us, too, who believe in this gospel, *"Neither do I condemn you" (John 8:11).* We give thanks to the Lord, who delivered us from condemnation. ✉

Sermon 2 by Paul C. Jong

Whoever believes in the salvation Jesus accomplished gains the light of life

< John 8:1–12 >

"But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. Now early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people came to Him; and He sat down and taught them. Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman caught in adultery. And when they had set her in the midst, they said to Him, 'Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?' This they said, testing Him, that they might have something of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger, as though He did not hear. So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up and said to them, 'He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first.' And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground. Then those who heard it, being convicted by their conscience, went out one by one, beginning with the oldest even to the last. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, 'Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

condemned you?' She said, 'No one, Lord.' And Jesus said to her, 'Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more.' Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, 'I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.'"

Opening the word with Romans Chapter 8

The more we look at the word of God, the more it is the truth. How could we testify of all the works God has done? For people to understand the word of John chapter 8, we must first go over the word of Romans; only then will they be able to understand it. This is because understanding it only by the letter is simple, but the letter must be understood, it must also be understood in the soul, and faith must reach the heart.

Let us first look at the word of Romans. *"There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. 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 8:1–4).* Because the word of God is not simple but is truth that is connected together, when we read this word, we must know the word that comes before it, and we can testify of the word of the Bible only when we know the whole Bible. However, since we cannot cover it all, in order to understand the word of John chapter 8, I will first go over the main thread of the gospel.

The apostle Paul uses the conjunction "*therefore*" to continue from the preceding word and says, *"There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1)*. This means that a person who is in Christ Jesus can have no sin, cannot receive judgment for sin, and cannot become a person who has sin. Why is that? It is because it says, *"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death" (Romans 8:2)*. Here, the law of sin and death is as follows. A person is fundamentally born a sinner, inheriting sin from his parents, and for a sinner there is only death. So God gave mankind a law, and that is none other than the law. He has told us that if people who have sin are dealt with according to God's law of righteousness, they will not only be judged, be cursed, and come to spiritual death but will also suffer forever.

All people were born under sin with sin, and they commit sin. So when we hold ourselves up to the law of God—that is, when we hold ourselves up to the commandments that tell us to have no other gods before Him, not to bow down to idols, not to take the name of God in vain, to keep the Sabbath holy, not to murder, not to commit adultery, not to steal, to honor our parents, not to bear false witness, and not to covet—we can see that we are truly bound to come to death and to receive eternal destruction. The law declares to people who have sin, "You are a person who will be cursed, and a person who will receive judgment for sin." That is why it says, *"The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death" (Romans 8:2)*. The law of the Spirit of life is another law that God gave because He loved us, in order to save us from sin. The law is a law He gave to make us realize and know our sins. Through the law we come to know that we have become sinners, and we come to know, in accordance with righteousness, that we are to receive judgment

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

for sin. And the law of the Spirit of life is the law by which God, taking pity on us as we are, gave us salvation. There are two laws, and this means that He has completely saved us from the law of sin and death by the law of the Spirit of life.

Here the conjunction *"therefore"* points to the word of Romans chapter 7 that comes before it. Anyone who has been born a sinner must know, before God's law, that he is a sinner, and must know and admit that he is a person who must receive the righteous judgment of the law and die once. He must admit that if he receives the judgment of God, he is a person who deserves to receive eternal destruction and fall into eternal hell. Only when we admit it in this way are we put to death once by the law, and do we go to Jesus Christ, who has become our Savior, and ask Him to save us. And the word is telling us that we come to know how the Lord saved us from destruction and judgment, and that we obtain salvation by believing in the Savior and holding on to Him. We must acknowledge all of this. This means that although a person is born with sin and must once receive judgment and come to death, we must know that we can obtain salvation by faith, relying on Jesus Christ, who took pity on us as we are and saved us, and we must go to the Savior.

In Romans chapter 7, the apostle Paul spoke using the relationship of husband and wife as an example. If the husband dies, the wife can marry another man, but if the husband does not die, she cannot go to another man. Using an example from human life, he explained the law, God's righteous law, and the law of salvation God gave, relating them to one another. The word is telling us that we must know and admit that we are sinners before God's law, that because of sin we must die once in our hearts, and that we were people who were bound to go to hell without fail. And it is telling us that we must go to Jesus Christ and be saved by knowing and believing as the Savior the

Christ, who had all our sins transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John and received the judgment for all those sins. One more thing: when we look at our own flesh and hearts, we come to know that we are people who do what the law says not to do and cannot do what it says to do. Even in such circumstances, we must be saved by believing in Jesus Christ, who truly rescued people who had to go to hell, be destroyed, be cursed, and receive eternal judgment, and we must give thanks by faith. This is what the word is saying. That is why so much is contained in the single word *"therefore."*

"O wretched man that I am"

Of himself, the apostle Paul says, *"With the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin" (Romans 7:25)*. The desires and greed of the flesh always follow after sin. But there is one more, different thing, and that is the heart that wants to pursue and follow what is holy, just as God is holy. This means that these two things are both present within him. Yet he cannot live as holy a life as his heart desires, and he cannot help but follow the sin he does not want and follow the desires of the flesh. As he saw himself like that, Paul lamented, *"O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?" (Romans 7:24)*. He is saying that he is not someone who has been rescued from sin, that he is someone who is to be judged, and that if he did not have Jesus Christ, he would be truly worthless, would deserve to be judged, and would be a person with no hope at all. Yet he is saying that Jesus Christ has saved him from this body of death.

The apostle Paul knew how Jesus Christ had saved him. That is why he says, *"What the law could not do in that it was weak*

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

through the flesh, God did" (Romans 8:3). We cannot keep the law. It is said that if we add together what it tells us to do and what it tells us not to do, the law of God comes to as many as 613 things. There are many things it tells us to do, and I cannot tell you how many things it tells us not to do. If we apply those articles of the law to ourselves, we can see that we have lived almost the whole of each day sunk in sin and have followed the will of God in barely one or two things. So no matter how much the law tells us to do this and not to do that, we fundamentally cannot keep it, because our flesh is weak and we follow the desires of sin. That is human weakness. Even though we fundamentally have sin, are people who cannot keep the law, and so cannot help but go to hell and be judged, and are people who were to enter the fire of hell that will never be quenched for all eternity, God saved us.

How did God save us? He did so *"by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh" (Romans 8:3)*. Because of our sins, God the Father sent His Son. This means that He had the Son of God, who was without sin, put on a human body, had Him born on this earth by borrowing the body of Mary, passed the sin of mankind on to the flesh of Jesus, and judged sin in that flesh. That is why the Bible records, *"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)*. Jesus had all the sin of mankind transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John. And bearing that sin, He was judged on the Cross, rose again from death, and removed our sins completely. In this way, He did it so *"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 8:4).

The requirement of the law is righteous judgment. A person who has sin must receive judgment for sin. The judgment we were to receive because we had sin, Jesus Christ received in our place by coming to this earth in human flesh. By receiving baptism from John the Baptist, He had all the sin of us human beings transferred to Him once and for all. According to the principle of the law, as the Bible says, *"The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23),* sin must be judged; and this means that by having sin transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John and by shedding His blood on the Cross and receiving judgment, Jesus fulfilled the requirement of the law toward you and me. And He rose again from death and became our Savior. This means that Jesus fulfilled that righteous law God had set. In place of you and me having to die, in place of our having to be judged, and in place of our having to go to hell, the Lord came to this earth, had our sins transferred onto His own body, and received the judgment for sin with His own body. This means that He thus fulfilled the requirement of the law, caused you and me, who believe this truth, to believe in the love of God in our hearts, and accomplished salvation with love.

Perhaps I have said easy things in a difficult way. For those who know it well, it is very easy. So with the Bible, if one does not know the basic things, one does not know any of it. The Bible says that Jesus is God, that He created the universe and all things and made you and me, and that He is the Savior of you and me and our Master. If one does not know this, one does not know any of the rest. Jesus is the Son of God the Father; He was born on this earth clothed in a human body, and when He turned thirty, He had our sins transferred to Him once and for all by receiving

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

baptism from John the Baptist, fulfilled the requirement of the law by shedding His blood on the Cross and receiving all the judgment for sin, rose again from death, accomplished the love of God, and saved you and me. Those who do not know this do not know the truth written in the Bible. Therefore, you and I must know how we have been saved, and we must not only know it but also believe it.

People who do not know the gospel of the water and the Spirit

As I say again and again, a Christian is one who believes in and follows Christ. People who follow Jesus must know Jesus properly. They must know that Jesus is God, and that Jesus, clothed in a human body, received baptism from John and thereby had all the sins of mankind's ancestors, of us in the present, and of descendants in the future transferred to Him once and for all—at one single time—and they must know that He received the judgment for our sins on the Cross and rose again from death. Only when they know and believe this do they become people who follow Jesus; those who do not are living a religious life. Because they think Christianity is better than other religions, they believe in Jesus as the Savior unconditionally, and without even knowing the function of the law, they pray and follow unconditionally because living a good life is right. But when we examine it closely, there is far too much that is wrong.

They do not know that Jesus is God, they do not know that He is the true Savior, they do not know that He had all the sin of mankind transferred to Him once and for all, and they do not know that human beings cannot keep the law. They do not even know that the reason human beings cannot keep the law is that

they are weak and their thoughts are evil and filthy. This means that even though faith does not come about just because they believe in Jesus as a favor to Him, they do not know this and are under a delusion.

If you ask people who believe in Jesus why God gave mankind the law, most of them say that He gave it for us to keep. There are also many who know that He gave it so that we would realize and know sin. But what the law truly speaks of is a righteous law. It tells us, "If you are dealt with according to the law of God, you will go to hell. You are a child of the devil." Few people know that. So people who believe in Jesus, without either knowing Jesus properly or believing in Him properly, believe as if they were leading a religious life. So even with the Bible open, they do not understand it, and with the Bible open they talk about human ethics or morals. That is very wrong. Many people do not even have the foundation laid. One could write on a blackboard for many pastors, "What is the gospel of the water and the Spirit? Discuss," gather about five thousand of them, bring in all the dictionaries, and give them a test. How many people would be able to write the right answer? I wish we could try it once. The majority are people who do not know what the gospel of the water and the Spirit is.

A certain revival speaker says that the water is a woman's amniotic fluid. So he says that being born again of water and the Spirit is like the way life is born when an egg and a sperm meet: only those who diligently live a life of faith while praying prayers of repentance and make it all the way to the goal—those who live a life of faith properly—are born again. He says this because he does not know what water and the Spirit are. About Jesus' saying to Nicodemus, *"Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God" (John 3:5)*, this speaker says that as people diligently live a life of faith, there are

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

some among those who diligently live a life of faith who are born again, just as only the sperm that runs diligently and comes in first becomes life. I am not saying this to slander him, but how absurd a story this is! The book of 1 Peter says, *"There is also an antitype which now saves us—baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 3:21).*

Therefore, when you listen to the word, listening is more important than taking notes. Why is that? The word of God must reach the heart; if you hear it only with your head, it is over as soon as you step out of the chapel. What you have written down also ends there. You must answer "Yes" or "No" in your heart. Since people do not know what the water is or what the work of the Holy Spirit is, they ought to take a test, each one of them. The church members of a whole city should be gathered on a sports ground and given a test. Those who believe in Jesus must basically be born again of water and the Spirit, but if they are asked what the gospel of the water and the Spirit is, how many people would write an answer? You may think that one in ten would write it, but it would be hard for even one in ten thousand—no, one in a hundred million—to write it. Many churches say that they must transform their cities to be holy with the gospel, but if you write just the one phrase "Discuss the gospel" on a blackboard, they do not know what the gospel is. They give an explanation of the original word, saying that the gospel is good news, that it is dynamite, but they do not know how it applies to people. Like a person who answers everything with only "I do not know," they do not know when asked what the gospel is.

Though I am lacking and weak, when I think of Jesus, who saved us, it is not so with me in the least. When I think with Jesus at the front, no one looks exalted to me, yet I do not look down

on anyone, and as I go forward with Jesus at the front, I want to tell people to receive the salvation God has given us. How did Jesus save us? He came to this earth clothed in a human body, and by receiving baptism from John the Baptist at the age of thirty, He had transferred to Him once and for all every sin people commit because their flesh is weak and they cannot keep the law, and every sin they commit because they inherited it from their ancestors. And according to that righteous law, bearing those sins, He was stripped of His clothes on the Cross, was nailed, and shed His blood, and thereby received the judgment for the sins of you and me. And on the third day He rose again from death and became our Savior. This is what I am telling you. Knowing this, we must go into the word of John chapter 8.

The word of living water He cried out at the feast

Now let us look at that word in order. The word begins, *"But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. Now early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people came to Him; and He sat down and taught them" (John 8:1–2).* This was around the time of the Feast of Tabernacles, a great feast of Israel. Because this feast commemorates God's delivering the people of Israel from slavery in Egypt and having them dwell in booths in the wilderness, they keep this feast without fail. So they gathered at the temple in Jerusalem and offered sacrifices. In the Old Testament age, before Jesus came, they also slaughtered oxen, and the high priest offered sacrifices on behalf of the people of Israel. Jesus, having passed thirty years of age, went up to the temple in Jerusalem at this feast, spoke many words, and taught many people.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Whenever people heard the words of Jesus, they became furious. Even when they heard just one word, their anger boiled up and they could not stand it. If we look at the latter part of this chapter, when Jesus said, *"If anyone keeps My word he shall never see death" (John 8:51)*, the Jews retorted, *"Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and You say, 'If anyone keeps My word he shall never taste death.' Are You greater than our father Abraham, who is dead?" (John 8:52–53)*. So the Pharisees, with their eyes ablaze, tried to seize Jesus and kill Him. But the Lord was not the least bit concerned. Of what happened earlier, on the last day of that feast, the word records, *"On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, 'If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.' But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive" (John 7:37–39)*. This means that those who are thirsty—that is, those who thirst because of their own sins, who are sunk in a curse because of sin, who are weighed down by sin, who are ashamed because of sin, and who because of sin can neither pray before God nor come before Him nor ask Him for anything—will have rivers of living water flowing out of their hearts by believing in the Lord.

The Bible sometimes describes the human heart as a field or as soil. There are souls whose hearts are cracked, dried up, and dusty because of their own sins, who are thirsty with no water, who receive no answer even when they pray, who cannot come before God because of sin even when they try to, and who cannot pray because sin blocks them even when they want to cry out. To such sinners the Lord said, *"He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water" (John 7:38)*. This means that those who believe in the Lord have their hearts moistened and have rivers of living water

overflowing out of their hearts. By the grace of God, the heart that was thirsty comes to believe as follows: “Through the baptism Jesus received from John the Baptist, my sins were passed on to Him. And He took away the sin of the world and received all the judgment for sin. And He rose again from death and ascended into heaven. He is my Savior and my God.” Those who believe this way have rivers of living water overflowing from their hearts. This means that water springs up in their hearts again, the grace of God overflows, thanksgiving overflows, and the word of truth wells up from within and moistens the heart that was dry and cracked with the grace of salvation God has given us as a gift.

When we believe in Jesus Christ in our hearts as the Savior and have our sins washed away, the Holy Spirit comes upon our hearts as a gift. The presence of the Holy Spirit should not be identified merely with physical sensations such as bodily warmth or with dreams. Such experiences by themselves do not prove the work of the Holy Spirit and must be discerned according to the written Word of God. When we know and believe in our hearts that the Lord has become our Savior through the truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit—that is, that your sins were passed on to Jesus Christ, that the Lord received all the judgment for sin on the Cross, and that He rose again from death and became our Savior—the Holy Spirit is given as a gift. He is simply given as a gift.

The gift given freely

On our birthdays we receive gifts. Suppose someone gives you a gift on your birthday so that you can buy and wear an expensive suit. Do you receive it saying, “Why are you giving

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

me something so expensive? This is all the money I have right now, but please take at least this"? Receiving a gift is one hundred percent free. The gift the Lord has given us is free. It is not something we receive by paying even a little of the price. We receive salvation from the Lord because we are people who absolutely cannot do without receiving salvation, and so we accept the gift He has given. If we were even somewhat decent people, were good, and were able to follow the word of God to some degree, then the Lord would not need to give us salvation, we would not need to receive the gift of salvation, and we would have to pay a certain price to receive it. But a person who tries to buy a gift with money is insulting the person who gives the gift. He is ignoring the other person's dignity.

Moreover, God loved you and me, and so Jesus Christ, who is God, came to this earth and accomplished salvation through the truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. He received baptism from John the Baptist, the representative of mankind, and had all our sins transferred to Him once and for all; He was nailed to the Cross and shed His blood, and so received all the judgment for sin; He rose again from death; and having accomplished that salvation by which He saved us, He gave that salvation to us as a gift. So we must believe it, accept it with thanks, and be saved. If we try to buy it by paying a price, or try through effort, saying, "Lord, my circumstances are not good now, so I am not living well, but in the future I can live well," and wait until then to receive salvation—that is, if we try to receive salvation by correcting our deeds—that is insulting God. It is not knowing God properly, it is not knowing oneself properly either, and it becomes an insult to God, who gave the gift.

As the years go by, we can only do worse, not better. When we are young, we can have the thought, "I should live a good

life," and to some extent we can even do so. It is because our obligations are few. But when we become adults, our obligations and responsibilities increase, so we must do much, yet we are rather unable to do it. Sin ripens, we commit more sins out of our originally evil thoughts, and though we ought to live good lives, we live even more wrongly. The Bible says, *"Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day" (2 Corinthians 4:16)*. The older we get, the more the outward man perishes. When our flesh is healthy and strong, it seems as if we could say to others, "Don't worry. I will take care of it for you," and take responsibility for them, but when our flesh becomes weak, we cannot take responsibility even for ourselves, let alone others. Our strength fails, we become irritated and distressed when someone says something, our worries increase, we are even less able to work, and our temper grows even crankier. It is not that we become more sanctified as we grow older. Compare your character when you were young with your character now. Which time is better? Isn't it worse now? There is absolutely no such thing as a sanctification by which one naturally becomes gradually holier just by growing older. Therefore, it is wrong to intend to correct oneself and live a good life and only after that to believe in the salvation the Lord has given and obtain salvation. If we try to obtain salvation by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit after we have lived a decent life, it will never work.

The Lord knew that we are so pitiful and that we ourselves are the seed of evildoers, and He said that He would save us as we are, and just as He said, He saved us through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. We must not be needlessly stubborn but simply believe. Suppose a swimmer is swimming across a distant sea, and a boat is following alongside. If his strength gives out while swimming, he must cry out, "I cannot do it. I am

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

sinking. If you do not bring the boat alongside right now, I will die." Yet even though he has no strength left and is about to drown, he thinks, "It's all right, I can make it," and then drowns. A person who is to be saved must ask for help from the One who will save him. "I have no ability to keep the law, and even if my circumstances get better in the future, I will not be able to keep it well. I cannot keep it now, I will not be able to keep it in the future, and I will never be able to keep it for all eternity. Please have mercy on me. I am weak in this part and weak in that part; I am a lump of weakness. Please save me. Please take care of me. Please take responsibility for me. Please send me to the kingdom of heaven." Those who do this are the very ones who will obtain salvation.

Countless people put forward their own will. They say, "I am like this now, but I can do it. I will live a proper life of faith." But when their circumstances get better, they do worse than when things were hard. That is why there are hardships for human beings. That is why God drove human beings out of the Garden of Eden and made them walk a thorny path. He made thorns and thistles grow outside the Garden of Eden so that, as they wandered around, thorns would tangle around their legs and they would bleed and suffer. When they were in the Garden of Eden, everything in nature became food for human beings, but after they left the Garden of Eden, He made them till fields and grow vegetables to eat, made them get food only by the sweat of their faces, and made them go through the labor of childbirth. The reason God gave hardships to human beings is to have them abandon their own will, return to the Savior, who is God, accept and believe the Savior's love, and be embraced in the bosom of God. Do not hope only for your circumstances to improve. If you keep hoping only for your circumstances to improve, a time will come when you cannot even get food to eat. People all over the

world could end up that way. Even so, those who believe in Jesus are living well.

To preach the gospel once, it takes five hours to preach it all the way through to the main part. When I take hold of one soul after breakfast and talk, there have even been times when I talked for eight hours. We talk, eat a meal, and talk again; we drink tea and talk again. Why is that? It is because those people heard wrong teaching and learned the word of God as ethics and morals. That is why we must know Jesus well.

"He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first"

Of what happened while Jesus was teaching people in the temple, the Bible records, *"Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman caught in adultery. And when they had set her in the midst, they said to Him, 'Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?'" (John 8:3–5).* The reason they did this was that the Pharisees and scribes were enemies of Jesus. Even today there are many people who regard Jesus and those who believe in Him as enemies. There are many people who say that if you cry out in prayer with all your strength, saying, "Lord, I believe," you receive the Holy Spirit, and many who say that you receive the Holy Spirit even if there is sin in your heart. These people are enemies of Jesus. They are exactly the same as the Pharisees and scribes. This is truly evil.

Because Jesus kept coming out to the temple and teaching people, these people seem to have noted beforehand where a certain woman was committing adultery, chosen the day when

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Jesus was teaching in the temple, and gone on purpose to catch her. They waited, caught her in the act, and dragged her here. "This woman has been brought here, caught in adultery. What would You say about this woman? Tell us." Why did they do this? It was because Jesus had always proclaimed love, saved people, healed the sick, and given food to those who had nothing to eat. He was truly the One who saves and the Savior. So if Jesus had said this woman was all right, they would probably have tried to stone even Jesus, saying, "You do so many good things all the time, but You, who say that someone who broke the law of God is all right, are a worse person." That is how they tested Jesus. The Bible records, *"This they said, testing Him, that they might have something of which to accuse Him" (John 8:6)*.

What did Jesus say? Jesus, who had been writing on the ground, stood up, looked around at the people, said, *"He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first" (John 8:7)*, and again stooped down and wrote on the ground. Their putting Moses forward, saying, *"Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?" (John 8:5)*, was regarding Moses as greater than Jesus. It was because they believed in Moses. The law of Moses says to stone to death a person caught in adultery. It says that, without even a trial, if there are just two or three witnesses, the person is to be stoned and killed on the spot. And they were asking what He would say about it.

What Jesus said was simple. He had been writing on the ground; He stood up, said, *"He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first" (John 8:7)*, and again stooped down and wrote on the ground. But amazingly, of the people who had been holding stones, the Bible records, *"Then those who heard it, being convicted by their conscience, went out one*

by one, beginning with the oldest even to the last. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst" (John 8:9).

Can a person who has sin judge sin? Can a person who has sin save a sinner? Can a created being save a created being? Only Jesus—that is, Jesus Christ, who is God, the Creator of mankind, and who came as the Savior of mankind—is truly the One without sin and the Holy One. Jesus had our sins transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John, and He received them not in His heart but in His flesh. That is why He was judged and died on the Cross in that flesh, then rose again and became the Savior who saves us. Therefore, Jesus alone is the Savior. That is why only Jesus could speak these words. It is because He is our Savior.

"Neither do I condemn you"

The Lord said, *"He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first" (John 8:7)*. The scribes and Pharisees had tried to kill even Jesus along with this woman, but when Jesus said these words, the people, being convicted by their conscience, all quietly slipped away, from the oldest to the young. Of what happened when only Jesus and this woman were left, the Bible records, *"When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, 'Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?' She said, 'No one, Lord.' And Jesus said to her, 'Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more'" (John 8:10–11)*. And it goes on to record, *"Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, '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)*.

When He asked, *"Has no one condemned you?" (John 8:10)*,

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

the woman answered, *"No one, Lord" (John 8:11)*. To condemn is to declare that a person has sin. He was asking, "Is there anyone who says that you have sin and has dragged you here to judge you?" and the woman answered that there was no one. Then the Lord said, *"Neither do I condemn you" (John 8:11)*. The Lord, too, did not say that this woman had sin. Why is that? Before meeting this woman, Jesus had already received baptism from John the Baptist. This means that when He received that baptism, He had this woman's sins transferred to Him too. And bearing those sins, He was going to go to the Cross, be judged, and rise again from death. That is why He could say these words.

And Jesus said, *"Go and sin no more" (John 8:11)*. These words are an earnest request. Just because He told her not to sin again, will she never sin again? She will sin again, won't she? That is why Jesus had already accomplished this work at the Jordan River before meeting this woman. The Bible records, *"Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. And John tried to prevent Him, saying, 'I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?' But Jesus answered and said to him, 'Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.' Then he allowed Him" (Matthew 3:13–15)*. *"Thus" (Matthew 3:15)* means that the Savior, who is God, received baptism from John the Baptist, the representative of mankind, and thereby had all sins transferred to Him once and for all, bore those sins, was judged on the Cross, rose again, and rescued us from all sins and washed us clean. Here, the 'all' in *"all righteousness" (Matthew 3:15)* means 'everything.' It refers to the whole of the sin of the world, all the sins of a whole lifetime. This means that our sins were all passed on to Jesus Christ.

We commit sins all our lives. Sins we commit knowingly, sins we commit unknowingly, sins we commit by deeds, sins we

commit with our hearts—we commit sins every moment we open our eyes and breathe. Even though we commit sins, thinking evil thoughts and unrighteous thoughts as soon as we open our eyes, the Lord says, *"Sin no more" (John 8:11)*. Why is that? It is because a person who has received the remission of sins must not keep on committing sins. Yet He said, *"Neither do I condemn you" (John 8:11)*. What does this mean? It means that this is so because the Lord had the sins of all such people transferred to Him through the baptism He received through John the Baptist.

The one who gains the light of life

Jesus 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)*. The Lord is the light of this world. He is the Savior, He is the truth, and He is the life. Do you follow the Lord, do you follow people, or do you follow a denomination? Those who believe that the Lord had the sins of you and me transferred to Him never again walk in darkness but gain the light of life. Therefore, you and I must examine our hearts. "Truly the Lord had our sins transferred to Him once and for all through the baptism He received from John. Once and for all He received the judgment for sin on the Cross, and three days after He died, He rose again and became our Savior. And He gave that salvation to you and me as a gift." Of the one who believes this, He said, *"Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water" (John 7:38)*. Those who believe obtain salvation, and those who do not believe do not obtain salvation.

The Lord said, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6)*. Truly

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Jesus Christ is the way to the kingdom of God. He is the Savior who washes away our sins. He washed away our sins more cleanly than any detergent. Why is that? It is because He had our sins transferred onto His own body through the baptism He received from John.

Sins are not washed away by prayers of repentance. The Bible says, *"Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19)*. If you have believed wrongly until now, then when you repent, turn back, know the truth, and believe it, you receive the remission of sins, your heart becomes glad, and you receive the Holy Spirit. The Lord is the light of the world, the Savior of this world, and the true Savior. He had transferred to Him the sins that were in the hearts of you and me—all the sins we committed knowingly and unknowingly from childhood until now. This means that when Jesus Christ received baptism from John, our sins were passed on to Him. If small sins were passed on, then big sins were passed on too. People say ignorant things, such as that the sins committed knowingly were not passed on, or that even if all other sins were passed on, the sin of adultery was not passed on. They were all passed on. Every sin was passed on. Jesus Christ had our sins transferred to Him once and for all, received the judgment for sin on the Cross once and for all, rose again from death, and truly gave us the gift of salvation.

Whoever believes in his heart that Jesus Christ came by the gospel of the water and the Spirit, gave us true salvation, and became the Savior—for him it comes true just as the word says, *"Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water" (John 7:38)*. He becomes a child of God. He becomes a person with no sin in his heart, a person who has nothing to do with the judgment of sin. He had sin, but he becomes a person without sin. The Bible

says, *"As many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name" (John 1:12)*. Because you and I have accepted by faith the Savior, who came by water and the Spirit and washed away the sins of you and me, and because that Jesus removed the sins of you and me, you and I have no sin. Because Jesus had all the sins of you and me transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John, received the judgment for all those sins, and saved us, we have been saved.

Faith is nothing other than this. He said, *"You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32)*. We believe because we know the truth; if we do not know the truth, we cannot believe. To say that one believes without knowing the truth is deception. The one who deceives and the one who is deceived are the same. Therefore, the Lord commanded that this gospel be spread throughout the whole earth. Now many letters are coming from missionaries, pastors, and saints in various countries. Among them are people whose families have believed in Jesus for several hundred years, generation after generation from their ancestors. But even if they have believed for a long time, they cannot be saved by a religious life in which they only perform ceremonies in a holy manner without knowing the truth.

Jesus Christ is the Savior of you and me. He said that those who follow the Lord gain the light of life. How certainly Jesus is our Savior! If you know and believe this, it is a blessing, but if you do not know it, it is all in vain. This means that the woman caught in the very act of adultery was saved. The Bible says that the blind received their sight, the lame walked, and the paralyzed stood up, and all of these are words about salvation. Did the Lord come to this earth to heal the diseases of the flesh? We must learn this.

And we must not eat poison. As for food, too, we must eat

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

pure food; if poison is put into it, we eat it and die. As for the word of God, too, we must hear the word that is preached purely; if we hear just any word, we die. Even after hearing this much of the word of God, if we hear even a little of what is not the word of God, its effect is stronger. Why is that? It is because there is poison in it. That is why people are put to death. With poison, you die even if you do not eat a lot of it the way you eat your meals. We must know well, practice well, and learn much. We are spiritually little children.

Even so, I am thankful. The Lord has given us this gospel. These times are difficult, but even so, God keeps us from having to go around borrowing money and lets us make a living. In this age, merely having no debt makes one rich. When I think that Jesus is our God and Savior, my heart is full. People have nothing to boast of and nothing to talk big about in the flesh, but because of God our Savior, our hearts are full and thankful, and we have something to boast of, and we are unashamed and joyful. I give thanks to the Lord, who has given us this salvation. ✉

Sermon 3 by Paul C. Jong

The true testimony of the Lord, who gives the light of life

< John 8:12–20 >

"Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, 'I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.' The Pharisees therefore said to Him, 'You bear witness of Yourself; Your witness is not true.' Jesus answered and said to them, 'Even if I bear witness of Myself, My witness is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going; but you do not know where I come from and where I am going. You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one. And yet if I do judge, My judgment is true; for I am not alone, but I am with the Father who sent Me. It is also written in your law that the testimony of two men is true. I am One who bears witness of Myself, and the Father who sent Me bears witness of Me.' Then they said to Him, 'Where is Your Father?' Jesus answered, 'You know neither Me nor My Father. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also.' These words Jesus spoke in the treasury, as He taught in the temple; and no one laid hands on Him, for His hour had not yet come."

The Lord, who had said to the woman caught in adultery, *"Neither do I condemn you" (John 8:11)*, went on to say again

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

that He is the light of the world, and that he who follows Him will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life. For a person who is in sin and death, where could there be a promise more needed than this? Yet even after hearing this word, the Pharisees did not come to the Lord. They countered that because He was testifying of Himself, His testimony was not true. What made it hardest for the Lord on this earth was also that people would not believe Him.

The word *"witness"* appears again and again in this passage. Witness is revealing clearly what is true so that anyone can know it. The words that continue from verse 12 are the words in which Jesus defended Himself in front of the Pharisees. Today we will look at what the Lord revealed about Himself, and at how that takes its place in our hearts.

The light that gives life in the darkness of sin

Let us read verse 12.

"Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, '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).

Light reveals everything brightly, with nothing hidden. Jesus' calling Himself the light of the world means that who He is and what He came to do are revealed as brightly as the sun. The darkness without that light is the condition of people who are in sin. The heart of a person who has sin is pitch-dark. Just as one cannot find the way in darkness, a person in sin cannot find by himself the way that leads to life. Even if he strives, the sin and the fear of judgment in his heart remain just as they are.

Just as everything dies without sunlight, if Jesus had not come, people would have had no choice but to die in sin. Jesus

is the Son of God and is God. The One who created us came to this earth in a human body. If we know Him only as a man who left good words behind, this word sounds like an excessive claim. But because He is God the Creator, the word that He is the light of the world is true just as it is.

Then by what did Jesus become the light of the world? The Lord actually bore our sins. He received baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River and had all the sins of the world passed on to Him, and, bearing those sins, He was hung on the Cross, shed His blood, and died. The Lord received the judgment for sin that we should have received. And He overcame death and rose again. The Lord did not do this work in words only, but accomplished it Himself and proved it. This is the light of salvation that Jesus shone on the world.

When this light shines in our hearts, what becomes clear? We come to know where our sins have gone and who received the judgment for those sins. In hearts that were pitch-dark, the fact that sin is gone is clearly revealed. We who believe in the Lord have become children of light without sin. The light that has shone in our hearts in this way is the very testimony of salvation that we have. Though it may seem that we live well thanks to our economic means, our abilities, or our background, in fact we live today because we believed in this light of salvation and became children of God.

The Lord said that he who follows Him does not walk in darkness. This means no longer living as a slave of Satan, dragged around by sin. To have the light of life means to obtain salvation. To follow the Lord is to believe in the Lord. Those who know who He is and believe the word of salvation He has given live under the guidance of that word. Break away from a life in which you set your path by your own thoughts and then ask the Lord to help you only along that path. The word sheds

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

light on both the One who saved us and the way we are to walk.

The Lord knows where He came from and where He is going

Let us read verses 13 and 14.

"The Pharisees therefore said to Him, 'You bear witness of Yourself; Your witness is not true.' Jesus answered and said to them, 'Even if I bear witness of Myself, My witness is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going; but you do not know where I come from and where I am going'" (John 8:13–14).

To begin with, the Pharisees were displeased with the verdict Jesus had given the woman who committed adultery a little earlier. Since He had not condemned the woman whose sin had been exposed, to them it looked as though Jesus were passing judgment as God does. Now this same One was calling Himself the light of the world, so they countered that words testifying of oneself with one's own mouth are not true. If it were a matter between people, what they said would have a point. But they spoke that way because they did not know who the One standing before them was.

The Lord clearly said that His testimony is true. It is because He knows where He came from and where He is going. Jesus was sent by the Father and borrowed the body of Mary to be born as a man, and when He turned thirty, He received baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River and bore the sin of the world all on His own body. And now He was going toward the Cross, bearing that sin. The Lord fully knew the way by which He would receive the judgment for that sin on the Cross and die, rise again from death, and return to the Father. He knew even the

sufferings He would undergo ahead.

The Pharisees thought that they knew where Jesus had come from. They knew Him as a man who had come from Nazareth in Galilee. But that was only knowing the things of the flesh. They knew neither that He was the Son sent by the Father nor that the way He was going was the way to save us. Even though they did not know, the Lord's testimony is true.

Today, too, those who have not been born again do not know where Jesus came from and where He went. But those who have been born again through the gospel of the water and the Spirit know. They know and believe that Jesus was sent from heaven by the Father and came, that on this earth He removed all our sins, and that, having accomplished all that work, He returned to the Father. The written word and the Holy Spirit who dwells in us make us know this.

Our faith, too, is grounded on how the Lord testified of Himself. It is not that our salvation is true because our hearts are bright today, nor that our salvation is shaken because our hearts are heavy tomorrow. It was not we, lacking as we are, who saved ourselves; the Son whom the Father sent saved us. Our thoughts are narrow and our feelings change, but the Lord clearly knows the salvation He has accomplished. When you lose heart looking only at your own shortcomings, trust the Lord more than yourself.

The Father, who testifies of the Son

Let us read verses 15 through 18.

"You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one. And yet if I do judge, My judgment is true; for I am not alone, but I am with the Father who sent Me. It is also written in your law that the

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

testimony of two men is true. I am One who bears witness of Myself, and the Father who sent Me bears witness of Me" (John 8:15–18).

The Pharisees judged according to the flesh. They divided people by looking only at the sins that showed on the outside. The woman caught in the very act was dragged in as a sinner, but seen in the sight of God, the people surrounding that woman were no different. The Lord did not come to condemn people by looking at the outside as they did, but came to save people who are in sin. That is why He told that woman, too, that He did not condemn her.

The Lord went on to say that even if He judges, that judgment is true. It is because He is not alone, but the Father who sent Him is with Him. The verdict He gave the woman who had committed adultery was not one the Lord gave alone, either. As we saw earlier, the Father sent the Son and caused even that woman's sins to be passed on to Him through the baptism He received from John the Baptist, and that Son was soon to receive that judgment on the Cross. So that verdict was a true judgment, in which He spoke the Father's will just as it is.

Jesus spoke by citing the law that they knew. That is, He asked whether the law did not say that the testimony of two men is true. Jesus Himself testifies, and the Father who sent Him also testifies of Jesus. From His birth to His being hung on the Cross and His rising again from death, He accomplished everything according to the Father's will, together with the Father.

The Father's testimony is not a vague word. When Jesus received baptism from John, the Father Himself testified of the Son.

"*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 3:16–17).

At the very place where the Son had the sin of the world passed on to Him, the Father called Jesus His beloved Son, the One in whom He is well pleased. It was because the Son carried out the work of bearing the sin of mankind according to the Father's will. That work He did at the Jordan River and the sufferings of the Cross were both one with the Father's will.

Also, the very works the Lord did testified that the Father had sent Him. Let us read John chapter 5, verse 36.

"But I have a greater witness than John's; for the works which the Father has given Me to finish—the very works that I do—bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me" (John 5:36).

Jesus did not just speak and then step back. He accomplished the work the Father had entrusted to Him. He had our sins passed on to Him, received their judgment to the end, and rose again from death. And that work was recorded in the Bible. The written word is the first testimony we have received.

By what will you know that the Lord loves you? You know it by that work in which He died on the Cross for you, rose again, and gave you life. In this way, the love with which God loved you has its evidence.

Those who know the Son know the Father also

Let us read verses 19 and 20.

"Then they said to Him, 'Where is Your Father?' Jesus answered, 'You know neither Me nor My Father. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also.' These words

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Jesus spoke in the treasury, as He taught in the temple; and no one laid hands on Him, for His hour had not yet come" (John 8:19–20).

The Pharisees asked Him where His Father was. Their problem lay not in failing to find where the Father was, but in not knowing the Son who had come right in front of them. Jesus said that if they had known Him, they would have known the Father also. That is, one cannot say that one knows the Father well while rejecting the Son. Because they did not know who Jesus was, their disputes never ceased.

Through Jesus we know the Father's will. We know that God did not abandon sinners but wanted to save them. We know the love by which He sent the Son and passed our sins on to that Son and had Him bear them. We can believe in Jesus as much as we know Him. So know properly through the Bible who Jesus is, and believe. Only then does faith become firm.

Jesus taught this word at the treasury in the temple. There were people who opposed Him, but no one could lay hold of Him. It was because the Lord's time had not yet come. The Lord was going toward the Cross, but that time was set not by people but by the Father. The Lord accomplished the work of salvation at the time the Father had set.

Our salvation was accomplished within God's will in just that way. The work the Lord accomplished does not lose its effect because of someone's opposition or unbelief. Those who believe in Him, the Son of God, as their Savior obtain life. The Apostle John explains the testimony God has given us as follows.

"He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son. And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does

not have the Son of God does not have life" (1 John 5:10–12).

Eternal life is in the Son of God. Those who believe in the Son have the testimony in themselves. In the same chapter, the Apostle John says, *"There are three who bear witness, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood –ASV" (1 John 5:8)*. Jesus removed our sins with the water of the baptism He received from John and with the blood of the Cross, and the Holy Spirit testifies of that salvation in our hearts. We fall short every day, so how can we say that we have no sin? It is because Jesus has saved us. If, even after knowing the salvation the Lord accomplished in that way, we say that our sins that were passed on to the Lord still remain in our hearts, we are making God out to be a liar.

Those who have this testimony are happy. People's approval changes, and the satisfaction gained in the world lasts only a moment. But the life the Lord has given is eternal. Do not look for happiness anywhere other than in this testimony. Whenever things are hard, let us take out again the testimony of salvation in our hearts and confirm it. Let us look to the Lord, who loved us and washed away our sins, the Lord who made us children of God and gave us eternal life.

A life of testifying of salvation together with the Lord

Just as Jesus worked together with the Father, we who have received the remission of sins do not work alone either. The Holy Spirit is in our hearts, and we believe and follow the word. When we preach that the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the true salvation, we are opening our mouths and testifying of the Lord's work that has been confirmed within us through the Holy Spirit. That this gospel is true is guaranteed by the Father, the

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Son, and the Holy Spirit. That is why we are witnesses who work together with the Lord.

So when we serve the gospel, let us not simply think that we are working by our own strength alone. Within the Church of God, let us serve with one heart together with the workers who believe the word and work for the gospel. Receive the work entrusted to you through the church also as work the Lord has entrusted to you. When you believe this way, whether it is work that is easily seen or work that helps from behind, that labor comes to be regarded as precious, and you come to take it on with thanksgiving instead of complaint.

Because we have already received salvation, we do this work with joy. Because the testimony of salvation is in our hearts, we can preach that salvation to others as well. Because we know that our sins have been washed away, we speak of the remission of sins, and because we have received God's love, we convey that love. Through us who have the testimony, others also come to have that testimony.

Jesus, the light of the world, has shone the light of life on us. His word is true, and the Father who sent Him also testifies of Him. Let us keep this light in our hearts, follow the Lord, and shine that light on the people who are still in darkness. ✉

Sermon 4 by Paul C. Jong

The only Savior, who delivered us from sin

< John 8:21–30 >

"Then Jesus said to them again, 'I am going away, and you will seek Me, and will die in your sin. Where I go you cannot come.' So the Jews said, 'Will He kill Himself, because He says, "Where I go you cannot come"?' And He said to them, 'You are from beneath; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. 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.' Then they said to Him, 'Who are You?' And Jesus said to them, 'Just what I have been saying to you from the beginning. I have many things to say and to judge concerning you, but He who sent Me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I heard from Him.' They did not understand that He spoke to them of the Father. Then Jesus said to them, 'When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things. And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him.' As He spoke these words, many believed in Him."

Jesus told the people that He would go away. And He said that they would seek the Lord and die in their sin, and that they

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

would not be able to come where the Lord was going. This is a truly solemn word. The people were listening to the words of Jesus, and they had also seen the works He was doing. Yet to them, who did not believe, the Lord said that they would die in their sin.

It is not by the mere fact of having been near Jesus that one obtains salvation. Hearing the Lord's word with the ears and believing that word with the heart are different things. When we go one step further than knowing the name of Jesus and being familiar with Bible stories, and know and believe who Jesus is and how He saved us, and accept it in our hearts, the salvation the Lord accomplished becomes ours.

Within the ten verses of today's passage, the Lord says *"you will die in your sins"* as many as three times. It is that grave a warning. At the same time, He speaks of the Son of Man's being lifted up and of the work of salvation in which the Father is with Him. In this word there are both a clear warning about sin and the grace of the Lord, who saves sinners.

We must listen to the warning about dying in sin

Let us read verses 21 and 22.

"Then Jesus said to them again, 'I am going away, and you will seek Me, and will die in your sin. Where I go you cannot come.' So the Jews said, 'Will He kill Himself, because He says, "Where I go you cannot come"?'" (John 8:21–22).

The word *"I am going away"* refers to what the Lord was soon to do: be hung on the Cross and die, rise again from death, and go up to the Father. When He spoke this word, it was still before the Cross. But Jesus had already received baptism from John and had the sin of the world passed on to Him. Because He

had borne that sin, going to the Cross now lay before Him. The people did not understand this word. Because He said it was a place they could not go, they wondered whether He was going to kill Himself. The Lord was speaking of the kingdom of heaven, that is, the heavenly realm, but they tried to figure out that word only with the thoughts of the flesh and with their heads.

Those who heard this word were the Pharisees and the Jews who did not believe in the Lord and kept finding fault with Him. Because they had heard the words of Jesus with their ears and seen with their eyes the works He did, they were fully able to know that He was the Savior. Whoever has rejected the Savior even with Him right before his eyes shuts the way of the remission of sins by himself, dies in sin, and is separated forever from the Father's kingdom, where the Lord goes. A person cannot save another person. The One who would deliver them from sin was Jesus alone, who was standing before them at that moment.

People tend to take sin lightly. They think, "So what if I have some sin? Doesn't everyone else have sin too?" But dying is individual, and receiving judgment is individual as well. Just because many people go the same way does not mean that the end of that way changes. If we die without having received the remission of sins, it is we ourselves who will receive the judgment for our sins before God.

The Bible speaks clearly about what comes after death.

"And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27).

After the death of the body there is judgment. To die in sin means to fall into that judgment. This is a fearful word: it means receiving death, the wages of sin, that is, punishment that continues forever. For the person who has died with sin, the judgment of hell awaits. In the light of this word, let each of us

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

ask ourselves: Do we have the remission of sins? Do we believe in the salvation the Lord has accomplished?

The Lord gave this warning in order to let people know how fearful sin is and to have them believe in Him. He tells us our condition as it truly is and teaches us the way of salvation. If we push away the word about sin and judgment because it is uncomfortable, we will not even know why we need a Savior. It is the person who admits before God that he is a sinner who comes to Jesus, who washes away sin.

Believe in Jesus, who came from above, as the Savior

Let us read verses 23 and 24.

"And He said to them, 'You are from beneath; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. 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'" (John 8:23–24).

Jesus said that He and they were different in origin. They were born from beneath and belonged to this world, but the Lord was the One who was born from above. To be 'born from beneath' means that a person is born, from birth, as a descendant of sin, becomes a slave of sin, and lives bound to Satan. Left as they are, they are people who cannot help but die in sin. We are all created beings who were made, but Jesus is not a created being. He is the Son who came from God the Father, and He is God, who made us. That God took on a human body and came to save us.

We are people who are born in sin and commit sin. We have neither the ability to solve the problem of sin by ourselves nor the strength to lift ourselves up to God. That is why we need the

Savior who came from above. Someone a little better than we are is not enough. We need God, who bears our sins and delivers us from judgment. Faith that believes without knowing that Jesus is God is a faith without roots.

The Lord said, *"If you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins" (John 8:24)*. Here, *"He"* refers to the very One who came to save mankind from sin, the one and only Savior. Jesus is not One to be regarded as one among the many teachers of religion. He is the Son of God and the only Savior, who bore all our sins.

Then why do people die in sin? Listen carefully to the word of the Lord. The Lord said that you will die *"if you do not believe that I am He."* The Savior came to this earth and removed our sins, yet not believing that work is what leaves a person a sinner and leads him to destruction. The One who would solve the problem of sin came, and He has already accomplished that work. Now a person's eternal destiny depends on whether he believes in Him.

Let us read John chapter 14, verse 6.

"Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me'" (John 14:6).

The way to the Father is in Jesus. Only the Lord bore our sins, only the Lord received that judgment in our place, and only the Lord rose again from death and gave us life. Jesus accomplished salvation, and we receive that salvation by believing. Let us not try to go another way by piling up more good deeds and devotion.

Jesus received baptism from John the Baptist, the representative of mankind, and had all the sins that we would commit from the time we are born until we die passed on to Him, without leaving out a single person. Bearing those sins, He was hung on the Cross, shed His blood, and died, and three days later He rose again from death. By believing this gospel of the water

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

and the Spirit, we have all our sins washed away. Therefore, to believe in Jesus is to believe with the heart the fact that the Lord bore our sins in this way and received the judgment for those sins on the Cross. If someone claims to believe in Jesus yet does not know this gospel, that person's sins still remain in his heart just as they were.

But how can we, who commit sins every day, say that we have no sin? A person's sins are like the waves that roll in endlessly from the middle of the sea toward the land. Once we look back on one wrong, another weakness is exposed, and even if we resolve to correct today's wrongs, we sin again tomorrow. But the Lord is the eternal God. By that power He received baptism from John once and for all, died on the Cross once and for all, and rose again, and so put an end to all the sins we would commit throughout our lives. Each time our sins are exposed, there is no need for the Lord to repeat that work. The salvation He accomplished once has washed away the sins of our whole lives.

So let us lay down the thought of trying to resolve sin by our own strength. The Lord did this work for the very person who has sin that he cannot resolve by himself. Let us admit our own weakness and rely on Jesus, who has saved us completely.

The truth of salvation revealed after the Son of Man is lifted up

Let us read verses 25 through 28.

"Then they said to Him, 'Who are You?' And Jesus said to them, 'Just what I have been saying to you from the beginning. I have many things to say and to judge concerning you, but He who sent Me is true; and I speak to the world those things which

I heard from Him.' They did not understand that He spoke to them of the Father. Then Jesus said to them, 'When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things'" (John 8:25–28).

When the people asked the Lord who He was, the Lord said that He was the One who had been speaking to them from the beginning. Who is the One who spoke to all things in the universe from the beginning? Who is the One who formed man out of the dust and breathed the breath of life into his nostrils, the One who commanded man not to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? It is Jesus, who was standing right then before them. The Gospel of John testifies that all things were made through Him. God, who created the heavens and the earth in the beginning, came Himself among them and spoke the word of salvation.

But they saw the Lord only with the eyes of the flesh. They were displeased that a man of not many years was teaching and judging them.

The Lord said that He had many things to say and to judge concerning them. It was because, although they looked godly on the outside, inside they were full of hypocrisy and wrongdoing. Even so, the Lord did not let their opposition sway Him into changing His word, but spoke to the world what He had heard from the Father, who is true. Yet they did not understand that the Lord was speaking of the Father. What was the word the Father had spoken? It was His word of love: that He would give His only begotten Son so that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. What we, too, need is to lay down the thoughts of the flesh and to learn and believe what God says in the Bible about ourselves and about salvation. Rather than examining whether the Lord's word fits our thoughts, let us

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

examine whether our thoughts fit the Lord's word, and so know well and believe who Jesus is.

And the Lord said that after they had lifted up the Son of Man, they would know that He was the One. The *"Son of Man"* means 'the son of a human being.' Because Jesus, while being God, was born on this earth in a human body, He called Himself the Son of Man. Lifting up the Son of Man refers to Jesus' being hung on the Cross. The Gospel of John explains this meaning later on as well. Let us read John chapter 12, verses 32 and 33.

"'And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself.' This He said, signifying by what death He would die" (John 12:32–33).

People nailed Jesus to the Cross, but on that very Cross the Lord received the judgment for our sins. The adversaries thought they were getting rid of the Lord, but the Lord, following the Father's will, accomplished the work of salvation that gives life to sinners. He died bearing the sin of the world, which had been passed on to His own body when He received baptism from John, and He rose again from death and ascended to heaven. Only after that work had been fully accomplished did many people come to know that the One who had come at that time was the Savior of mankind and was truly God. It was also then that they came to know that all the Lord's words and works had been just as the Father had taught.

Therefore, when we look at the Cross, let us not stop at the Lord's suffering alone. The reason He hung there is that He Himself bore our sins. Through that death He received in our place the judgment we should have received and paid the full price of sin. The One who did this work is the very Son of God, who came from above, the Creator, who has been speaking to us from the beginning.

Today, many people vaguely know that Jesus is the Savior.

But they do not know specifically how He saved us. The Lord has accomplished salvation perfectly, and through the written word we have come to know that work clearly. This salvation is for none other than me. When I believe in Him as my Lord, who came for me and was judged for me, the assurance of the remission of sins settles in my heart.

A life of believing in and following the Lord, who fulfilled the Father's will

Let us read verses 29 and 30.

"'And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him.' As He spoke these words, many believed in Him" (John 8:29–30).

Jesus said that the Father, who sent Him, is with Him. He said that because He always does the things that please the Father, the Father has not left Him alone. Among people, the Lord must have been very lonely. The One who made the universe by His word came among His own people, but they did not recognize Him and demanded to know who He was. But even in that rejection, the Father was with the Son, and the Son fulfilled the Father's will to the end.

Of the works the Son did, the one in which the Father's will was most clearly revealed was the work of giving life to sinners. The Father loved the world so much that He gave His only begotten Son, and the Son, after receiving baptism from John and having the sin of the world passed on to Him, went to the Cross to receive the judgment for that sin. That way was painful, but the Son obeyed to the end. Our salvation is thus a sure salvation that the Father willed and the Son accomplished.

The passage records that as the Lord spoke these words,

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

many believed. In the very place where, until a little while before, people had misunderstood the Lord's words and asked back who He was, there now arose people who heard the word and believed. The Lord spoke clearly about sin and judgment and taught again and again who He was. Today, the same word lies before us as well. Let us also become people who hear that word and believe.

There is also a work entrusted to us, who have already received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. It is the work of preaching the Savior so that those who do not yet know this gospel will not die in sin. Since we too are people who have come to live because the Lord saved us, we come to preach with a humble heart. When we preach the gospel, let us first plow the field of the heart thoroughly. When we explain step by step through the word what kind of being a person is before God, why there is sin, and where sinners go, those who have realized what they are like seek the Lord with thirsting hearts.

Just because we preach the gospel does not mean that everyone believes right away. Even when the Lord Himself spoke, there were people who rejected His word. But at the same word, many people also believed. The gospel has the power to give people life. So let us rely on the Lord and keep up the labor of reading the word together, answering questions, and delivering writings that contain the gospel.

The Lord went all the way to the end of the path of which He had said, *"I am going away."* He was lifted up on the Cross with our sins, which He had borne through the baptism He received from John, and received the judgment for those sins, and He rose again and went to the Father. Now that way is open before us. He who said to believe *"that I am He,"* Jesus Christ, alone is our Savior. If you have not yet believed this gospel, believe in Him

as your Savior today, before your life comes to an end, without putting it off until tomorrow. ✉

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Sermon 5 by Paul C. Jong

Abide in the word of truth by which the Lord saved us

< John 8:31–36 >

"Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, 'If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.' They answered Him, 'We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can You say, "You will be made free"?' Jesus answered them, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.'"

"If you abide in My word"

The Lord said, *"If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31–32)*. When the Lord said that He Himself was the truth and was with God the Father, and that the words He spoke were not His own words but the word God the Father had given—that He was speaking what the Father had shown Him—many among the Jews came to believe. So the Lord said to them, *"If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed" (John 8:31)*. It means that when those who believe in the Lord accept in their hearts the words the Lord

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

spoke, hold on to that word of God, and come to abide in it by faith, they become the Lord's true disciples.

Those who want to become the Lord's disciples and follow Him can become the Lord's disciples only when they believe in their hearts the words the Lord spoke, hold on to them by faith, and live with that word held close to their hearts. Becoming the Lord's disciple is nothing other than this: those who keep the word of God in their hearts, and believe it, hold on to it, follow it, and put it into practice are the ones who become the Lord's disciples. If people say that they believe in Jesus and only say with their lips, "I believe in Jesus as my Savior," but do not specifically know the words the Lord spoke, cannot hold on to them, and cannot abide in that word, then in fact not only can they not say that they believe in the Lord, but they are not the Lord's disciples either.

Those who have truly received salvation through the truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit that the Lord has given received that salvation through the word of the Lord. Because the word of the Lord says that our sins were removed in this way by the water and the Spirit, we believe so and have received salvation. If the word of the Lord is not in our hearts, then there is no evidence that we have been saved either. When we say that we believe in the Lord, we believe that the Lord is our Savior, and that though to God the Father He is the Son, to us He is our Master and the Lord who created us and saved us. Also, when we have the faith that believes all the words the Lord has spoken to us, we can say that we believe in the Lord as our Savior. And it is then that we become the Lord's true disciples.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Religion and true faith

Becoming the Lord's disciple means holding on to the word of the Lord. Those who cannot hold on to the word of the Lord are not the Lord's disciples. A person who merely says that he believes is a religious person. Believing in Buddhism, believing in Shakyamuni, believing in Islam, believing in the sun—all of these are things people have made up. They are things a person makes up himself, thinks up himself, and believes himself. This is religion. Religion is a person thinking up some image or object on his own, setting it up, and holding on to it and believing in it himself.

But Christianity is not a religion. Even before we existed in this world, God made the universe, made you and me, and caused us to be born on this earth. And knowing that we would fall into sin, the Lord promised that He would come to this earth, bear our sins through the laying on of hands, shed His blood and receive the judgment for sin, rise again from death, and save us. And just as He had promised, the Lord came to this earth, received baptism from John and had the sin of the world transferred to Him, went to the Cross bearing that sin, was nailed to it and died, rose again from death, and saved us. The faith that believes this word God has spoken is true faith, and this is what faith is. Faith means looking up to the object of one's belief.

God made the universe and made us. And when we fell into sin, God the Father sent His own Son to this earth to save us. He had our sins transferred to His own Son through John the Baptist, and He had His own Son nailed to the Cross to receive the judgment for our sins. He laid on His own Son the death we should have received and had His own Son die in our place, and in order to give us life once more, He raised His Son again. Looking up to this and believing it is what faith is. This is true

faith; this is true belief.

So Christians believe, just as the written word says, that the Lord came to this earth and had our sins transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John the Baptist. *"But Jesus answered and said to him, 'Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.' Then he allowed Him" (Matthew 3:15)*. Jesus, who thus had the sin of the world transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John, bore that sin, was judged on the Cross, and rose again from death. The Bible records the scene of that baptism as follows: *"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 3:16–17).*

Therefore, looking up to the things the Lord did when He came to this earth, we believe them in our hearts, follow them, and keep them. "Through that baptism Jesus Christ received from John, all my sins were passed on to Him. Not only all my sins, but my parents' sins were also passed on, and all the sin of all mankind was passed on. Jesus Christ fulfilled all righteousness in this way at that time. According to the will of God the Father, He did the right thing that removes the sins of all people." This word says that holding on to this word and thinking and believing on the basis of this word is true faith, that such a person is a true person of faith, and that he is a true disciple of Jesus Christ.

So, to become true Christians, we must remove much of the dregs in our hearts. The human heart is fundamentally full of fleshly thoughts and lustful thoughts. They make up almost all of it. The heart that seeks God is very small and lies deep within, and unless a certain situation arises, it never comes out. But

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

when the outer man is completely broken and shattered, and when people run into some difficulty and fall into despair, that small part, the inner man, comes to look up to God, rely on Him, and ask God for help. Only then does that heart come out.

Therefore, even that heart receives salvation only when it believes and acknowledges the word of God, submits to that word, and relies on that word and holds on to it. And even after receiving salvation, a person can become a true disciple of Jesus Christ when he keeps removing all the dregs of the flesh in his heart by the faith that holds on to the word of God, and when he abides in the word of God and holds on to that word and follows it. That is why, even among those who have truly been born again, there are not many who have become disciples of Jesus Christ.

Also, even among those who believe in Jesus, there are not many who have been born again. It is just as the Lord said, *"For many are called, but few are chosen" (Matthew 22:14)*. Most people attend church and say that they believe in Jesus as their Savior, but sin is still in their hearts, and the desires of the flesh are still there too. In the word that follows, the Lord deals with this problem step by step.

"You shall know the truth"

In any case, to become the Lord's true disciples, we must abide in the word the Lord has spoken to us. We must accept that word by faith, hold on to it by faith, and follow it by faith. It is the word of God—exactly that. These three things are absolutely necessary. And the Lord said to those who believed, *"You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32)*. All of the word of God is precious, but to put it in human terms,

this word is a great saying that shines even more brightly among the words of God.

"You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). It means that we must know the truth without fail. Even if people believe in Jesus, if they do not know the truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit revealed in the Bible, there is no such thing as freedom. There is no freedom of conscience, no being saved from sin, no freedom of becoming children of God, no freedom of becoming the people of God and enjoying the blessings of the kingdom of heaven, and no blessing of being able to go to the kingdom of heaven. Only when we know the truth can we believe. And it means that the truth releases us from all sin, curses, and suffering and causes us to receive all the blessings of God. That is why He said, *"You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32)*. Knowing the truth is extremely important.

There are a great many people who believe in Jesus, but if you ask them, "Do you know the truth? Do you know the truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit?" they do not know the truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. When Pilate had Jesus seized and brought to him and was interrogating Him, he asked, *"What is truth?" (John 18:38)*. People do not know the truth. Then do those who believe in Jesus know the truth? They do not. Just think about it. What difference do you think there is between a person who attends church, gives offerings, offers prayers of repentance, and serves, yet has sin in his heart, and a person who goes to a Buddhist temple, gives alms, chants Buddhist invocations, puts his palms together and bows, regrets his wrongdoings, and turns back again, yet has sin in his heart? There is no difference.

There is no one who lives in this world without committing sin. All people commit sin alike, but those who know the truth

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

have no sin in their hearts, while those who do not know the truth have sin even though they believe in Jesus just the same. Even if people believe in other religions, they have sin just the same. Whether they believe in this religion or that religion, they have sin. A person who knows the truth has no sin in his heart, and a person who does not know the truth still has sin in his heart. Therefore the Lord said, *"The truth shall make you free" (John 8:32)*. It means that the truth makes us free. Who is that truth? It is the Lord. The Lord said, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6)*. It means that the Lord had our sins transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John, received the judgment for our sins on our behalf, died in our place the death that you and I should have died, rose again from death, and gave you and me new life.

That is, the Lord is the way to go to the kingdom of heaven, He is true life to us and the One who gave us life, and the Lord is the truth—that is, the One who is true. There are very many things in this world that are called gods. There are many gods that people have made and many miscellaneous gods, but the only true God is the triune God. Only God the Father, His only Son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit—God who is the Trinity—are true and are the truth. In Him there is no falsehood, only goodness. He has the power to do all things and does all things, but He cannot lie and cannot do evil. He is righteous, holy, and absolute. No one can challenge Him. It is that truth that makes us free.

We can believe only when we know

The Lord, who is the Master of the truth and our Savior, has made us free. Just as He said, "I will bear your sins in this way

and remove them in this way," He bore them in this way and removed them in this way. Therefore we must know the truth. Believing in Jesus, who is the truth, is also something we can do only when we know. Do you think that you will receive salvation if you hold on to Him unconditionally, saying, "I believe in Jesus," or if you say the prayer to receive Jesus just because someone has you say it? That is a very foolish thing.

Some people, at every turn, say, "Those who will believe in Jesus, raise your hands," and then say to them, "I will pray, so repeat after me." "God the Father, I have committed many sins in this world. I am someone who is going to hell. But now I know that the Lord has removed our sins. I receive Jesus as my Savior. I believe." It is not by saying a prayer to receive Jesus like this, repeating it word for word, that one receives the remission of sins before God. The Lord said, *"You shall know the truth" (John 8:32)*. We can believe only when we know. Holding on and believing blindly without even knowing is religion. It is a person making up some god himself and believing in it himself.

Those who truly believe in God know the truth. We must know how the Lord came to this earth and how He swept away once and for all, cleanly, as one sweeps out garbage, the sins of you and me, who sin every day all our lives and cannot help but go to hell—that is, how He had them transferred to Him once and for all through the baptism He received from John. And we must know how He was judged and died once and for all, how He rose again once and for all, and so how He became our Savior once and for all. We can believe only when we know. It is the truth that makes us free and saves us from sin; it does not happen just because we strive. Yet many people believe by mixing half and half like this—half their own effort and half Jesus' saving them. There are many people who believe this way. This is futile.

Believing by mixing half and half like this is like the song

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

that was sung at a certain international sports competition, calling on people to join hands with one another, rise above ideologies and barriers, and become one brother and one sister. That song says that through the games we should tear down the walls of war and ideology and become one. But God and we are not in a relationship in which we can join hands like that. We must know how God has saved us. We had fallen into sin, belonged to sin, and could not help but die. When we had fallen into a pit of filthy waste, with barely our noses out to breathe, and were stretching out our hands, crying, "Please save us," His hand came down from heaven, grabbed us firmly by the wrist, pulled us up out of that pit by His own power, and saved us. It is because He pulled us up out of sin that we have obtained salvation. That is the very truth.

"The truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). Those who know the truth obtain freedom. But that freedom is freedom within the word; it by no means refers to dissipation. I, too, once knew this word only casually, but it was only after I believed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and came to know the Lord through this word that I understood what the word *"you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32)* meant. Isn't it the same with you too?

The truth is fact

Those who know the truth are people who have been saved from sin. Why is that? Because it is fact. It is because it is a fact that the Lord had our sins transferred to Him once and for all by receiving baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River, was judged on the Cross bearing those sins, and rose again from death. The truth is fact. Fact and truth are the same thing. A

person who does not know this truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit has in fact not been born again. He is a religious person. Those who pastor in order to make a living, even when their church members come every day crushed under sin, weeping and wailing, only tell them with composed faces to offer prayers of repentance and to attain sanctification.

They do this in order to receive a large stipend every month. Whether believers or anyone else, people must first know the truth. And they must obtain salvation from all sins in their conscience. After that they must hold on to the word of God and go after it, and by following the word, they must become true disciples of the Lord. Without being born again, no one can become the Lord's disciple. It makes no sense to say that one goes to the kingdom of heaven without being born again and without believing in the truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

We can believe only when we know the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and we come to believe only when we throw away our own thoughts. The core of the Bible is the truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and that truth is Jesus Christ. Yet even when the gospel of the water and the Spirit has been preached to them, there are people who know it but still cannot throw away their own thoughts. With the religious life they have been living until now and some shallow knowledge made of a few words they have picked up, they say, "I was not taught it this way. I was not taught it that way," and do not throw away their own thoughts. If, when the word of truth has been preached, they cannot hold on to this written word, they believe in vain. Such people perish.

But the Lord has truly made us free. By believing, we know the truth; by believing, we have been saved from all sins and set free, and we have obtained everlasting life. And we who have

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

believed and followed the word of Jesus Christ have become His disciples.

"Whoever commits sin is a slave of sin"

At this word of the Lord, the Jews who did not believe answered, *"We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can You say, 'You will be made free'?" (John 8:33)*. Jesus answered, *"Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin" (John 8:34)*. It means that everyone who commits sin is not a free person but a slave of sin. There are two kinds of sin. There is sin that is remitted, and there is sin for which one goes to hell. The Lord came to this earth as the Savior and saved us through the truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and not believing in that truth and in the Lord who accomplished that truth is the sin for which one goes to hell.

That is why He said, *"Whoever commits sin is a slave of sin" (John 8:34)*. What the Lord is saying is that because they are slaves of sin, they must obtain salvation in order to truly become free people. But those who do not believe now—that is, the Jews who do not believe that Jesus is the Savior—say, *"We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can You say, 'You will be made free'?" (John 8:33)*. A person who does not know this is spiritually blind. If a person has sin in his heart, he is now living as a slave of sin. It means that although a person's body can go wherever it wants to go, come whenever it wants to come, and do as it pleases, his heart has become a slave to the devil.

So a person who has become a slave of sin cannot help but commit sin; he comes to commit sin as the devil tells him to,

anxiety keeps arising in his heart, he has no peace of heart, and he has no freedom of conscience either. His conscience is continually pressed down by sin and the law. That is why He said they are slaves. Have you ever lived as a slave?

Being a slave means having no freedom. A slave cannot do as he pleases. Now, are all people free people or slaves? There are many slaves. There are many slaves of sin. If there is sin in a person's heart, the Holy Spirit cannot dwell in that heart, so he is a slave of sin. A slave of sin always commits sin. If you ask what sin he commits, it is that he does not know who Jesus is or what the gospel of the water and the Spirit that Jesus has given is, and even if he knows, he does not believe. So, because there is always sin in his heart and he is ruled by the devil, he lives as a slave of sin. He hates others, envies them, and quarrels with them; he has no peace in his heart; he always tries to kill someone, torment someone, and bring someone down; and like a hunter, he lives hiding and lying in wait for people. That is the very evidence that he has become a slave of sin.

Those who have received the remission of sins white as snow through the gospel of the water and the Spirit and have the Holy Spirit in their hearts bear the fruit of the Holy Spirit and do not deliberately try to harm anyone. But those who have not been born again and have sin in their hearts try, in one way or another, to bring someone down and harm him. Even though they know in their own thoughts that it is not right, they are doing it themselves. Why is that? It is because they have become slaves of the devil on account of sin. Because there is sin in their hearts now, they have become slaves of the devil. Just as eagles gather where there is a carcass, where there is sin the devil surely comes to take control, and the devil makes that person his slave and has him do evil things. That is why they are called slaves. This is a truly important word.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

If people do not truly know the word of the Bible, they read the Bible like a book of literature, but it is not so. He said, *"Whoever commits sin is a slave of sin" (John 8:34)*. People who cannot practice righteousness and cannot live a right life easily harbor in their hearts thoughts of resentment, hatred, envy, quarreling, forming factions, and deceiving. And when the time comes, these come out in their actions. When the other person treats them well, they rather rush at him to deceive him. Why is that? It is because there is sin in their hearts, so Satan the devil controls and manipulates their hearts and souls. Since they are being manipulated by the devil, they cannot help but act according to the will of the one manipulating them. That is why we must know the truth and, by faith, escape from being slaves of sin. We must escape and obtain true freedom.

To obtain true freedom, we must escape from sin. We must receive into our hearts the righteous Lord, the Lord who saved us, the Savior who removed all the sins in our hearts, and by holding on to the word that Savior has given, we must drive out Satan the devil and sin so that they cannot dwell in our hearts. To do that, we must accept the word of truth. Above all, we must believe in our Savior Jesus Christ, who came to this earth, had our sins transferred to Him once and for all through the baptism He received from John, died on the Cross, rose again from death, and saved us. We must be set free by faith. The Lord said, *"A slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever" (John 8:35)*. Since He said, *"A slave does not abide in the house forever" (John 8:35)*, a slave can never go to the kingdom of God. A person who has sin can never go to the kingdom of God. We must receive the remission of sins. How must we receive the remission of sins?

We must know the fact of that salvation by which the Lord saved you and me from sin—how Jesus came to this earth and

had your sins transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John, how He received the judgment for sin in your place, how He died the death for sin in place of you and me, and how He rose again from death, ascended to heaven, sat down at the right hand of the Father, and saved you and me. Since He said, *"You shall know the truth" (John 8:32)*, we must know that. What is important is not that you and I did something well or did something wrong, lived this way or lived that way, regret it or do not regret it. When it comes to receiving salvation, whether we commit sin or not, it is not as though God suffers loss or gains benefit because of it.

If we commit sin and become slaves of sin, we ourselves receive the price of sin and are judged; nothing changes for God. It is just that God had such great pity on us. Because we are such pitiful beings, the Lord came to this earth to save us and saved us. With what did He save us? He saved us with the truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. So we must become sons. In the Lord's Prayer it says, *"Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come" (Matthew 6:9–10)*. To become children of God, we must first be holy, according to the word He spoke, *"Be holy, for I am holy" (1 Peter 1:16)*. This is not a word spoken in view of our lives. It means that we are to receive the remission of sins in our hearts. It means that we are to know and believe that the Lord has removed our sins.

It means that we are to learn, know, and believe that Jesus Christ, the Savior of mankind, came to this earth, received baptism from John and had your sins and mine transferred to Him, died on the Cross, rose again from death, and saved you and me. And so it means that we are to receive salvation. Only then can we become sons of God. A slave can never abide in the house of God. But He said, *"A son abides forever" (John 8:35)*. Only those who have become sons abide forever.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

We, too, with faith like David's

The Lord said, *"Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed" (John 8:36)*. You understand what this word means, don't you? It does not mean that we become free if we offer prayers of repentance. Nor does it mean that we become free if we are sanctified and live good and kind lives.

"If the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed" (John 8:36). If the Lord has removed your sins and mine—the sin of all mankind—through the truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, then we have no sin. That is exactly what this word says.

Has the Lord made us free? Has our Lord made you and me free through the truth of the water and the Spirit? He has made us free. You and I are lacking and cannot become perfect, but the Lord has made you and me free. Then we become free. This word is very simple. If the Lord has removed our sins, then we have no sin. How simple it is! That is why Jesus is called the Savior. The name Savior is not just an idle word. It means that when the Lord looked at us, we were so pitiful that He rescued us from sin. Out of the destruction of sin, which is like a pit of filthy waste, He rescued such people—people who could only die resenting, could only die committing sin, could only live tormenting others and then die, and could only live all their lives full of worries and then die.

With what did the Lord save us? He saved us with the truth of righteousness and His own love. He did not save us with words only; He Himself came to this earth clothed in human flesh, received baptism from John the Baptist, the representative of mankind, and had the sin of mankind transferred to Him once and for all, and bearing all that sin, He was nailed to the Cross and shed His blood, said, *"It is finished!" (John 19:30)*, rose

again from death, and saved us. It is the Lord who did it. The Lord Himself saved us. We did not obtain salvation by our own efforts; the Lord saved us.

Therefore we must truly entrust our souls to the Lord. "Lord, I try to live well, but it does not go well. Even so, I will strive to live well. But when I look far ahead and think deeply, I am fundamentally a person who cannot do well. Unless I believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit You have given, I can never become a righteous person. Since You saved me from sin through the baptism You received and the blood of the Cross, I will believe that You have saved me and go to the kingdom of heaven. Please accept me. I believe in You, Lord." We must come before the Lord like this. We must believe with this kind of heart and rely on Him with this kind of heart. Do not keep putting forward your own will, saying, "If I just try a little harder, it will work out." Do not try to obtain salvation by earning merit before God and living a good life.

Do not try to accomplish something by offering a lot of money in offerings, and do not try to accomplish something by committing fewer sins either; entrust yourself entirely. "I cannot do it. Lord, please save me. If You save me, I will be saved, and if You forsake me, I will go to hell." Isn't that what David did? After David committed adultery with the wife of Uriah, he came to God with this kind of heart: "Lord, if Your word says that I am holy, then I am holy, and if it says that I have sin, then I have sin. It will be as You judge. Everything depends on You. You are the Creator of the universe, my Savior, the One who removed my sins, and my everything. Whatever You decide about me, that is exactly what I will be. If You have removed my sins, then my sins are gone, and if You have not removed them, then no matter how much I beg and plead, weep and wail, and fast and pray for seventy days, I have sin. If You do not remove my sins,

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

I have sin forever, and if You have removed my sins, I have no sin forever." David entrusted himself entirely to the Lord in this way. That is, he entrusted himself to Jesus.

You and I must also entrust ourselves like that. We must have such eyes. We must have eyes that can see far ahead. We must think about whether we will commit sin or not as we go on living, and quickly entrust ourselves to the Lord. If the thought comes that we will go on committing even more sins, and if we are not confident that we will not commit sin from now on, we must quickly entrust ourselves to the Lord.

And through this word of the truth of the gospel, you must know how the Lord saved you from sin—how He had your sins transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John, how He received the judgment for sin that you should have received, and how He gave you the remission of sins and everlasting life and made you children of God—and you must hold on to that word and believe it. Then all the blessings of the remission of sins, the kingdom of heaven, becoming children of God, and everlasting life will be yours. Do you believe this?

The only name by which we can be saved

"If the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed" (John 8:36). Who can do such a thing? Only Jesus can do such a thing. Can the figures who are called gods in the world do it? Or could a famous and clever person do it? Who indeed could do it?

Socrates said, "Know thyself." It means that you should not just talk to others but should rather know yourself. All the philosophers only said that it seems right to live a good life rather than to live an evil one. But none of those people could say to all people, "Believe in me. I have saved you. I have

removed your sins. I have saved you from sin." In this universe, only Jesus could speak these words. Only Jesus came to this earth, had all the sins of this world transferred to Him once and for all through the baptism He received from John, was nailed to the Cross and shed His blood, rose again from death, and saved us.

Only Jesus could do this work. That is why it says, "*There is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12)*. There is no name but the name Jesus Christ. The name Jesus Christ alone is the most beautiful name, the name of our Savior, and the name of the King of kings. The word Jesus means 'Savior,' and the word Christ means 'the Anointed One'; and 'the Anointed One' means the King of kings. It means that He is the true God and the true Savior. The One who saves you and me from sin and makes us happy, the One who saves us from sin, causes us to live right lives, causes us to go to the kingdom of heaven, and, even on this earth, causes us to become true disciples of Jesus Christ is Jesus. Jesus has removed our sins through the truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

I hope that you will truly believe this and abide forever in the kingdom of God, the kingdom of the Son. ✉

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Sermon 6 by Paul C. Jong

The eternal Son of God, who makes us free

< John 8:31–59 >

"Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, 'If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.' They answered Him, 'We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can You say, "You will be made free"?' Jesus answered them, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed. I know that you are Abraham's descendants, but you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you. I speak what I have seen with My Father, and you do what you have seen with your father.' They answered and said to Him, 'Abraham is our father.' Jesus said to them, 'If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham. But now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has told you the truth which I heard from God. Abraham did not do this. You do the deeds of your father.' Then they said to Him, 'We were not born of fornication; we have one Father—God.' Jesus said to them, 'If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me. Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word. You are of your father the devil,

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it. But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me. Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me? He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God.' Then the Jews answered and said to Him, 'Do we not say rightly that You are a Samaritan and have a demon?' Jesus answered, 'I do not have a demon; but I honor My Father, and you dishonor Me. And I do not seek My own glory; there is One who seeks and judges. Most assuredly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he shall never see death.' Then the Jews said to Him, 'Now we know that You have a demon! Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and You say, "If anyone keeps My word he shall never taste death." Are You greater than our father Abraham, who is dead? And the prophets are dead. Who do You make Yourself out to be?' Jesus answered, 'If I honor Myself, My honor is nothing. It is My Father who honors Me, of whom you say that He is your God. Yet you have not known Him, but I know Him. And if I say, "I do not know Him," I shall be a liar like you; but I do know Him and keep His word. Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad.' Then the Jews said to Him, 'You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?' Jesus said to them, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.' Then they took up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by."

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Dear fellow believers, if someone says he will give freedom to a person who thinks he is free, how will that person take it? Only when a person first admits what he is bound by does the word that gives freedom also sound welcome to him. So it was with the people who were in front of Jesus. When the Lord said that the truth would make them free, they put forward the fact that they were Abraham's descendants. They had pride in their ancestors and their status, but they did not see their condition as slaves of sin, of which the Lord was speaking.

The dispute in today's passage grows deeper and deeper. At first they speak about freedom, then it comes to asking whose descendants they are, and finally it reaches the question, *"Who do You make Yourself out to be?"* Within these twenty-nine verses, the name of Abraham appears eleven times. They held on to Abraham, and the Lord was the One who existed even before that Abraham was born. When we know who it is that saves us from sin, we come to believe fully in that salvation. Jesus is the Son of God, who gives true freedom and eternal life to us, who were slaves of sin.

The freedom the Son gives is salvation for us, who had become slaves of sin

Let us read verses 31 and 32.

"Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, 'If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free'" (John 8:31–32).

The Lord told those who believed Him to abide in the word. To abide in the word is to believe the Lord's word, and to hold

on to that word and not let it go. A person who stops at hearing Jesus' word for a moment and thinking well of it cannot be called a disciple. The person who, even when a word comes that differs from his own thoughts, acknowledges that the Lord is right and accepts that word is a true disciple.

Truth is what is true. It is what is true, with not even the slightest falsehood mixed in—the fact just as it is. Later, Pilate too asked in the Lord's presence, *"What is truth?" (John 18:38)*. With the One who is the truth right before his eyes, he did not recognize Him. The truth the Bible speaks of is Jesus Christ Himself, and the work He did for us. That the Lord received baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River and so had all our sins passed on to Him once and for all is a fact that actually happened. Sin departs from the heart of the person who knows that fact.

The freedom this truth gives is that our conscience is released from sin and we become children of God. It is different from licentiousness, living as one pleases. Nor is it obtained by accumulating worldly knowledge or by learning how to control one's mind. We obtain it when we know and believe the Savior, who delivered us from sin, and the work He accomplished.

As soon as the Lord spoke of freedom, an answer came back in protest. Their point was: why would they, Abraham's descendants, need freedom? They said they had never been slaves to anyone, but their history was a history of enduring slavery under Egypt and Babylon. Above all, they did not see the fact that, although their bodies went wherever they wanted, their hearts were bound by sin. What the Lord pointed out was not their genealogy but sin. Let us read verses 34 through 36.

"Jesus answered them, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. Therefore if the

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed'" (John 8:34–36).

He said that whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. A slave is a person who has no freedom. If there is sin in a person's heart, he is dragged around by whatever that sin makes him do, his conscience is always weighed down, and peace leaves his heart. This is because it is a heart in which the Holy Spirit cannot dwell. Even though all the people of the world commit sin, our own sins do not become lighter, nor does God's judgment disappear. We are those who have no ability to escape from sin by ourselves.

A slave does not abide in the house forever. This means that a person who has sin cannot enter and live in the house of God, the kingdom of God. But the Son abides forever. The Son of God, who abides forever in the Father's house, makes us, who were slaves of sin, free, and causes us also to become sons and to abide in that house forever. The only way to deliver a slave of sin is the freedom the Son gives.

He said, *"If the Son makes you free."* It is not that we become free by repeating prayers of repentance, nor that we become free by living good lives and becoming holy. Jesus came clothed in a human body and, through the baptism He received from John the Baptist at the Jordan River, had all our sins passed on to Him. While bearing those sins, He shed His blood and died on the Cross and so received the judgment we should have received, and He rose again from death. Since the Son has removed all our sins, we are people without sin. Because He did this work, we call Jesus the Savior.

Even when our hearts are shaken, the place we return to is this salvation. It is not that our sins have disappeared because we feel good today, nor is it that the sin that was passed on to the Lord comes back to us again because we have discovered our weaknesses. We acknowledge our wrongs as wrongs, but we look to the Lord, who bore even those sins. The One who makes

us free indeed is the Son of God.

Abraham's faith is the faith that accepts the truth of God

They insisted again and again that they were Abraham's descendants. Jesus, too, knew the fact that they were Abraham's descendants according to the flesh. After acknowledging that fact, the Lord spoke as follows. Let us read verse 37.

"I know that you are Abraham's descendants, but you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you" (John 8:37).

The Lord's word had no place in them. It was because their hearts were filled with the thought that they were already right. Whether we believe in the Lord or not is also decided here. Does the word of the Lord, who saved you, have a place in your heart? A heart in which that word has no place eventually pushes away the One who speaks it. In trying to guard their own boast, they finally sought to kill the Lord, who spoke the truth.

The Lord went on to say, *"I speak what I have seen with My Father, and you do what you have seen with your father" (John 8:38)*. Jesus spoke what He had seen with the Father, and they acted according to what they had heard. Today we cannot see God with our eyes, but we can see the written word with our eyes. The person who confirms with his own eyes what is written in the Bible about salvation, judgment, and eternal life and believes it comes to walk a different path from the person who follows rumors that someone said this or that.

Jesus said that if they were Abraham's descendants, they would do the works of Abraham. Abraham did not seek to kill the One who preaches the truth He heard from God. If one exalts Abraham's name while opposing the God whom Abraham

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

believed, what profit is there in putting forward that name? The moment the boast of having the father of faith as one's ancestor takes the place of faith, that boast becomes empty.

Let us also accept this word as our own matter. The fact that we have gone to church for a long time, the fact that we know many Bible stories, and the fact that we were born to parents of good faith do not make our sins disappear. The salvation that others have believed becomes our salvation only when we ourselves believe it directly. When the word comes into the heart, what one boasts of also changes. A person who used to boast of his background comes to boast of the Lord, who saved him, and a person who tried to stand by his own righteousness comes to rely on the righteousness the Son of God accomplished.

He who is of God hears God's words

When the Lord said, *"You do the deeds of your father" (John 8:41)*, they flared up in protest. They said that they had not been born of fornication and that they had only one Father, God. Jesus said that if God were their Father, they would love Him. A person who is of God loves the Son whom the Father sent, and loves His word. They could not claim to love the Father while seeking to kill the Son.

The word He spoke, *"Why do you not understand My speech?" (John 8:43)*, is also worth engraving on our hearts. When the word of truth comes near, a heart that resists it rises up within a person, as if by instinct. Even while he knows that the word is right, opposition rises up inside him. The person who, even in the face of that opposition, believes the word rather than his own thoughts becomes a child of God.

And the Lord revealed where their lies and their desire to

murder came from. The devil was a murderer from the beginning, and he is the father of lies, who does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. So it was with the serpent in the Garden of Eden. Twisting the word of God, it asked, *"Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?" (Genesis 3:1)* and so separated man from God. In this way the devil deceives by twisting the word. The claim that, although the Lord took away the sin of the world entirely, sin still remains in the heart and so one must wash it away by oneself every day, and the claim that one is still a sinner even after believing—these are such lies.

The Lord asked, *"Which of you convicts Me of sin?" (John 8:46)*. He never once committed sin while He lived on this earth. Because He is the One without sin, He could bear our sins in our place. Let us read verse 47.

"He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God" (John 8:47).

People are divided into those who are of God and those who are of the devil. If someone goes to church and says he believes in the Savior, yet the sin in his heart remains as it is, he cannot yet be called one who is of God. The person who has heard and believed the gospel of the water and the Spirit, which the Lord accomplished, and has had the sin of his heart washed away is one who is of God. Therefore, the standard for discerning faith is also the word of God. Truth is distinguished not by the name or the eloquence of the person speaking, but by the written word. If we follow only people's claims, our assurance of salvation also becomes bound to people's words.

Even today, the devil's deception keeps us from believing the word of God. It makes us believe our own thoughts more than the salvation the Lord accomplished, makes us see our own feelings as bigger than the sin the Lord removed, and whispers

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

that we can be at ease only if we add our own merits on top of the gospel. At such times, what we must hold on to is the written word. Open the Bible and confirm the fact that Jesus had your sins passed on to Him through the baptism He received from John, received the judgment for those sins on the Cross, and rose again from death. Repeating familiar religious terms and believing that word as one's own salvation are different things.

The word of God is our standard even after we have been saved. The written word is the place we return to and stand on every day. With mouths that once loved lies we speak the truth, with hearts that once sought only our own benefit we serve the Lord's work, and we discern between words that oppose the gospel and the word that gives life. This is the life of believing in and following the Lord, who saved us from sin.

The word that gives victory over death is the promise of the Savior, who is God

The people who would not accept the word of truth insulted Jesus. They called Him a Samaritan and said that He had a demon. To the Jews of that time, calling someone a Samaritan was an expression of deep contempt for him. The Lord did not fight against that insult with words that exalted Himself. He said only that He honored the Father. To honor is to know how exalted He is and to hold Him in high reverence. People despised the Lord, but the authority of the Son whom the Father sent remained the same.

Look at the promise the Lord made at that time. Let us read verse 51.

"Most assuredly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he shall never see death" (John 8:51).

Who can speak such a word? Since a person cannot even prevent his own death, how could any teacher, however excellent he may be, give eternal life to those who listen to his words? But Jesus said so. It is because He is God, who rules over life. This promise is believed only when we know who it is that spoke it.

Growing angry, the people argued that even Abraham and the prophets had died, and demanded, *"Who do You make Yourself out to be?"* Because they saw only the death of the flesh, they denied the Lord's promise. The eternal life given to those who believe in the Lord is the life of being delivered from the eternal death that comes through sin and living forever in the Lord. The Lord spoke clearly of this life in another place as well. Let us read John chapter 11, verses 25 and 26.

"Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?'" (John 11:25–26).

The Lord is the resurrection and the life. Therefore, for those who believe, the death of the flesh is not the end. The Lord, who saved us, rose again from death and has given eternal life to us as well. The One who made the promise and the One who fulfills that promise are the same Lord.

Let us also hear the word *"if anyone keeps My word"* in this context. It does not mean that we should make our own deeds perfect and so drive away death; it means that we should accept into our hearts and believe the word of the Lord, who gives life. A person who holds on to the word that the Lord had all his sins passed on to Him does not again strive to wash away his sins by his own merits. The life the Son of God has given is more certain than human self-confidence and greater than the fear of death.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

We believe in the Lord, who existed before Abraham was born

The Lord said that the Father gives Him glory. The very One whom they call God is Jesus' Father. The Father sent the Son to accomplish salvation, and He wants the Son to be exalted as God. So for us to know Jesus as God, to exalt Him, and to rely on Him is to follow the Father's will. Jesus knows the Father and keeps His word. He is not One who would say that He does not know the Father in order to avoid people's opposition.

Then the Lord said that Abraham rejoiced to see His day, and saw it and was glad. Abraham was a man who saw the work of Jesus and was glad. The Abraham they boasted of was a man who waited for His day. Therefore, their attitude of exalting Abraham while rejecting Jesus was at odds with Abraham's faith.

But they looked only at Jesus' age. They asked how He could have seen Abraham when He was not yet even fifty. In answer to that question, the Lord revealed His own eternity. Let us read verse 58.

"Jesus said to them, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM'" (John 8:58).

Abraham was a man who lived thousands of years before this word. Jesus existed even before that Abraham was born into the world. His coming to this earth clothed in flesh does not mean that He began to exist from that time. The Gospel of John testifies of who He is from its very beginning. Let us read John chapter 1, verses 1 through 3.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made" (John 1:1–3).

Jesus, who saved us, not only existed before Abraham but is

also the Word, who was with God from the beginning, and is God. Underlying the faith that believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the faith that Jesus is God. If He were not God, He could neither have borne all the sins of the world nor saved us from those sins. Because God Himself came clothed in human flesh and removed our sins through the baptism He received from John and the blood of the Cross, this salvation is complete.

Could the Lord have been unable to bear our sins just because they are many? Did He save us without knowing our weaknesses? The Lord, who has existed from eternity, knew all our circumstances and accomplished salvation to the end. Therefore, we look to the One who saved us rather than to our own circumstances. The faith that the Lord is God and the faith that believes the salvation the Lord accomplished cannot be separated from each other.

In the end, the people took up stones to strike Jesus, and Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple. The heart that had rejected the word finally showed itself in an act of trying to murder. That heart eventually went as far as nailing the Lord to the Cross. But truth does not become a lie just because people take up stones. On that Cross the Lord received the judgment for our sins, and three days later He rose again, revealing that He is the eternal God.

Dear fellow believers, whose word are we believing today? Are we looking for words that guard our own righteousness, or are we believing the word of the Son, who exposes sin and delivers us from that sin? The word that gives us life does not lose its value just because it has become familiar to our ears. Read that word, keep it in your hearts, and come to know the Lord more and more.

Even when our circumstances become hard, the Lord's salvation does not change. Even when we become discouraged

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

while serving the gospel, all we need to do is not reckon only our own strength but rely on the Lord, whose power is perfect. To those who do not yet know the freedom the Lord has given, we testify, just as we have heard it, how the Son has made us free.

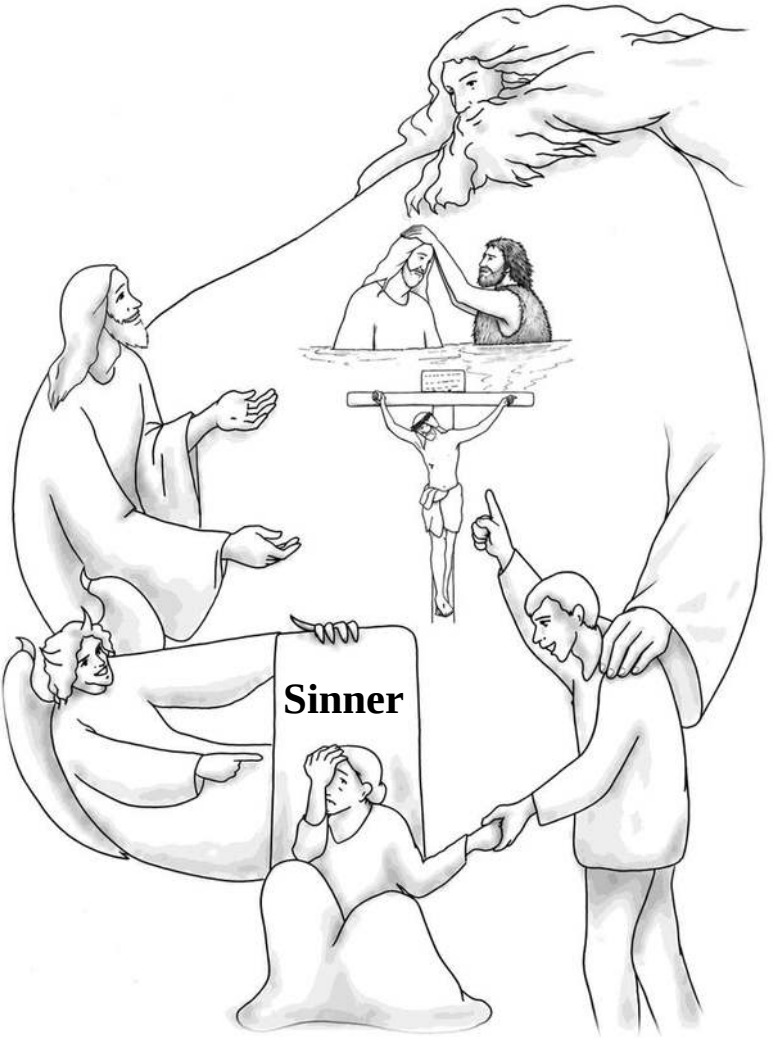
The Son of God, who existed before Abraham was born, has saved us. He has washed away all our sins and has given us eternal life. The person who lays down the heart that boasted of himself, believes with his heart the salvation He accomplished, and so abides in His word is a true disciple. Since the very Lord whom Abraham saw and rejoiced over has made us free, we are people who are free indeed. ✉

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

CHAPTER

9

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



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

Sermon 1 by Paul C. Jong

The Lord, who opened our eyes and let us see salvation

< John 9:1–12 >

"Now as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?' Jesus answered, 'Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him. I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.' When He had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. And He said to him, 'Go, wash in the pool of Siloam' (which is translated, Sent). So he went and washed, and came back seeing. Therefore the neighbors and those who previously had seen that he was blind said, 'Is not this he who sat and begged?' Some said, 'This is he.' Others said, 'He is like him.' He said, 'I am he.' Therefore they said to him, 'How were your eyes opened?' He answered and said, 'A Man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, "Go to the pool of Siloam and wash." So I went and washed, and I received sight.' Then they said to him, 'Where is He?' He said, 'I do not know.'"

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

A man had been unable to see from birth. He lived by sitting and begging, and his neighbors knew him as a man who always lived that way. But as Jesus was passing by, He saw him. It was to that man, whom people had been seeing for a long time, that the Lord came. That day Jesus opened his eyes, and he came back seeing.

Looking at him, the disciples asked whose sin it was due to. Jesus answered that He would reveal the works of God in him. While people were debating the reason for his plight, the Lord healed him. What we will see in this passage today, too, is the work that the Lord does. Let us look together at what kind of salvation God has bestowed on us, who have no ability to save ourselves, and how we believe that salvation.

The salvation of God, which He reveals to us who are weak

Let us read verses 2 and 3.

"And His disciples asked Him, saying, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?' Jesus answered, 'Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him'" (John 9:2–3).

The disciples' question had only two answers: it was either because of his own sin or because of his parents' sin. Jesus did not choose one of those two for them, but spoke of the work of God that He would reveal in him. He was correcting the thinking of the disciples, who were laying the blame on a man who had been unable to see from birth.

The Lord knew all about that man's circumstances. He knew that he had not been able to see since he was born, and that he had lived by begging. That man faced a reality that he could not

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

change by himself, but the Lord had the power to heal him. The work of God that was revealed in him was that his eyes, which had been dark, actually became bright.

This man who was blind from birth is also a picture of all of us. We, too, were born with sin as descendants of Adam, and we live committing sins all our lives. We were the spiritually blind, who did not know God and could not see even the road ahead of us. Even if we resolve to become better people than we were yesterday, the sins we have already committed remain as they are, and we have no strength to stop by ourselves the evil things that rise up from our hearts.

Then what is the work that God desires to reveal to such people as us? It is the work of removing our sins to make us righteous people and making us children of God. The grass of the field and the beasts cannot become children of God, but God planned from the beginning to do this work for human beings. Even our being born weak was within God's will to let us receive that grace.

Moreover, God has already accomplished this work completely. God did the work of removing our sins, and the only thing left for us to do is to believe it. Therefore, whenever you discover your own shortcomings, do not regard even God's salvation as lacking. The Lord, who knows all our sins and weaknesses, came to save exactly such people as us.

The Savior needed by the person who knows his own sins

Jesus spat on the ground, made clay, and put it on the man's eyes. Since He put earth kneaded with saliva on the eyes of a man who was already sorrowful enough just from being unable

to see, in human eyes it is an insulting thing. When people see someone who is extremely filthy and deserves to be cursed, they spit. And God made man out of the earth. The clay kneaded with saliva shows the fact that man, who was made out of that earth, became one who was to be cursed before God because of sin.

Before Jesus opened his eyes, He first made him realize what kind of person he was. The eyes point to a person's heart. The sin in our hearts is as filthy as spit, and if it is left as it is, the judgment of God cannot be avoided. Only when we know that we are such people does the word telling us to wash sound precious. The Lord spoke as follows about where the things that defile a person come from.

"And He said, 'What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man'" (Mark 7:20–23).

The Lord looks not so much at the actions that show on the outside as at the heart from which those actions come. Even while we keep our manners before people, we can hate others inwardly, and even though we have not laid a hand on what belongs to others, our hearts can be full of covetousness. Sometimes we point out other people's wrongs well while failing to see the pride within ourselves. When the Lord speaks of the human heart, that is a word about none other than our own hearts. What we need is not an evaluation that we look better than others, but a salvation by which even this sin that comes out of our hearts is washed clean away.

That man accepted the clay put on his eyes just as it was. If he had pushed it away, saying that he did not like earth mixed with saliva, he would not have been able to open his eyes. The

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

person who lays down the heart that exalts himself and accepts what he is as the Lord reveals it comes to salvation. But if one stays in that place with the earth still on his eyes, everything before him is still dark. The earth must be washed off. Sins are not washed away by regret and resolution. The Savior, who actually had our sins passed on to Him and received the judgment for those sins, must wash them away for us.

If we know Jesus only as One who gave good teachings, our own problem of sin remains as it is. When we know and believe how Jesus bore our sins and how He paid the price of those sins on the Cross, our eyes that had been spiritually dark are opened.

The washing away of sins accomplished by the Savior who was sent

Let us read verses 6 and 7.

"When He had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. And He said to him, 'Go, wash in the pool of Siloam' (which is translated, Sent). So he went and washed, and came back seeing" (John 9:6–7).

Jesus told the man to go and wash in the pool of Siloam. He went and washed, and came back seeing. It was not that he found a way to heal his eyes by himself; he went to the place the Lord had told him. He could not open his own eyes by himself. Going and washing as the word said was all that he did, and the One who opened his eyes was Jesus.

The Bible makes it clear that Siloam means *"Sent."* Who is the One sent by God? It is Jesus Christ. In verse 4, the Lord spoke of *"the works of Him who sent Me."* Only when we go to the Son whom the Father sent is the sin in our hearts washed

away.

Also, Jesus sends into the world those who have believed that salvation first. We meet the servants of God and the saints who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and we hear how the Lord washed away our sins. What washes away sin is not the name or position of the person who preaches, but the salvation of Jesus Christ that they preach. Here lies the precious work of the person who has been sent by God and preaches this gospel.

Then how did Jesus, whom the Father sent, wash away our sins? The very first thing that Jesus, who was sent and came to this earth, did as He began His public ministry was receiving baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River. Through that baptism He received from John, Jesus had all the sins of the world transferred to Him. When John the Baptist tried to prevent that baptism, Jesus answered as follows.

"But Jesus answered and said to him, 'Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.' Then he allowed Him" (Matthew 3:15).

"All righteousness" was fulfilled as follows. Just as on the Day of Atonement in the Old Testament the high priest laid both his hands on the head of the live goat and passed the sin of the children of Israel on to it, Jesus had the sin of mankind passed on to Him through the baptism He received from John. Just as the water of Siloam washed away the clay put on the man's eyes, the baptism He received from John washed away the sin in our hearts.

Within it are contained not just a few wrongs that we remember. All the sins we commit from the time we are born until we die are contained in it. Both the sins we want to hide and the sins we have committed again and again are within the sin of the world that was passed on to Jesus.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Bearing that sin, Jesus went to the Cross. There the sinless Son of God shed His blood and received all the judgment for that sin which we should have received. And He was buried and, three days later, rose again from death. The Apostle Paul testifies as follows about what kind of salvation that death and resurrection are for us.

"Who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification" (Romans 4:25).

Jesus is not One who remained in death. He is the Savior who rose again in order to justify us. Whoever believes in Jesus, who was sent and came, washed away our sins through the baptism He received from John, paid the price of those sins on the Cross, and rose again from death, has all his sins washed away. God gives the Holy Spirit as a gift to those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and makes them His own children. Becoming a child of God is not a position we obtain by meeting the qualifications, but the gift of salvation given by sending His Son.

Jesus is not One who, every time we sin, comes to the Jordan River again to receive baptism from John and is hung on the Cross again. Human weakness is exposed every day, but the atonement of Jesus is an eternal atonement that He accomplished once and for all. The Lord, who knows even tomorrow's weaknesses that we do not yet know, had even all those sins transferred to Him. Therefore, the assurance of the remission of sins depends not on how well we have done today, but on what the Lord has accomplished for us.

The man who came back seeing had no reason to go back to Siloam every day in order to open his eyes. We, too, believe in the washing away of sins that the Lord has already accomplished. This is not taking sin lightly, but believing the fact that Jesus bore all the weight of that sin. When you have done wrong,

admit the wrong and turn back, but do not make your own resolution the basis of salvation; believe in the unchanging righteousness of the Lord.

Believe the gospel you have heard as your own salvation

Seeing him, whose eyes had been opened, his neighbors and the people who had previously seen him begging said things that differed from one another. Some said that he was the man who used to sit and beg, and others said that he was another man who looked like him. Then he made it clear that he was that very man. When they asked how his eyes had been opened, he told just as it was what Jesus had done.

Let us read verses 11 and 12.

"He answered and said, 'A Man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, "Go to the pool of Siloam and wash." So I went and washed, and I received sight.' Then they said to him, 'Where is He?' He said, 'I do not know'" (John 9:11–12).

What he said was clear: Jesus had made clay, put it on his eyes, and told him to go to Siloam and wash, and when he went and washed as He had told him, he came to see. Whatever people might guess, what had happened to him remained just as it was. He did not speak as if relating a story he had heard from others, but testified of what Jesus had done for him.

We, too, believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit in this way. There are people who know the statement that Jesus washed away the sin of the world, yet regard their own sins as still remaining. Some also think that others can be saved, but that they themselves are too deficient. But within the sin of the world

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

that Jesus had transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John are our own sins as well. The judgment for that sin which He received on the Cross was for each one of us, and the Lord, who rose again from death, is our own Savior. Accepting this fact in the heart is faith.

Explaining the gospel well and believing that gospel in one's own heart are different things. If, while repeating words about the remission of sins with ease, we are always weighing our own deeds in our hearts, we cannot enjoy the grace that the Lord has given. Receive what the Lord has done as your own. Believe the word that you, too, are a person who has received that salvation and that the Lord has washed away your sins.

When people asked him where Jesus was, he answered that he did not know. While not pretending to know what he did not know, he spoke clearly of what had happened to him. Likewise, it is not that we can believe in salvation only after we have built up enough knowledge to answer every question. We learn more through the word about what we do not know, but we believe now the fact of salvation that God has made clear through the word.

The assurance of the remission of sins does not come from feelings. Faith is holding on not to a scene seen in a dream or some special sound one claims to have heard with his ears, but to the written word. On days when our hearts are overflowing, and also on days when our hearts are heavy because of our shortcomings, what the Lord has accomplished remains the same. The written word that Jesus saved us through the baptism He received from John, the blood of the Cross, and the resurrection is the ground of our assurance.

Do not spend today, the day you receive grace, in vain

Before Jesus opened the man's eyes, He spoke about the time for working. Let us read verses 4 and 5.

"We must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. When I am in the world, I am the light of the world –ASV" (John 9:4–5).

The Lord, the light of the world, was doing the Father's work. The disciples were asking whose fault it was, but the Lord said that the work of Him who sent Him had to be done now, and He actually opened the man's eyes. Since He said that *"we"* must do it, the Lord wanted to do this work together with His disciples. He said that when night comes, no one can work. This present time, in which we can hear and believe the gospel, is the day, and this day does not continue without end.

It is grace that we have today, a day on which we can hear and believe the gospel. The Apostle Paul also exhorted as follows.

"We then, as workers together with Him also plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain. For He says: 'In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you.' Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Corinthians 6:1–2).

When the word of salvation comes to your ears, do not put it off. If you say that you will believe after you have become a better person, you will still end up looking for the qualifications for salvation in yourself. God has sent His Son to us, who need a Savior because of sin. Salvation is not a reward earned by piling up merits, but a gift. You need only lay down your own righteousness and believe what the Son has accomplished.

Let us, who have already believed this gospel, not treat the

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

grace we have received carelessly either. Before we heard the gospel, we did not know what to do about our own sins, but now we know that the Lord has washed away all sins, and we know the reason why we have become righteous people before God. Let us not let this slip by as if it were something to be taken for granted, but let us hear the word, worship together, and praise God, who has given this salvation.

Those whose eyes were opened first are people sent to those who do not yet know salvation. Let us treasure the daytime that the Lord has allowed us and preach the Savior who has washed away our sins. Let us see to it that our words do not become words that boast of ourselves, but a testimony that reveals what Jesus has done.

Jesus, who gave sight to the man who had been unable to see from birth, has also let us, who lived in darkness under sin, see salvation. True to the meaning of Siloam, He is the Savior whom the Father sent for us. When that man heard the word telling him to go to Siloam and wash, he went just as he was told, without questioning or putting it off. Like that man, who went and washed as the word said and came back seeing, believe in your hearts today the word that the Savior who was sent has washed away all your sins. ✉

Sermon 2 by Paul C. Jong

He saved those who deserved to be cursed

< John 9:1–7 >

"Now as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?' Jesus answered, 'Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him. I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.' When He had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. And He said to him, 'Go, wash in the pool of Siloam' (which is translated, Sent). So he went and washed, and came back seeing."

"A man who was blind from birth"

In the word we read today, while Jesus was walking along the road with His disciples, He saw a man who had been blind from birth. Then the disciples asked, *"Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" (John 9:2)*. And Jesus answered, *"Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him" (John 9:3)*.

In fact, this word is very simple. It is simple and plain. Jesus saw a man who was blind, the disciples asked a question, and

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

the Lord answered that question. He said that it was neither because of the man's own sin nor because of his parents' sin, but only *"that the works of God should be revealed in him" (John 9:3)*. But to understand this word, we must know the whole Bible. To know why the Lord spoke this word and what the core of this word is, we must know the whole Bible; and also, only when we believe in the word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit and are born again do we come to know what this word is saying.

The plan to make human beings the people of God

Romans says, *"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)*. So we understand that Adam and Eve sinned, and that we inherited that sin and became sinners. That is how we usually understand it, and that is the basic common knowledge about the word written in the Bible. We understand that because we were born of sinners we become sinners, and that when we have children, since we are sinners, our children also become sinners, so that sin is handed down from generation to generation.

But what did the Lord say in this word? He said, *"Neither this man nor his parents sinned" (John 9:3)*. He said this when He saw the blind man. Then one may be confused, wondering, "Does this mean that the word saying that many became sinners through the sin of one man, Adam, is wrong?" It is not wrong, but confusion can arise. However, the two passages do not contradict each other.

It is true that many became sinners through the sin of one man, but that is one part of the process. What the Lord actually means to say here is what He said, *"But that the works of God*

should be revealed in him" (John 9:3). In whom? It means that He intended to reveal the works of God in the blind man. God the Father had a plan in His Son Jesus Christ even before Adam and Eve were created. As for what that plan was, it is that in creating man on this earth, He had the purpose of making man, who is fundamentally a created being, His own children and His own people. That is why He spoke this word.

Even before you and I were born into this world, and even before Adam and Eve, the ancestors of mankind, were deceived by Satan the devil and sinned against God, God had a certain purpose for us human beings. That purpose was none other than the work of saving us from sin and making us children of God and the people of God.

To do this work, God caused all people to be born spiritually blind from birth, that is, to be born as sinners. People are born with sin from the time they are born. It is not because they themselves committed sins, nor because their parents committed many particular sins. It is that we came to be born on this earth under the purpose of God the Father to make you and me, who resemble the image of God, the people of God in His Son Jesus Christ. It is that we came to be born spiritually blind.

Even today there are people whose physical eyes cannot see. Some cannot see from birth, and some lost their sight after they were born. These days such people are called the visually impaired. But spiritually speaking, we are the spiritually blind. We are blind from birth. It is not that we became this way because our parents did something wrong. It is true that Adam and Eve did wrong, but before that, God the Father had a plan in His Son Jesus Christ. He did so in order to reveal in that blind man the work that God intended to do. What is that work? He did this in order to fulfill the word that follows. The Bible records that word as follows: *"When He had said these things,*

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. And He said to him, 'Go, wash in the pool of Siloam' (which is translated, Sent). So he went and washed, and came back seeing" (John 9:6–7).

"He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva"

After the Lord had spoken the words of verses 4 and 5, He spat on the ground, made clay, put it on the man's eyes, and told him to go and wash in the pool of Siloam. When he went and washed, he came back seeing. Dear fellow believers, in opening this blind man's eyes, Jesus spat on the ground. He spat and kneaded the dirt into clay, and He put that clay on the blind man's eyes.

In fact, seen through human eyes, this is an insulting thing. He did not spit into the blind man's eyes, but in human terms, spitting on the ground, kneading the dirt with that saliva, and putting it on someone's eyes is a shameful thing. Being unable to see was sorrowful enough, and then he met someone who kneaded clay, put it on his eyes, and told him to go and wash in the pool of Siloam. But what is amazing is that the people who met the Lord obeyed well. He went to the pool of Siloam and washed. He did not do anything special; he simply washed.

The Bible says, *"There are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written" (John 21:25)*. The Bible is precisely the word given in order to save sinners from sin.

So when we look at the word of God, we must focus on that. If we needlessly focus on scientific matters, or on things like

ethics, morality, and manners, we miss the original meaning of the word. This man obeyed well. When He told him to go and wash in the pool of Siloam, he washed, and when he washed, his eyes were opened wide. He came back seeing. The Bible records it this way, and what is important is to know what this word is saying. It is not a word saying that if you obey well, you will be blessed. Pastors commonly teach that if you obey your pastor well you will be blessed, that if you bring and offer much you will be blessed, and that if by faith you give a large tithe, even if you have to go into debt to do it, your business will prosper—but all of that is talk that deceives people.

People who deserve to be cursed

Centered on this word, which says that the Lord *"spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. And He said to him, 'Go, wash in the pool of Siloam'" (John 9:6–7)*, we must come to know the word one step at a time. Only then will the spiritual principles open up to us. What does it mean spiritually that He spat on the ground and made clay? It is telling us that we human beings are people who are to be cursed before God.

People ordinarily spit on someone who is to be cursed. They spit on a truly wicked person, saying, "You wicked man!" Spitting is not something one does to just anyone. People spit on someone whose sin has been clearly exposed, someone who turns out to be utterly wrong when his sins are dug up one by one, someone who is to be cursed. So His spitting means that before God, you and I—all mankind—were people who were to be cursed like this. We were not merely sinners; we were people who were to be cursed.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Dear fellow believers, the Bible says, *"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23)*. It means that the wages of sin is death. For one who has sin, suffering death and going to hell is one part of the process. It is only natural for sinners to go to hell, and it is also natural for them to be cursed. But we must know what kind of beings we ourselves are before God: we are not merely beings who must go to hell, but truly shameful people who are to be cursed. We must know that.

Because of our sins, we are fundamentally such beings before God. Think about how each one of us has lived until now, in the light of the word of God's law. If we engrave on our hearts God's commandments that said, "Do this," and "Do not do this," then truly all people—each one of us—must confess that we are people who are to be cursed before God. We must own up to it. If we do not know this, we cannot know why the Lord spat on the ground and made clay, and why He put it on the eyes.

This is a word spoken to the eyes of our hearts. He is telling the eyes of your heart and mine that you and I are such people before God. He is saying that we are truly filthy people who ought to be cursed. Therefore, when we come to realize who we are before God, it is not at the level of whether we have sin or not. We are people who are to be cursed. Because of our sins, we ourselves deserve to be cursed before God, deserve to go to hell, deserve to be destroyed, and deserve to go into the fire that never goes out for all eternity and suffer torment there. Knowing that, we must come before God and make the confession, "Because of my sins, I am a person who deserves to be cursed, to be judged, and to suffer eternal destruction." When there is such a confession, the Lord tells us to go and wash in the pool of Siloam, and when we go and wash, we are healed.

For the sin in our hearts to be washed away before God so

that we become people as white as snow without a single sin, and for us to become the holy people of God, we must first know what kind of being we ourselves are before God—that we are truly people who deserve to be cursed and to receive the wrath of God. Then we must confess it and acknowledge it. And we must come to Jesus Christ, and since He has washed away our sins with the word of the truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit that He has given us, we must believe in that word of the truth of the gospel and receive the remission of sins.

"Go, wash in the pool of Siloam"

Jesus Christ is the One whom God the Father sent. Jesus Christ is not One who came to this earth as He pleased and worked as He pleased. He was sent according to the will of God the Father, and while living His thirty-three years of life on this earth, He thoroughly kept in His heart the work God the Father had entrusted to Him, and He thoroughly accomplished that work. Of the name Siloam, the Bible says that it is a name *"which is translated, Sent" (John 9:7)*. The Lord said, *"I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day" (John 9:4)*. Who is the One who sent Him? He is God the Father.

Dear fellow believers, to whom must we go? Only when we go to Jesus Christ can all our filthy sins be completely washed away and every curse be completely removed. Then how must we go? We must first know our own wretchedness and filthiness and go to Jesus Christ. Then what are we told to do when we go to Jesus Christ? We must know that Jesus Christ, who was sent by God the Father and came to this earth, received baptism from John the Baptist according to the will of God the Father and so had your sins and mine transferred to Him. And we must believe

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

that Jesus Christ, bearing those sins, was nailed to the Cross and hung there, received all the judgment for our sins, and rose again from death. So, by the faith of our hearts, we must have our sins washed away so that our hearts become clean, as white as snow, and we must now be able to see God with clear eyes and call God our Father.

The baptism He received from John

We must know, acknowledge, and believe why God caused us to be born into this world, and that we who have been born into this world are truly people who deserve to be cursed. The Bible records the birth of Jesus and what happened *"when He was twelve years old" (Luke 2:42)*, and after that there is no record. Then, at about thirty years of age, He begins His public ministry and begins the work of saving mankind from sin. The very first thing Jesus Christ did when He came to this earth and began His public ministry was to receive baptism. From whom did He receive it? He received it from John the Baptist. Why did He receive baptism? He received baptism in order to have all the sin of mankind transferred to Him. And it was in order to bear that sin, be judged on the Cross, rise again from death, and save us. We must know this fact and believe in Jesus.

Then how do we understand the reason for it? Did He receive baptism because He was humble, and did He receive baptism to set an example? That is not so. The word baptism carries the meanings 'to be washed,' 'to be buried,' and 'to be passed on.' Jesus received baptism from John the Baptist in order to have the sin of all mankind born as Adam's descendants, including you and me, transferred onto His own body once and for all through John the Baptist, the representative of mankind. It was

so that, bearing the sin thus transferred to Him, He would receive the judgment for sin on the Cross and rise again from death, and so wash us from sin and save us from sin, curse, and destruction. We must know this.

If, without knowing this, people say they are going to Jesus Christ, whom God the Father sent, and claim to believe in Him blindly, they cannot receive the remission of sins. Then they become religious people. Presenting offerings with all one's devotion in a man-made religion is exactly the same as coming to church, blindly calling on God the Father, singing praises and praying while saying that one believes Jesus is one's Savior, and giving offerings. For the sin in their hearts still remains as it is. You must know when, where, and how—that is, through the baptism He received from John—Jesus, whom God the Father sent, specifically had the sins of each one of you transferred to Him, and how He truly became our Savior by bearing the sin of the world and going on to be nailed to the Cross, receiving the judgment for sin, and rising again from death.

Only when we know and believe in that way does it come to pass according to the word, *"You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32)*. Only when we know and believe in that way do we have all our sins washed away once and for all and truly become children of God, and from then on we come to worship services and praise God. We come to praise Him, and even without anyone saying, "Preach the gospel," or "Do not preach it," our mouths itch so much that we cannot keep still, and so we come to testify of Jesus Christ, who came by the truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. That is why we must know well Jesus Christ, whom God the Father sent. And we must also know ourselves well. It is not merely that we were simply sinners and the Lord saved us.

Please do not underestimate sin and the price of that sin too

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

much. It has been said that if there is even the slightest bit of sin, one can never come out of Hades. I am not trying to talk about whether one commits sin or not. The point is that the price of sin is not so light. Sin is accursed, painful, and an eternal curse; sin is something that carries such a price that it would have been better never to have been born into this world—it has that much power.

Sin that is not washed away by pleading

Dear fellow believers, we must hear the word of God steadily, in order, and continually. But some people hear the word of God once, then go to some religious place and hear it once there, then come back and hear it once again. All of that is in vain. Rather, it only makes their ears picky and defiles their hearts. What is this word saying? It is that He spat on the ground, made clay, put it on the eyes, and told him to go and wash in the pool of Siloam. We must know how shameful we are because of our sins and how accursed is the curse we ought to receive, and we must go to Jesus Christ, whom God the Father sent. And we must know, through the written word of God, the fact that Jesus Christ had the sin of mankind transferred to Him once and for all through the baptism He received from John the Baptist.

I cannot cover all those specific words here, but it is all recorded verse by verse. God specifically prophesied in the Old Testament when, where, and how the Lord would have your sins transferred to Him through the baptism He would receive from John, and the word of how Jesus fulfilled it just as it was in the New Testament is recorded. Also, what we must know is that sin is not something one recognizes on one's own and washes away by oneself. If people recognize their sins and plead to be

forgiven, are their sins washed away?

In the old days, when someone who had committed a crime was taken to the government office, he would plead before the judge, "I committed that crime. I was wrong. Please forgive me." But your sins are not washed away by pleading for forgiveness like that. You must know that. Only when you know the truth of how specifically the Lord removed your sins and mine are your hearts and consciences set free from sin and saved. Sin is not washed away just because one pleads one-sidedly or because one has pleaded a great deal. Yet people today wrongly understand it that way.

They go to church and blindly plead, "Father God, I committed such and such sins this week. Please forgive me." Then, having some sense of shame, they ought not to sin again, but they sin again. As they keep doing that in the name of Jesus for five, ten, twenty, thirty, forty years, eventually even that no longer works. They say, "God, You know all my sins, don't You? Lord, You shed Your blood on the Cross and removed them all, didn't You?" Then when did the Lord shed His blood on the Cross and remove your sins? On the Cross He received the judgment for your sins, but when did Jesus have those sins transferred to Him? Do you know that He had those sins transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John? Because they do not even know this, yet blindly go and plead and offer prayers of fasting and prayers of repentance, they are spiritually blind. Spiritually, they are like *"a man who was blind from birth" (John 9:1).*

Dear fellow believers, there are people who lightly say that believing in Jesus and being saved is only the foundation. Then is the foundation that easy? Even when building a house, the foundation is not easy. To build a nuclear power plant, laying the foundation takes far more effort and a much longer time than

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

what goes up above the ground. The Lord, too, came to this earth and laid the foundation of salvation that saves you and me from sin. Do you know for how many years He worked to do that? He accomplished it while living for thirty-three years, and during that time He spoke the word. The point is that it is not such a simple thing.

That is why the Lord, having been sent by God the Father, came to this earth and completely accomplished the work of saving us by the truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. If we were to sum up in one sentence the work the Lord did when He came to this earth, it would be that He saved us by the gospel of the water and the Spirit. All the work the Lord did is contained exactly in this sentence. Then we must know specifically what the water is, what the Spirit is, and what it is that saved us. The Lord came to this earth, accomplished all that work, rose again from death, and ascended to heaven.

Those who have been sent

And the Lord left His disciples on this earth. Who were they? They were the apostles of the early church. What does the word apostle mean? It means ‘one who has been sent.’ After the apostles departed from this world, there were the Church Fathers. The Church Fathers, too, all departed from this world. Who comes after them? The Lord has sent to this earth people who know and believe the truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Who are they? They are none other than you and I today. We are preaching the gospel to the whole world. Even if we preached this gospel in one city and gathered a hundred people, or a million people, that would be a work as small as a grain of millet. Those who have the gospel of the water and the Spirit

preach this gospel to all people throughout the whole world.

Those who have the gospel of the water and the Spirit can do this work toward all people throughout the whole world. They can do it because the Lord has sent them and because the Lord works. Therefore, those who believe in Jesus but have not yet truly met the Lord and still have sin in their hearts must meet someone who knows the truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Who are those people? They are the people sent by God. That is why, as you meet those people, listen to their sermons, learn step by step, and ask questions when you have them and hear the answers, the problems of your hearts are resolved.

This word is telling us this. It tells who the people are who have truly met the Lord, who receives the grace of the remission of sins before God, who comes to see the world and to see God with clear eyes, and who receives such blessings. Dear fellow believers, the Bible says, *"So he went and washed, and came back seeing" (John 9:7)*. What does it mean to wash? Filthy things go away only when they are washed. They do also go away if you burn them, but we must wash. Do people say that when you die, it is all over? Absolutely not. There is judgment. Have your sins been washed away? Have they been washed as white as snow? Do you have in your hearts, as the word of God's truth, the truth by which your sins were washed as white as snow? This is truly necessary.

Dear fellow believers, once you have read the word of the Bible, you must speak on the basis of that word. For the salvation of your own soul, you must earnestly seek out people who have met the truth. And if what such a person preaches is the spiritual meaning contained in the word of the Bible, you must learn and listen with the attitude of a learner. We, too, were spiritually blind, but God gave us this precious truth and caused us to know the Lord, caused us to know Jesus Christ, who came to this earth

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

by the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and not only caused us to know the truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit but also caused us to believe it; and now He has caused us to be born again so that we follow and serve the Lord while we live on this earth. How great a grace this is!

As I look at this word, I am truly thankful before God. I hope that those of you who are still spiritually blind will learn the word through the Church of God—through the pastors, workers, and brothers and sisters in the Church of God. For that to happen, all the things you have wrongly known and wrongly learned until now must be removed. They are all leaven. They are the leaven of men. It is not achieved by knowing it only doctrinally; only when you throw away the leaven of men can you meet the Lord. I hope that God will give you such blessings. ✉

Sermon 3 by Paul C. Jong

Go, wash in the pool of Siloam

< John 9:1–7 >

“Now as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying, ‘Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?’ Jesus answered, ‘Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him. I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.’ When He had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. And He said to him, ‘Go, wash in the pool of Siloam’ (which is translated, Sent). So he went and washed, and came back seeing.”

“Go, wash in the pool of Siloam”

Today we have looked at the word of John chapter 9. Jesus told him to go and wash in the pool of Siloam, and it says that when he went to the pool of Siloam and washed, he came back seeing. The Bible records of Siloam *“which is translated, Sent” (John 9:7)*. Jesus saw the man who was blind from birth, and *“He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. And He said to him, ‘Go, wash in the pool of Siloam’” (John 9:6–7)*. And the Bible records, *“So he went and washed, and came back seeing” (John 9:7)*.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

If you were to stop a blind man passing by, spit on the ground, make clay, put it on his eyes, and tell him to go and wash in that pond over there, would his eyes be opened? Concerning this blind man who appears in the Bible, Jesus' disciples asked, *"Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" (John 9:2)*. Jesus said, *"Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him" (John 9:3)*.

The work of God that is revealed in unfortunate circumstances

You and I, too, were born with sin when we were born into this world. We inherited the sin of Adam and Eve. So we were born as sinners. Why were we born as sinners? It is so that God might work in you and me and remove our sins. It means that the Son of God came to this earth for that work: to remove our sins, make us children of God, and so reveal the glory of God. Looking at our own family backgrounds, we often think, "Why was I born into a family like this? I wish I had been born into a decent family."

But God is saying that He has allowed it so that, working in all the unfortunate circumstances and lives of you and me, He might clothe us with the blessing of becoming children of God and give us the blessing of being able to live forever in the kingdom of heaven.

The One who was sent

Siloam, when translated, means 'Sent'; what is this telling us?

Who is the One sent by God? It is Jesus Christ. The One who sent Jesus to this earth is God the Father. God the Father sent His own Son to this earth. That is why Jesus said, *"He who believes in Me, believes not in Me but in Him who sent Me" (John 12:44)*. It means that to believe in the One who was sent to this earth is none other than to believe in God the Father.

Also, we have received the remission of sins by believing in Jesus Christ; to whom does Jesus Christ send people? He sends His disciples to the spiritually blind. He sends the disciples to them and has them, so to speak, spit on the ground, make clay of the earth, and put it on their eyes. Who does that work? It is you and I who do it.

You and I meet people who have sin in their hearts and preach to them as follows: "You are a person who was born with a cursed life from birth. Even if you had not committed a single sin, you would be a sinner; you have already committed many sins as well, and you are a person who will go to hell. If you know that you are a sinner and believe in the work the Savior of mankind did when He came to this earth—that is, in Jesus the Savior, who received baptism from John the Baptist and had the sin of this world transferred to Him, went to the Cross and suffered, rose again from death, and so saved you—you will be saved." It is telling us that when we preach this, people receive the remission of sins. He told him to go and wash in that pool—Siloam, which means 'Sent.'

In John chapter 5, the pool of Bethesda appears. Bethesda means 'the house of mercy.' The pool that bestows mercy also has water in it. What is that water that bestows mercy? It is speaking of the mercy by which Jesus came to this earth, received baptism from John the Baptist and had the sins of you and me—the sin of this world—transferred to Him, died on the Cross for us, rose again from death, and became the Savior of

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

you and me. It is speaking of that word of mercy, that the Lord has made you and me new created beings. And the pool of Siloam here means 'Sent.' Jesus Christ, who was sent, came and saved this man. He opened his eyes, delivered him from blindness, and let him see a new heaven and a new earth. This is speaking of the work Jesus Christ did.

The gospel of salvation contained in every sign

The whole Bible is that kind of story. So it is with the time He made wine from water at Cana. The Bible records, *"Jesus said to them, 'Fill the waterpots with water.' And they filled them up to the brim. And He said to them, 'Draw some out now, and take it to the master of the feast.' And they took it" (John 2:7–8)*. The master of the feast, who tasted the wine that had been made from water, said to the bridegroom, *"You have kept the good wine until now!" (John 2:10)*. That shows that Jesus has given us new life, that He removed our sins and made you and me new created beings, that He saved us, and that the Lord did that Himself. That is why the Gospel of John goes on showing seven signs. So it is that this man too, when He told him to go and wash in the pool of Siloam, went and washed, and his eyes became clear and he came back.

Is this not the miracle of miracles? You and I were born as sinners, lived as sinners, and had no choice but to go to hell, the place where sinners go; but the Lord came to this earth, received baptism from John the Baptist and had our sins transferred to Him, died on the Cross, rose again from death, and saved us. Because He had pity on you and me and saved us, we believed and received salvation.

This is a wondrous work. Wherever the Lord brought about

a wondrous work, there is always contained that gospel of salvation—that the Lord received baptism from John the Baptist and had our sins transferred to Him, received judgment on the Cross, rose again from death, and saved us. The Bible is not speaking of something else. It speaks of other things in the world as well, but the Bible is the book of salvation.

Jesus is the Savior. How did He save us? He came with the offices of Christ and saved us. As the King of kings, the Lord came as the One who *"will save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21)*. And in the office of the High Priest, in order to offer His own body before God the Father instead of offering animals as the sacrificial offering, He had our sin, the sin of mankind, transferred onto His body through the baptism He received from John the Baptist. And He gave up His own body on the Cross, shed His blood, and died, and thereby paid the price of our sins, made us the people of God, and presented us before God. In this way, He came to this earth as the Savior who became the sacrificial offering and accomplished salvation for us.

So how thankful we are! He told him to go and wash in the pool of Siloam, and when he went and washed, he came back seeing. Dear fellow believers, only those who believe become righteous. Those who know and believe that the Lord came to this earth, received baptism from John the Baptist and had the sins of you and me transferred to Him, and received judgment on the Cross, and who by faith pass their sins on, by faith have their sins washed away, by faith are judged together with Christ, and believe that by faith they have risen together with the Lord, are people who have obtained everlasting life and have become children of God.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

People who cannot become clean by themselves

We are saved by believing. What could this man, who was blind from birth, do to open his own eyes? He could do nothing. In the same way, we human beings can do nothing to remove our own sins. For example, let us say that a man who cannot see is groping his way along and meets a swindler. When the swindler asks, "If you do what I tell you, you will be able to open your eyes. Will you do what I tell you?" the man answers, "If only I can open my eyes, I will do whatever you tell me." Then the swindler tells him, "Go and do a lot of restroom cleaning."

Long ago there was a certain religion that was once very popular. Its followers spread their religion wearing sashes over their shoulders, and when someone joined that religion, the very first thing they had him do was this: "To make your heart clean, clean restrooms." Which restrooms? Public restrooms. Those places are tremendously dirty. They taught that if one cleaned those places as if serving a god, for a month, a year, or five years, his heart would become clean.

And people really did that and said they had gained cleanness in their hearts. Dear fellow believers, it is the same with the sisters who do housework, and with the brothers too. When you see something dirty and think, "Should I do this or not?" and then decide, "I had better do it," and make it clean, what do you feel in your heart then? When you have neatly done the piled-up dishes, wiped the sink clean, tidied up the house, and cleaned even the window frames, don't you feel as if your heart has become clean? We sometimes feel that way. But when we come to understand it, that is a sense of accomplishment. We are enjoying the sense of accomplishment that we have achieved it, but we feel it as if our hearts had become clean.

But in reality, that cleanness gets dirty again before long.

That is how it goes. Having our sins washed clean is being cleansed by believing that Jesus came to this earth, received baptism from John the Baptist, and had our sins transferred to Him. Only when we believe that the work in which the Lord received baptism, died on the Cross, and rose again from death was for us can we be made clean; we cannot be made clean by anything else.

It is not accomplished by the blood of the Cross alone. If one believes only in the Cross, he goes only as far as thinking, "The Lord was killed for me. He is One I am grateful to." Jesus had the sins of you and me transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John the Baptist and washed them clean. Because He had the sins transferred to Him, because the sins that were in us were passed on to Jesus, because He took away the sins of our hearts, we have become clean. It is by believing that that we are made clean. Today people think proudly of the blood of the Cross and the word of the Cross, but the Cross is the place where the cursed are hung.

Because Jesus Himself had the sins of you and me transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John, He Himself was hung on the Cross and received our curse in our place. So the Cross is the Cross of the curse, not the Cross where He had our sins transferred to Him. Just as Jesus told him to go and wash in the pool of Siloam and the water of the pool of Siloam washed the dirt from this man's eyes, Jesus washed away our sins because He had our sins transferred to Him. Is it not amazing? Dear fellow believers, if we preach the word to people in this way, how many people can come into the church, receive the remission of sins, receive cleansing in their hearts, and live their lives anew with new hearts!

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

The baptism left out of the Apostles' Creed

But Satan the devil erased this word of the gospel through human desires. Those who held power erased it. When the powerful of that era gathered together everything about what the faith of the apostles had been, it contained the fact that when Jesus received baptism He had our sins transferred to Him. That is, He was born of Mary, received baptism from John the Baptist and had our sins transferred to Him, suffered under Pilate and died on the Cross, rose again from death, and saved us. They thought, "If it is written like this, Rome will truly become a nation that believes only in Christianity."

That would be a problem, because many peoples would rise up. The people believed in Zeus and in Apollo and in all the gods that were in Greek culture; if they were told to abandon them, would they abandon them? Because the Apostles' Creed was made for the unification of the nation, from the confession that He was born of Mary, had the sin of mankind transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John the Baptist, suffered under Pilate, and was hung on the Cross and died, they cleanly cut out the phrase "had the sin of mankind transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John the Baptist."

So in the Apostles' Creed, only the word of the Cross remained: "Born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was nailed to the Cross and died, on the third day after He was buried rose again from the dead, ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God Almighty, from where He will come to judge the living and the dead."

Today many Christians believe just as this brief wording of the Apostles' Creed says. So baptism is missing from their faith. That is why, even though people believe in Jesus, their sins do not go away. Dear fellow believers, there are people who say

that sins go away even if one believes only in the Cross, but there is a difference between the man who went to the pool of Siloam and washed and a man who went to just any pond and washed his eyes.

Jesus told him to go and wash in the pool of Siloam. When he went and washed, the blind man's eyes became clear and he came back. But people say, "Is the pool of Siloam really necessary? We can just go and wash in any pool," and they go and wash in just any pond. Even if they go and wash for an hour or two, their eyes are not opened.

Jesus was telling people to meet those who have already met Jesus, hear the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and have their sins washed away. So we received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Jesus washed away the sins of your hearts through the baptism He received from John. Your sins were passed on to the body of Jesus. But some people may say, "Oh, that trivial thing! This or that, we already know it all. There are people who did not believe such an easy thing but believed at the cost of their lives—are you saying that those people go to hell because they have sin in their hearts?" Jesus said, *"All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers" (John 10:8).*

The Lord came to this earth, had the sin of the world transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John the Baptist, died on the Cross, rose again from death, and saved us. He was saying that to have one's sins washed away by doing anything other than this work the Lord did is all the act of a robber and the act of a thief.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

The conscience of those who believe only in the Cross

Dear fellow believers, that religion, which taught that if you cleaned restrooms well the sin of your heart would be washed clean, later changed its appearance. Dear fellow believers, religions change their form. But the truth does not change its form.

The truth is unchanging, both in the past and now. But those who say that sins go away by believing only in the Cross say, "Thank You. I believe in Jesus, who was hung on the Cross for me," yet the sin in their hearts does not go away. When they first believe, they feel refreshed, but after that, when they commit sin, that sin is recorded on their hearts and does not go away. Dear fellow believers, because the conscience is extremely precise, if a person knows the fact that his sins were passed on to Jesus, he can say, "Ah, I have no sin. They were passed on, so I have no sin." But if he knows only that Jesus was nailed to the Cross and died for his sins, he is grateful, of course, but only for that moment. When he does wrong the next day, he can go before the Cross and pray, "Shed Your precious blood for me. Thank You." He can do as that religion did, which taught that sins go away if you clean restrooms. But as he keeps doing it over and over—ten times, twenty times, fifty times, a hundred times, two hundred times, three hundred times, five hundred times—he is pricked in his own heart.

Each time a person commits sin, he needs the blood that Jesus shed on the Cross, and as he keeps on doing this too much, his own conscience becomes very tormented. "I have done this much, so now I should stop sinning, but I keep committing sins; I do have some sense of shame, so how can I do this again?" So people become opponents of Christianity, or change their

religion. And when that does not work either, they even take their own lives.

A certain elderly man I knew was a true gentleman. He was a person of fine character. A person of fine character means a person whose knowing, feeling, and acting are all very upright. Someone who knows how to be angry when he should be angry, knows how to understand others when he should understand them, and knows how to help others when he should help them—who knows with his head, feels with his emotions, and acts well in his deeds in a balanced way—is called a person of fine character. He was such a man, but one day a rumor began to spread in that city.

It was that an elderly man had gone up to the top of a mountain and set fire to his own body, ending his life. At the time he was going to church, I was not going to church. But I had a connection with that elderly gentleman and had met him a few times, and he was truly a dignified man of fine character.

So I thought that he could not possibly have done such a thing. He was a man who went to church. At that time I thought only that much, but now that I have met the truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, I see that he had been believing only in the gospel of the Cross. Because his sins did not go away, he had tried to remove his sins even by burning his own body. Even now countless people believe only in the Cross. Even now countless people who believe in Jesus are deceiving their own consciences.

They say, “I believe in the gospel of the Cross, so where is there any sin in me?” but then, after they commit sin, before they know it they say, “Lord, please forgive this sin.” And while being careful in case other people hear them, they go to a quiet place of prayer because they want to shout out to their hearts’ content all the sin within them and pour it all out before God.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

There they pray with fasting, cling to trees and cry out, praying prayers of repentance for their sins, and they come down thinking that their sins have been washed away and go on living, and when sin builds up again, they do the same again. Yet the sins do not go away. That is why people who believe in Jesus always say that they are sinners, saved sinners. How heartbreaking this is!

Dear fellow believers, then do pastors have no sin in their hearts? As I have preached the gospel of the water and the Spirit, I have met many pastors, and when our brothers and sisters say that they have received the remission of sins and so have no sin, those pastors strongly oppose it.

So I inevitably end up meeting them. I ask, “Pastor, do you believe in Jesus?” and when he says he does, I ask, “Then, Pastor, are you a sinner or a righteous person?” Then he answers, “I am a saved sinner.” When I ask, “Don’t put it that way. Right now, is there sin in your heart, Pastor, or not?” he says, “How can you ask a person such a thing?” So when I tell him to say whether he has sin or not without saying anything else, he says, “Where is there anyone without sin?” Then I say, “How can a sinner who has sin in his heart tell church members to receive the remission of sins? Pastor, receive the remission of sins yourself first. If you have sin in your heart, you are a sinner too, Pastor, and you will go to hell. Aren’t you doing ministry just to make a living? Stop doing such a thing.” By nature I am very resolute in matters like this. When I deal with you, I deal with you very gently.

“The night is coming when no one can work”

The Lord said, *“I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day” (John 9:4)*. Because freedom of religion is still

given in this world, we can preach this gospel. But He said, *"The night is coming when no one can work" (John 9:4)*. When the Antichrist appears, then we will not be able to work. If anyone so much as opens his mouth, he will be seized and killed.

In the future, the Antichrist will appear throughout the whole world. Because that person solves all the difficult problems of the world, people follow him; there will be some who respect him and some who denounce him as the Antichrist. But one day someone shoots him dead with a gun. A doctor comes, examines his heart, and pronounces him dead, and he is laid aside to hold a funeral, but he comes back to life. From then on, the devil enters into him and revives him, so that when he prays, fire falls from heaven and wonders and miracles happen.

He becomes the one who rules the whole world, and that person is the Antichrist who opposes God at the end. Because such things happen, everyone follows him. So we must prepare now. For anyone who has not received the remission of sins, everything ends with that death; after that, only judgment remains, and only entering the pit of fire remains. Dear fellow believers, are you afraid of martyrdom? At that time it will not be only us; anyone who resists the Antichrist will be killed. And the sun, moon, and stars of the sky, the water of the sea, the air, and nature will all collapse, and diseases will spread. The sun will lose its light, so it will be dark even at midday.

Something comes to mind. Someone asked whether, when such things happen, he could not go into a sewer, hide there for three and a half years until the tribulation passed, then come out and be saved. But the water in the sewer is rotten too and teems with all kinds of germs, so if you stay in a sewer, you will die.

That person said that because he did not yet have complete faith. If one has faith, being martyred is not such a difficult thing. When such a world comes, do you think that only we will

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

become pitiful people and that the people of the world will eat well and live well? The people of the world will be even more miserable.

In Revelation, it is recorded that a voice heard from heaven said, *"Write: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on'" (Revelation 14:13)*. It means that from now on, those who die in the Lord are blessed. That is, in the last days, when the Antichrist is active on this earth, those who die in the Lord at that time are blessed. Why is that? Because those who remain alive will suffer far more, at that time those who die keeping their faith are the blessed ones. When that time comes, we must not fear martyrdom but keep our faith and go before the Lord. At that time, if someone abandons his faith, saying, "I'm scared, so I won't die," it will be more miserable. Being alive will be more miserable.

Now we must preach the gospel. We must preach the gospel to the whole world. We must let everyone know. In the future, all the people of the world, without missing a single person, will come to know this truth—that Jesus had our sins transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John the Baptist, went to the Cross and died, rose again from death, and saved us—even down to little children. Every single person will come to know it. At that time, those who know this and, saying, "If the Lord did so according to the word, then He has saved me," stand on Jesus' side and accept it purely will receive salvation, and those who do not accept it will end up taking the side of the devil and the Antichrist.

That is the very last harvest that is to come. It is whether one believes or does not believe. But until the time of harvest comes, you and I must be here. We will preach it to everyone. The claim that one is saved even by believing only in the Cross is not right.

Dear fellow believers, if you have a debt, until you pay off

that debt, the heavy heart of a debtor always weighs you down. You find yourself saying, "I am a debtor. I am a debtor." It is exactly the same: only after you have paid off precisely the debt you owe is the heavy burden lifted from your heart.

A person's conscience can be regarded as God's representative. We can deceive our conscience for a while, but we cannot deceive it forever.

To put it precisely, the Lord, in order to save us from sin, was born as a man by borrowing the body of Mary, and when He turned thirty, He had the sin of mankind transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John the Baptist and had the sins of you and me transferred to Him as well. And He took away our sins, shed His blood and died on the Cross, rose again from death, and became our Savior; only in this way can we receive salvation by believing in that Jesus Christ. The Lord said, *"You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32)*. It means that until one knows, believes, and acknowledges precisely the truth of salvation, the truth of the washing of sins, and the truth of the judgment of sin, the sin of the heart does not go away.

However much someone may be a leader in the religious world or a theologian, it is of no use. Someone may say, "Must you really preach it that way? Those people can believe in their own way, and we can believe in our own way." But if one believes that way, it becomes a religion made by man, and if one believes as we do, it becomes faith. To believe the truth by which the Lord saved us, to become a person who believes while looking up to the work God has done—this is faith.

Dear fellow believers, there is no need to think of it as too difficult. The truth is a very certain, simple, and clear fact. That is the truth. The truth is what does not change even when someone comes and shakes it. When we believe with our hearts,

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

whether there is any change in our hearts or not, we first come to know that there is no sin in our hearts, and next we come to know that we have become children of God, and our faith gradually grows.

And the Holy Spirit comes to rule that heart fully. We come to know what pleases the Lord and what does not please Him. We become blessed people. Dear fellow believers, you must go and wash in the pool of Siloam.

You hear the gospel from me, who met the gospel first, and are washed by believing that gospel. You were spiritually blind. As I introduce Jesus, you believe in Jesus and have your sins washed away, and you become people whose eyes are opened clearly and who see. I hope that all of you will enjoy this blessing. ✉

Sermon 4 by Paul C. Jong

The faith of living as disciples of the Lord, who saved us

< John 9:13–34 >

"They brought him who formerly was blind to the Pharisees. Now it was a Sabbath when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also asked him again how he had received his sight. He said to them, 'He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and I see.' Therefore some of the Pharisees said, 'This Man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath.' Others said, 'How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?' And there was a division among them. They said to the blind man again, 'What do you say about Him because He opened your eyes?' He said, 'He is a prophet.' But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind and received his sight, until they called the parents of him who had received his sight. And they asked them, saying, 'Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?' His parents answered them and said, 'We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but by what means he now sees we do not know, or who opened his eyes we do not know. He is of age; ask him. He will speak for himself.' His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had agreed already that if anyone confessed that He was Christ, he would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

said, ‘He is of age; ask him.’ So they again called the man who was blind, and said to him, ‘Give God the glory! We know that this Man is a sinner.’ He answered and said, ‘Whether He is a sinner or not I do not know. One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see.’ Then they said to him again, ‘What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?’ He answered them, ‘I told you already, and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become His disciples?’ Then they reviled him and said, ‘You are His disciple, but we are Moses’ disciples. We know that God spoke to Moses; as for this fellow, we do not know where He is from.’ The man answered and said to them, ‘Why, this is a marvelous thing, that you do not know where He is from; yet He has opened my eyes! Now we know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him. Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind. If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing.’ They answered and said to him, ‘You were completely born in sins, and are you teaching us?’ And they cast him out.”

The man whose eyes had been opened came to stand before the Pharisees. He was a man who had been unable to see from birth and had come to see because of Jesus. It was something for the whole neighborhood to congratulate him on. But what he received was not congratulations but repeated interrogation. They asked again and again how he had received his sight and who it was that had opened his eyes, and finally they cast him out.

The blind man’s receiving his sight in John chapter 9 shows

our receiving the remission of sins. The man whose eyes had been opened had one fact that no one could overturn. It was that though he had not been able to see before, now he could see. So he could not give the answer the religious leaders wanted, and even when they accused Jesus of being a sinner, he testified that the One who had opened his eyes had come from God.

We who have received the remission of sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit also need this faith. We cannot deny the salvation we received from the Lord in order to be acknowledged by people. Today's word shows what a person who has received the Lord's grace holds on to and whom he follows as he lives.

The heart that judges the Savior by human standards

Let us read verses 13 through 16.

"They brought him who formerly was blind to the Pharisees. Now it was a Sabbath when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also asked him again how he had received his sight. He said to them, 'He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and I see.' Therefore some of the Pharisees said, 'This Man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath.' Others said, 'How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?' And there was a division among them" (John 9:13–16).

The day Jesus opened that man's eyes was the Sabbath. When people took him to the Pharisees, it was not with the intention of rejoicing together with him, but with the intention of finding fault with Jesus, who had opened his eyes on the Sabbath. The man whose eyes had been opened answered exactly as it had happened: Jesus had put clay on his eyes, and

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

when he washed, he came to see. Then some among the Pharisees said that He was not from God because He had not kept the Sabbath, and others asked how a sinner could do such signs. So a dispute arose among them.

Before them stood a man whose eyes had actually been opened. Even so, some of them, rather than trying to know who Jesus is by seeing that event, made Jesus fit the standards they themselves had set up. Their point was that if He did not fit their standards, He could not be One who had come from God. What is more important than whether one has read the Bible a great deal or has lived a religious life for a long time is whether one believes in the Savior of whom that word testifies.

The question the Pharisees harbored inwardly was how one could have his eyes opened all at once. Today, too, when a person who has received the remission of sins confesses that the Lord has washed away all his sins, the same question comes back. The question is this: even after one has repented of sins and prayed for a long time and lived a life of faith zealously, the sin in the heart remains just as it was, so how can one become a righteous person by hearing the gospel and believing it? But the remission of sins is not determined by how much one has prayed or how long one has lived a religious life. It depends on what Jesus has accomplished and whether we believe that work.

The Pharisees took the Sabbath as their standard and said that Jesus was not from God. But Jesus is the Son of God, whom the Father sent into this world. He came in a human body and had all the sins of the world transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John the Baptist at the Jordan River. Bearing those sins, He was hung on the Cross, shed His blood, and died, and He rose again from death and became our Savior. Just as that man did not open his eyes by his own strength, neither are we people who removed our sins by our own goodness.

The baptism Jesus received from John and the blood of the Cross cannot be separated. It was because He had our sins passed on to Him at the Jordan River that He received the judgment for those sins on the Cross. If there had been no baptism He received from John, that Cross would also have had nothing to do with our sins. The Lord did not leave our sins as they were and simply look upon us favorably; He actually bore those sins and paid their price. The book of 1 John speaks of this salvation by the testimony of the water, the blood, and the Spirit.

"This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is the truth. For there are three who bear witness, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and the three agree in one –ASV" (1 John 5:6–8).

Believe with your heart the work accomplished by Jesus Christ, who came by water and blood, the One of whom the Holy Spirit testifies. Lay down the heart that measures the possibility of salvation by your own thoughts, and accept just as it is the salvation God has accomplished. Since the One who has made us righteous is the Lord, believing His word is what exalts God.

Do not avoid the testimony of grace because of fear

The Pharisees asked the man whose eyes had been opened again what kind of man he took Jesus to be. He answered that He was a prophet. He confessed that He was One like the prophets of the Old Testament, One who had shown the power of God to him.

But the Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had come to see. Even though the man whose eyes had been opened

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

was standing right before their eyes, they could not accept that event and called his parents. They asked whether this was their son, who they said was born blind, and if so, how he now saw.

The parents said that they knew two things: that he was their son and that he was born blind. But saying that they did not know how he now came to see or who had opened his eyes, they put it off onto their son, saying, *"He is of age; ask him. He will speak for himself" (John 9:21)*. They were parents who ought to have rejoiced and congratulated him before anyone else, since their son, who had been unable to see from birth, had had his eyes opened. Yet not a single word testifying of the grace their son had received came out of their mouths. The Bible reveals the reason they answered that way. Let us read verses 22 and 23.

"His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had agreed already that if anyone confessed that He was Christ, he would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, 'He is of age; ask him'" (John 9:22–23).

It had already been agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus as the Christ would be put out of the synagogue. When someone is put out of the synagogue, he is treated like a Gentile in that society and is not treated well anywhere. Even making a living becomes difficult. The parents were afraid of that. Even in the face of their son's eyes being opened, the fear of being driven out bound the parents' mouths. Verse 23 records the words *"ask him"* once more, and so shows that in the end they stepped back behind their son.

This also happens to people who have received the remission of sins today. If we say that we believe in Jesus and yet are still sinners, nothing happens. But if we say that Jesus had our sins passed on to Him through the baptism He received from John, received the judgment for those sins on the Cross, rose again, and saved us, and that therefore there is now no sin in our hearts,

opposition begins even from close family members and old friends. In the face of that, there are times when, even while knowing in our hearts that the gospel is right, we want to hide the confession that we have received the remission of sins in order to be at ease.

But we cannot confess the sins the Lord has washed away as being in us again in order to get along comfortably with people. It is just as the man whose eyes had been opened could not say that he still could not see in order to be accepted by people. Our remission of sins is not something achieved by people's approval but something the Lord has accomplished. When your heart aches because of opposition, tell that pain to the Lord and ask Him for help. What we must hold on to is not people's evaluation but the word of the Lord, who saved us.

I cannot deny the one thing I know

They called the man whose eyes had been opened a second time. This time, rather than asking about the facts, they first put forward their own judgment that Jesus was a sinner. Let us read verses 24 and 25.

"So they again called the man who was blind, and said to him, 'Give God the glory! We know that this Man is a sinner.' He answered and said, 'Whether He is a sinner or not I do not know. One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see'" (John 9:24–25).

Heard on their own, the words *"Give God the glory!"* sound like a godly exhortation. But attached to them was the declaration *"We know that this Man is a sinner."* It meant that he too should say that Jesus was a sinner, and it was an indirect threat that he should know what would happen if he did not do

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

so. They dressed up the denial of what Jesus had done as if it were exalting God.

He was not dragged along by that demand. He said that he did not know whether He was a sinner—that what he did not know, he did not know. And he spoke of the one thing he clearly knew: that though he had been blind, he now saw. The leaders put forward what they claimed to know, but this man held on to the one thing that had happened to him. Even in the face of their authority, he told of that event just as it had happened.

This answer is the clearest testimony that a person who has received the remission of sins today can give. Even if we do not know anything else, this much we know clearly: that we were sinners before, but now we are righteous people who have received the remission of sins. The ground of that testimony is also clear. It is not that we say we have no sin because we felt good one day, nor that we say we are righteous because we have committed fewer sins than others. It is that Jesus had all our sins transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John, shed His blood on the Cross and paid the price of those sins, and rose again from death, and so we believed that word and received the remission of sins. The book of Hebrews speaks as follows of how perfect the sacrifice Jesus offered is.

"For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified" (Hebrews 10:14).

The Lord did not accomplish salvation only halfway and tell us to fill in the rest with our deeds. By the sacrifice He offered once, He has perfected forever those who have been sanctified. Therefore, saying that we have received the remission of sins is not the pride of exalting ourselves but a confession that gives the credit to the Lord, saying that the Lord has made righteous the sinners who could not become righteous by themselves.

This faith is put to use all the more on the days when our

weaknesses are exposed. As we live, we speak rashly, hatred arises in our hearts, and we discover our own wrongs. At such times we acknowledge our wrongs as wrongs and turn back. And we believe again the word that Jesus had even those sins passed on to Him through the baptism He received from John. The Lord knew all our shortcomings and saved us, so do not lock yourselves up in condemnation again, but ask the Lord for help and serve the Lord again.

The faith of knowing the Savior rather than the boast of being disciples of Moses

They repeated the same question: what had that Man done to him, and how had He opened his eyes? They asked again and again how his eyes had been opened, but they would not accept who it was that had opened his eyes. He asked them in return why they wanted to hear it again when he had already told them and they had not listened, and whether they also wanted to become His disciples. Then they reviled him and said that they were Moses' disciples. Let us read verses 28 and 29.

"Then they reviled him and said, 'You are His disciple, but we are Moses' disciples. We know that God spoke to Moses; as for this fellow, we do not know where He is from'" (John 9:28–29).

They made it clear whose disciples they were. Their point was that they were the disciples of Moses, the disciples of the law, and not the disciples of Jesus. The fact that God had spoken to Moses was right. But while putting forward that fact, they did not believe in Jesus, whom God had sent. Their boast of having the law blocked their way of coming to the Savior.

The law given through Moses makes people realize their own

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

sins. What a person who has realized his own sins before the law needs is the Savior, who will bear those sins. If, considering oneself better because one knows the law, one rejects Jesus, one is pushing away, by oneself, the way to be rescued from sin. The apostle Paul speaks as follows of what the law does.

"Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin" (Romans 3:20).

The sin in the heart is not washed away by having lived a life of faith for a long time, by having learned from a renowned teacher, or by belonging to a group that people recognize. Before putting forward what we have learned and where we belong, what comes first is to know and believe how Jesus has removed our sins.

The man whose eyes had been opened clearly testified, before the leaders, of the One who had opened his eyes. Let us read verses 30 through 33.

"The man answered and said to them, 'Why, this is a marvelous thing, that you do not know where He is from; yet He has opened my eyes! Now we know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him. Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind. If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing'" (John 9:30–33).

The words *"Why, this is a marvelous thing"* contain his amazement. His point was this: how could people who say they believe in God faithfully fail to recognize the One who had opened his eyes? In verse 29 they said that they did not know where this Man was from, and in verse 30 he turned those very words back on them. Since the world began, there had been no one who opened the eyes of a person who was blind from birth except Jesus Christ. Where the One who had done such a thing

had come from was clear.

Citing the fact that God does not listen to the words of sinners but listens to the words of those who do His will, he said that if this Man had not come from God, He could have done nothing. In verse 16, the Pharisees took the Sabbath as their standard and said that He was not from God. The man whose eyes had been opened overturned that judgment on the basis of what had happened to him. Just as Jesus, who came from God, opened his eyes, which had been unable to see from birth, so He has washed away the sins of us who are sinners from birth through the baptism He received from John and the blood of the Cross.

Follow the Lord together with those who have received the remission of sins

Let us read verse 34.

"They answered and said to him, 'You were completely born in sins, and are you teaching us?' And they cast him out" (John 9:34).

The leaders could not give a fitting answer to his words. Instead, they dragged up his birth and asked whether a man born in sin dared to try to teach them. And they cast him out. They judged that a person who spoke this way could no longer be on their side.

When people do not accept the truth, they try to keep their own position with words that belittle the other person. But although they could cast him out, they could not make him blind again. Here we, too, look back on ourselves. Are we not pushing away the testimony of the word because it differs from the thoughts we had learned? Are we not, while weighing only who is preaching it, letting slip past our ears what God has actually

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

said?

We who have received the remission of sins also know clearly where we belong. Since we have believed the fact that Jesus had all our sins transferred to Him and have become righteous, we cannot go back to the teaching that we must remove our sins by our own efforts every day and mix God's grace with our own merit again. To go back to the place of denying the Lord's salvation in order to be acknowledged by people again is like the man whose eyes had been opened becoming blind again in order to remain in that gathering.

The man whose eyes had been opened was cast out of Judaism. But being cast out by people does not mean that one has no place left to go. The Church of God is not determined by the name of a building or an organization; it is formed in a way that cannot be seen with the eyes. Those who have believed the gospel of the water and the Spirit, received the remission of sins, and received the Holy Spirit are the church that belongs to the Lord. Even if the world does not recognize that gathering, the Lord knows their faith.

Therefore, a person who has received the remission of sins does not believe alone, but meets people who believe the same gospel, and together with them learns the word, worships, and serves the Lord. What this man who had been cast out needed, too, was to learn from the Lord and the Lord's disciples. We are people who cannot leave the Lord, because we have received salvation by believing the work the Lord has accomplished. Even though we are lacking, we are people who believe in the Lord, and whatever circumstances we are in, we are people who believe in the Lord.

If, after being saved, we grow distant from the word and from believers, saying that we will now live as we please apart from the Lord, our hearts are again drawn by the desires of the world

and are shaken. So even when you are lacking and fall, do not leave the Lord and the Lord's church, but stay near the word and learn together with the family of faith. There we ask for the Lord's help, build one another up, and preach the Lord's salvation to one person who has not yet heard the gospel.

We are disciples who have received the remission of sins and follow the Lord. A disciple learns and follows the Lord's word rather than his own will. If it is something that pleases the Lord, he takes it on by faith even in the midst of difficulties, and if his strength falls short, he asks the living Lord to help him. Though the work each one is entrusted with is different, people who have received the same grace serve the one Lord together.

The man whose eyes had been opened did not deny the grace he had received in the face of people's pressure. While saying that what he did not know he did not know, he spoke to the end of the one thing he knew, and he testified that Jesus is the One who came from God. We, too, have one thing that we know and believe in our hearts: that Jesus, who came from God, had all our sins passed on to Him through the baptism He received from John, received the judgment for those sins on the Cross, rose again from death, and became our Savior.

Do not doubt the Lord's salvation because of people's opposition, and do not lay down the Lord's righteousness because of your own shortcomings. Like that man who was cast out, we are disciples who belong to the Lord. Let us, too, boldly testify before people of this one thing we know: that we, who were sinners, have now become righteous people who have received the remission of sins. ✉

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Sermon 5 by Paul C. Jong

The person who believes in the Son of Man and follows Him

< John 9:35–41 >

“Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said to him, ‘Do you believe in the Son of God?’ He answered and said, ‘Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?’ And Jesus said to him, ‘You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you.’ Then he said, ‘Lord, I believe!’ And he worshiped Him. And Jesus said, ‘For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind.’ Then some of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these words, and said to Him, ‘Are we blind also?’ Jesus said to them, ‘If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, “We see.” Therefore your sin remains.’”

Jesus went to the man who had been cast out by the people and met him. He was the very man who had washed in the pool of Siloam and come back seeing. He had spoken just as he had experienced it about the One who had made his eyes see, but the Jews did not accept his words and in the end cast him out. But their rejection did not become the last part of this man’s story.

In today’s passage he goes one step further. When the Lord asked, *“Do you believe in the Son of God?” (John 9:35)*, he

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

answered that he wanted to believe, and when the Lord made Himself known to him, he confessed his faith and bowed down. The man who had received the grace of having his eyes opened now became a man who knew and believed in the One who had bestowed that grace.

The passage also shows people whose attitude is entirely different from this man's. The Pharisees who were with Jesus asked in return, *"Are we blind also?" (John 9:40)*. The one man admitted what he did not know and asked the Lord, while the others held on to the thought that they already saw. To those who said they saw, the Lord said that their sin remained. With what kind of heart are we standing before the Lord?

The Lord, who met the man who had been cast out

Let us read verses 35 and 36.

"Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said to him, 'Do you believe in the Son of God?' He answered and said, 'Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?'" (John 9:35–36).

When Jesus heard that the man had been cast out, He met him. The Lord could have met him before that as well, but He went to him at the very time he was cast out. He was originally a man who had lived as one belonging to Judaism, and once he was cast out of it, he could not even enter the synagogue. To him, who had lost every place he had leaned on, the Lord came.

The Lord works in this way today as well. He seeks out and meets the person who could not have the problem of sin solved within a religion that people set up and has come out in disappointment, and He washes away that sin and makes that person one of His own people. The One on whom the man who

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

had been cast out was now to rely was not the people who had cast him out but Jesus, who had come to meet him. From whom would the man whose eyes had been opened want to learn? He wants to learn from the Lord, who opened his eyes.

Yet he asked, *"Who is He, Lord?" (John 9:36)*. When he washed in the pool of Siloam and his eyes were opened, Jesus was not there. He had been healed, but this was the first time he saw Jesus with his own eyes. The man who had testified boldly in front of the Pharisees said in front of the Lord that he did not know what he did not know, and answered, *"That I may believe in Him" (John 9:36)*.

This is a truly precious heart. When we come to know something a little, we easily regard it as if there were nothing more to learn, and we easily think that, with only the grace we received before, we judge everything rightly even now. The more a person has received grace, the more he needs a heart that wants to know more of the Lord who gave that grace. The question He asked, *"Do you believe in the Son of God?"* is a question He asks us today as well. Listen to the word of the Lord, who meets you and asks about your faith.

We believe in the Creator, who came in a body like ours

Let us read verses 37 and 38.

"And Jesus said to him, 'You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you.' Then he said, 'Lord, I believe!' And he worshiped Him" (John 9:37–38).

He said, *"You have both seen Him."* With those eyes that had just been opened, he was looking at the One who had opened his eyes. Jesus made known to him that He Himself, who was now

talking with him, was the very Son of Man in whom he wanted to believe. He did not tell him to go and look for someone far away, but had him believe in Jesus Himself, who was speaking right in front of him. Then he said, *"Lord, I believe!" (John 9:38)* and bowed down.

The "Son of Man" in this text (the reading found in several early Greek manuscripts; the NKJV reads "the Son of God") means 'the son of a man.' That Jesus came as the Son of Man means that He came to this earth clothed in a human body exactly like ours. But within this term there is a meaning greater than that. The One who stood before him in a human body is God, who has been from the beginning, and the Creator, who made all things. That Creator came clothed in a human body to save us from sin. Let us read verses 1 through 3 of John chapter 1.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made" (John 1:1–3).

All things were made through Him. The One who made us and gave us life came to us. Therefore, the question He asked, *"Do you believe in the Son of God?"* was not a question a man asks a man, but a question God, who came in a human body, asks a man. To God He is the Son, and to us He is God. Being true God, He truly put on a human body and came among us. Let us read verse 14 of the same chapter.

"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

The Word became flesh. Jesus, who came in a body that could be seen, was full of the glory of the only begotten Son of the Father, and of grace and truth. The man whose eyes had been

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

opened bowed down to the Lord because he believed that the One standing before him was that very Savior. To regard Jesus as no more than a great teacher or a man who left good teachings is not to believe in Him. To believe in Him as God, who made us and came to save us, is the faith that believes in the Son of Man. On this faith that believes Jesus is God, the gospel of the water and the Spirit, too, becomes not a theory in our heads but our own salvation.

Why did God come in a human body? A sinner cannot save a sinner. It was because He had to actually receive our sins onto His body and die in our place with that body. Jesus, who put on flesh like ours, had all the sins of the world transferred onto His body through the baptism He received from John the Baptist at the Jordan River. His body, which bore those sins, was nailed to the Cross and shed blood, and so He received the judgment for those sins; He was buried and rose again from death on the third day.

At the Jordan River, when John the Baptist tried to prevent Him, Jesus answered as follows and received baptism.

"But Jesus answered and said to him, 'Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.' Then he allowed Him" (Matthew 3:15).

All the righteousness that He fulfilled *"thus"* is His having had the sin of the world passed on to Him in its entirety through the baptism He received from John. That sin of the world includes all the sins we commit throughout our lives, beginning with the sins we commit because we are weak. Because He had that sin passed on to Him, His death on the Cross became a death that paid the full price of our sins, and because He rose again from death, we believe in a living Savior. The risen Lord gives the Holy Spirit to those who believe and even now speaks to us through the word.

Therefore, the faith of the remission of sins is the faith that believes what God has done. It is not that a person is merely given the name of a righteous person while his sin remains as it is. Because Jesus actually bore our sins and actually received their judgment, whoever believes this gospel of the water and the Spirit in his heart has the sin of his heart washed away. Turn from the heart that relied on people who cannot save you, and believe in Jesus, who bore our sins and rose again from death, as the Savior.

The eyes that are opened for those who admit that they cannot see

Let us read verse 39.

"And Jesus said, 'For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind'" (John 9:39).

Jesus said that He had come into this world so that those who do not see may see and those who see may become blind. Regarding the work of opening the eyes of the flesh, He now speaks of the eyes of the heart. The man who had been blind from birth could not open his eyes by himself. We, too, were born with sin and were spiritually blind, unable to see God. A spiritually blind man is one who cannot recognize God even when He is right before his eyes.

But there is hope for a person who is blind. It is because one who knows that he cannot see can meet the Lord and receive salvation. When we believe that Jesus is the Creator God, who made us, and the One who saved us through the baptism He received from John and the blood of the Cross, we open the eyes of our hearts.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

When we hear the gospel, let us first admit our own true state. We have sinned, sin keeps coming out of our hearts, and we cannot wash away that sin by our own strength. God gave the law also so that we would realize our own sin in the light of the word. Even if there is something about us that people approve of, in the sight of God all the sin of our hearts is exposed.

But if a person who has sin insists that he is fine, he does not seek the Savior. If he thinks that he has already obtained salvation because he has led a religious life for a long time, he does not try to hear anew the salvation the Lord accomplished, and he pushes away the gospel of the water and the Spirit, saying that it differs from the ideas he has believed. It is that very heart that darkens the spiritual eyes.

The word telling us to admit our own sin does not mean that we should live condemning ourselves endlessly. It means that we should accept the fact that, because we have sin, we need the Savior. For us to put forward our own righteousness and say that we have no sin before hearing the gospel is a boast that believes in ourselves, but to confess that we now have no sin because Jesus has washed away our sins is the faith that believes in the Savior.

We are people in whom the eyes of the heart have been opened by the grace of the Lord. It is not that we were wise in ourselves and found out what others do not know; rather, to us, who could not but be judged because of sin, the Lord made known the truth of salvation. So let us not become proud because we have heard the word much, but let us keep listening to what the Lord is saying and cast away what we had understood wrongly.

The one who believes in the Son of Man also changes the teaching he follows

The man whose eyes had been opened did not go back to the judgment of the people who had cast him out. He had originally been a man who listened to the teaching of the Pharisees within Judaism, but now the One he would believe in and follow was Jesus, who had opened his eyes. That he changed his place in this way was not his own merit either, but the grace of the Lord, who had pity on him and came to him first.

Even after one has received grace, whose teaching one follows is important. The one who believes the word of God is the one who belongs to the Lord. If a person says that he believes in Jesus yet keeps in his heart, just as they are, teachings that go against His salvation, his faith is divided in two. What must be laid down here is not the blood of the Cross, but the faith that explained salvation by the blood of the Cross alone, leaving out the baptism Jesus received from John; the doctrines that were put ahead of the word; and the heart that relied on its own righteousness. If he keeps those thoughts as they are and merely adds that the gospel of the water and the blood is also right, then even if he has heard that gospel and agreed with it, the word cannot take root in his heart.

In the parable of the sower that the Lord told, the seeds that fell on stony places sprang up, but *"because they had no root they withered away" (Matthew 13:6)*, and as for the seeds that fell among thorns, the thorns grew up and *"choked them" (Matthew 13:7)*, and they bore no fruit. It was not because there was no life in the seeds but because of the ground that received the seeds. If only the knowledge of the gospel is laid on top of a heart that has kept its old faith as it is, it is hard for the word that has been heard to grow into a living faith. Just as the man who

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

had been cast out did not go back to his old place but bowed down to the Lord, let us give the place in our hearts over to the Lord so that the word may take root.

Therefore, learn the word together with the Church of God, which believes and preaches the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The Church of God is the gathering of those who have received the remission of sins through Jesus Christ. On the day this man whose eyes had been opened bowed down to the Lord, one more person who belongs to the Lord was added. In this way, people gather one by one to form the Church of the Lord. The Lord knows each one of those people who belong to Him.

A person who has just received the remission of sins is like a little child. When he grows while listening to the word together with those who believe the same gospel, his faith takes deep root. If he drifts away from the word, his heart easily leans toward the approval of people and the splendor of the world. Each time that happens, look back on who washed away your sins, and hold fast to the word of the Lord, who saved you.

Cast away the pride of saying that you see, and stand before the Lord

Let us read verses 40 and 41.

"Then some of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these words, and said to Him, 'Are we blind also?' Jesus said to them, 'If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, "We see." Therefore your sin remains'" (John 9:40–41).

The Pharisees who were with Jesus heard this word and asked, *"Are we blind also?"* They thought that they knew God and judged rightly, but they did not recognize the Savior who was right in front of them. If they had recognized who He was,

they would not have opposed Him like that. They did not accept the fact that they needed the One who would open their eyes. The Lord said that because they said they saw, their sin remained. Their religious pride left their sin just as it was.

He said, *"If you were blind, you would have no sin."* A person who admits that he does not see, that he does not yet know salvation, can meet the Lord and receive the remission of sins. Before the Savior, sinners receive salvation. But for the one who, without the Savior, puts forward his own righteousness and says, "I see; I am not a sinner," sin remains. Even if a person has been in the church for a long time, if there is sin in his heart, he is still a sinner. If he says that he believes in Jesus yet has sin in his heart, he says that he sees, but spiritually he is blind.

This word of the Lord is solemn. Jesus is not One who says that it is all right to leave sin as it is. He is the One who washes away sin and saves, and the One who judges those who reject that salvation and oppose Him to the end. Let us read verses 17 and 18 of John chapter 3.

"For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John 3:17–18).

That God sent the Son is, first of all, love that seeks to save the world. In verse 39 He says that He came for judgment, and here it says that it was not to judge the world but that the world might be saved. The Lord comes to do two works. The Lord who came the first time saved us with the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and the Lord who will come again will lead those who have been saved into His kingdom and judge those who have not accepted that salvation. He who believes in the Son is not judged, and he who does not believe is already under judgment.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

The judgment of sin is real. Merely knowing the fact that the Savior has come does not make sin disappear. When we believe in Jesus, who came as a man, as God, and believe in our hearts the salvation He accomplished through the baptism He received from John and the Cross, we are set free from sin. A person who regards Jesus as no more than the leader of a religion and rejects the gospel of the water and the Spirit, so that sin remains in his heart, receives the judgment of hell. Is the Jesus you believe in truly God, who made you, and the Savior who bore all your sins?

The man whose eyes had been opened heard the word, *"It is He who is talking with you,"* and believed. This word, that those who say they see are blind, cannot be fully grasped by the human mind. Faith is not accepting only what can be understood with the head, but accepting the written word just as it is because God has spoken it. It is written, *"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1)*. Even though it is not visible to our eyes, we hope for the remission of sins in our hearts and believe the salvation written in the Bible. Even without hearing some special sound or feeling something in the body, the person who knows who the Lord is through the written word and believes in that salvation is one who stands on right faith.

The Lord who saved us is living now. Until the day He comes again, let us pray to the Lord and preach this gospel to people who do not yet know the truth of salvation. Let us not change our faith according to the evaluations of people, but let us hold firmly to the gospel of the water and the Spirit that the Lord has entrusted to us.

The man who had been cast out gained something greater than the place he had lost among people. He saw with his own eyes the One who had opened his eyes, and he came to know that He was the Son of Man. Jesus, who came as the Son of Man,

is the Creator who made us and our Savior, who had all our sins transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John, received the judgment for those sins on the Cross, and rose again from death. We who believe this fact in our hearts also, like that man on that day, confess, *"Lord, I believe!" (John 9:38)*, and bow down before the Creator, who came in a body like ours. ✉

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

CHAPTER

10

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

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

Sermon 1 by Paul C. Jong

The sheep who come in through the door of salvation and follow the shepherd

< John 10:1–6 >

“‘Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.’ Jesus used this illustration, but they did not understand the things which He spoke to them.”

Whose voice are we listening to as we live? Even while we say that we live by faith, when something hard happens, we are apt to hold on to our own thoughts first. There are times when, even while following someone, we do not examine where he is leading us. Whose voice our souls listen to and whom they follow is not a question to be passed over lightly. Today, through the illustration of the sheep and the shepherd, Jesus speaks of the way of salvation and the life of following behind Him.

In the preceding chapter 9, Jesus opened the eyes of the man

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

who had been unable to see from birth. Those who had been interrogating him cast him out, but Jesus met him again and let him know who He was, and he believed in Jesus and bowed down before Him. On the other hand, to those who claimed that they themselves could see, Jesus said, *"Your sin remains" (John 9:41)*. As soon as He finished that word, the Lord went on to tell them an illustration that distinguishes the shepherd who enters the sheepfold by the door from the thief who climbs up some other way.

On the outside, they all appear to come near the sheep. But there is the shepherd who gives life to the sheep and leads them, and there is the one who tries to snatch the sheep. The Lord began this illustration with *"Most assuredly."* It means that this is a word He speaks in truth, in very truth. In the light of this word, let us examine the salvation we believe in and the voice we are now listening to and following.

The door of salvation that Jesus has opened

Let us read verses 1 and 2.

"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep" (John 10:1–2).

The sheepfold has a door. The shepherd enters by that door. The one who intends to steal the sheep leaves the door aside, climbs over the wall, and enters some other way. It is a picture of a sheep pasture that anyone knows, but through this illustration Jesus spoke of Himself. It means that there is a way of salvation that God has established, and that there are people who try to step around that way and climb in some other way.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

In the word that follows, the Lord revealed who that door is. Let us read verses 7 and 9.

"Then Jesus said to them again, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep'" (John 10:7).

"I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture" (John 10:9).

Jesus is the door of the sheep. If anyone enters by Him, he will be saved. But verse 2 says that there is One who entered by this door first. It says, *"He who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep" (John 10:2)*.

We are people who have committed sin. The sins of days gone by, the evil that comes out of our hearts now, and the sins we will commit in the future—none of these can we wash away by our own strength. Even if there is something about us that is a little better than others, we cannot present it and enter the kingdom of God, and so we need a door.

For such people as us, God came clothed in a human body. Jesus had the sin of the world transferred onto His own body through the baptism He received from John the Baptist at the Jordan River. Still bearing that sin, He was hung on the Cross, shed His blood, and died, and so received all the judgment for that sin, and three days later He rose again from death and entered heaven, where the Father is. The shepherd who entered by the door is none other than this One. Because He removed all our sins and entered by that door first, those who believe in Him as the Savior who removed their sins also follow Him and enter that kingdom.

At the Jordan River, when John the Baptist tried to prevent Him, saying, *"I need to be baptized by You" (Matthew 3:14)*, Jesus answered as follows.

"But Jesus answered and said to him, 'Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.' Then he

allowed Him" (Matthew 3:15).

Through the baptism He received from John, Jesus fulfilled all righteousness and had the sin of the world passed on to Him. Therefore, the shedding of His blood on the Cross became the judgment on our sins. His bearing of sin and His paying the price of that sin are one salvation that cannot be separated. If we leave out the baptism He received from John and hold on only to the blood of the Cross, we are left without knowing when Jesus bore our sins. Faith that tries to enter while leaving out even one of these is faith that leaves the door aside and climbs up some other way.

As to what the One who came to bring us in through this door came by, the Apostle John testifies as follows.

"This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is the truth. For there are three who bear witness, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and the three agree in one –ASV" (1 John 5:6–8).

Jesus Christ came by water and blood, and the Holy Spirit testifies that this work is true. The water is the baptism He received from John, and the blood is the blood He shed on the Cross. Do not take away from this work that God testifies of according to your own thinking. The person who believes in his heart in this water and blood, and in Jesus, who rose again from death, is the one who has entered by the door. Through that faith we receive the remission of sins and become God's sheep.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Teaching that has departed from the door does not give life to the sheep

The Lord called the one who climbs up some other way a thief and a robber. It is because he harms the life of the sheep. The wording is mild, but its meaning is very strong. Not believing the salvation that God has completely accomplished in His Son just as it is, but making another way with one's own thinking—that is climbing over the wall. Faith that believes only what makes sense to our own thinking and leaves out the rest also stands on that road. To believe just as God has done it is the easiest and the right way.

Neither the number of years one has spent in religious life, nor the recognition one receives from people, nor the office one holds can wash away the sin of the heart. Even if one torments one's own body and piles up good works, the sins already committed remain as they are. The Lord Himself bore that sin and received the judgment, and so washed away the sins of those who believe. If one rejects this salvation and tries to enter the kingdom of the holy God while still having sin, that is the way of climbing up some other way of which the Lord spoke, and at the end of that way there is judgment.

Those who preach the gospel are people who have first entered by this door. A person who has had the sin of his heart washed away can preach that salvation to others. Pleasant-sounding words and much knowledge alone cannot lead the sheep to the way of life.

Therefore, do not entrust your faith on the basis of a person's name or outward appearance alone. Listen to whether the word he preaches fully testifies of the salvation Jesus accomplished. Examine whether he preaches the gospel of the water and the Spirit—that Jesus had your sins passed on to Him through the

baptism He received from John, received the judgment for your sins on the Cross, and rose again from death. When a person who has received the remission of sins preaches this gospel, those who hear also believe the same word and receive salvation.

Let us, too, not put forward only our confession of days gone by. Faith is always in the present tense. More important than the memory of having once heard the gospel is whether we believe in our hearts today the salvation the Lord has accomplished. Is your heart now leaning on that word? Let us believe today, too, in Jesus, who became the door of salvation, and abide in Him.

The shepherd who calls His own sheep by name

Let us read verse 3.

"To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out" (John 10:3).

The doorkeeper opens the door for the shepherd, and the sheep hear that shepherd's voice. God has left the door open so that whoever believes in Jesus may enter the kingdom of heaven.

The shepherd calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. To the shepherd, the sheep are not a nameless crowd. They are sheep that belong to him, sheep he will call out, feed, and look after. The Lord, who saved us from sin, does not leave us even after that, but calls us one by one. Those who know and believe the fact that they belong to the Lord recognize that calling and follow.

The Lord knows all about the circumstances of His own sheep. He knows how weak we are, and also what thoughts are making us hesitate. We sometimes compare ourselves with others and become discouraged that our faith is small, and

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

sometimes, because we know a little, we consider ourselves sufficient. But the One who calls us is the shepherd who saved us. Believe that calling. When fear comes into your heart, ruminate again on the faith that says, "The Lord is my shepherd, and I am His sheep."

With what does the Lord call us today? The Lord raises up on this earth servants who believe the gospel and has the written word preached through them. Therefore, hearing the voice of the Lord is not waiting for some special sound to ring out in one's heart. It is learning the written word and coming to know the will of the Lord while receiving teaching that preaches that word rightly. Because the Holy Spirit dwells within those who have believed the gospel of the water and the Spirit, they understand that that word is not meant to harm them but to benefit them.

Knowing the shepherd's voice does not stop at the voice being familiar; it means knowing the shepherd's heart. It is knowing why he calls and where he leads. The word also sometimes exposes what we had wrongly understood. Even if at first we feel unwilling to follow, when the Holy Spirit within us makes us realize that that word is right, we yield ourselves and follow. As we follow in that way, our faith grows.

The sheep who walk together, following the shepherd who goes before them

Let us read verses 4 and 5.

"And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers" (John 10:4–5).

The shepherd brings out all his own sheep and then goes

before them. Because the sheep know his voice, they follow behind him. Our shepherd Jesus also went ahead. Through the baptism He received from John and His death on the Cross, He removed our sins, and He rose again and went that way first. Since He is in front, the sheep do not look at their own weakness, but look to the shepherd who goes ahead and follow by faith. Even when they fall short and it is hard, those who are born again rejoice to follow the Lord.

Sheep do not scatter on their own, but follow the shepherd in a flock. A life of faith, too, is not something one lives by one's own strength alone. The Lord has raised up in the church those who lead the way with the word, and has bound us who believe the same gospel together as members of one body, so that we look after one another and serve the gospel together. Paul said as follows.

"That there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another. And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually" (1 Corinthians 12:25–27).

Those who have gone ahead do not press down on those who follow, but lead them with the word so that their faith may grow, and we share together the suffering of one member as we serve the Lord.

A sheep that leaves the shepherd and goes alone may look free, but on that road there is one who is after the life of the sheep. If, even after being saved, we drift away from the shepherd's voice and follow the voice of a stranger, our hearts are shaken, and the devil takes advantage of that gap to capture our hearts. A sheep that has left the shepherd's side roams here and there and wanders. So do not become complacent because you have become a sheep and drift away from the word. In the church that

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

believes the gospel of the water and the Spirit, hear the shepherd's voice every day and remain at His side.

Because the sheep do not know the voice of a stranger, they do not follow him but rather flee. The voice of a stranger does not come from the beginning as words that are all wrong. Because it leads by making nine things out of ten sound right and getting one thing wrong, the sheep that cannot discern are taken in. The sheep that knows the shepherd's voice well picks out that one thing. When you hear words that leave out the baptism He received from John or that make you add human merit to the salvation the Lord has accomplished, or words that make you exalt yourself, do not follow them, but keep far away from them as if fleeing.

The faith that understands the word and follows the Lord

Let us read verse 6.

"Jesus used this illustration, but they did not understand the things which He spoke to them" (John 10:6).

Jesus spoke in this illustration, but they did not understand what He was saying. They were the ones who, at the end of chapter 9, had asked back, *"Are we blind also?" (John 9:40)*. Although the words sheep, door, and shepherd were familiar to them, because they heard them with the thoughts of the flesh, in their ears that illustration remained only a story about a sheep pasture. When we hear with the thoughts of the Spirit, which consider what God has done, we see the One to whom that illustration points. Hearing the word from up close and receiving that word in one's heart are different things.

Let us, too, not be satisfied with having heard much of the

word. Do you believe that Jesus is your door of salvation? Do you believe in your heart that He is the One who had your sins transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John and paid the price of those sins on the Cross? Are you accepting the fact that He is now calling you through the word and going ahead of you? Let us look back on whether we are living by the word we have heard.

Jesus came to save us. He opened the door of the remission of sins, and He calls, feeds, and looks after us who have come in through that door. We are not people who make our own way and go to God, but people who have believed the salvation the Lord accomplished and have become sheep that belong to Him. Therefore, faith in the Savior and a life of following His voice always go together.

Our shepherd Jesus washed away all our sins and entered by that door first. And today, too, He calls us by name through the written word and goes ahead of us. Let us lay down the thoughts we had wrongly held and listen to that voice every day. I hope that you will live as sheep that recognize the shepherd's voice and follow Him who goes ahead. ✉

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Sermon 2 by Paul C. Jong

The good shepherd, who gave His life for us

< John 10:7–18 >

"Then Jesus said to them again, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.' 'I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep. I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own. As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd.' 'Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father.'"

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Jesus said that He is the door of the sheep, and then He said that He is the good shepherd. The door is the way by which the sheep enter, and the shepherd is the one who feeds and protects the sheep. Jesus is the door who saves us from sin, and He is the shepherd who cares for us, who have been saved, to the end. Today's passage shows these two graces together.

Before we receive salvation, we suffer over the problem of sin, and after we receive salvation, there are times when we worry about what we will eat to live on and how we will serve the Lord. To us, who are such people, the Lord makes known who He is. In today's passage, the Lord repeats the word that the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep and takes it again. The One who gave even His life for us is our shepherd.

The Lord, who became the door of salvation with His own body

Let us read verses 7 through 9.

"Then Jesus said to them again, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture'" (John 10:7–9).

Jesus called Himself the door of the sheep. He said that anyone who enters through Him will be saved. The kingdom of heaven is a place that one can enter only by going through this door. What we must present before God is not our own merit or a record of religious life, but the salvation of Jesus Christ, who actually removed our sins.

But we who enter through this door were not sheep to begin with. Just as the Bible says, *"All we like sheep have gone astray;*

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

We have turned, every one, to his own way" (Isaiah 53:6), we were people who went our own way as we pleased and committed sins all our lives. Being recognized by people does not make us righteous, and even with a heart that regrets the past, the price of those sins remains just as it is. All we were to receive was the judgment of sin and destruction. God loved us, who were such people, and while He loved us, He also kept intact His righteousness, which judges sin.

So God sent His Son and had that Son Himself become the door of the sheep. That door was made up of two things. The first is the baptism Jesus received from John at the Jordan River, and through this baptism He had all our sins transferred to Him. The second is the blood of the Cross: bearing those sins, He shed His blood on the Cross and received in our place the judgment we were to receive for those sins. And He rose again from death on the third day, and the Lord, who lives even now, Himself became that door for us.

This is the way of salvation that the Lord has opened for us. God did not treat sin that was there as if it were not there; He actually removed sin. Therefore, those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit become righteous not because their own deeds are perfect, but by believing in the washing away of sins that Jesus accomplished. Look to how perfect the Lord's atonement is rather than to your own shortcomings.

The door of the sheep is the door through which those who have received the remission of sins by believing in this sacrifice of atonement enter. The Book of Hebrews speaks of that sacrifice as follows.

"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"

(Hebrews 10:12–14).

Jesus offered one eternal sacrifice. So whenever our sins are revealed, there is no need for a sacrificial offering to be offered again. The sin of the world that Jesus had passed on to Him through the baptism He received from John includes all our past, present, and future sins. Sins committed without knowing, sins that make our hearts ache when we think of them, and even the sins we will commit in the future because of our weakness are in it. Because He paid the full price of all those sins on the Cross, those who have entered through this door have been perfected forever by one offering.

Jesus opened this door with His own body. The Lord called those who came before Jesus and spoke of salvation on their own thieves and robbers. That is because they only rob people of what is theirs and cannot remove sin and let them into the kingdom of heaven. The only One who gives us salvation is Jesus, who laid down His life for us, and when we believe in Him, we are saved from sin and come to God. Those whose sins remain as they are because they reject this salvation cannot escape God's judgment and come to eternal punishment.

The shepherd, who gives the food of life every day

Let us read verse 10.

"The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).

The purpose for which Jesus came is clear. The thief comes to steal, and to kill, and to destroy, but Jesus came so that the sheep may have life and have it more abundantly. The thief comes to take, and the Lord came to give. We believe in the Lord,

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

who gave life to us, who would have died in sin.

What the Lord gives is, first of all, the remission of sins and new life. And according to the word *"more abundantly,"* the Lord came to make abundant even our hearts and thoughts and our life in the flesh. Jesus removed once and for all not only our original sin but even the sins we commit throughout our lives, so that we would never again suffer because of sin or fear judgment. The abundance that the good shepherd gives begins here.

In the previous verse, the Lord said that the sheep who have come in through the door go in and out and find pasture. Even after receiving salvation, we need food. That pasture is the baptism Jesus received from John, the blood He shed on the Cross, and His death and resurrection. The faith that believes in this salvation becomes the food of our souls every day and gives us new strength.

We make mistakes while working, and while dealing with people we sometimes reveal the evil in our hearts. At such times we are disappointed in ourselves, and we wonder how people like us could ever serve the Lord. At that very moment, think again about the fact that Jesus had even this sin passed on to Him through the baptism He received from John and also received its judgment on the Cross. Then, with thankfulness that the Lord has taken away even this sin, your heart is made new.

Those who believe in the grace that washed away their sins do not hide their own faults. They acknowledge their faults and turn back, but they place their faith in the Lord. The gospel of the water and the Spirit is not a word that we hear once when we are first saved and then pass by; it is the food of life that revives our souls today and holds us fast tomorrow as well.

The owner of the sheep takes responsibility not only for the sheep's lives but even for their food. The Lord knows what we

must eat and what we must wear. Knowing us, who hesitate because of the worries of life even though we have a heart that wants to serve the gospel, He made the following promise.

"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" (Matthew 6:31–33).

We have a heavenly Father who knows what we need. Believe that promise and seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. Make known to the Lord the help you need for the gospel and for the work entrusted to you. Even when difficulties come, the shepherd is still with us. The Lord permits difficulties in order to remove the dross that remains in our hearts, and in the midst of them He lets us learn the faith that relies on the word. In today's circumstances as well, let us believe in and rely on that shepherd.

The love with which He did not abandon the sheep but gave Himself up

Let us read verses 11 through 13.

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep" (John 10:11–13).

When danger comes, the difference between a shepherd and a hireling is revealed. For the hireling, the sheep are not his own,

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

so his own interest comes first. He does not want to suffer loss or have his life put in danger while protecting the sheep. So when the wolf comes, he leaves the sheep and flees, and the sheep left behind are caught and scattered.

In this passage, the good shepherd lays down His life, and the hireling leaves the sheep. Jesus did not flee, leaving us behind as we stood in the face of sin and judgment. To give us life, He bore our sins on His own body through the baptism He received from John, and He gave up that body on the Cross and laid down His life. The good shepherd is the One who became the sacrificial offering of atonement for the sheep. And He gave the Holy Spirit as a gift to us who believe in this salvation. The Lord's goodness does not stop at good words; it is the love with which He gave His own life and gave life to the sheep.

This is the reason we believe in and rely on Jesus. The One who gave His life for us is our shepherd. The One who paid such a great price cannot fail to know our weakness now. The Lord knows our sorrow and the pain in our hearts, and what makes us struggle. Do not think of the Lord only as the power that can do all things; believe in Him as a personal Savior who loves us and cares for us.

David confessed the Lord, who had become his shepherd, as follows.

"The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me" (Psalm 23:1–4).

In green pastures and in the valley of the shadow of death, the shepherd is with us. Even on the paths we fear, the Lord holds us up with the word. Therefore, rather than measuring the

Lord's love by looking at your circumstances, hold on to that love with which He gave His life for us.

To a hireling the sheep are not his own, so he does not care about them, but in those who have been born again through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the good Lord dwells through the Holy Spirit and causes them to regard each and every person as the Lord's sheep. So those who are entrusted with the Lord's sheep and care for them do not make the sheep their own, but regard them as sheep the Lord has entrusted to them and feed them the pasture of the word in due season.

The Lord, who knows us and also gathers other sheep

Let us read verses 14 through 16.

"I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own. As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd" (John 10:14–16).

Jesus said that He knows His sheep and that the sheep also know Him. Those sheep are the people who have received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and they know the shepherd's voice and follow Him. The Lord said that this knowing is like the knowing between the Father and the Son, and right after that He said, *"I lay down My life for the sheep" (John 10:15)*. They know each other because He saved them by giving His own life. Even if other people cannot fully understand our circumstances, our shepherd knows them. We can make known to the Lord even what is in our hearts

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

that we cannot fully express in words.

We, too, know through the word who the Lord is. We learn how Jesus had our sins transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John, why He gave His life, and with what purpose He is now leading us. While we follow the Lord, we also come to know His care in our lives. Remember how the Lord helped you in your past difficulties, and give thanks. The more you come to know the Lord in this way, the more you can entrust the worries of your heart to the Lord.

But the Lord's concern does not stay only with the sheep that have already been gathered. He said that there are other sheep that have not yet come into this fold, and He said that He causes them also to hear His voice, become one flock, and belong to one shepherd. There are people who suffer because of sin yet have not found the way to have their sins washed away, and there are people who say they believe in Jesus yet have sin remaining in their hearts because they do not know the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

The Lord causes them to *"hear My voice" (John 10:16)* and come. That voice is the written word of God. To preach that word we have heard is to let them hear the shepherd's voice. Let them hear, step by step, the gospel of the water and the Spirit—that Jesus had the sin of the world passed on to Him through the baptism He received from John, received the judgment for that sin on the Cross, and rose again from death. Examine what the other person knows and does not know, and resolve the problem of sin for them through the word. That person is not our possession but the Lord's sheep, and we are being used in the Lord's work of calling His own sheep.

The Lord has entrusted this work to us, who have been saved. He has made it so that our toil in living does not end with filling our own stomachs but leads on to the work of others obtaining

life. The work of preaching the word and the many kinds of service that support that work all lie within this one purpose.

The Savior, who laid down His life of His own accord and rose again from death

Let us read verses 17 and 18.

"Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father" (John 10:17–18).

Jesus said that His life is not taken from Him but that He lays it down of His own accord. He also said that He has power to lay down His life and power to take it again. In the whole universe there is no force that can overpower the Lord and kill Him. It was not because He had no power that Jesus received a sentence in Pilate's court and was nailed to the Cross; it was His giving Himself up of His own accord so that the sheep might obtain new life.

That laying down of His own accord began at the Jordan River. Through the baptism He received from John, Jesus first had our sins transferred to Him, and He gave up that body on the Cross as the sacrificial offering of atonement. The command of which He said, *"This command I have received from My Father,"* was the Father's command of love to save sinners through the Son. The Son upheld that will and obeyed. Because of His love for us, Jesus did not avoid suffering, and He made us children of God, even to the point of giving His own life.

Jesus said that the reason the Father loves the Son is *"because I lay down My life that I may take it again" (John 10:17)*. This word contains the meaning that Jesus Himself

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

comes back to life from death, and together with it, the meaning that He brings back to life our lives, which were to die because of sin. It is because He laid down His life for us and restored life to many people that the Father loved the Son.

And Jesus rose again from death. Our shepherd did not remain in the tomb but is living even now. If it had ended with the Lord dying on the Cross, our salvation would also have ended there. Because the risen Lord has become the guarantor of our salvation, our salvation is valid forever. Our faith does not stop at remembering one sacrifice of the past; it is relying on the Lord, who accomplished salvation through that sacrifice and is alive even now and cares for us.

Therefore, we know and serve Jesus as God, who is equal to God the Father. The Lord is our Creator and Savior. We ask for help from Him, who upheld the Father's will and saved us; we give thanks for the salvation He accomplished; and we set our hearts before the word.

Through Jesus, who became the door of the sheep, we have received the remission of sins. In the Lord, who is the good shepherd, we find pasture every day. We have also gained the hope of living forever with Him, who laid down His life for us and took it again. The Lord paid the price, made us His own sheep, and gave us all these graces. Those who believe in their hearts that this shepherd laid down His life and took it again to remove our sins are His sheep.

When your heart is weary, gain new strength from the Lord's salvation, and when the worries of life come rushing in, hold on to the Lord's promise. Let those who have not yet come into this fold also hear the shepherd's voice. The Lord is a shepherd whom we can trust completely. Let us thank the good shepherd, who laid down His life of His own accord and took it again to give us life, and let us entrust our lives to Him. ✉

Sermon 3 by Paul C. Jong

The Lord, who is the good shepherd

< John 10:1–18 >

“‘Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.’ Jesus used this illustration, but they did not understand the things which He spoke to them. Then Jesus said to them again, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.’ ‘I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep. I am the good

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own. As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd.' 'Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father.'"

The Lord said, *"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep" (John 10:11)*. It is truly fortunate that you and I have Jesus, who is the good shepherd, and I give thanks before the Lord. Because we have the good Lord, who is our good shepherd, there is hope for all people, and all people can obtain eternal life. In this word the sheep appear and the good shepherd appears, and the Lord called all people sheep. You and I are all sheep. Sheep are stubborn, and they cannot live without the shepherd's care. The sheep is a weak animal that can only die when a wolf comes. You and I are sheep before God. Even if we seem strong, we are all weak, lacking, and powerless. To such sheep, the Lord is the good shepherd. What is a good shepherd? He is a shepherd who gives his own flesh and gives his own blood to save his sheep, protect them, and bless them. A shepherd who gives his own flesh, that is, his own body, and gives his blood, which is his life, even to the point of death, so that his sheep may obtain life, obtain it more abundantly, and live forever—such a shepherd we call a good shepherd.

The shepherd who gave His own flesh

Among people, is there anyone who gives his own flesh for another person? There is not. But the Lord became the good shepherd for us and gave us His own flesh. He did not love us only with words, but gave us true love by giving His own body, His own flesh. Do you believe this? Do you know that Jesus gave His own flesh to us?

The Lord became the good shepherd for us. We are people who are lacking in so many things before God that we could never live unless the Lord loved us to the end. If the Lord, who is the good shepherd, had not removed all my sins, I would have died long ago. It is not because of some accident; even if I simply stay still, I am already a dead man. I am a frail human being who could not hold out even a year and could only die. Because of my weakness and my sins, I would already have been a dead man. But the Lord said, *"I am the good shepherd" (John 10:11)* and said, *"I am the door of the sheep" (John 10:7),* and He became the good shepherd for me and became the door through which one can enter the kingdom of heaven. The Lord gave His own flesh for the sheep. People say with words that they love, but can they tear off their own flesh and give it to another person? But the Lord gave His own body, His own flesh, to us in order to give life to the sheep. That is why the Lord could say, *"I am the good shepherd" (John 10:11)*. Our Lord is truly the good shepherd. Let us look at the word together.

"I am the bread of life"

"I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which comes down

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world. The Jews therefore quarreled among themselves, saying, 'How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?' Then Jesus said to them, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me. This is the bread which came down from heaven—not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever.' These things He said in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum" (John 6:48–59).

The Lord said that He is the bread that came down from heaven. He called Himself the bread of life, and He also said, *"I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world" (John 6:51),* and said, *"Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you" (John 6:53)*. The Lord gave us His own flesh, that is, His own body. The Lord, who is the good shepherd, did not love us only with words. He actually gave His own body to you and me, saved us from all sins, and caused us to obtain eternal life. Have you eaten the flesh of Jesus? There are people who have eaten the flesh of Jesus Christ, and there are also people who have drunk only the blood of Jesus. That is, there are people who drink only the drink every day so that only their bellies bulge. The Lord said, *"For*

My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed" (John 6:55).

Jesus is the bread that came down from heaven. For whom is this bread? It is the bread that causes all the people of the world, that is, the sheep, to eat this bread, obtain life, and live forever. Jesus is our bread. But among those who believe in Jesus, there are people who always think only of the blood of Jesus Christ. There are many people who sing hymns that praise the precious blood and, as if carrying the cross every day, say, "Lord, did You shed Your blood on the Cross for me? Thank You," and who burst into tears whenever they think of that alone. But the Lord said, "*The bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world" (John 6:51)*. The Lord gave His own flesh to us and said that that flesh is our food. And He said that His blood is our drink. The Lord gave us food and drink so that the sheep might obtain life, be full, and live forever. But there are people who, while believing in Jesus Christ, drink only the drink. Then, though their bellies may seem full, their insides remain hungry as before.

In my own belief in Jesus Christ, I too was once like one who drinks only the drink. Every day I thought only of the Lord's precious blood and wept, saying, "So the Lord died for me!" That is abusing one's own conscience. I felt that if I did not shed tears I would be a shameless person, so I deliberately squeezed out tears and prayed for an hour or two, and the floor would be soaked, and then people said that I had received grace. Since I could both soothe my conscience and be acknowledged by others, I regarded it as if nothing could be better than this.

But now, because the Lord has given me His flesh and I am still eating the Lord's flesh even now, I can preach the word in this way. It is because the Lord has given me His flesh, that is, food. If the Lord had not given me His flesh, I could not have

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

lived because of hunger. Just as countless people starved to death in a land struck by famine and were buried in the ground, I too could not have avoided ending up that way. My body might eat food and be full in this abundant world, but my soul would already have gone to hell.

The flesh He gave at the Jordan River

Here, the flesh means that the Lord gave His own body to us. In the Gospel of John the Lord said, *"My flesh is food indeed" (John 6:55)*, and said, *"He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him" (John 6:56)*. He also said, *"I lay down My life for the sheep" (John 10:15)*. Only our Lord is the true good shepherd of mankind. What did that good shepherd do for us? He gave His own flesh to us. How did He give it? The Lord left the throne of glory and came to this earth to give us life and save us from sin. And when He was about thirty years old, He gave His own body, His own flesh, to us: through the baptism He received from John the Baptist at the Jordan River, He had all the sins that mankind commits transferred onto His own body.

What was the baptism Jesus received from John for? It was to give His own body, that is, His own flesh, to us, so that we might eat that flesh as food, receive the remission of sins, and live full forever. Through the baptism He received from John at the Jordan River, Jesus had our sins transferred onto His own body. The Jordan River is the river of death. The Jordan River was flowing, and John the Baptist, the representative of mankind, was standing there. Jesus came to him there, bowed His head, and waited to receive baptism. And He said, *"Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness" (Matthew 3:15)*. It means that it is fitting to fulfill, in this way,

the right thing that would make all people sinless. Originally, Jesus was not One who was born with sin but One who had no sin at all. The Lord gave His own body to us in order to save the sheep from sin. At that time, by giving His own body, He had all the sin of mankind transferred onto His own body.

How did He do it? He did it *"thus" (Matthew 3:15)*, that is, by receiving baptism from John the Baptist. The word baptism carries the meanings 'to be washed,' 'to be buried,' and 'to be passed on.' Jesus received baptism from John in order to wash away the sins of our hearts. Because Jesus gave His own body to us and all the sin of mankind was passed on to the body of Jesus Christ through John the Baptist, all the sin of mankind and its judgment came to an end through Jesus Christ's receiving the punishment of the Cross in that body. And the Lord completed our salvation by rising again from death. Do you believe this?

Jesus Christ said, *"The bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world" (John 6:51)*. If the Lord had not given His own flesh—that is, if He had not had our sins transferred onto the body of Jesus Christ through the baptism He received from John—you and I could not have lived, nor could we have obtained eternal life. But the Lord said, *"I am the living bread which came down from heaven" (John 6:51)*. Among breads, too, there is dead bread and there is living bread. There is bread fit to eat and bread not fit to eat. There is moldy bread and there is fresh bread. Jesus was born on this earth with a body without blemish or spot, a body without a single sin. And with that body He bore our iniquities. So by sacrificing His own body, He saved us from sin. We live only when we eat that flesh of the Lord.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

The faith that eats the flesh and drinks the blood

Jesus was hung on the Cross and shed His blood. He gave us life. He laid down His own life for us. The ways we obtain life are two: eating the flesh of Jesus Christ and drinking His blood. Our souls live by believing with our hearts that Jesus had all our sins transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John at the Jordan River. That is eating the flesh of Jesus Christ. The Lord said, *"It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life" (John 6:63)*. How do we eat the flesh of Jesus Christ? Could it mean eating human flesh? To believe with our hearts that the Lord fulfilled all righteousness at the Jordan River—that is, that He had all our sins transferred to Him through that baptism—is to eat Jesus Christ. The word that Jesus gave His flesh does not mean that we should tear off His flesh and eat it. To believe that He had our sins transferred to Him through that baptism is to eat that flesh.

Jesus came into this world to save the sheep. But those sheep had fallen into iniquity and weakness. To save those sheep, the price of sin had to be paid. Because the sheep were committing sins with their bodies and committing sins with their hearts as well, the Lord had to bear both of those kinds of sin. So the Lord had all the sins that the sheep commit with their bodies and commit with their hearts transferred onto His own body and removed the sin of the sheep. In that way He gave His own flesh to us. While believing in Jesus Christ, we must not speak only of the blood of Jesus. The Lord is not One who gave us only life. He gave His own flesh in order to give us life. He gave His own flesh, which is like this flesh that you and I have. Through the baptism He received from John, He had all our sins transferred onto His own body, and with that body He finished the judgment

for our sins for us. Because Jesus gave us His flesh, we eat that flesh by faith, and through it we have received salvation and obtained eternal life. Do you believe this? That is why the Lord said, *"I lay down My life for the sheep" (John 10:15)*.

How much the Lord must have loved us to give His own flesh to us and bear our sins with His own body! How much He must have loved us to tear off His own flesh and give it for those He loves! He gave all of His own flesh for us. This is true love.

The Lord did not save us by theory or doctrine. Truly loving us, He gave up His own flesh and saved us. Lest the sheep die because of sin and weakness, He gave His own body to give life to the sheep. If the Lord had not loved you and me in that way and had not given His own flesh, we would not be saved. If Jesus had not had all our sins transferred onto His own body through the baptism He received from John at the Jordan River, how could we have said that we are righteous? We would have been righteous in the morning and would have become sinners right away in the evening. Though we might say we were alive, ours would be a life that would soon die. How could such people as we are obtain eternal life? Because the Lord gave us His flesh, you and I have become sinless as we eat that flesh and drink that blood. We have obtained eternal life by believing that the Lord gave His own life to us, that He received the judgment in our place, and that He gave us eternal life and removed all our iniquities. People who believe as you and I do have obtained eternal life.

The Lord did not merely soothe the sheep and say only with words that He loved them. When the Lord looked at us, we were so very weak and so very lacking. The Lord knew us all too well. So He thought, "To save them, I must give My flesh. To save them, I must give My blood. I must give My flesh to become the food of salvation, and give My blood so that they may obtain

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

life," and He came to this earth. So Jesus received baptism from John at the Jordan River for you and me. And to give life and eternal life to you and me, He paid the full price of that sin on the Cross and shed His blood, and He rose again from death. So our being saved is by the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ—that is, by the water, the Spirit, and the blood; by the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The person who eats the flesh of Jesus Christ by faith—that is, the person who believes the fact that Jesus had all the sin of mankind, my sins and your sins, each and every sin that each person commits, transferred to Him at the Jordan River—and who believes the fact that Jesus received the judgment in his place, has obtained eternal life. It is through these two that he has obtained eternal life.

It is the same for you and me even now. That all people obtain fullness and obtain eternal life lies in eating by faith the fact that Jesus Christ had all our sins transferred onto His flesh, that is, His body, through the baptism He received from John. Only then are we full and able to live. Even people who have received the remission of sins starve and die if they do not eat the flesh of Jesus by faith. They have indeed received the remission of sins, but saying, "Oh dear, I am so lacking—how will I live? I don't know, Lord…," they totter about without strength and keep dying.

The Lord has given us eternal life. He has given us true life. What is that? The Lord gave His own flesh. Through the baptism He received from John, He had all the sins we commit, that is, the sin of the world, transferred onto His own body. So when we believe in the Lord, that becomes the food of eternal life in our hearts, so that we can live without going hungry, and we enjoy eternal life. If Jesus had not borne our sins, how could we enjoy eternal life? How could we look at people unashamed and call on God, and live boldly in this world?

The Lord truly became the good shepherd and laid down His own flesh for the sheep. For the sheep He laid down His own life, that is, His blood. Therefore, all the sheep can obtain eternal life and live by eating and drinking the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ by faith. Even now all the sheep must eat and drink the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ. Only then do they obtain eternal life and live. Only then can they gain boldness and strength in their hearts, drive away Satan the devil, and drive away every curse and the poverty of the soul as they live. They can enjoy spiritual riches. The Lord said, *"I am the living bread which came down from heaven" (John 6:51)*. This is calling Jesus Christ bread. Jesus is the bread that we are to eat. When we believe with our hearts that Jesus had all our sins transferred onto His body through the baptism He received from John, and then believe with our hearts that Jesus gave His own life to us, we receive salvation and obtain eternal life. Jesus Christ became the good shepherd not only in words but truly.

Jesus Christ is the good shepherd. Even now He goes about seeking the sheep. The Lord is truly the good shepherd and the One who has given us eternal life. If there is someone who, though believing in Jesus Christ, is tormented because of the sin in his heart, there is surely a problem with that person. He has eaten only one of the two. He is a person who has drunk only the blood of Jesus Christ, that is, only the drink, so that his belly is full while his inside is empty. Only when we eat the flesh of Jesus Christ is our belly full and our inside solidly filled. After that, when we are thirsty, we drink the blood of Jesus Christ. By believing that Jesus Christ has given us life and has finished the judgment for all our sins, we drink the blood of Jesus Christ and come to obtain life. As I live my life of faith, when I look closely, I often see my own pitiful self. Even so, how can I say that I am alive? I can say that I am alive because, as I have said, Jesus

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

gave me His flesh and I am still eating that flesh even now. If there were no flesh and blood of Jesus Christ, I could not say that I am alive. I would die.

The shepherd who knows all about the sheep

Jesus Christ said as follows: *"To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out" (John 10:3)*. What does this word mean? It means that the Lord knows all about our circumstances. It means that He knows all about the sheep's weakness, the sheep's nature, their bad temper that cannot endure, and the sheep's stubbornness.

On this earth, the One who is truly good, the good shepherd, is Jesus alone. He said, *"The sheep hear his voice" (John 10:3)*. When people go to a place where the word of God is preached just as it is and listen to the word, they come to know that it is the voice of the shepherd. When we hear the voice with which the Lord, who is the good shepherd, speaks to us, mankind, we can know that God is the God of love, and we can know that the Lord, who is our shepherd, is truly good, the One who has saved us, loves us, and has given us eternal life. The Lord knows all of us, just as He said, *"He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out" (John 10:3)*. Do you have anything hidden? Do you have sins hidden in your heart? The Lord knows those too, and for those sins He gave His own flesh to us. The Lord knows everything.

When God looks at us, He sees everything, with nothing hidden, as one looks into a mirror or through a window. And He calls us one by one and leads us out. It is as if the Lord says to each one of us as follows: "Are you that weak? Is that your

situation? I am your shepherd. I am the Creator who made you, the good shepherd who wants to be with you. I am your true God. I made you so that you might live with Me forever, and though I allowed Satan the devil to entice you for a while in your weakness, in order to cause you to be born again I have borne all your sins Myself and removed them all, and I will have you live with Me forever. I am your God and your shepherd." The Lord is the good shepherd who speaks to us in this way. But because people do not know Jesus, the good shepherd, well, they meet false shepherds who deceive people, and even though they believe day after day, they live as sinners. But the Lord is not like that. He is One who knows our circumstances well and wants to solve our problems. He is that good. The word continues as follows: *"And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers. Jesus used this illustration, but they did not understand the things which He spoke to them" (John 10:4–6).*

The Lord caused us to be born into this world. Do you know who it is that saved us? It is the Creator who made you and me, that is, the Lord. Do you know who our Master is? It is Jesus, who saved you and me from sin. The Bible says, *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1)*, and says, *"Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light" (Genesis 1:3)*. The One who said that there should be light is the very One who came to save us, gave His own flesh and blood, and saved us, and He is the Creator who made us. After putting us outside the Garden of Eden for a while, the Lord saved us. The Lord wanted to become our good shepherd, and He wanted to bring us back into the kingdom of heaven, into the Garden of Eden, and to live with us

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

forever. So He led us.

Through the baptism He received from John, the Lord had all our sins transferred to Him—that is, all the sins that the sheep commit when tempted by Satan the devil, all the sins they commit because they have no faith, and all the sins they commit because they are weak. By giving His own flesh and blood, He removed all those sins. He saved us perfectly. Do you believe this? Because Jesus Christ is the good shepherd, if we hear the word of Jesus Christ only as the word says, we truly come to believe before God, and a thankful heart arises in us. When we hear the voice of the Lord, eternal life arises in us and hope arises, and joy and the blessings of God are given to us. The sheep grow fat.

When we hear the word of God, when we hear the voice of God, our souls grow fat and our bodies also flourish. If we preach the word of God accurately to all the people who do not know God, they receive the remission of sins right away. They receive it even in a single day. "God is truly the God of love, isn't He?" "That's right." "He is the God of truth, isn't He?" "Yes, that's right." "God has saved you, hasn't He?" "Yes, that's right. It's all true." This is what happens when people hear the voice of the good shepherd. But if it is not the voice of the good shepherd, the sheep listen to that voice and run away. What did I say the work of the good shepherd is? As I said earlier, it is to give His own flesh and blood and save us. "So the Lord has saved us. He has removed all our sins. He has removed forever even the sins we commit because we are weak and the sins we commit in secret. He has removed the sins we committed before, and He has removed the sins we commit now. How? He removed them by giving His own flesh. He bore all our sins with His own body and removed them. He gave us life by having His own body judged. Ah, He is truly the good shepherd!" When we

hear the voice of the good shepherd in this way, we come to know and believe that Jesus is our very Savior. And we become thankful. So the sheep obtain life and leap about.

O souls who, having lived until now, find the way ahead dark and hard—for whom even living in the world is hard, and the problem of the soul is harder still, so that you wander, not knowing where to go—hear the word of God, who is the good shepherd. Then you will obtain life and follow the Lord, and following Him with thankfulness, you will enter the kingdom of heaven and enjoy glory forever.

The sheep that heard the voice of the hireling

Is life hard for you? Hear the voice of the good shepherd. Then the sheep will surely grow fat and flourish. If a person is living with a dry soul, without strength and on the verge of collapse, with a sick and wounded heart, that person has not yet heard the voice of the good shepherd. Rather, it is because he has heard the voice of a hireling shepherd, that is, the voice of a stranger. The reason people become disappointed while believing in Jesus Christ is that they have not heard the voice of the good shepherd. Today the whole world believes much in Christianity. But why are so many people disappointed? When I sometimes go to universities, there are many young people who believed in Jesus Christ, became disappointed, and say, “I will never believe in Jesus Christ.” When I ask them why, they say that Christianity ruins people. When I ask, “What do you mean by that? As a pastor, I cannot understand it at all. Jesus has given me both His flesh and His blood, so I am enjoying eternal life even now and living joyfully, happily, and richly,” they answer, “When you go to church, there are so many things they tell you

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

not to do; they press you down tightly and tell you to do only what you are told. Is there happiness in that? There was no happiness either." So they become disappointed and leave, and then, doing too much all at once of the things they had been held back from doing all that time, they end up completely ruined. So whenever God is mentioned, they say they hate it.

The good shepherd is not like that. He is not a shepherd who torments the sheep, presses down on their necks, grabs their hind legs, and beats them with a rod. He is not the kind of shepherd who snatches the pasture away when a sheep tries to eat it and throws the sheep into the water when it tries to drink. The good shepherd is a shepherd who strikes the wolf with His staff and drives it away when it comes, is glad when the sheep eat the grass well, and cares for them, thinking of putting on some music, whether jazz or Brahms, so that they will not be bored. The One who, when they have eaten all their food, tells them to drink water too so that the nourishment spreads evenly, and who leads them to green pastures and clear streams, just as the word says, *"He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters" (Psalm 23:2)*—He is the good shepherd.

People all run away if it is not the voice of the good shepherd. They believe in Christianity and then abandon it, and they go far away from God, saying that they will never believe in God. After believing in Jesus, have your sins increased? If people know Jesus Christ wrongly and believe in Him, their sins increase. They end up saying, "Before I believed in Jesus I had only one sin, but after believing in Jesus, how my sins have multiplied! A sinner today, a sinner tomorrow, a sinner until I die." I hope you will know that this is because they believed in Jesus while knowing our good shepherd wrongly.

The Lord, who is the good shepherd, said, *"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest"*

(Matthew 11:28). That He gives rest means that the Lord Himself takes care of all our sins completely. It means that He has taken care of all our sins. But if people believe in Jesus wrongly, that burden is so heavy that they cannot live.

When people gain any new knowledge, their minds become alert and they become lively. When someone who believed in another religion comes to believe in Jesus Christ, the knowledge is new, so his eyes sparkle. For about the first year, he feels light because he comes to know what he did not know. But that light shines a little, and then, after about five years, sins begin to pile up and little by little he becomes heavier. If he believes for ten years, his back begins to bend; after fifteen or twenty years it bends more; and if he believes for thirty years, it bends so much that it nearly touches the ground. He reaches the point where, if he takes just one more step past the threshold of hell, he will fall into hell. It is because he does not hear the voice of the good shepherd. It is because he has heard the voice of a hireling who deceives people. In this word the Lord speaks of the hireling. As He said, *"One who does not own the sheep" (John 10:12)*, a hireling works expecting wages, that is, a reward. Teaching this and that about the Son of God in order to make a living for himself—that is a hireling. Working with the thought, "These are not my sheep but someone else's, but if I do this, my salary comes in, so I should do it"—that is a hireling. Working that way, even if a wolf devours a sheep, he just leaves it alone because it is not his. Even if a sheep gets sick and dies, he leaves it alone, saying that it is not as if his salary will stop coming just because the sheep gets sick. That is a hireling. Today there are many people who have not heard the voice of the good shepherd but have heard the voice of hirelings, and so get sick and die.

A hireling is good at lying. He teaches that to receive the remission of sins one must offer many prayers of repentance,

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

and that if one prays with fasting, the painful sins hidden in the heart will disappear, and then he has people go to the mountains and pray with fasting. Since the sheep know nothing, they pray, “Lord, I have sinned. Please remove it,” and even though they feel they will die of hunger, because a servant of God told them to pray with fasting for forty days, they hold out, saying, “Lord, do not let me die for these forty days.” Lost sheep, sheep that have not met the good shepherd, are like that even now. Deceived by lies, they starve and agonize, and when they come down from the mountain, they weigh it up, thinking, “I have starved for forty whole days, so surely God will let it go. If He does not forgive my sins after I have starved like this, He is not even God,” and they come down having settled the account. Coming down, they sing hymns, saying it is a joyful day, and shout hallelujah, and then they commit sins again. Before even two days pass, they become sinners again. So they go back to the false hireling shepherd and say, “It hasn’t been long since I fasted for forty days—what should I do?” and this time he tells them to do a lot of service. Since he says that sins are remitted if they take part in various service groups, visit orphanages, and preach the gospel a lot, they again pick up their bags and, putting off even their housework, run around every day.

This is now the situation of many sheep who have met false shepherds. So when nothing works however hard they try, the sheep run away. They reckon, “However much I follow with my heart, it is not going to work. How many years has it been since I began believing in Jesus? Ten years, more than fifteen years. I believed with all the devotion and strength I had, and what is this? Is there any hope ahead?” and they conclude that there is no hope and that if they follow any further, it will only get worse. So the sheep who can no longer endure quit, saying, “I won’t believe in Jesus anymore.” When their hearts are hurt like that

and they stop believing altogether, it is completely over. Even when servants of God who preach the word of Jesus, the good shepherd, go to them and tell them that God has already removed all their sins and ask why they do not believe, they say not even to talk about God, that they believed in Christianity for fifteen years and it was all in vain, and not even to say such things. Because the sheep have not heard the Lord's voice and have heard only the hireling's voice, they are only hurt and run away. Why do they run away? They run away because they too want to live.

The Lord goes ahead, as He said, *"When he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them" (John 10:4)*. After He Himself has borne all the sin of those sheep and removed it, He calls us, as the good shepherd, to follow Him. When the Lord, having given all His flesh and blood and taken care of all our sins, calls us to believe in Him and follow Him, we, mankind, can follow the Lord, the good shepherd. We come to follow Him. That is why we believe in the Lord. Because He has taken care of all our sins, and because He loved us so much as to give His own flesh and life, we follow the Lord by faith. By faith we obtain eternal life. All people are sheep. And in John chapter 10 the Lord said that He is the door of the sheep.

"I am the door of the sheep"

Even if there is the kingdom of heaven—in the book of Revelation the kingdom of heaven is called a city—even if there is a city, one cannot enter it if there is no door. Sheep do not even have claws, so they cannot climb up cliffs. Because sheep cannot climb rock walls, the Lord, who is the good shepherd, Himself became the door of this city. By giving His own flesh and blood,

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

He enabled the sheep to believe and enter. He made it so that anyone, without laboring, can believe and enter as long as he has two legs—so that anyone who wishes to enter can enter.

If we look at the tabernacle of the Old Testament, the outer court of the tabernacle is enclosed all around with white cloth. But at the main entrance there is a gate embroidered with blue, purple, and scarlet thread. When you look around to find the gate, it is white cloth all around, but if you go to one side, there is a large gate opening. The white cloth was embroidered with blue, purple, and scarlet thread to mark it as the gate. Unless one is a person who cannot see, anyone can enter. Even a person who cannot see can find it by feeling, because it is embroidered and therefore different from the other cloth. In the same way, the Lord has saved us perfectly so that anyone who wishes to enter can enter. Our Lord is the good shepherd. *"Then Jesus said to them again, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture'" (John 10:7–9).*

I give thanks to the Lord, who became our door. The Lord said, *"All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers" (John 10:8)*. They are not even hirelings but robbers. A robber is one who, without any explanation, demands that you hand over what you have and takes it away. There were those who came before the Lord and said that they themselves would save people, and the Lord, who is the good shepherd, called them robbers. Can you call them robbers? Only the Lord can say so. The One who gives true life to people and removes all their sins is Jesus Christ. The true good shepherd of you and me, the One who has done good work for us, is our Lord. The Lord is the One who saved us by having all our sins transferred onto His own

flesh, His own body, through the baptism He received from John at the Jordan River. And He is the One who, by receiving judgment on the Cross, gave His own life, that is, His blood, so that whoever believes it may receive salvation.

The Lord, who is the good shepherd, removed all my sins at the Jordan River. If we truly believe in Jesus, we receive salvation. What is the work Jesus did? Let us first look at our situation. First, we were created by God. Second, Satan the devil tempted Adam and Eve to sin, and we sinned. Third, we human beings are born with the sin we inherited from our ancestors. Fourth, and so sin came to be in every human being who is born. But God gave the law to make people who have sin realize for themselves that they are sinners. And the Lord came to this earth to save His own sheep who had sin. Having come to this earth, He had all our sins transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John at the Jordan River, put a complete end to that sin by shedding His blood and being judged on the Cross, and rose again from death. The Bible says, *"Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin" (Hebrews 10:18)*. He has made it perfect so that sin and judgment will never be brought up again and so that we will never again be destroyed. He is our Lord and the good shepherd. He is the One who made us and the One who saved us. He is the One who gave us eternal life. The purpose for which the Lord, who is the good shepherd, made us was to live together with us forever in the kingdom of God.

The Lord said, *"Will go in and out and find pasture" (John 10:9)*. Just because you have received the remission of sins once and know that the Lord has removed your sins, is your heart always at peace? As we live in the world, it seems that we always just go on living that way. But the reason our hearts are always at peace even when the waves of sin are rough, as in the words

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

of a hymn, is that the Lord gave His own flesh to us and bore all our sins. That is why our hearts are at peace. So what if we are lacking? We have entered through the Lord and received salvation. And we go out and find pasture. Through the Lord's word of truth, we obtain the food of life. A person must eat the food of the spirit to live. Only our Lord is the good shepherd. The Lord said as follows: *"The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep. I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own. As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd. Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again" (John 10:10–17).*

"That they may have it more abundantly"

The Lord said, *"The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly" (John 10:10)*. The Lord came to this earth so that we might obtain salvation, obtain eternal life, and have it more abundantly, and He actually enabled us to have it more abundantly. I am abundant. Are you abundant too? I am truly abundant. I am abundant because I, and

you as well, have the Lord, who is the good shepherd. Now there is no more thirst. There is no more despair. There is no more curse. Through the Lord—through following the Lord by faith—there is only abundance. I hope that you will meet the Lord, who is the true life and the true shepherd. I hope that you will hear what the Lord has done. The Lord is not a shepherd who removes only original sin and leaves the remaining sins. Nor is He One who removes sins little by little each time we repent of the sins we commit every day, or who removes separately, each time, the sins we will commit in the future. The true good shepherd is the One who gives His own flesh and life, gives perfect life so that the sheep will never again suffer because of sin or fear because of curses, and gives eternal life so that they may enjoy that life ever more abundantly forever.

Jesus Christ is the good shepherd. I have met Jesus. The good shepherd has become my shepherd. I am His sheep. We are all His sheep. The Lord said that He also leads the countless souls who have not yet come into this sheepfold into this sheepfold. He said, *"And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd" (John 10:16)*. Even now the good shepherd lets the sheep hear the word in order to hold them in His bosom and to give them everlasting life—and to give it more abundantly. It is so that the sheep may hear, know, and believe that He removed our sins with His own flesh and gave us life with His own blood, and so obtain everlasting life and more abundant life. Do you believe this?

The Lord is One who is good, the good shepherd. Jesus is the only good shepherd. There is work that the good shepherd does. The purpose of the good shepherd is to bring back His own sheep, whom He had sent out of the Garden of Eden, to have them come into His own sheepfold, to give them pasture, life, eternal life,

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

and blessings within that fold, and to have them live with Him forever.

The Church of God is the sheepfold of the good shepherd. The reason the Church of God exists on this earth is that it is the sheepfold of the good shepherd. The Lord blesses the people who have come into this sheepfold, that is, the people who are united with the Church. You have experienced it too, haven't you? The Lord bestows grace, doesn't He? He never fails to make them abundant. God leads the people who have not yet come into this sheepfold. Our Lord, who calls them out of this world, leads them into the Church of God, and gives them the same remission of sins, the same life, and the same abundant blessings as us, is the good shepherd.

Dear beloved saints, we must know why we were born into this world and know the Lord rightly. We must hear the voice of the shepherd accurately and rightly and follow Him. We must not follow a hireling shepherd. If we only go to the Lord, there is nothing that is not resolved. All sins are resolved once and for all, and all curses also come to an end once and for all. That is what happens when we follow the good shepherd. I hope that you will hear the voice of the good shepherd and obtain eternal life, and also receive the abundant blessings of God. Our Lord is the good shepherd. Do you know that our Lord is the good shepherd, and do you follow Him? The Lord is One who can be trusted. Even if you believe Him one hundred percent and entrust everything to Him one hundred percent, you will lose nothing at all. The Lord is not One who raises us in order to eat us. He is One who causes the sheep to obtain life and live forever. Because the Lord is One who lives forever, He made us and saved us in order to have the sheep also live forever so that they might enjoy eternal happiness together, and in order to share life with them forever. Knowing this, I hope that you will hear and

believe the voice of the good shepherd, who is the Creator who made us and our Savior, and enjoy eternal life in His bosom. ✉

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Sermon 4 by Paul C. Jong

The faith that recognizes the Savior even amid slander

< John 10:19–21 >

“Therefore there was a division again among the Jews because of these sayings. And many of them said, ‘He has a demon and is mad. Why do you listen to Him?’ Others said, ‘These are not the words of one who has a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?’”

They had heard the same word, but people’s answers were different. When Jesus said that He would lay down His life of Himself for the sheep and take it again, many people branded Him as a man who had a demon. Their point was that there was no reason to listen to someone who said such things. But others looked at both the words the Lord had spoken and the work He had done in opening the eyes of the blind. They asked how one who had a demon could speak such words and open the eyes of a man who had not been able to see.

Jesus was one Person, and what He had done was also clear. Yet people’s words about Him split in two. We cannot know the Savior by reckoning on which side many people are standing. When we hear how the Lord revealed Himself and know what He has done for us, we recognize Him. If we keep away from the One who gives us life because of people’s slander, we also end up keeping away from the life He gives.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

The One who gave up His life to give life to the sheep

This dispute arose after Jesus had spoken about His own life. Verse 19 says that the division arose *"because of these sayings."* Let us read the preceding verses 17 and 18.

"'Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father'" (John 10:17–18).

Jesus spoke of His own death and His rising again. It was a word that He would lay down His life to give life to the sheep and would take that life again. This is exactly what is meant by *"these sayings,"* which caused a division among the Jews. People were split in two at this word, but the way the Lord was going to take had been one and the same from the beginning.

Jesus is God, who made the world, and He is our Savior. At the Jordan River He bowed His body, and as He received baptism from John the Baptist, He had the sin of mankind transferred to Him. The One who bore the sin of the world also had to receive death, the wages of that sin. So the Lord, still bearing that sin, shed His blood and died on the Cross and received the judgment for that sin. And three days after He was buried, He rose again from death. The word that He would lay down His life and take it again was fulfilled in this way.

The obedience of the Son whom the Father loved was revealed first at the Jordan River. These are the words Jesus spoke as He stood before John the Baptist.

"But Jesus answered and said to him, 'Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.' Then he allowed Him" (Matthew 3:15).

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

All righteousness was fulfilled by Jesus' having the sin of the world passed on to Him through the baptism He received from John. His bearing of sin and His paying its price together testify of our salvation. The person who believes this gospel of the water and the Spirit in his heart is no longer blind.

Therefore, although this word that He would lay down His life sounded to some like the words of a madman, to the person who knows his own sin it is news of life. It is because the Lord bore the sin that could not be removed however diligently one lived, the sin that could not be undone however much one regretted it. The Lord's death was the judgment for my sin, and the Lord, who rose again from death, is my Savior, who is alive even now.

Look at what the Lord has done rather than at words of slander

Let us read verses 19 and 20.

"Therefore there was a division again among the Jews because of these sayings. And many of them said, 'He has a demon and is mad. Why do you listen to Him?'" (John 10:19–20).

It says, *"There was a division again."* This is not the first time people have been divided over Jesus. In chapter 7 it says, *"So there was a division among the people because of Him" (John 7:43)*, and in chapter 9, after the blind man's eyes were opened, it says of the Pharisees as well, *"There was a division among them" (John 9:16)*. And this time, a division arose again because of the word that He would lay down His life. Each time, what divided people was Jesus Himself and the words He spoke and the works He did.

The words "He has a demon" were not spoken for the first time either. The Gospel of John records those words that people said about Jesus four times: in chapter 7, verse 20, in chapter 8, verses 48 and 52, and in this verse 20. This time *"and is mad"* was added, and saying, *"Why do you listen to Him?" (John 10:20),* they even stood in the way of the people who listened to that word. Slander closes the ears of the heart in this way. It makes people push away the One who speaks before they even find out what He has said.

Those who said this were *"many of them."* There are times when we, too, first accept the assessment of many people and keep away from the gospel of the water and the Spirit. We regard a teaching that many people accept as safe, and we doubt an unfamiliar word even before we hear it. But a teaching does not become the truth just because it is familiar. Even if you have lived for a long time calling yourself a sinner, listen to the word that the Lord has washed away all sins.

If we reckon only how much we have done, what the Lord has done is pushed to the back. Then, when we hear the word that He washed away sins once and for all, we end up objecting, asking how a person can be saved like that. The One who saved us is God, who accomplished what man cannot do. Let us read verse 21.

"Others said, 'These are not the words of one who has a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?'" (John 10:21).

These people weighed two things together. One was *"the words"*—that is, the word of Jesus they had just heard—and the other was the work He had done. In chapter 9, Jesus opened the eyes of the man who was blind from birth. It is the work of which that man whose eyes had been opened testified, saying, *"Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind" (John 9:32)*. In the face of that

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

work, the slander that He had a demon lost its ground.

These people did not answer harsh words with harsh words. They answered by pointing to what Jesus had done. You, too, when someone speaks slander, do not be pushed back by the force of those words, but confirm again through the word what the Lord has done. When you preach the gospel as well, rather than confronting the other person with words that put him down, make clear how the Lord bore our sins and saved us. What gives life to people is not our skill with words but the salvation the Lord has accomplished.

Know the Savior clearly and believe in Him with your heart

The people in verse 21 came as far as concluding that Jesus could not be One who had a demon. Faith goes one step further from there and knows who He is. Jesus is the Son of God the Father, the Creator who made us, and the Christ who delivered us from sin. If we regard Him merely as One who gives excellent teachings, the salvation He gives is not seen. To believe in Him is to accept with the heart the salvation He has wrought.

John the Baptist testified of Jesus as follows. Let us read verse 29 of John chapter 1.

"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).

Jesus is the Lamb of God, who bore and took away the sin of the world. That sin of the world includes my sin as well. Our past sins and the sins being exposed now—all the sins we commit throughout our lives—Jesus had passed on to Him through the baptism He received from John. And still bearing

those sins, He paid their full price on the Cross. Therefore, the person who believes in the Lord's salvation in his heart is a righteous person who has received the remission of sins. This is not a confession that boasts of my own deeds but a confession that gives glory to the Savior, who bore sin in my place.

What can a person who cannot see do to open his own eyes? We were like that too. While there was sin in our hearts, the works of God were not visible to us, and even though we struggled to remove our own sin, our closed eyes remained as they were. The man in chapter 9 went to Siloam as Jesus said, washed, and came to see. The eyes of our hearts, too, were opened when we believed the word that the Lord bore all our sins and received the judgment for those sins. The Lord opened the eyes that neither demons nor people could open.

There are people who, while familiarly repeating words about salvation, still try to solve the sin in their own hearts by themselves. If a person counts only how much he repented today and how good a life he lived, his heart is always bound to his own deeds. On the days he has done well he feels at ease, but on the days his shortcomings are exposed he collapses again. Even our sins that are exposed now, the Lord has already had transferred to Him and has removed on the Cross.

Feelings change from moment to moment. Even after being moved to the point of tears, the heart soon changes. But the salvation the Lord has accomplished does not change. Just as those people that day pointed to what Jesus had done as evidence, you, too, take as the evidence of your salvation not your own feelings but what the Lord has done.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

The faith that accepts the word of the Lord today as well

The many people in verse 20 told people not to listen to that word. But if we push away the salvation God has given, there is no other way to escape from sin. Let us read verse 18 of John chapter 3.

"'He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God'" (John 3:18).

Those who do not believe in the Son of God are already under judgment. One cannot escape that judgment just because one has attended worship services and done many religious things. If a person does not believe in the Lord, who saved us through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and remains in sin, he comes to eternal punishment. Therefore, do not put off knowing the Savior, but open your ears to His word today.

Faith is always today's faith. It does not stop at remembering a confession made long ago; it is hearing the word today and believing today. If something you had known wrongly before is exposed in the light of the word, you need only lay down that thought and set your faith right according to the word. Turn from the heart that tried to be saved by piling up your own merits, and believe in the righteousness the Lord has fulfilled.

Although many people spoke slander, what Jesus had done remained as it was. He opened the eyes of the man who had not been able to see from birth, and to give us life He laid down His life and took it again. Today, too, people's words are divided over the Lord. The person who believes in this Savior with his heart looks at what the Lord has done rather than at people's words. Even in the midst of slander and division, look at that work by which He opened the eyes of the blind and washed away

all our sins, and believe in Jesus as your Savior. ✉

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Sermon 5 by Paul C. Jong

My sheep hear My voice, and they follow Me

< John 10:22–29 >

"Now it was the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem, and it was winter. And Jesus walked in the temple, in Solomon's porch. Then the Jews surrounded Him and said to Him, 'How long do You keep us in doubt? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly.' Jesus answered them, 'I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in My Father's name, they bear witness of Me. But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you. My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand.'"

The Lord came to this earth and, revealing Himself, said, *"I am the door of the sheep" (John 10:7)*; and saying, *"I lay down My life for the sheep" (John 10:15)*, He said, *"My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again" (John 10:17)*. And saying that He was doing all these things just as the Father had sent Him and told Him to do, He said, *"This command I have received from My Father" (John 10:18)*. But the Jews did not believe. Not only did they not believe, but they were also discussing how they might seize Jesus and kill Him,

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

and they were watching for an opportunity. Even so, the Lord did not back down but went on speaking. Later, at the Feast of Dedication in winter, when the Lord was walking in Solomon's porch in the temple, the Jews surrounded Jesus and said, *"How long do You keep us in doubt? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly" (John 10:24)*. They were asking whether He was the Messiah who was said to come, whether He was the King of kings, and whether He was the very One whom God was said to be sending to save mankind from sin.

The Lord answered, *"I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in My Father's name, they bear witness of Me. But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you" (John 10:25–26)*. It means that although the works the Lord did in the Father's name were the very evidence that the Lord is the Christ and their Savior, the reason they did not believe was that they were not the Lord's sheep. And then He went on to say: *"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand" (John 10:27–29).*

The Father, who is greater than all

What we will now think about together is the Lord's word that He gives eternal life to the sheep. The Lord said, *"I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand" (John 10:28)*. The reason lies in what He said: *"My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My*

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Father's hand" (John 10:29). That is, the reason the Lord gives the sheep eternal life, those sheep never perish, and no one can snatch those sheep out of the Lord's hand is that the Father, who gave us to the Lord, is greater than all.

The word *"all"*—that is to say "all things"—refers to the whole world God made, including the Milky Way. When we try to think of something far greater than what people can fathom, we are at a loss for words. It is so great that human thought cannot take it in. The Lord said that because the Father is greater than all, He has given eternal life to us, His sheep, and this is hard to explain fully in words. The word He spoke, *"My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all" (John 10:29)*, means that God made the Milky Way and the whole world of countless stars, and that He is greater than all of them. God the Father is the One who made all these things, and Jesus Christ Himself is also the One who made them. That is why the Lord said, *"I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand" (John 10:28)*. It means that the Father gave the Lord the authority and power to give eternal life to the sheep and had Him do this work, and since that Father is the One who made all things in the universe and is greater than all of them, no one among created beings can snatch us out of the Father's hand. In a word, that is what it is.

The Lord called us His sheep. He said that the Father has given us to the Lord, and the people in this world who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit are the very sheep of the Lord. The Lord's sheep recognize the Lord's voice and follow Him. They believe, follow, and give thanks. But those who are not the Lord's sheep do not recognize the Lord's voice; they do not believe, and they do not follow. And the Lord said that He gives eternal life to His sheep. Eternal life is never perishing forever, exactly as the word *"they shall never perish" (John*

10:28) says. Never perishing forever—this is something human thought cannot fathom. It is so great that we are simply astounded. But because the Lord spoke by way of comparison, saying, *"My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all" (John 10:29)*, and actually spoke of that power, we are able to talk about this. God made the whole universe and all things and the world of the Milky Way. Do you know how great, wide, vast, high, and deep this world of the Milky Way is? No one can measure it.

Even now scientists keep finding new stars. People of old observed with telescopes the galaxy we live in, and scientists say that as they observed it again and again, they found that outside that galaxy there is yet another galaxy, that in it too there are stars like the sun, and that there are countless such galaxies. Even the scientists are so amazed that they are at a loss for words. And the One who made all those things is our very God, the God who saved you and me. Since it says that He has given us eternal life, we can understand it when we compare it with this. It means that the One who made a world so unspeakably wide, great, and deep that it cannot be measured, the One who has such power, is our God, and that this God has given you and me eternal life. So could the eternal life God has given us be ruined? Could it be taken away partway? Could it go wrong? The Lord said that no one can snatch His sheep away and that no one can destroy those who have received eternal life. When we think about it by comparing it in this way, we come to know that it is truly possible. It means that since God, who made all things in the universe, is so great, if He has given us eternal life, no one can take it away and no one can destroy us.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Eternal life that cannot be measured

Since the One whose power is this great has given us eternal life, the eternal life we have received can never be taken away. Nor can it be ruined partway. I can say that God has given us grace that is so great and wonderful. This is exactly what I want to say to you. If it were a story people could understand and measure, we too could explain it well with ease. But the word that God, who saved us, has spoken to us goes beyond the level that people can understand. It is that He has given us eternal life, that no one can take that eternal life away, and that no one can destroy us.

So we are people who, going beyond the dimension of the blessings that people can think of and understand, have received unspeakable blessings before God. Think how great the blessing is that we have received. Even we who know this fact may go wrong while living a life of faith, may pay some price as we serve the gospel, and may stumble or follow the flesh while serving the gospel. But when we think of what the Lord has given us, nothing can compare with it. There is no grace more perfect than this. If we know that, because there is God the Father, who is greater than all, no one can take away the eternal life the Lord has given and destroy the Lord's sheep, and if we know that we have received such a blessing, then whatever toil, temptation, and deception there may be in this world, and even if we pay a great price in our life of faith, we cannot exchange it for anything or give it up, because what the Lord has given us is so great. We become truly thankful, and with this grace alone we become able to endure all things.

The hope that enables us to endure all things

This is how I feel. Sometimes, when my heart is weary, the confession of the Apostle Paul comes to mind. Paul said, *"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" (Romans 8:35)*. Truly, nothing can separate us from the love of Christ. The Lord has given us eternal life by which we shall never perish. Since it is eternal life given by the One who made this universe that we cannot even measure, the One who is greater than all things in the universe, how perfect, great, and lasting this eternal life must be! Eternal life is, just as the words say, living forever. So how great it must be! Therefore, whatever price we may have to pay as we meet people and serve the gospel on this earth, we cannot give up the eternal life He has given us, and because of the blessing of that eternal life, we can endure all things.

We must believe that the Lord has given eternal life to you and me, His sheep. Then we gain the strength to endure all things. We gain the strength to endure all things and to hope. The Bible says, *"And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love" (1 Corinthians 13:13)*. The love of God is the greatest, next is faith, and next is hope. We live because we have the hope of living forever, the hope of never perishing forever but living on, enjoying eternal life as children of the Father. You and I have become such people. What the Lord said is so great that it is hard to explain it all. We have to compare it with something, but it is hard even to find something to compare it with. The Lord said, *"I give them eternal life" (John 10:28)*, and who are *"them"* here? It is you and me. The people who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit are included here. The Lord called us His flock. The Lord made the universe and

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

all things, and when we fell into sin, He came to save His people. And He saved us.

The Savior, who is the door of the sheep

The Lord said, *"All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them" (John 10:8)*. The Lord made us, and He came to this earth to save us from sin in order to make us His people. The Lord is truly the One who carries out the will of God the Father. That is why He said, *"I am the door of the sheep" (John 10:7)*, and so the Lord is our Savior, who came legitimately. A house has a main gate, windows, and various other doors. But that the Lord called Himself the door of the sheep means that He is the Savior who, carrying out God's will, came legitimately and saved us from sin. Before Jesus Christ, various people came and said that they would rescue people, but according to the Lord's word, they are all robbers. Why is that? It is because the One who made us is God. The One who would come to save us when we went wrong is also God. It means that because that God saved us, spoke to us, and gave us salvation and eternal life, all who, apart from that God, clamored that they would save mankind are robbers. They are not the legitimate Savior. How could they save us? The Lord said, *"I lay down My life for the sheep" (John 10:15)*, and He said, *"I lay down My life that I may take it again" (John 10:17)*. He said that He was keeping this just as the Father had commanded. And He said, *"I and My Father are one" (John 10:30)*.

When the Lord came to this earth and said that, as the Father's Son, He was one with the Father, people must have been astounded. The Jews said, *"For a good work we do not stone*

You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God" (John 10:33). Here, "blasphemy" refers to speaking or acting in a way that dishonors God or wrongly claims what belongs to God. So the Jews picked a quarrel, saying that Jesus must be killed. But it is written, *"Therefore they sought again to seize Him, but He escaped out of their hand" (John 10:39)*. Jesus is God, so even though people tried to seize Him and kill Him by force, it was no use. Even if they seized Him from every side, the strength must have gone out of their hands, and they would have had no choice but to let Him go. The Lord was such a One. People could not at all understand or fathom the word the Lord spoke. But we, the Lord's sheep, can fathom and believe that word, and we can wait for the Lord and follow Him.

The sheep who recognize the Lord's voice

The Lord said, *"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me" (John 10:27)*. Do you hear the Lord's voice? What is the Lord's voice? Is it not that the Lord saved us through the gospel of the water and the Spirit? That the Lord came to this earth and saved us—this is the Lord's voice. It is not the Cross alone; it is that the Lord had the sin of the world transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John, shed His blood on the Cross and received the judgment for that sin, and so saved us. And it is that three days later He rose again from death and ascended into heaven, and that He will come again to take us. The Lord said that He first causes our souls to be born again, and that He will come again, bring our bodies to life, and have us take part in the first resurrection, have us be with Him in the Millennial Kingdom, and after that have us enjoy eternal life in

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

the eternal world. We hear that voice. We recognize it and believe. But many people do not recognize it.

There are many kinds of books that we deliver, and some people come to realize the gospel and receive the remission of sins by reading a book other than the few representative ones among them. But some people cannot believe even after reading all the books. Why is that? It is because an evil spirit rules their hearts and covers them over with the forces of the world. Such people say, "Then are you saying that everything the Christian denominations and the Reformers in this world have done is false? How can you say such a thing? Are you saying that you are greater than they are?" In Jesus' day as well, people disputed with Jesus along the lines of, "Are You saying that You are greater than these people?" The Samaritan woman asked, *"Are You greater than our father Jacob?" (John 4:12)*, and the Jews disputed, *"Are You greater than our father Abraham, who is dead?" (John 8:53)*. And when they said, *"You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?" (John 8:57)*, Jesus said, *"Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM" (John 8:58)*. People did not understand how He could say that He existed before Abraham, who was a man of long ago, and so they could not believe.

In this age as well, there are people who cannot believe even when we deliver books to them. Some people believe the gospel, and some cannot believe. The Lord said that His sheep recognize His voice. A person who sets his heart before God and fully admits that he is a created being made by God, that he is lacking before God and commits sins, and that according to the law he can only go to hell, cannot help but believe that Jesus came to this earth and saved us through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. He cannot help but acknowledge that the Lord loved us so much that He removed our sins and made us God's people.

And so he comes to acknowledge it.

The everlasting life that cannot be taken away

When we think only in terms of the flesh, growing old and facing death is truly wearisome and futile. But when we think spiritually, there is a new life for us saints. In Buddhism people believe in reincarnation and say that one is reborn after death, but for those who have become Christ's sheep there is truly a new hope. There is a new hope out there beyond. Greater than that, there is eternal life. Because there is a life of living forever, we are happy. God has given us blessings that cannot be measured, but even so, we want to understand them by comparing them with something. So we compare them with the word He spoke, *"My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all" (John 10:29)*. If God, who made all things in the universe, has given us eternal life, it makes sense that this is truly possible and that we who have obtained that eternal life can live forever and ever. When we think that He has given us such a blessing, we are truly thankful, and a heart arises in us that says, *"What shall I render to the LORD For all His benefits toward me?" (Psalm 116:12)*.

No one can take away the everlasting life the Lord has given us. That is why we are happy and thankful. There is much work to do, much to talk about, and much to preach. But what blessing could be greater than this? Preaching the gospel is important too, but what we are even more thankful for is that the Lord has made us His sheep. The Lord received baptism from John and had our sins transferred to Him, was hung on the Cross and received the judgment for those sins, thereby removing our sins, and three days later He rose again from death and saved us. And He made

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

us people without sin and made us God's people. Saying to us, His sheep, *"I give them eternal life" (John 10:28)*, He said that no one can destroy us, and He said that the Father, who is greater than all, keeps us. That we have received such great love from so great a God makes us so thankful and glad. Because we are weak, we sometimes fall into discouragement, but we are people who have hope, thanksgiving, and praise; people who have been saved from sin before the Lord; and people who have become the Lord's people, the Lord's sheep. It means that you and I are such people. The Bible says, *"Nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:39)*. No one can separate us from the love of Christ. There is no one who will snatch us away from the Lord, who has given us eternal life.

You and I are people who have believed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, become children of God, and received the remission of sins. Those who hear the Lord's voice and believe have received such blessings. That is why we are thankful. I hope that this word will be the Lord's comfort to you. You too will have hard times while you hear the Lord's word. There are many who betray the Lord, there are people who hurt our hearts, and there are times when we ourselves find it hard to follow the Lord. But we are comforted, because the Lord has not only given us salvation but has even given us eternal life. He said that no one can snatch us out of His hand. We have become people who will enjoy eternal life. We cannot understand it all, but we know that eternal life is unspeakably greater than all things in this universe. No scientist has ever measured the whole of this world of the Milky Way that God made. Yet eternal life is something that cannot be reckoned even in terms of time, something without beginning or end. Living forever is called eternal life.

Eternal life lies in the Lord's power

At one time there was even a religious organization that bore a name claiming to give eternal life. Once, a story became known about spring water over which a certain church leader was said to have prayed a prayer of blessing. It was said that if people washed their faces with that water, their skin would become fine and their illnesses would be healed, but it is said that when the water quality was tested, it turned out to be water unfit to drink. Also, in the past, a certain cult leader drew water into a basin and prayed a prayer of blessing over it, then mixed that water into a water tank, had his followers share it and drink it, and taught that they would obtain eternal life. Saying that if that water were sprinkled on the grave of a dead person, the body would drink the water and come back to life, they even sprinkled water over graves. For a while, not a few people did so. The director of a certain prayer house also said that God had appeared and told him to dig a spring, and that when he dug, water of eternal life came out, and that if people drew that water and drank it, their illnesses would be healed. In this way, there are truly many stories about the water of eternal life. People said that if one drank the water of eternal life, one would obtain eternal life. How much people must have wanted to obtain eternal life to do such things!

But the Lord said, *"I give them eternal life" (John 10:28)*. He said that He gives eternal life to those who recognize His voice and follow Him. The eternal life the Lord gives is not in water but in the Lord's power. The Lord has given us eternal life. We have obtained the eternal life that people so long to have. We have looked at this fact together through the word; can you believe it? The Lord's word is here and we hear the Lord's voice, so what reason could there be not to believe the Lord's word? I

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

am a person who has obtained eternal life. You too are people who have obtained eternal life, people who have received unspeakable blessings. Though you may look lacking in the flesh, spiritually you are people who have received tremendous blessings. Who on this earth could have been blessed as much as we have?

Moreover, since we have met the Lord, obtained eternal life, and become people who serve the Lord's righteousness, will the Lord not guarantee this eternal life to us? The Lord has not only given us salvation; He has given us eternal life. Yet there are also people who, after believing in the Lord and receiving the remission of sins, go completely out into the world, reject this gospel, the Lord, the saints, and the Church of God, and become enemies. Such a person is called a wicked person, and his end is destruction. Therefore, we who have received the remission of sins must live serving the gospel to the end. But since God has given us eternal life, there is now nothing more for us to ask of God. We are so thankful, and thankful again. I hope that you will live the rest of your life meditating on this grace. Let us live giving thanks by faith to God, who has given us eternal life. ✉

Sermon 6 by Paul C. Jong

The Lord, who gives us eternal life and keeps us

< John 10:22–39 >

"Now it was the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem, and it was winter. And Jesus walked in the temple, in Solomon's porch. Then the Jews surrounded Him and said to Him, 'How long do You keep us in doubt? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly.' Jesus answered them, 'I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in My Father's name, they bear witness of Me. But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you. My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are one.' Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him. Jesus answered them, 'Many good works I have shown you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me?' The Jews answered Him, saying, 'For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God.' Jesus answered them, 'Is it not written in your law, "I said, 'You are gods'"? If He called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), do you say of Him whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, "You are blaspheming," because I said, "I am the Son of God"? If I do not do the works of My Father,

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

do not believe Me; but if I do, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him.' Therefore they sought again to seize Him, but He escaped out of their hand."

The Jews who surrounded Jesus demanded a clear answer. They were saying that if He was the Christ they had been waiting for, He should tell them plainly. Jesus answered that He had already told them. The works He had done in the Father's name were also testifying of who He was. They had heard His words and had also seen the works He had done, but they did not believe.

There, Jesus spoke of what kind of people His sheep are. The sheep hear the shepherd's voice and follow Him, and the shepherd knows them. He said that He gives them eternal life and that no one can snatch them out of His hand. Follow the word *"hand"* through this passage. We find *"My hand"* and *"My Father's hand,"* which Jesus spoke of, and, at the end, the hand of the people who tried to seize Jesus. However loud the voices that shake our faith may be, the One who keeps us is the Lord.

The Christ, who has already spoken and acted

Let us read verses 22 through 25.

"Now it was the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem, and it was winter. And Jesus walked in the temple, in Solomon's porch. Then the Jews surrounded Him and said to Him, 'How long do You keep us in doubt? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly.' Jesus answered them, 'I told you, and you do not believe. The works

that I do in My Father's name, they bear witness of Me'" (John 10:22–25).

It was the Feast of Dedication, and it was winter. The Feast of Dedication is a feast that commemorates the day when, after a Gentile army had defiled the temple, they were driven out, the temple was thoroughly repaired, and worship was offered to God again. As Jesus was walking in Solomon's porch in that temple, the Jews surrounded Him and said that He was keeping their hearts in doubt.

The *"Christ"* they told Him to speak of plainly means 'the anointed one.' Just as kings, priests, and prophets were anointed in the old days, the Christ is the One whom God approved and sent to carry out the Father's will. That will of the Father was to save us from sin. Jesus healed the sick and opened the eyes of the man who was blind from birth. All these works came from the Father, and as people saw those works, they could know what the Father is like.

When people place their own judgment above the word, they reject the evidence even when they see it. Just as Jesus said, *"I told you, and you do not believe" (John 10:25),* what they lacked was faith. It was they who demanded that He speak plainly, but it was also they who needed to know plainly and believe plainly. Today we, too, rather than endlessly seeking new evidence, plainly know and believe in our hearts what the Lord has already spoken and accomplished.

The work of salvation that the Father entrusted to the Christ was accomplished in this way. The Christ, who had been anointed, first received baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River and had the sin of the world transferred to Him through that baptism. Then, because of that sin which had been passed on to Him, He shed His blood on the Cross and received the judgment for that sin, and He rose again three days later. This

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

is the very work He did in the Father's name, and here lies the clear ground of the remission of sins. To accept in our hearts this work that the Christ has done is to receive the Lord.

The life that cannot be snatched out of the shepherd's hand

Let us read verses 26 through 29.

"But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you. My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand" (John 10:26–29).

Jesus gave the reason they did not believe as *"because you are not of My sheep."* This word does not mean that God, from the beginning, loved some people and forsook others. God so loved the world that He removed the sin of all people equally. The reason for not believing lies on the side of the person who holds on to his own righteousness and does not let go of his doubt.

The Lord's sheep hear the Lord's voice. What is that voice? It is the word telling us that Jesus has saved us through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The sheep recognize and believe that word—that He removed our sins not with the Cross alone but with the baptism He received from John and the blood of the Cross. The Lord knows such sheep, and the sheep know the Lord and follow Him. The person who recognizes His voice and whose heart first submits to that word is the Lord's sheep.

The Lord said that to such sheep He gives eternal life. Eternal

life is, just as the words say, living forever, and *"they shall never perish"* means that they will never come to ruin again. We did not first ask Him to give us eternal life, yet the Lord gave it first. Though the days of the flesh pass and the body grows weak, the life the Lord has given does not end.

Then who are those called *"them"* here? They are those who believe that Jesus had all our sins passed on to His body through the baptism He received from John the Baptist, received the judgment for those sins on the Cross, and died and rose again. In this way the Lord removed our sins, made us His own sheep, and then gave us eternal life. And He placed those sheep in *"My hand."*

This promise rests on the Father's power. He said that because the Father, who has given the sheep, is greater than all, no one can snatch them out of the Father's hand. What is meant by all here is the whole universe, which man cannot even fully measure—the entire world God has made. The One who made that world is God, who saved us. There is no one greater than He, so there is also no one who can snatch away the eternal life He has given. Our eternal life is guaranteed by His power.

When we meet hard things, we become afraid, and our hearts are shaken even by a single word from another person. But the guarantee of eternal life does not lie in our wavering emotions. It lies in the power of the Lord, who saved us and made us His own sheep. Look to the One who made the promise.

The apostle Paul also testified of the love of God, which no one can take away, as follows.

"For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38–39).

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Among the things Paul listed is death as well. Since even death cannot separate us from that love, it goes without saying that today's tribulations and the mockery of people cannot either. A person who knows this promise holds on to the hope of living forever even in the midst of hardship. If we believe in the eternal life the Lord has given, we gain the strength to endure all things. Even when we grow weary while serving the Lord, we think of this grace, learn the word again, and serve together.

Therefore, do not take lightly the eternal life you have received within this hand. If we hold up only the memory of days past, when we received the remission of sins, and drift away from the word, our hearts are shaken first and the foundation of faith grows weak. When the foundation stands on the word that Jesus saved us through the baptism He received from John, the blood of the Cross, and the resurrection, the devil cannot shake it, and whatever suffering comes, we endure it by faith. Hold fast to the word and remain in the shepherd's hand.

We believe in the Son, who is one with the Father

Let us read verses 30 through 33.

"'I and My Father are one.' Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him. Jesus answered them, 'Many good works I have shown you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me?' The Jews answered Him, saying, 'For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God'" (John 10:30–33).

Right after Jesus spoke of *"My hand"* and *"My Father's hand,"* He said, *"I and My Father are one" (John 10:30)*. While saying that no one can snatch the sheep out of the Father's hand, He spoke of Himself as one with the Father. When they heard

this word, the Jews took up stones again. When Jesus asked them for which good work they were going to stone Him, they answered that it was because He, being a Man, made Himself God.

The *"blasphemy"* they spoke of means insolent words that insult God. They could not deny the good works by which He opened the eyes of the man who was blind from birth and raised up the man who had been sick for thirty-eight years, but in the end they would not acknowledge who Jesus was.

Jesus is God Himself in essence, and He is God exactly equal to the Father. Being the Son whom the Father sent does not make Him lower than the Father. The One who made us came clothed in a human body to save us. So whether we pray to the Father or call on the Lord, we stand before the same God. Let us read verses 1 through 3 of John chapter 1.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made" (John 1:1–3).

The One who made all that verse 29 speaks of is this very Word. The Jews, who judged only by the appearance visible to the eye, did not recognize the Creator who stood before them. The person who knows Jesus through the word knows that God, who made him, came to save him.

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are together in the work of saving us. The Father planned to save us in Jesus Christ and make us His children, the Son came to this earth and accomplished that work, and the Holy Spirit testifies of that work to us through the word and guarantees it. Therefore, one cannot reject the salvation the Son accomplished while saying that one honors the Father.

Only Jesus can say, *"I give them eternal life" (John 10:28).*

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

No man can take responsibility for another person's life forever. Because Jesus is God, He could come as a man, have our sins passed on to Him through the baptism He received from John the Baptist, shed His blood on the Cross and pay the price of life, and rise again from death. Because He is God, exactly equal to the Father, we who believe in Him obtain salvation. Because it is eternal life given by Him who rose again from death, our eternal life is certain.

Keep your faith with the word that cannot be broken

Faced with the people who had taken up stones, Jesus answered with the Scriptures. Let us read verses 34 through 36.

"Jesus answered them, 'Is it not written in your law, "I said, 'You are gods'"? If He called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), do you say of Him whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, "You are blaspheming," because I said, "I am the Son of God"?'" (John 10:34–36).

Jesus cited the word written in the law they had. In the Psalms, God said concerning those who had received the word, *"You are gods, And all of you are children of the Most High" (Psalm 82:6)*. And Jesus said, *"The Scripture cannot be broken."* It means that no one can break the word of God, nor can anyone change it. If He called even those who received the word of God by that name, how could they condemn as blasphemy the Son, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, for saying of Himself that He is the Son of God?

Just as Jesus was told that He was blaspheming when He said He was the Son of God, today we, too, hear similar words. When

we say that we have received the remission of sins and have become righteous people who have no sin in our hearts, people call us arrogant, asking how a person can be without sin. It is because they think that, even when one believes in Jesus, one must say that one is a sinner for life in order to be humble. At such times we answer not on the basis of our own thoughts but on the basis of the Bible. When we believe within the word, we can believe rightly.

Romans chapter 3, after making clear through the word *"There is none righteous, no, not one" (Romans 3:10)* that all people are under sin, continues as follows.

"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Romans 3:23–24).

The law made us realize that we are sinners, and through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus we have been justified freely. This entire chapter says that God made us, who were sinners, into righteous people. If one takes out only that earlier verse by itself and says that even those who believe are still sinners, one goes against this flow.

Because Jesus bore all our sins through the baptism He received from John and paid the full price of those sins on the Cross, those who believe this salvation in their hearts have received the remission of sins. The confession "I am a righteous person" is not words boasting of one's own character but a confession that exalts the merit of Jesus, who became the sacrificial offering of atonement for me. Do not hold up your own shortcomings as greater than what God has done.

Just because He called those who received the word of God gods does not mean that we become God. We, who received the word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit and received the remission of sins, have been born as children of God. Let us read

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

verses 12 and 13 of John chapter 1.

"But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:12–13).

God has given us, who believe in His name, the right to become children. It is not a status obtained by bloodline or by effort but a status of having been born of God, and this fact is the ground on which we can be bold.

A person who has newly believed the gospel sometimes shrinks back, not knowing how to answer when someone presses him again and again. At such times, stand beside that person, open the word, and read together with him how the Lord removed sin and how He gave justification. Helping faith stand clearly on the word is the work of caring for the Lord's sheep.

Even in the face of hostile words, do not be ashamed of the salvation you have received. Build up your faith firmly with the word, and answer boldly with the word.

The person who believes the works He has done and follows the Savior

Let us read verses 37 through 39.

"'If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; but if I do, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him.' Therefore they sought again to seize Him, but He escaped out of their hand" (John 10:37–39).

Jesus again brought up the fact that He had done the works of the Father. He said that if they could not believe the One who was speaking, they should believe the works He had done. He

said that if they believed those works, they would come to realize and know that the Father is in Jesus and Jesus is in the Father. He was bringing up again the very evidence He had spoken of in verse 25. But they tried again to seize Jesus, and Jesus escaped out of their hand and went away.

In verses 28 and 29, Jesus said that no one can snatch the sheep out of *"My hand"* and *"My Father's hand,"* and in verse 39, the hand of the people who tried to seize Jesus could not take hold of Him. That He escaped out of the hand of the people who rushed at Him to kill Him was because Jesus is God. With that power Jesus saved us, and with that power He keeps whole the salvation He has given us.

Count up what the Lord has given us. He has delivered us from sin, made us children of God, and given us eternal life. It is grace that cannot be exchanged for a few words of recognition from the world. Even when we suffer hardship because of our faith, we ask for help from the shepherd who knows us and follow His voice.

We are people who have obtained eternal life. To us who believe in our hearts that Jesus removed our sins through the baptism He received from John and the blood of the Cross and rose again from death, the Lord has already given the life that shall never perish. Even on days when we waver because of weakness, the power of the Lord keeps this life. We are in the hand of Jesus, who is one with the Father who is greater than all, and there is no one who can snatch us out of that hand. ✉

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Sermon 7 by Paul C. Jong

The people who met the Savior through true testimony

< John 10:40–42 >

"And He went away again beyond the Jordan to the place where John was baptizing at first, and there He stayed. Then many came to Him and said, 'John performed no sign, but all the things that John spoke about this Man were true.' And many believed in Him there."

John the Baptist performed no sign. But all that he said about Jesus was true. People came to Jesus and acknowledged that fact, and many believed in Jesus there. Even though there was not a single thing to astonish people's eyes, John's words, which rightly pointed to the Savior, led people to the Lord.

In these three verses, the word *"many"* appears twice. There were many people who came to Jesus and ruminated on John's words, and there were many people who believed in Jesus there. On what are we relying as we believe in Jesus? Is it a rumor that someone has special power, or some feeling we have experienced? We have the testimony God has given. That testimony makes clear who the Lord is and how He removed our sins. Even a person who was suffering because of sin, if he believes this testimony, comes to know the Lord as his own Savior and to rely on Him.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Jesus, who came to the place where John had testified

Let us read verse 40.

"And He went away again beyond the Jordan to the place where John was baptizing at first, and there He stayed" (John 10:40).

Jesus escaped from the hands of those who had tried to seize Him and went beyond the Jordan. And He stayed at the place where John had first baptized. In Jerusalem the opposition was so fierce that people took up stones to try to strike the Lord, but here many people came to Jesus and ruminated on what John had said.

Why did Jesus go precisely to the place where John was baptizing? Jesus and John the Baptist are that close to each other. The one who testified of Jesus before anyone else and more clearly than anyone else was John the Baptist, and the disciples came after him. John chapter 1 also records that John's testimony took place *"where John was baptizing" (John 1:28)*. The Lord went back again to the place where that testimony had been given.

John the Baptist was not someone who stepped forward to make his own name known. He was a witness sent by God. Let us read John chapter 1, verses 6 through 8.

"There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light" (John 1:6–8).

Just as the word says, *"A man sent from God,"* John is a man whom God sent in order to entrust him with the work of testifying. Jesus also said, *"Among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist" (Matthew*

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

11:11). Though he was such a great man, John himself was not the Light. Jesus, of whom he testified, is the Light. Those who hear John's words rightly do not stay with John but go forward to the Lord he points to.

The person who preached the gospel to us is also precious. But the Savior we will rely on forever is Jesus. If we set our hearts on the talent or reputation of the one who preaches, it is easy to miss the content of the salvation he actually preaches. God has given us, too, the written testimony that makes known what kind of One the Lord is and what He has accomplished. Just as many believed in Jesus through John's words, we too, through that testimony, come to know what the Lord has done for us and meet the Savior.

The testimony that was true even without signs

Let us read verse 41.

"Then many came to Him and said, 'John performed no sign, but all the things that John spoke about this Man were true'" (John 10:41).

John did no such work as healing the sick or opening the eyes of those who could not see. The people knew that fact too. Even so, they acknowledged that everything John had said about Jesus was true. What they saw was not John's power but the fact that what John had said was fact.

What was all true? Everything accomplished by the One whom John pointed to is true. It is true that Jesus fulfilled all righteousness through the baptism He received from John; it is also true that He bore the sin of the world, was hung on the Cross, shed His blood, and died, and that He rose again from death and became our Savior. That day the people beyond the Jordan

acknowledged that John's words were true, and we see in the Bible that those words have all been fulfilled just as they were spoken.

If we say we will believe only when something special happens, our hearts go endlessly searching for new experiences. Even the memory of having seen an amazing thing fades as the years go by. Having one's body healed and having one's sins washed away are different things, and having one's circumstances go well and believing in Jesus as the Savior are also different things. What we need most is the salvation of being delivered from sin and death, and John's testimony points precisely to the One who accomplished that salvation. Faith stands on the word that testifies of that fact.

Though John had no signs, his mission was not in vain. He preached the testimony God had entrusted to him just as it was, and that testimony remained in people's hearts even after time had passed. What has been entrusted to us who preach the gospel is also not signs but testimony. Rather than striving to astonish people, we need only make clear what the Lord has accomplished. It is Jesus who saves, and what we are to preach is the salvation He has accomplished.

John, who pointed to the Lamb who bore the sin of the world

Whom did John testify Jesus to be? Let us read John chapter 1, verse 29.

"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).

The Jesus whom John pointed to is the Lamb of God who

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

bore the sin of the world. For us, who could not come before God because of sin, this testimony is truly precious. It is because it is the news that Jesus bore in our place the sin that we would have had to live with all our lives and then be judged for.

Then when did Jesus have the sin of the world passed on to Him? Was it when He was born? Was it when He was hung on the Cross? It was when He received baptism from John at the Jordan River. Let us read about what happened at the Jordan River, where John the Baptist was baptizing.

"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).

John tried to prevent Him, saying that he himself ought rather to receive baptism from Jesus. But Jesus said that it was fitting to fulfill all righteousness in this way. All this righteousness is the most right thing He did for us—namely, the work in which the sinless Son of God had all the sin of mankind transferred onto His own body through the baptism He received from John. So John pointed to Jesus, who had received baptism from him, and testified that He was the Lamb of God.

Bearing the sin of the world that had thus been passed on to Him, Jesus was hung on the Cross, shed His blood, and died. In our place He received the judgment for that sin—the judgment we should have received. And He was buried, and three days

later He rose again from death and accomplished our salvation. Those who believe this gospel of the water and the Spirit in their hearts have all their sins washed away once and for all, receive the Holy Spirit as a gift, and become children of God.

How did we come to know the gospel of the water and the Spirit? We came to know it through the testimony of John the Baptist. If the account of John the Baptist giving Jesus baptism and so passing on the sin of the world to Him were not in the Bible, we would have known only Jesus, who died on the Cross, and would simply have tried to believe. The testimony of John the Baptist shows where our sins went. My sin, too, is included in that sin of the world. Because Jesus had that sin transferred to Him, the judgment of the Cross is the judgment for me, and His salvation is my salvation.

Whenever you feel the weight of sin, return to this testimony. This does not mean that you should take your wrongdoings lightly or hide them. Acknowledge your wrongdoings and turn back; but the power to wash away sin lies not in your regret or resolve but in the Lord. Before you strive to remove sin again by your own strength, look to the Lamb who bore even that sin.

John also testified that Jesus is the Son of God. Let us read John chapter 1, verses 32 through 34.

"And John bore witness, saying, 'I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, "Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit." And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God'" (John 1:32–34).

John saw and testified just as God had made known to him. The One upon whom the Spirit came down like a dove and remained, the One whom He who sent John had made known as the One who baptizes with the Holy Spirit, is Jesus. He is the

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Son of God. We have not entrusted our salvation to someone who has no power to deal with people's sins; we believe in the Savior who is God. Because the salvation He accomplished is complete, we too are certain of the remission of sins.

Those who hear the testimony and believe with their own hearts

Let us read verse 42.

"And many believed in Him there" (John 10:42).

Many believed in Jesus there. They did not stop at judging that John's words were excellent; they believed in the One he pointed to. They could believe because there was evidence. To tell people to believe unconditionally, without any grounds, is no different from superstition. Those who would believe in God find their grounds in the word of God and believe by holding on to that word. The Bible does not stop at one or two verses but lets us hear the testimony of John the Baptist again and again in many places.

Let us, too, not stop at having heard the gospel as an explanation, but accept that word with our own hearts. If, while saying that the Lord has saved the people of the world, we still regard ourselves as people bound by sin, we have not yet accepted that salvation as our own. The fact that our parents believed, that our spouses believe, or that we have attended church for a long time cannot take the place of our own faith. To believe in our own hearts the fact that Jesus had our sins passed on to Him through the baptism He received from John and paid the price of those sins on the Cross—that is the way to make salvation our own.

To believe with the heart is different from having one's

emotions greatly stirred. It is to accept as true the word God has spoken and to entrust oneself to Him. Do not place your own thoughts and old religious judgments above the word, but acknowledge that what the Lord has done is right. When we accept the word that the Lord has washed away all our sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, sin is gone from our hearts. This is what it is to truly receive the Lord.

What the Lord gives to those who believe in this way is eternal life. Let us hear again the promise He made in this chapter. Let us read verse 28.

"And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand" (John 10:28).

This very life was also what the people who believed in Jesus beyond the Jordan received. On the day they heard the words of John, who had not a single sign, and believed in the One he pointed to, they became the Lord's sheep and obtained eternal life. To us, too, who hear and believe the same testimony today, the Lord gives the same life. Because it is the life given by the Savior who rose again from death, it does not disappear even when our life in this world comes to an end.

The people who came beyond the Jordan came to know that the words of John, who had performed not a single sign, were true, and they believed in Jesus. That testimony has come to us today as well. Because there was the testimony of John the Baptist, we too have come to know and believe what Jesus did for us.

Beside us, too, there are people who still do not know how their sins are washed away. As John did, let us also point to Jesus rather than putting ourselves forward, and preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the gospel of the Lamb who bore the sin of the world through the baptism He received from John. ✉

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

CHAPTER

11

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

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

Sermon 1 by Paul C. Jong

The Lord, who wakes up those who sleep, and the hope of the resurrection

< John 11:1–16 >

"Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. It was that Mary who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. Therefore the sisters sent to Him, saying, 'Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick.' When Jesus heard that, He said, 'This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it.' Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So, when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was. Then after this He said to the disciples, 'Let us go to Judea again.' The disciples said to Him, 'Rabbi, lately the Jews sought to stone You, and are You going there again?' Jesus answered, 'Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. But if one walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.' These things He said, and after that He said to them, 'Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up.' Then His disciples said, 'Lord, if he sleeps he will get well.' However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep. Then Jesus said to them plainly, 'Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe. Nevertheless let us go to him.' Then Thomas, who is called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, 'Let us also go, that we may die with Him.'"

When Lazarus, who lived in Bethany, was sick, his sisters sent someone to Jesus and said to Him as follows: *"Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick" (John 11:3)*. The sisters were people who believed in and followed the Lord, and as verse 5 says, Jesus loved this family. Sickness came even to such a family, and in the end death came. Such problems come into the lives of those who have received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit as well. At that time, the sisters brought their brother's sickness just as it was and came before Jesus. We, too, bring our problems and come to the Lord. The Lord is not One who turns away from the hardships His people go through.

But even after hearing that news, Jesus stayed two more days in the place where He was. For a family with a sick person, every moment was urgent, yet the Lord, who loved him, did not go right away. And then at last He made it clear to the disciples that Lazarus was dead, and said that they should go to him. In human eyes, it was a time when the chance to help had already passed. But even after death had come, there remained work for the Lord to do.

We, too, see the end of what human beings can do when faced with death. Even if we want to hold on to the people we love, we cannot hold on to them, and we cannot keep even our own lives forever. But Jesus says of the dead Lazarus that He

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

will go to wake him up. Unlike us, who must let go when faced with death, He is God, who gives life and raises the dead again. When we know this Lord, we can live today looking to the resurrection beyond death.

The Lord, who reveals the glory of God to those He loves

Let us read verses 4 through 6.

"When Jesus heard that, He said, 'This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it.' Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So, when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was" (John 11:4–6).

In this passage, the word that Jesus loved this family and the word that He stayed two more days are placed side by side. In human eyes, these two do not seem to go together. It seems that if He loved them, He should have run to them right away. Here the gap between what Jesus sees and what people see is revealed. The sisters saw their dying brother, and Jesus saw the glory of God that would be revealed through that event.

The Lord said that it was not a sickness unto death, yet Lazarus actually died. Jesus already knew that Lazarus would die, and He also knew that He would raise him up again. So this word was a declaration that Lazarus's death would not end in the tomb. That death was an event that would reveal that the Son of God is the One who raises the dead, and through this event Jesus showed that there is a resurrection for us as well.

Jesus deliberately did not go. If He had gone right away, He would have healed Lazarus while he was sick. But His going after Lazarus had died and raising him up became, beyond

healing a sickness, raising the dead to life again. The problem that can never be solved by human strength is death, and it is the problem of sin, which brought about that death. The Lord sometimes waits until our strength is all gone and our self-righteousness, by which we tried to live rightly on our own, is completely shattered. Then He Himself does what we cannot do.

There are times when, even while we believe in the Lord's love, our hearts waver if our circumstances do not work out as we want. We think that since we have prayed, things should change soon, and when the time we expected passes, we think that the Lord is not taking care of us. The Lord waits until then, but we cannot wait and become impatient. There was a purpose, too, in Jesus' staying in that place after He heard the news about Lazarus. Rather than measuring the Lord's love by our own time and judgment, know through the word who the Lord is. He is God, who rules over even our life and death.

Even those who have received the remission of sins grow weak in the flesh and come to the end of their lives on this earth. That death does not become evidence that the Lord's love has ended. The Lord, who saved us from sin, will raise us again and let us live with Him. Those who look to this resurrection, instead of measuring their lives only by the circumstances now visible to their eyes, come to know how great the hope of life that the Lord has given them is.

The faith that follows the Lord's light even in fearful circumstances

At that time, Jesus was staying on the other side of the Jordan, as the word says: *"He went away again beyond the Jordan to the place where John was baptizing at first, and there He stayed"*

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

(John 10:40). A little before that, in Jerusalem, when Jesus said, *"I and My Father are one" (John 10:30)*, the Jews took up stones to stone Him. But after hearing the news about Lazarus and staying two more days, Jesus told the disciples that they should go to Judea again. Recalling that event, the disciples thought of the danger first. Jesus, too, knew that danger. But in that very place the disciples feared, there was work the Lord would accomplish.

Let us read verses 9 and 10.

"Jesus answered, 'Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. But if one walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him'" (John 11:9–10).

When people walk along the road in the daytime, they can walk while seeing the light, but in the darkness they do not know where to go and they stumble. With this word, Jesus taught the disciples what they should look at as they walk. If we look only at dangerous circumstances, we become gripped by fear. Since the One who gives life goes ahead of us, we need only look at Him and follow Him.

Without fully knowing the Lord's will, the disciples heard Jesus' word and, while going with Him, learned what kind of One He is. Faith is not to measure the Lord's power by our own judgment, but to trust and follow the Lord who speaks.

There is fear in our lives of serving the gospel as well. When we preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we come to think about how people will respond and whether we will receive opposition and criticism. But the fact that Jesus had the sin of the world transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John and received the judgment for that sin on the Cross is not a truth that changes because people dislike it. We are people who have received the remission of sins by believing

that word. Even if we have weak and fearful hearts, let us serve that gospel, relying on the Lord, who raises even the dead.

The life given to us by the Savior, who wakes the dead

Let us read verses 11 through 15.

"These things He said, and after that He said to them, 'Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up.' Then His disciples said, 'Lord, if he sleeps he will get well.' However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep. Then Jesus said to them plainly, 'Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe. Nevertheless let us go to him'" (John 11:11–15).

When Jesus said that Lazarus had fallen asleep, the disciples thought that the sick man was sleeping and resting. Jesus was speaking of his death, but the disciples, even though they lived together at His side, did not understand what He meant. So Jesus told them plainly that Lazarus was dead. Jesus was going to wake up a man who had actually died.

To say that someone is sleeping presupposes that he will wake up. To us it is death, but in Jesus' eyes Lazarus was a man who was asleep. It is because He has the authority to raise the dead. Just as a person wakes up a friend who is asleep, Jesus raises up the dead Lazarus. When the Lord said that He was going to wake him up, to say "Yes" to that word and believe it just as it is—this is true faith. So look at the Lord, who goes to him, rather than at Lazarus's death.

In truth, it is we who are Lazarus. We, too, were people who could not help but die because of the sickness called sin. Neither

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

by piling up good deeds nor by resolving never to sin again can we erase the sins we have already committed. To us, who had to receive judgment, God sent His Son. Jesus, the Son of God, came clothed in a human body and, through the baptism He received from John the Baptist at the Jordan River, had all our sins transferred onto His body.

Let us read John chapter 1, verse 29.

"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).

Because the Lamb of God, to whom John the Baptist pointed, had already had our sins passed on to Him, He could receive the judgment for those sins in our place on the Cross. The reason the sinless Jesus was pierced, shed His blood, and died is that He bore our sins. Since it was a work the eternal God did only once, the Lord removed all our sins forever through that one baptism He received from John and the Cross. And He was buried and, three days later, rose again from death. If the Lord had only removed our sins and remained in the tomb, we would have had no hope of living again. The Lord rose again to give us new life and became our Savior, who overcame the power of sin and death.

Those who believe in this gospel of the water and the Spirit in their hearts have all their sins washed away once and for all, receive the Holy Spirit as a gift, and become children of God. Even when our weaknesses are exposed, believe that Jesus had even those sins transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John and was judged in our place on the Cross. We cannot overcome the accusations of Satan by holding on only to our own resolutions. When we believe in the word of the Lord, who saved us, we can drive those accusations away.

The Lord, who gave us the remission of sins, also gives us

resurrection.

"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus" (1 Thessalonians 4:14).

Those who believed and died in the Lord have not come to an end, but are sleeping. When the Lord comes again, wherever they ended their lives, the Lord will raise them up. If they were dead forever, there would be no hope, but for those who sleep, there is a glorious life to awaken to anew and enjoy. Here lies the reason we can have hope even as we see our bodies growing weak. The One who holds on to our lives to the end is Jesus Christ, who rose again from death.

In verse 15, Jesus said that He was glad He had not been there, so that the disciples might believe. There was a purpose toward the disciples even in His not going right away. Jesus wanted them to see the dead come back to life before their eyes and to have a living faith. Let us, too, go a step further than asking the Lord to solve our immediate difficulties, and believe in the Lord, who gives us eternal life and will raise us again. When we have that faith, we can hope for the glory the Lord will give us even as we pass through our present sufferings.

The warning of judgment that we must engrave on our hearts along with the hope of the resurrection

Just as Jesus called death sleep, all who have died will one day wake up again. But when we hear the word that there is a resurrection, it is easy to think that all people will enjoy eternal happiness simply by coming back to life. The Lord said that the resurrection is divided into two kinds.

Let us read John chapter 5, verses 28 and 29.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

"Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation" (John 5:28–29).

The time is coming when all who are in the graves will hear the Lord's voice. Jesus, who saved us from sin through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, will come with the authority to judge. So let us not hear the word "resurrection" merely as a vague comfort, but engrave on our hearts which resurrection we will come forth to on that day.

Even a person who has actually received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit can come to the resurrection of condemnation if, after that, he does not follow the Lord, does not serve the gospel, and lives only for himself. It is because even among the righteous who have received the remission of sins, those who do good and those who do evil are divided. To live abandoning the Lord's will while knowing the salvation He has given is a grave wrong. This warning does not mean merely that one's reward will be reduced a little. It means that there is the judgment of eternal hell for those who forsake the Lord and follow the evil way.

Then what is doing good before God, and what is doing evil? Living for the gospel of the water and the Spirit and giving oneself for that gospel is doing good, and living only for oneself is doing evil. The remission of sins is rather simple, because it is receiving by faith what the Lord has accomplished. After that, the Lord sees for whom a person who has received the remission of sins lives. Those who do not know the gospel can believe if they hear it. But if a person, while knowing and believing this gospel, does not set his heart on preaching it to other souls and lives only for the comfort and profit of his own flesh, that is

doing evil. Moreover, if he hates those who preach the gospel and hinders the work of God while thinking that he is fine because he has received the remission of sins, he is acting in direct opposition to his confession that he believes in the Lord's righteousness. The Lord said, *"Everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required" (Luke 12:48)*.

The more a person holds a position of responsibility in the church, the more deeply he should reflect on this word. One cannot say that he serves the Lord while using his position to win the saints over to his own side and to exalt his own name and authority. A worker of God is a person who leads people to believe in the Lord and to live for the gospel. Do not use the people, material things, and time entrusted to you for your own greed and call that the work of God. The Lord knows not only in what name we work but also for whom we live.

We all have the weakness of the flesh. Those who serve the gospel also get tired, want to rest comfortably, and worry because of their own affairs. So when you discover one another's shortcomings, rather than judging as if you yourselves were people without any weakness at all, rely on the Lord together and share one another's burdens. At the same time, beware of abandoning the Lord's will with weakness as an excuse. Even if we are lacking and weak, let us clear away the dregs in our hearts, deny the heart that weighed our own benefit first, and entrust ourselves to the Lord. And let us gather our hearts together with the Church of God so that the gospel may be preached to those who do not yet know salvation. Though the work each of us has been entrusted with differs, the purpose of serving for the Lord's gospel, which saves people's souls from sin, is the same.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

The life of going with the Lord, who will raise us again

Let us read verse 16.

"Then Thomas, who is called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, 'Let us also go, that we may die with Him'" (John 11:16).

Thomas said that they should go to die with the Lord. Jesus had spoken of waking the sleeping Lazarus, but Thomas took the spiritual word as a fleshly matter and understood it as a road on which they would go to die. Thomas was going to go to die, but Jesus went to give life to Lazarus. The Bible does not hide even these aspects of the disciples, but records them as they are. If we do not think about and believe the word from God's point of view, we, too, like Thomas, end up giving an irrelevant answer to the Lord's word. Even so, the will and power of the Lord, who led the disciples, were greater than the danger they saw.

We, too, sometimes look only at our present toil and loss while following the Lord. But our lives do not end with what is seen on this earth. Since Jesus first rose again from death, we who sleep in Him will also rise again. Because we have this hope, we do not regard the hardships we go through while serving the gospel as the final conclusion. Let us not make the fact that we have received the remission of sins an excuse to live only for ourselves, but let us accept into our hearts the will of the Lord, who has given us life, and follow the way He goes.

Jesus, who went to wake Lazarus, is our Savior. The Lord, who bore all our sins through the baptism He received from John at the Jordan River, paid the price of those sins in our place on the Cross, and rose again from death, has given us the remission of sins, the Holy Spirit, and the hope of the resurrection. We believe in this Lord in our hearts and give thanks for this grace.

What we will meet at the end of this road of following the Lord is not the sleep of death, but the Lord, who wakes us up from our sleep. ✉

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Sermon 2 by Paul C. Jong

Jesus, who saves our families

< John 11:1–46 >

"Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. It was that Mary who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. Therefore the sisters sent to Him, saying, 'Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick.' When Jesus heard that, He said, 'This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it.' Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So, when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was. Then after this He said to the disciples, 'Let us go to Judea again.' The disciples said to Him, 'Rabbi, lately the Jews sought to stone You, and are You going there again?' Jesus answered, 'Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. But if one walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.' These things He said, and after that He said to them, 'Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up.' Then His disciples said, 'Lord, if he sleeps he will get well.' However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep. Then Jesus said to them plainly, 'Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe. Nevertheless let us go to him.' Then Thomas, who is called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, 'Let us also go, that we may die with Him.' So when Jesus came, He found that he

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

had already been in the tomb four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles away. And many of the Jews had joined the women around Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. Now Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him, but Mary was sitting in the house. Now Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You.' Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' Martha said to Him, 'I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.' Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?' She said to Him, 'Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.' And when she had said these things, she went her way and secretly called Mary her sister, saying, 'The Teacher has come and is calling for you.' As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly and came to Him. Now Jesus had not yet come into the town, but was in the place where Martha met Him. Then the Jews who were with her in the house, and comforting her, when they saw that Mary rose up quickly and went out, followed her, saying, 'She is going to the tomb to weep there.' Then, when Mary came where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying to Him, 'Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.' Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled. And He said, 'Where have you laid him?' They said to Him, 'Lord, come and see.' Jesus wept. Then the Jews said, 'See how He loved him!' And some of them said, 'Could not this Man, who opened the eyes

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

of the blind, also have kept this man from dying?' Then Jesus, again groaning in Himself, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. Jesus said, 'Take away the stone.' Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, 'Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days.' Jesus said to her, 'Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?' Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, 'Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me.' Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come forth!' And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, 'Loose him, and let him go.' Then many of the Jews who had come to Mary, and had seen the things Jesus did, believed in Him. But some of them went away to the Pharisees and told them the things Jesus did."

The Lord does not turn away from the problems in the homes of His people who have received the remission of sins. The Mary who appears here is the Mary of whom it is said, *"It was that Mary who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick" (John 11:2)*. She is Mary, who received the remission of sins by believing in the Lord. Mary's older sister was Martha, and her older brother was Lazarus. Martha, too, was a sister who believed in the Lord, and Mary, too, was a sister who had believed in the Lord and received salvation. And the two of them were sisters who lived for the gospel.

That household was a household of the gospel. Martha, Mary, and Lazarus all had a close relationship with Jesus, and theirs was a household loved by the Lord. Through this event, we can see that sickness, death, and other hardships may come even to the families of believers, and that the Lord can reveal His glory and life-giving power even in the midst of such circumstances. Concerning a household that has brothers and sisters who have received salvation, the Bible says, *"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household" (Acts 16:31).* In the homes of the saints who have received salvation—that is, the people of God—there are also family members who have not yet received salvation. Then does the Lord turn away from the souls of the family members who have not yet been saved, who are in the homes of the saints who have received salvation? This word shows that He does not. Their older brother fell sick and was about to die. So Mary and Martha earnestly appealed to the Lord. Saying, *"Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick" (John 11:3),* they clung to Him, asking Him to come and save their brother's life and asking whether the Lord did not love this soul, too.

"This sickness is not unto death"

Having received salvation does not mean that there are no hardships, nor does it mean that one becomes a person without problems. There are hardships we go through because of ourselves, there are hardships we go through because of our families, and there are also many hardships we go through while living in this world. How do we solve these problems? The Lord came to the house of Martha and Mary and solved that problem for them. But among these many problems, the biggest problem

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

is the problem of the souls of family members receiving salvation. That is to say, for a saint who has received the remission of sins, the biggest problem before God is the problem of his family receiving salvation. They asked Him to come and heal their brother, since he had fallen sick and was about to die, but the Lord did not go. And He said, *"This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it" (John 11:4)*.

Why did the Lord not go right away? Someone He loved had fallen sick, and a problem had arisen for sisters who believed in the Lord, so it seems that if He loved them, He should have hurried there and solved it for them, but the Lord did not do so. Rather, the Bible says, *"He stayed two more days in the place where He was" (John 11:6)*. Even though He knew it was urgent, He stayed two more days. And the Lord came only after Lazarus, the brother of Mary and Martha, had died. What use is it if He comes after he has died? But with the Lord there is no despair. The Lord said to the disciples, *"Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up" (John 11:11)*. But who here is the person with the least faith? It says, *"Then Thomas, who is called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, 'Let us also go, that we may die with Him'" (John 11:16)*. A person without faith rushes from one extreme to the other in this way. When the Lord said that He was going to wake a man who was sleeping, Thomas, perhaps because he was the most afraid of dying among the disciples, said that they, too, should go and die with Him. It sounds as if, since it seemed that he would die if he followed the Lord around, he did not want to die alone and so was trying to drag even the other disciples along. It was because he had no faith.

In this word there appear people who have no faith, and there also appear people who have faith. And there also appears Mary,

who earnestly believed in and relied on the Lord and was united as one with the Lord. Mary was earnestly united with the Lord and had the faith that said, "If only the Lord comes here, this problem will surely be solved. Lord, I believe. Please just come." Through what happened to their brother, we can see in this word how united Martha and Mary were with the Lord, how much they served the Lord and were united with the Lord's Church, and how they brought their own problem before the Lord and had it solved by faith. Does the Lord really turn away from the difficult problems His people go through? He does not. When our strength had all run out, when every means and method that people can use had all run out, the Lord came Himself and solved all the problems. The Lord desired to receive glory, and He did receive glory.

Then what is the one thing we need? It is being united with the Lord, and faith that believes in the Lord. "If only the Lord comes, our brother will surely live. Lord, please come quickly." Martha and Mary waited earnestly, to the end, for the Lord, who had saved the two sisters. Even after their brother had died, the two of them said the very same thing: that if the Lord had been here, their brother would not have died. This means that the two of them had faith that believed in the Lord, faith that was united with the Lord.

The Lord, who waits until all strength is gone

For us, it does not go well when it comes to our family members receiving the remission of sins. Why does it not go well? Yet the Lord came to them only after four days had passed since Lazarus died. The Bible says, *"So when Jesus came, He found that he had already been in the tomb four days" (John*

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

11:17). When we see our family members not receiving the remission of sins, it is that they still have strength left in them, so they do not listen. They do not listen because they have the thought that they can do something before God. So the Lord waits even after hearing our prayers. Until when does He wait? Until our family members' own strength has all run out, until, while striving to live according to the word of God, according to the law, they are exposed all the way to the bottom, and until their own righteousness is completely broken and they can no longer do anything.

When even their faith had collapsed, and they had completely given up believing in God, saying, "Now I do not even believe in God. Even if I believe, I only commit sins every day, so what use is it? What good is there in believing in God? Let me just give it all up"—that is, when they had come to a state of being dead—the Lord came to them. The Lord waits until then. But while praying for Him to save the souls of our family members, if He does not save them quickly, we think that it must not be working, wonder what we should do, and think that although it says, *"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household" (Acts 16:31)*, it is not working, so we had better save other people instead.

The Lord waited. He waited until the other person's strength had all drained away, until that person's faith had completely collapsed. The faith of a person who has not received the remission of sins is bound to collapse. Do you know how it collapses? He does believe, and he knows that he must not commit sin. Looking at it by the law, by the word of God, he knows that not committing sin is right and that this is believing in God well. But as he goes on living, he commits even more sins. Since he keeps committing sins, in the end he gives up even what little he did believe, and he comes to say, "God, do as You

please now." He comes to discover that what he believes is nothing and that his own faith is nothing. After that, all his strength drains away and he dies. He just goes to church, and that is all. Now his heart has died, without even hope.

Let us think for a moment about the Lord's waiting and our waiting, about the Lord's working and our working. We think that if our family members are attending church well, they will soon receive salvation as long as we just guide them well. But the Lord waits until that person's strength has all drained away—to put it simply, until he commits sins before God, his own righteousness is completely broken, and his faith completely dies. People say that they live by faith before God, but what kind of faith is that faith? The word is not in it at all, and I cannot tell you how hard they strive to please God somehow. They firmly resolve, "Today I did not live according to the word of God and did not please God, but tomorrow I will be more determined and resolved and please Him." But does it work by doing so? The more one resolves to live according to God's will, the less it works. Even while resolving that way, one commits sin again. When one believes in God, one rather sees oneself committing sins recklessly. Why is that? We human beings are originally beings who commit many sins, and when we come to know God, we come to know the law—that is, the word of God, which tells us what to do and what not to do—so from the time we come to know God, we rather come to know sin. People believe in God in order to become good people, but they discover that they are becoming even more evil people. This is because people are originally such beings and are lumps of sin.

The Bible says, *"Those who are in the flesh cannot please God" (Romans 8:8)*. A person of the flesh, who does not have the Holy Spirit within him, cannot please God. Yet because he thinks that he himself can please Him, he resolves to please Him

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

with all his human strength, will, and devotion. Did the legalists who resolved this way please God? When Jesus came, *"They spat in His face and beat Him; and others struck Him with the palms of their hands" (Matthew 26:67)*, and in the end they nailed Jesus to the Cross. This means that they did not please God. God is the One who, when He saves us, waits until our strength has all drained away, our righteousness is completely broken, and we are completely dead.

"I am the resurrection and the life"

What kind of One is God? Even after hearing the news that Lazarus was sick, the Lord stayed two more days, and He went only after Lazarus had been in the tomb for four days. When a person has been dead for four days, the body rots from the inside, becomes mushy, and gives off a smell. It was then that the Lord came. Martha said to the Lord, *"Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died" (John 11:21)*, speaking as though to say that they had asked Him to come early, so why was He coming only now. When the Lord said, *"Your brother will rise again" (John 11:23)*, Martha said, *"I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day" (John 11:24)*. She meant that she fully believed that the Lord is the One who raises even the dead, but since he had already died, what could be done? Then the Lord said, *"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" (John 11:25–26)*. Martha answered, *"Yes, Lord" (John 11:27)*, but she did not believe that her brother would come back to life now. Now we must look at Mary. When Martha went and called her, Mary rose quickly, came to the Lord, said, *"Lord, if You*

had been here, my brother would not have died" (John 11:32), and wept before the Lord. She wailed aloud, saying that if the Lord had been here, then even though her brother had fallen sick, he would not have died. Here lies the difference between Martha and Mary. Martha spoke to the Lord as if arguing with Him, and that was the end of it, but Mary believed that if the Lord had been here, her brother really would not have died, and she wept before the Lord.

The Lord saw Mary weeping and wept. The Bible says, *"Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled" (John 11:33)*, and *"Jesus wept" (John 11:35)*. And of the time when He heard people saying, *"Could not this Man, who opened the eyes of the blind, also have kept this man from dying?" (John 11:37)*, it says, *"Jesus, again groaning in Himself" (John 11:38)*. The Lord also wept as He looked toward Jerusalem, which was going to be completely destroyed. It says, *"As He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it" (Luke 19:41)*. He wept as He looked at the city of Jerusalem, which was to be destroyed because the people He had loved so much rejected the Lord, did not believe in Him, and spurned Him. The Lord came in order to raise Lazarus. He came when people's hope had all been cut off and there was no hope at all.

"Take away the stone"

When the Lord raised Lazarus, the very first thing He said was *"Take away the stone" (John 11:39)*. The Jews put bodies in caves and blocked the entrance of the cave with a large stone. The word to take away the stone means that we must throw away our own faith, which we are holding on to. It means that since

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

believing that way ended in death after all, one must first throw away one's own faith. Everyone has a faith of his own. But for us to receive salvation, we must listen carefully to the word about how the Lord saved us. The Bible says, *"Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17)*. All we need to do is listen carefully to the word of God. When we hear it, faith arises through the word of truth, and we come to believe naturally and receive salvation. Taking away the stone means setting aside our own faith and looking at how the Lord has saved us. For us to receive salvation and have our problems solved, we must throw away our own thoughts. The Bible says, *"Let the wicked forsake his way, And the unrighteous man his thoughts; Let him return to the LORD, And He will have mercy on him" (Isaiah 55:7)*. Only when we first throw away our own evil thoughts—that is, our own thoughts—can we hear the voice of the Lord and receive salvation by hearing the word.

So it is with all our problems. We must throw away our own thoughts. We must hear what the Lord's will is and what the Lord says about this matter. When the Lord said, *"Take away the stone" (John 11:39)*, Martha was negative, as always. Saying, *"Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days" (John 11:39)*, she said that it was impossible. Then the Lord said, *"Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?" (John 11:40)*. Having been dead four days means that there is no hope. It means that he has become a person whose faith has completely collapsed and who has nothing at all to say before God—that is, a sinner. A person truly becomes a sinner before God when, having tried to live according to the word of God, he comes to know that he is the exact opposite of the word of God. When he comes to know that he is a fallen human being, when he comes to see himself wanting to live according to the word of God but unable to do

so, that person's faith dies completely.

How does the Lord raise the dead? The Lord goes to the dead person to the end and raises him, but for that, that person must throw away his own thoughts and throw away his own faith. Only then does the Lord save him. When we receive salvation, we must throw away the thought of keeping the law, and we must know that we cannot receive salvation by the law. We must also clear away the law. The law only makes us realize sin; it can absolutely do nothing else. And we must also clear away our own thoughts and clear away our own faith. Before God we must clear away all three of these things. The Lord said, *"If you would believe you would see the glory of God" (John 11:40)*. Our receiving salvation and receiving the remission of sins before God, our family members' receiving the remission of sins and a soul's receiving salvation, and our having our problems solved do not come about by knowing the word; they come about by believing the word.

By our human righteousness, by human effort, by our own faith, we can by no means receive salvation. Even when we say that we believe in God, there is faith that has come from heaven and faith that has arisen from the earth. There is the faith by which we believe in God by ourselves, and there is the faith by which we believe because we have heard the word of God and God has made us believe. We must throw away the faith we made ourselves. Can we receive salvation by keeping the law? Can we reach holiness by living according to the word of God? We cannot. A person who has flesh is a person who cannot keep all of the word of God. If, although he is a person who cannot keep it, he says that striving anyway is still one's duty before God, that is pride. Rolling away the stone means that it does not work by the law. It means that it does not work by our human faith or by our own thoughts either. We must believe only the

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

word of the Lord, who said, *"If you would believe you would see the glory of God" (John 11:40)*. The Lord came to this earth Himself and saved us with His own flesh and blood.

The Lord gave His flesh and blood to all the people of this world and completely accomplished the remission of sins, and that Savior raised Lazarus. To people who had no hope by human strength, the Lord gave hope. Saying, *"I am the resurrection and the life" (John 11:25)*, He raised him to life again. The Lord Himself gave us the life He had given Adam and Eve—that is, the new life of being born again. Jesus came to this earth, gave us life, and raised to life again our faith and thoughts, which had been dead. He resurrected them. The Lord raised the people who, having no hope, were like those who had been completely dead for as long as four days—that is, those who had given up, saying, "I cannot do it by the law. I cannot keep the law. The law only makes me realize sin." He saved them. The Lord saved you and me. Then do you have sin? No, you do not. The Lord came to this earth and saved us Himself with His own flesh and blood, so how could we have sin? The Lord loved us and gave His flesh—that is, His own body—to us. Through the baptism He received from John at the Jordan River, He had all the sin of mankind transferred onto His body, shed His blood on the Cross and received the judgment for that sin, and rose again from death. Since He received for you and me the judgment for all the sins we commit in this world, how can we say that the Lord did not save us completely?

The Lord is the One who created the heavens and the earth. When His people fell into the temptation of the devil and fell into sin, He Himself taught them about sin through the law. And since we cannot receive salvation by the law, or by our own faith and thoughts either, He makes known to us through the word that He Himself came as the Savior, removed all our sins, and

gave us life. Even now the Lord is making it known through the word to all mankind, and to all who hear this word, that He has saved us.

We need the Lord, who gave His flesh and blood

The Lord is the Savior of you and me. He is the One who made us and the Savior who saved us from all our sins. Did Jesus fail to save us? He saved us. He gave us life. For man it was utterly impossible. Four days had passed since death, and there was a smell. But the Lord brought salvation. The Lord said, *"Take away the stone" (John 11:39)*, and there are three things we must take away before God. They are the law, our own faith, and our own thoughts, which I mentioned earlier.

We cannot keep the law. Then is the law unnecessary? It is not that the law is unnecessary. The law is the word of God and the truth. The Bible says, *"By the law is the knowledge of sin" (Romans 3:20)*. Through the law we should only come to know, "Ah, we are sinners. We are sinners who cannot live according to the word of God," and say, "God, I cannot do it," and ask the law to step back over there. It is because we need the Lord. It is like saying the following: "Law, you are so holy, strict, and righteous that I really like you. But you and I are not a match by nature. It is because I am so weak and you are so perfect. Please step back a little. I need a Savior who will understand me and solve my problems." We must take away the law in this way. It does not mean that the law is unnecessary; it means to take it away. And we must also take away our own faith. What we have experienced, what we have striven for, and how we have served while living a life of faith are nothing and are less than dust before God, who made the heavens and the earth and all things.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

So we must take away our own merits, take away our own faith, and believe that the Lord has saved us. It is because the Lord said, *"If you would believe you would see the glory of God" (John 11:40)*.

For you and me, Jesus said, *"Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life" (John 6:54)*. When we believe that the Lord came, fulfilled all righteousness by receiving baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River, and had all our sins transferred to Him, we are eating the flesh of the Lord. And we believe that the Lord bore that sin, shed His blood on the Cross, received the judgment, and rose again from death. Have you eaten the flesh of the Lord? The Lord did not give us only His blood. He gave us His own flesh. He said, *"The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep" (John 10:11)*. You may ask why I talk only about that every day, but I will talk only about that. If the Lord comes late, I will keep talking about this until the day He comes. Why is that? It is because it is not something I did, but something the Lord did. The Lord saved us with His own flesh and blood. Every morning I eat the flesh of the Lord. I have become very used to eating the flesh of the Lord. Even when I get up in the morning, I say, "Lord, You have removed all my sins. You have saved me. Since You removed all my sins with Your flesh, I am a righteous person. I live this day, too, as a righteous person." As a person without a single sin, by believing in the Lord, I now live today, too, for the souls of other people.

We must eat the flesh of the Lord and drink the blood of the Lord every day. When the Lord instituted the Lord's Supper, He said, *"This is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me" (1 Corinthians 11:24)*. Why did He do so? It is because the way the Lord, who came to this earth to save mankind, saved us and loved us was exactly that—that is, saving

us by giving His own flesh and blood. The Lord was not the law. The law is what tells you to do this, says that if you cannot do this you will be sent to hell, and says that if you cannot do this you are no good. But the Lord did not do so. Therefore, we must take away the law. Since it says, *"By the law is the knowledge of sin" (Romans 3:20)*, all we need to do is realize sin. And we must say to the law as follows: "I am a sinner. So please stop hovering in front of me and go away. I need the Lord, who will understand me and solve my problems. I need the Lord right now."

People need the Lord. The law only teaches us that there is sin in our hearts. So please set the law aside, respectfully, off to one side. The Lord said, *"Take away the stone" (John 11:39)*. The Lord has saved us. I believe that the Lord is my Lord and the One who made me, and that He removed my sins and the sins of all the people of the whole world. Do you believe that the Lord removed your sins? Do you believe that the Lord has become the Savior of you and me? With people there is no hope, but the Lord came to Lazarus, who had no hope, and saved him. When Martha, in front of Him, went on saying this and that—that he had been dead as long as four days—the Lord said, *"Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?" (John 11:40)*. Saving us from sin is the glory of God. What is the glory of God? The glory of God is that the Lord Himself came to us—people who had died because of sin, people who could not live according to the word, we who were like dead corpses because our deeds were lacking—took upon Himself all our problems and solved them, and saved us. God is worthy to receive glory. The Lord is worthy to be praised through us. So, like the psalmist, we come to praise Him, saying that it is good *"to declare Your lovingkindness in the morning, And Your faithfulness every night" (Psalm 92:2)*.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

The Lord helps us, knows our frame, knows everything about us, and loved us, and so He has solved all our problems. The Lord is not One who does not know us, but One who knows us well, who knows us very closely. The Bible says, *"For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust" (Psalm 103:14)*, and *"we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses" (Hebrews 4:15)*. The Lord knows how weak we are, how weak our will is; He knows that even while saying we believe in God, we are people who cannot keep the word before the law, human beings who cannot but die because of sin and can receive nothing but a curse, feeble human beings who cannot but be cursed unless the Lord saves us. Because He knows this, God determined to make such weak people as us His own children, who resemble His image. The Lord loved us and came to this earth, and with His own flesh and blood He saved us, who were lower than *"the offscouring of all things" (1 Corinthians 4:13)*, from all sins.

Is there something you lack? Lay that lack, too, down before the Lord. "Lord, I cannot do anything. I am a sinner. I cannot but go to hell. I am just like a dead corpse. I smell. I am afraid that someone will see me as I really am. So today, too, as if making coverings of fig leaves to wear, I do good deeds and keep up a godly appearance and form before God. God, please do not look inside me. My inside is already dead. It smells of a dead corpse. Please save me." When we ask God for mercy in this way, when we believe that God is truly the God of love, that God meets us and saves us. To receive salvation and have our problems solved before the Lord, we must throw away our own thoughts. When the Lord raised Lazarus, the entrance of the tomb was blocked with a large stone. If He had told Lazarus to come out while the stone was still there, could Lazarus have come out? He could have come back to life, but he could not have come out. With

what strength would Lazarus have pushed out the large stone that several people had rolled into place to block it? So He said, *"Take away the stone" (John 11:39)*, and when, after the stone had been taken away, He said, *"Lazarus, come forth!" (John 11:43)*, Lazarus came out.

To receive blessings before God, we must throw away our own thoughts. God gives blessings without limit, but if we turn our bowl upside down, it is of no use. Suppose there is a small bowl. God sends down rain, but if the bowl is turned upside down as it catches the rain, then however much rain falls, not a single drop collects. That is what it is like when we do not throw away our own thoughts and, even though God says He will give, we say, "It cannot be. I commit sins every day, so how can I become a righteous person? It makes no sense." That is the thought of the flesh. It is not believing according to the word of God. If the bowl is turned upside down, nothing remains. Everyone's bowl was turned upside down. But if before God we think, "I should not be like this. I can live only if I am clothed with God's blessing. I can go to the kingdom of heaven only if I am clothed with God's blessing—how could I get there by my own effort?" and say, "Lord, I know I have no right to ask, but please give me some," and set the bowl right side up, the bowl becomes full. The Lord has given blessings so that they overflow, and He gives them even now.

Why do people not receive blessings from God? It is because they hold their own thoughts, which are the exact opposite of God's blessing, thinking, "God will not bless me. I commit so many sins and I am so weak—would God bless me?" and so they themselves turn upside down the bowl with which to receive God's blessing. So we must throw away our own thoughts and change our thinking. Everyone who has changed his thinking receives God's blessing. What was decisive for Lazarus coming

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

back to life was the stone being taken away. After the stone was taken away, Jesus told him to come out. He spoke that blessed word to Lazarus, and Lazarus came back to life by that word and came out. The stone must not be there. One's own stubbornness must not be there. We must throw away our own thoughts.

Faith for one's family

Dear beloved saints, through this word we can know how the families of our brothers and sisters receive salvation. The Lord waits a long, long time. How does He wait? He waits until the faith of the family members of our brothers and sisters has completely collapsed. The Lord waits until they strive to the end, fail, and finally say, "Let me just give it all up." But do we wait until then? We cannot wait, and we make a great fuss. We believe that the Lord is the resurrection and the life, but we believe only that this will come true in the next world after death. But if we believe while living, it really comes true just as that word says. We come back to life. We receive the remission of sins and obtain life. We must know the fact that our family members have already collapsed, that they are already dead. And we must teach them, too, by faith the fact that they are dead.

A person who does not have the Holy Spirit within him is already a dead person. He is a dead corpse going back and forth giving off a smell. From a person who has not received the remission of sins comes the smell of sin. He goes about like a dead corpse with his head hung low, saying, "Lord, I am a sinner." A dead corpse has no life. There is no laughter, no flowers, and no fruit. A dead tree has no fruit. However good a tree it may be, if it is dead, it has only an imposing outward form but no fruit, and it cannot bloom. So we must throw away our

own thoughts. We need faith that the Lord will surely save our families—that faith which believes to the end. And when we invite the Lord in and say to Him, "Lord, please bring them to life," they come back to life in an instant. The Lord has saved us. Yet even though the Bible promises, *"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household" (Acts 16:31)*, there are many cases where family members are stubborn and even now persecute the family member who believes. Then we come to think, "I guess this word does not apply to me." When I look at some brothers and sisters, once one person receives the remission of sins, even the mother, father, older brother, and relatives receive the remission of sins one after another. There are times when I hear it said, "You say you are a servant of God, so why has your family not received the remission of sins?" I, too, while praying for the brothers and sisters, have nothing to say when I think of my own family, and I can only bow my head and say, "Lord." But I believe in the Lord. Humanly speaking, no hope can be placed on the souls of our family members, but I believe the fact that the Lord saves those souls.

I believe that no matter how hopeless it may be for man, if the Lord works, if the Lord saves, they will obtain salvation. The Lord has already removed the sins of all people. It is only that they are not receiving salvation because they have not heard the fact that their sins have been removed—that is, the gospel and the word of God. If they hear it accurately, even a dead corpse comes back to life and comes out. John chapter 11 speaks of the families of saved brothers and sisters receiving salvation. It means that the Lord saves our families and the families of the members of our church.

Believe in the Lord. Did the Lord raise Lazarus? He raised him. If we look at Lazarus as a picture of a family member who

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

has not received salvation, he is like a person who, while striving to keep the word of God—that is, the law—came to die because of his own stubbornness. Can a human life that is like a maggot keep the law and live as a proper human being? It cannot. Whether bound by the law, bound by one's own thoughts, or bound by anything else, the Lord has saved us. The Lord is the One who removed our sins and the Savior who saved us completely. Whatever our circumstances may be, the Lord has removed our sins. Where did He remove them? At the Jordan River and on the Cross. Through the baptism He received from John at the Jordan River, He had all the sins we commit in the world transferred to Him, on the Cross He received the judgment for those sins in our place, and He rose again from death.

"Loose him, and let him go"

When the Lord said, *"Lazarus, come forth!" (John 11:43)*, Lazarus came out. Lazarus came out bound up tightly. A dead body has its hands and feet bound, and the whole body is wrapped around and bound. The head is bound, too, and the nose and mouth are covered. If that were not loosed, he would die again even after coming back to life, because he could not eat. But even though he was bound, when the Lord told him to come out, Lazarus came back to life. Whatever circumstances we are in, whether we are stubborn, whether we strive to keep the law, or whether we commit sin, the Lord has already saved us. He has already removed our sins. Whatever we are like, the Lord has saved us from destruction and moved us into the kingdom of God. The Bible says, *"He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love" (Colossians 1:13)*. He has moved us over as a people

without a single sin. The Lord, by giving His own flesh and blood, washed completely clean the person who had fallen into sin as if into a pit of filth, made him a person without a single sin, and moved him into the church where righteous people without a single sin live. Whatever weakness we may have, the Lord has saved us. Are we lacking and unworthy, and do we commit sin often? Do we tend to commit sin in secret? Do we have a disposition to commit sin as if we were born with it? Even if we have such a disposition, the Lord has removed even that sin.

I, too, see the weakness of my flesh every day. If the Lord rebuked me for such weaknesses and set the standard of salvation by them, I could not receive salvation. But even though we have such a disposition, the Lord has saved us. Regardless of us, regardless of our weaknesses, the Lord has saved us. He has saved me from all my sins, and He has saved you from all your sins. The Bible says, *"Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love" (Ephesians 1:4)*. Whether we are weak or not, He determined to save us, and since God, who has power, has saved us, what do we have to say? The Bible says, *"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" (Romans 8:35)*, and *"Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies" (Romans 8:33)*. You may ask how a weak person can be without a single sin, but that is the power of God and the power of the gospel. God's power of salvation is that powerful. Regardless of our weaknesses, He has saved us from sin.

If we were to receive salvation because we are excellent, who would there be to receive salvation? Honestly, no one. But the Lord—so much does He love us and so well does He know us—knows that we have such a disposition and says that He has removed even that sin. Even if we say, "Lord, this is more than

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

I deserve," and do not fully realize it, the Bible says, *"In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10)*. The Lord loved us. This is the gospel, 'euangelion (εὐαγγέλιον),' which means 'good news.' The Lord saved us regardless of our sins. Even though Lazarus became sick inside, so that his intestines rotted, his kidneys rotted, and a rotten smell came from his mouth, the Lord saved him. Saying, *"Lazarus, come forth!" (John 11:43)*, He saved us.

Why do you turn your bowl upside down and still want to receive blessings? Even if it is a dirty bowl, let us set it right side up. Only when we set it right side up can even the rain falling from heaven collect so that we can drink it, and the inside of the bowl is washed by that water. Why turn upside down a bowl that is nothing special anyway? Do not turn it upside down. Do not reject the love of God. Do not avoid that love and that salvation by which the Lord saved you. The Lord said, *"Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life" (John 6:54)*. And it is as though He comes into our hearts and says as follows: "I have saved you. Through the baptism I received from John at the Jordan River, I had all your sins transferred to Me, and I shed My blood on the Cross for you. Is there anything you lack? I will loose it through My servants. Even after receiving the remission of sins, do you feel stifled? Are your circumstances hard now? There are servants who will loose you and set you free. Do not worry. Believe My word that I, who told you to come out, have saved you. You are already a person who has received salvation. You have no sin. Even if you have many other problems, do not worry. Through My servants I will clear away the stifling that blocks your nose and mouth. I will loose the graveclothes that bind your two hands and two feet and let you go about freely." When the Lord told Lazarus to come out, it says, *"He who had*

died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth" (John 11:44).

Is there perhaps confusion in your thoughts? His coming out with his face wrapped in a cloth means that confusion has come into one's thinking and it is bound. The Lord has already removed our sins. Is that right? From then on, we just need to loosen things one by one. The things we are thinking wrongly, the things we are thinking legalistically, the things we are thinking in terms of deeds—if they are tied one way, we just need to untie them the other way. When they are loosened, the nose comes out, the eyes come out, and then the arms and legs are stretched out. If you stay within the church, the servants of God loosen everything for you and let you live freely and receive blessings freely. When Lazarus heard the word to come out, did he loosen all his own problems and his blocked nose before coming out? He came out bound with graveclothes, just as he was. Lazarus came back to life, regardless of his own will, by the Lord's having saved him. That salvation has come upon you and me today. Do you have sin, or do you not? You do not.

Jesus said, *"Loose him, and let him go" (John 11:44)*. That the Lord has removed our sins is the truth and a fact. We have no sin. We have received salvation. It is not that we are in the process of receiving it now or will receive it in the future; we have already received salvation. Now all that remains is for our wrong thoughts to be changed into the truth of faith by hearing the word. When we hear the word, we come to know the word and believe the truth, and so we come to live by faith. The Bible says, *"The just shall live by faith" (Romans 1:17)*. It is faith, not deeds. "Lord, I believe what the word says." As we hear the word again, faith arises. "Lord, even though I am this lacking, I believe that You will give me a job too. I believe that You will bless our family." When we believe in this way, the Lord

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

actually helps. You see such things too, don't you? Just as the Lord has given peace to the heart, He begins to move the circumstances as well. If the Lord does it, what is there that He cannot do? The One who created the heavens and the earth works in His own children. The Lord is alive. He said, *"Loose him, and let him go" (John 11:44)*. Those who received the remission of sins not long ago still have many things that are bound. Within the church, those things are being loosed even now. It is hard to loosen a person who is very stubborn, but even so, if he just stays still, everything comes untied, just as a top spins around a few times.

The glory of God, which those who believe see

The Lord has removed all the sins of all the people of this earth. Believe this. This is the gospel. The Lord will surely solve our problems, too. He solves even what is utterly impossible. If we believe in the Lord, it will be accomplished someday. That is what is important. But we are hasty by nature, so as soon as we finish praying, "Lord, I believe. I believe that You will heal my illness. I believe that I will become healthy," we grow impatient, asking why it is not healed, and then our faith disappears completely. That is not faith. Even if it does not happen right now, the Lord will surely solve this problem. It will surely be healed. Even though we cannot see it with our eyes, we believe. The Bible says, *"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1)*. Even if there is nothing we can feel right away, we tell Him with thanksgiving, "Lord, I believe. Please heal it. Please solve it." The Bible 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). When we make our requests known with thanksgiving, the peace of God guards our hearts and minds, and if it is a good thing, the Lord accomplishes it all. As we live believing, we later come to experience that the Lord has solved that problem. That is living by faith. Only the righteous can live that way.

Let the souls of your family members, too, obtain salvation by faith. You have no sin. Do your family members have sin? No, they do not. Just as the Lord removed your sins, He has already removed the sins of your family members as well. This is how you speak by faith. And then you wait. Even while walking along the road after hearing the word, they can realize the word and receive the remission of sins. Just as it says that the lepers heard the word of the Lord and went, and *"as they went, they were cleansed" (Luke 17:14)*, they go along and find that they have been completely healed.

The Lord said, *"If you would believe you would see the glory of God" (John 11:40)*. Become people who believe. When you become people who believe, you see the glory of God and receive the blessing of God. Not only you, but your descendants from generation to generation will receive blessings. But it says, *"Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me" (Exodus 20:5)*. We must resolve it by faith. If we do not believe, however hard we try, it is in vain. If God curses, man cannot receive blessings. However much one earns, someone comes and takes it all away, or one falls ill and it all goes out, or it all disappears on this and that, as though locusts had devoured it. But if we believe in God, receive the remission of sins, and live by faith, God has pity on us and helps us. When we say, "Lord, I believe. Please help me,"

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

it is as if God says, “All right, I will help you this much.” If He helped us too much, we could not handle it, so He helps us a little and lets us have a taste. Then, when our faith grows more, He helps us more. Because He loves His own children, He helps them more, little by little, so that they can handle it. When their faith grows greater, He helps them greatly. They receive great blessings from generation to generation.

We receive blessings by faith. How do we know that the One who created the heavens and the earth in the beginning created all things in this universe? We know by looking at the word. How do we know that we have received the remission of sins? We know that we have received salvation by believing the word. The Lord removed all our sins. The Lord truly loved us. He loved me, and He loved each and every one of you. How much did He love us? He loved us more than His own life. The Lord said, *“I am the good shepherd” (John 10:11)*. He gave His flesh and life, did not spare His own life but sacrificed it, and let the sheep live. When the sheep were in danger, He let them live. Our Lord is that very One. Lord, I praise You. Lord, I believe in You. I hope that this faith will come upon all the saints and upon all the family members who believe in God. ✉

Sermon 3 by Paul C. Jong

The Lord works in living faith

< John 11:1–44 >

"Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. It was that Mary who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. Therefore the sisters sent to Him, saying, 'Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick.' When Jesus heard that, He said, 'This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it.' Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So, when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was. Then after this He said to the disciples, 'Let us go to Judea again.' The disciples said to Him, 'Rabbi, lately the Jews sought to stone You, and are You going there again?' Jesus answered, 'Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. But if one walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.' These things He said, and after that He said to them, 'Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up.' Then His disciples said, 'Lord, if he sleeps he will get well.' However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep. Then Jesus said to them plainly, 'Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe. Nevertheless let us go to him.' Then Thomas, who is called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, 'Let us also go, that we may die with Him.' So when Jesus came, He found that he

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

had already been in the tomb four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles away. And many of the Jews had joined the women around Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. Now Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him, but Mary was sitting in the house. Now Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You.' Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' Martha said to Him, 'I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.' Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?' She said to Him, 'Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.' And when she had said these things, she went her way and secretly called Mary her sister, saying, 'The Teacher has come and is calling for you.' As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly and came to Him. Now Jesus had not yet come into the town, but was in the place where Martha met Him. Then the Jews who were with her in the house, and comforting her, when they saw that Mary rose up quickly and went out, followed her, saying, 'She is going to the tomb to weep there.' Then, when Mary came where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying to Him, 'Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.' Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled. And He said, 'Where have you laid him?' They said to Him, 'Lord, come and see.' Jesus wept. Then the Jews said, 'See how He loved him!' And some of them said, 'Could not this Man, who opened the eyes

of the blind, also have kept this man from dying?' Then Jesus, again groaning in Himself, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. Jesus said, 'Take away the stone.' Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, 'Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days.' Jesus said to her, 'Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?' Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, 'Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me.' Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come forth!' And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, 'Loose him, and let him go.'"

John chapter 11 tells of the death and resurrection of Lazarus. We have looked together at the event in which Lazarus died and then came back to life. The house Jesus often stopped by when He was on this earth was none other than Lazarus's house. Jesus also stopped by the house of Simon, who had had leprosy, and the Bible records, *"Being in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, as He sat at the table" (Mark 14:3)*. But in Lazarus's house, Lazarus fell ill and was about to die, and his sisters sent word to Jesus, saying, *"Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick" (John 11:3)*. But the Bible records that Jesus *"stayed two more days in the place where He was" (John 11:6)*, and that when Jesus came, Lazarus *"had already been in the tomb four days" (John 11:17)*. Because Lazarus had died in the meantime, words mixed with resentment came from the sisters: if the Lord had

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

been here, their brother would not have died, so why had He not come quickly? When Lazarus died, the people laid him in a stone tomb.

Jesus came to Bethany only after Lazarus had died, like a mourner. When Martha said, *"Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You" (John 11:21–22)*, Jesus said, *"Your brother will rise again" (John 11:23)*. Then Martha said, *"I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day" (John 11:24)*, and Jesus said, *"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" (John 11:25–26)*, and Martha said, *"Yes, Lord" (John 11:27)*.

When Jesus called Mary out and met her, Mary, too, wailed, saying the very same words, *"Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died" (John 11:32)*. And the Bible says, *"When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled" (John 11:33)*. Then when Jesus asked, *"Where have you laid him?" (John 11:34)*, the people said, *"Lord, come and see" (John 11:34)*.

There were two kinds of people in that place. Some said, *"Could not this Man, who opened the eyes of the blind, also have kept this man from dying?" (John 11:37)*, asking whether the One who had opened the eyes of the blind could not have kept Lazarus from dying. And when Jesus said, *"Take away the stone" (John 11:39)*, Martha said, *"Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days" (John 11:39)*, saying that there was nothing more that could be done now. Then Jesus said, *"Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?" (John 11:40)*. When the people had taken away the

stone, Jesus called out, *"Lazarus, come forth!" (John 11:43)*. Then the Bible says that *"he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth" (John 11:44)*. Lazarus came out of the cave with his face wrapped in a cloth and his hands and feet all bound. The Gospel of John speaks of these scenes.

The problems that exist even for those who have been saved

The Lord is telling us that we have many problems. In fact, Mary, Martha, and Lazarus were not people who did not believe in Jesus. Martha is the one who confessed, *"I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world" (John 11:27)*. In such a household, Lazarus fell ill and died. This tells us that even the lives of those who have believed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and received the remission of sins are not without problems. There are many problems, so how do we solve these problems? And how does the Lord solve them for us? I believe that the Lord is telling us this through this word.

Martha said, *"Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died" (John 11:21)*, and Mary, too, said the very same thing, *"Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died" (John 11:32)*. They meant that if the Lord had been here, He would have saved Lazarus's life, but because the Lord was not there, their brother died. In particular, there were words exchanged between Martha and the Lord. When Jesus said, *"Your brother will rise again" (John 11:23)*, Martha said, *"I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day" (John 11:24)*, and Jesus said, *"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And*

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" (John 11:25–26). Between these two sayings there is a great difference in faith.

The faith of the last day and the faith that is alive now

Martha confessed her faith, saying that she knew her brother would rise again and live at the last day. In fact, this confession of Martha's is one that anyone who believes in Jesus can make. But as Jesus talked with Martha, there was a faith He truly wanted from her. A formal faith or a religious faith is something anyone commonly has, and rather than that, the Lord wanted Martha to have in her heart the faith that the Lord would give her brother life again right here and now. That is why the Lord said, *"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die" (John 11:25–26)*. The Lord is the One who raises the dead, and He is the Lord of life, who gives life. And the Lord said, *"Whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die" (John 11:26)*.

Whether we truly have a living faith after being born again is very important. Do we not have the same kind of faith as Martha? Martha's faith was a faith that believed He would raise him up and give him life at the last day. Of course, in the end this faith, too, is a necessary faith. But what the Lord was speaking about was whether, while living on this earth, we can have the problems now lying before us solved by faith.

What does this word, *"Whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die" (John 11:26)*, mean? Christians are all in the faith that believes in the Lord, but some have a living faith and

some have a dead faith. There are some who have no saving faith at all, and there are also some who, when we look at the outcome, are revealed to have had no true faith. It means that those who have faith in the Lord have received salvation by a living faith, but what those without faith in the Lord have is only a faith that they will rise again at the last day, and not a living faith.

What the Lord wants to tell us through this word is to have a living faith. If it is something that pleases the Lord, the Lord grants it. If the prayer of the one who prays is something that pleases the Lord, the Lord hears that prayer and solves the difficult problems in our lives. It is necessary to pray with the faith that if this is something that pleases the Lord, the Lord will answer. It is because that is living faith. The Lord said, *"Whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die" (John 11:26)*. Never dying means believing in the living Lord, and it is believing that if it is not something bad and not something the Lord dislikes, the Lord will solve this problem. This is the faith the Lord wanted from Martha and Mary.

"Whoever lives and believes in Me"

As we actually live, we run into many problems. We run into this problem and we run into that problem. But we do not have the ability to solve those problems. Even when it seems we have ability, we do not, and we are the very people who can do no more once we go beyond the limits of our own ability. But the Lord is different. The Lord said, *"I am the resurrection and the life" (John 11:25)*, and He said, *"Whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die" (John 11:26)*. It means that though we have many problems, if we truly believe in the Lord, the Lord solves those difficult problems for us. Even though we are weak and

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

have many problems, we have them solved because we believe in the Lord. Also, when we believe in the Lord and pray, if it is not something the Lord dislikes but something He is pleased with, the Lord grants it all. The Bible says, *"Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him" (1 John 5:14–15)*, and it says, *"If our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. And whatever we ask we receive from Him" (1 John 3:21–22)*. This means that if we pray according to the Lord's will, He surely answers. Though we have problems, if we have a living faith that truly believes in the Lord, we have those problems solved—this is what the word means.

There are difficult problems in my life and in yours. There really are. But do we have the ability to solve those problems? For the most part, we do not. Of course, it is not that we have none at all. Honestly, there are times when we have ability in some areas. Just as it is not that we cannot eat or cannot rest, we can do easy things. But we cannot do difficult things. When we face difficulties that go beyond the limits of our strength, we have no choice but to seek God. Even when we want to live according to God's will, and when we want to follow the Lord's will, we rely on the Lord and pray to Him.

Preaching the gospel to the whole world is a work beyond our ability. Therefore, the task of a lifetime—spreading the gospel to the whole world—is in fact not something we can do by our ability alone. But if we truly have a living faith, the Lord does all of this work for us as well. If we have the faith that the Lord accomplishes this work, we shall never die. That is living faith. This means that because we have all our problems solved, we do not die crushed under those problems but are blessed

instead. In fact, we prayed over the things truly necessary for the gospel of the water and the Spirit to be spread to the whole world, and God heard that prayer and accomplished things that are unbelievable from a human standpoint.

You and I encounter problems that seem utterly impossible, whether in our personal lives, in our families, or even as we live a life of faith. The Lord said, *"Whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die" (John 11:26)*. If we truly have the faith that the Lord is alive and solves all these things, the Lord solves our problems. Lazarus's death shows that we were dead because of sin. No one could prevent Lazarus's death, so who brought Lazarus back to life? It was Jesus. It means that the Lord solves the problems we could never solve because we lack the ability. This is what this word is saying.

That we have received the remission of sins is by the grace of the Lord. Since the Lord saved us by the water, the blood, and the Spirit, we are simply saved from all sin and receive life from death by believing it. When we know that the Lord has removed all our sins and accept it in our hearts without being stubborn, we receive salvation.

Even while we live after receiving salvation, there are many problems. How do we solve such problems? We can solve them by relying on the Lord and by faith—by the faith that the Lord protects us. We have the desire to live according to God's will. But if we cannot possibly fulfill that desire by our own strength, what must we do? We must make supplication to God with the faith that believes in the Lord. That is how we fulfill our desire.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

The prayer that pleases the Lord

We must have not a dead faith but a living faith that truly believes in the Lord. To have a living faith, it is most important first to consider whether what we are now asking of the Lord is something that pleases Him or not. As we pray, there are times when we think, “Will He grant this?” or “Is God interested in this matter?” There are times when we wonder whether what we pray for is something God would grant, and there are also times when we actually want to have our problems solved by the power of God. At such times, we must first know whether God is pleased with this prayer or not. And we must believe that the Lord grants everything that pleases God.

When we actually believe, the Lord solves it for us. Therefore, we need to examine whether the Lord is pleased, and if we feel in our hearts that it is a prayer fitting before the Lord, we need a living faith that believes in the Lord and entrusts it entirely to Him. Because we are people who have received the remission of sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we are children of God. When a child of God relies on his God and asks for help, if it is something fitting, will God not surely grant it? There is no way the Lord could fail to grant it for lack of power, so He surely grants it. We need the faith that believes the Lord is alive and solves this problem, and it is important whether we are praying the prayer that pleases the Lord.

Have a living faith

Even after being born again of the water and the Spirit, you and I encounter many problems as we live in this world. One of them is the problem of children, which every parent goes

through. No one can avoid problems with their children, nor can they solve them by themselves. Can parents handle the problems of their children as they please? They cannot. When someone else's child causes trouble, a person who has no children can easily say, "What a wicked little rascal!" But once you have raised children, you come to have a compassionate heart that says, "Oh dear, poor thing. I wish things would go well for you too." Besides problems with children, there are problems of life—how we should live—problems at work, problems of material things or of health, and problems of being protected from danger, and there is also the problem of having to live according to the Lord's will. As we live in faith, we also wrestle with what the way is to live well and happily in the flesh too, and what the way is to live a truly blessed life while pleasing God. These problems do not go as we wish. These problems can be solved only when we have a living faith.

There were three siblings: Martha, Mary, and Lazarus. The Bible does not tell about their parents; it shows the three siblings living together. But their only brother fell ill and began to waste away, and, earnestly hoping that he would recover, they asked Jesus to come quickly, but Jesus came after Lazarus had died. When Jesus came and said, *"Your brother will rise again" (John 11:23)*, Martha, who thought that her brother was now dead, said, *"I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day" (John 11:24)*. Martha still did not understand the word the Lord spoke, *"Whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die" (John 11:26)*. The Lord is saying that He will give him life now, but Martha is saying that she believes he will live again at the last day, when the world ends. The Lord has said that He will now solve the problems in your lives and mine. But without faith, one ends up not receiving that grace. I hope that you will put away such a dead faith and have a living faith that tells the Lord about

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

this problem now and has it all solved.

The Lord often speaks to us about this matter. In fact, because we lack faith, every time we run into a difficult problem, we live crushed under that problem. That is in fact how you and I are. But just as the Lord said to Martha, *"Do you believe this?" (John 11:26),* He asks us too. He is asking whether we believe that the Lord, who is alive now, grants what we ask according to the will that pleases Him—whether we believe that He shows the power of God the Father. The Lord wants us to have a living faith. We have received salvation, but in fact, do we not have a dead faith in many areas? There are no small number of such areas in your hearts and mine. Although we have received salvation, there are many areas in which we do not have the living faith that believes that Jesus Christ, our Lord, is alive, and that when we pray now, He hears and actually works in our lives as the Almighty. That is why the Lord wants us to have a living faith. Like Mary and Martha, we too have many areas that we have not yet realized, and we must take hold of living faith by faith.

Having the faith that if what we pray for is something that pleases the Lord, He fulfills it one hundred percent—this is the secret to having an unshakable faith, a firm faith, a faith like a rock. The Lord has already given us such faith. The Lord is our Father and our shepherd. The Lord actually loves us and is pleased when things go well for us. Do you believe that the Lord hears our prayers and blesses us? We believe that the Lord, who is alive now, answers the prayers that please Him.

With such a living faith, we must become people of faith who have the many problems in our lives solved by faith, one at a time and step by step, starting from the small ones, and we must experience that firsthand.

What problems are there in your lives and mine? Each of us

has different problems. If you have no faith, pray that He would give you faith. I believe that the Lord will hear that prayer offered in belief in the living Lord and will give you a living faith. If you are in physical difficulty, you must pray that He would deliver you from that difficulty, and only when you pray with the faith that believes the Lord will deliver you does the Lord grant it. I believe that if you pray to the Lord with a living faith while you are sick, the Lord will heal that sickness. We also agonize a great deal when deciding the course of our lives. If you are trying to live according to God's will but lack the ability, and if you want to live with your heart set on the Lord but lack the ability to live that way, you must pray for the faith and the blessing to be able to live that way. If you believe in the living Lord, the Lord will do so for you.

Ask the living Lord

The Lord has given us a living faith. Because the Lord is alive, when we pray with a living faith, He actually grants it and answers. The Lord said, *"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you" (Matthew 7:7)*. If we truly believe that the Lord is alive and ask, we will receive. If we have truly believed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and become children of God who have no sin at all in our hearts, we can believe that the Lord who saved us is alive. To the one who believes that the Lord is our shepherd who hears our prayers, He, the living One, actually answers. Because He is truly alive, if we on our part have a living faith, we receive everything the Lord has given us. The Lord answers and solves your problems and mine now.

Therefore, we must have our problems solved by believing

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

in the living Lord. Human means and methods are also needed to some extent, but ultimately, because our strength falls short, we must experience the power of the living God through a living faith. In fact, there are many problems. I, too, have a tremendous number of them. You have many too, don't you? Because the living Lord grants all the beneficial things we ask for while we are alive, we have our problems solved. It is because the Lord is alive.

The Lord said, *"Whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die" (John 11:26)*. Does this word mean that if we live and believe in the Lord, our bodies will not die? No, it does not. He is speaking of our faith. He is asking whether we truly believe that the Lord is alive; whether we believe that God, who made the universe and all things, is alive; whether we believe that Jesus, who is that God, came to this earth and saved us through the gospel of the water and the Spirit; whether we believe that He rose again from death and is now seated at the right hand of the throne of God in heaven; whether we believe that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are alive now; whether we believe that this God has become our God; and whether we believe that when we entrust difficult problems to Him, He answers if it is not something bad. It means that those who believe have those problems solved and shall never die. This is what this word is saying.

Faith is needed. Faith goes through much trial and error. And faith is something that grows. Just as a tree grows, faith gradually grows. The Bible says, *"Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17)*. Faith grows as we hear the word of God. If we do not hear the word, faith itself does not grow. No matter what happens, if we do not hear the word, faith does not grow. When we hear the word, faith begins to grow little by little. And even when we are going through

difficulties for lack of faith, if we hear the word again and set our hearts by faith, we have that problem solved, and our faith gradually grows. Later, we come to have our problems solved by faith without going through great difficulty. Such faith is living faith.

"Loose him, and let him go"

Concerning Lazarus, Jesus said, *"Loose him, and let him go" (John 11:44)*. Why do we suffer hardship in life? We suffer because we resolve that we must do something and strive with our own zeal. The Lord made this world and made you and me; He solved our problem of sin and made us children of God; He gave us eternal life; and He has given us every blessing, just as the Bible speaks of Him *"who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3)*. The reason people cannot go to the kingdom of heaven is neither that they themselves are lacking nor that they fail to keep the law well. It is because they do not believe this: that the Lord came to this earth, received baptism from John and had all our sins transferred to Him, shed His blood and died on the Cross, and rose again from death, and so removed all our sins and fulfilled all righteousness. They fall into destruction because they cannot believe in Jesus Christ, who removed all our sins, made us children of God, and enabled us to go to the kingdom of heaven.

In fact, all people are bound by the law. They are bound by works, bound also by their own weaknesses and stubbornness, and bound also by the limits of the flesh. But what happens when we believe in the Lord? When we truly believe in the Lord of love, we are released from all of that law. And we come to live a new life, a new life of blessing. The reason people of this world,

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

even while attending church, say that they are sinners because they are bound by sin and commit actual sins every day is that they cannot believe in the living Lord and do not believe that the Lord has solved all their sins through the truth of the water and the Spirit.

Even setting those people aside, what about you and me? Are we not failing to solve our problems because we lack faith? Our faith must grow. Know and believe that God lets each person meet difficulties in order to make our faith grow. If you have difficulties after receiving the remission of sins, realize that it is in order to cultivate in you a living faith that believes in the living Lord. Then you will instead become thankful that He let you meet problems, you will pray by faith and experience living faith, and you will experience your faith growing. We must know this.

We must believe in the living Lord. We must have a living faith. "The Lord will do it. The Lord will accomplish it. The Lord will solve it." When we have this kind of faith toward the Lord, we have things solved by faith, one by one, more and more, and our faith comes to grow. We believe that the Lord allows problems and difficulties in order to teach those who have received the remission of sins how to have their problems solved, and we experience and also believe that if we have a living faith, we can have them solved. It is to teach us this that the Lord had this word of John chapter 11 recorded.

The household of Martha, Mary, and Lazarus was not a household that did not believe in Jesus but one that believed. And that household was one that Jesus loved dearly. When Jesus was on this earth, that house was the one He often stopped by. Jesus went to that house, ate food there, and had fellowship with them. It was to give them a living faith that the Lord came only after Lazarus had died and brought the dead Lazarus back to life.

Whether it is preaching the gospel, serving the Lord, our families' living their lives, or solving all the problems of life, you and I must work it out by faith. The most precious virtue for the righteous is faith. The Lord said, *"Whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die" (John 11:26)*. If we believe in the living Lord, we receive the blessing of actually having our problems solved one by one. I hope that you will live by this living faith. ✉

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Sermon 4 by Paul C. Jong

The faith that now believes in the Lord, who is the resurrection and the life

< John 11:17–44 >

"So when Jesus came, He found that he had already been in the tomb four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles away. And many of the Jews had joined the women around Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. Now Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him, but Mary was sitting in the house. Now Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You.' Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' Martha said to Him, 'I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.' Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?' She said to Him, 'Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.' And when she had said these things, she went her way and secretly called Mary her sister, saying, 'The Teacher has come and is calling for you.' As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly and came to Him. Now Jesus had not yet come into the town, but was in the place where Martha met Him. Then the Jews who were with

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

her in the house, and comforting her, when they saw that Mary rose up quickly and went out, followed her, saying, 'She is going to the tomb to weep there.' Then, when Mary came where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying to Him, 'Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.' Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled. And He said, 'Where have you laid him?' They said to Him, 'Lord, come and see.' Jesus wept. Then the Jews said, 'See how He loved him!' And some of them said, 'Could not this Man, who opened the eyes of the blind, also have kept this man from dying?' Then Jesus, again groaning in Himself, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. Jesus said, 'Take away the stone.' Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, 'Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days.' Jesus said to her, 'Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?' Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, 'Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me.' Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come forth!' And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, 'Loose him, and let him go.'"

When Jesus arrived at Bethany, Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. A body four days dead was, in anyone's eyes, a death that could not be undone, and it was a place where every

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

human expectation had come to a stop, so much so that even Martha said there was already a stench. Many Jews came and comforted Martha and Mary, but all they could do was grieve with them.

It was in the face of that very tomb that Jesus revealed who He is. Martha knew about the resurrection at the last day. But the Lord did not wait until that last day; He had come to raise Lazarus that day, at that very place. It was because the One who is the resurrection and the life was standing before the tomb. Today's word asks us: Do we believe in that Lord only as One who will work in the distant future, or do we believe in Him as One who is alive beside us today and speaks?

From the faith that knows the last day to the faith that relies on the Lord now

Let us read verses 21 through 24.

"Now Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You.' Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' Martha said to Him, 'I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day'" (John 11:21–24).

As soon as Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out and met Him. And she said that if the Lord had been here, her brother would not have died. She believed that if the Lord, who had raised even the dead and opened even the eyes of the blind, had been beside them, that problem would have been resolved. Then she said that she knew that even now God would give whatever the Lord asked of God. Martha, too, believed that Jesus was the Son of God the Father and the Savior.

Jesus said, *"Your brother will rise again" (John 11:23)*. The

Lord spoke of what He would accomplish that day at that place, but Martha took this word as something of the last day. That there is a resurrection on the last day is a truth the Bible has promised, and in the end it is a faith that we, too, surely need. Yet it is also a confession that anyone who says he believes in Jesus can make. What the Lord wanted from Martha was a faith that, going beyond the resurrection known as a doctrine, believes that the Lord before her eyes would accomplish exactly what He had said.

This kind of picture is found in our faith as well. We know that Jesus is the Savior and that He will raise us again on the last day. But when a difficult matter comes upon us today, rather than telling that Lord about it, we first weigh our own calculations and circumstances. We keep the word in one corner of our hearts and live a life of faith only with our thoughts. A faith in which only a form remains—"At a time like this, I should do it this way"—is shaken every time the circumstances change. The Lord is not One who will help us only later; He is One who listens today to the prayers we offer when we are in difficulty, and helps us.

Jesus, knowing full well that Lazarus had been in the tomb four days, said that he *"will rise again."* If the Lord, who knows all our circumstances, has spoken, then what we must do on our part is to receive that word just as it is.

Jesus Christ, who gives us life

Let us read verses 25 through 27.

"Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

this?' She said to Him, 'Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world'" (John 11:25–27).

Jesus said, *"I am the resurrection and the life" (John 11:25)*. He did not stop at teaching about the resurrection, but revealed that the Lord Himself is the Lord of the resurrection, who raises the dead again, and the Lord of life, who gives life. The One who gave life to the first man now gives life again to the dead. So what our faith must hold on to first, ahead of some day that will come someday, is Jesus Christ Himself, who is the resurrection and the life.

The word *"He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live" (John 11:25)* is the promise that even if the flesh of the one who believes dies, the Lord will raise him again. The word *"whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die" (John 11:26)* is the promise that our souls will never die. Within everlasting life there is the resurrection. Those who believe in the Lord have already obtained eternal life, and because they have that life, they live again even after the death of the flesh. So even when death actually comes upon them, the saints are not swallowed up by fear. It is because the Lord of life is in their hearts.

Then why did human beings come to be under death? We were born as descendants of Adam and were spiritually dead before God. We lived going against the will of God with our hearts and deeds, and when we stood before the law, the only thing revealed was that we were sinners. Even if we tried to cover our shortcomings with effort, there was no way to erase by our own strength the sins we had already committed.

Jesus came to bring us, who were under that death, to life. Through the baptism He received from John the Baptist at the Jordan River, the Lord had all the sins of us descendants of

Adam transferred to Him. The One without sin shed His blood and died on the Cross because of those sins, and became the sacrificial offering of atonement for us. And He rose again three days later. The promise *"shall never die"* in verse 26 was given to those who believe this work. Just as Christ rose again from death, we who believe in the Lord also die and then live again.

And Jesus asked Martha, *"Do you believe this?" (John 11:26)*. With this question, the Lord asks us today as well whether we believe that He has become our Savior. The person who does not put this word off as something of the distant future but believes it as his own salvation obtains a heart made clean, without sin, and the Holy Spirit testifies that there is no sin in that heart.

Martha answered, *"Yes, Lord" (John 11:27)*. And she confessed that Jesus is the Christ and the Son of God who comes into the world. The Son of God who comes into the world is the very One who came to save us from sin. Though Martha did not yet fully know what the Lord would do that day, she rightly confessed who Jesus is.

The Lord, who knows our sorrow and goes to the tomb

Martha went back, secretly called Mary, and told her that the Teacher had come and was calling for her. When Mary heard that, she rose quickly and went to Jesus. Jesus had not yet entered the town but was still in the place where Martha had met Him. The Jews who had been comforting her in the house thought that Mary was going to the tomb to weep, and they followed her. When Mary came to where Jesus was, she fell down at His feet and said exactly what her older sister had said:

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

"Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died" (John 11:32). Both sisters believed that if the Lord had been beside them, their brother would have lived. Mary fell down at the Lord's feet, holding that sorrow just as it was.

Let us read verses 33 through 35.

"Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled. And He said, 'Where have you laid him?' They said to Him, 'Lord, come and see.' Jesus wept" (John 11:33–35).

When Jesus saw Mary weeping and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled. As He saw those who had lost someone they loved and were grieving in despair, Jesus' heart ached as well. That He was troubled means that He knew the hearts of the people who had met with sorrow and was distressed over their situation. And Jesus wept. The One who would raise Lazarus a little later wept at that place. Because the Lord is God and at the same time the One who came clothed in a human body, He knows how sorrowful human death and parting are.

Let us read Hebrews chapter 4, verse 15.

"For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15).

To sympathize means to know our situation by going through it Himself. The Lord, who is without sin but lived clothed in weak flesh, knows our weaknesses and sorrows. So come to the Lord with your sorrow, as Mary did. Rather than enduring alone and weighing the problem only in your head, pour out your heart before the Savior, who knows our circumstances and hears our prayers.

The Jews said, *"See how He loved him!" (John 11:36)*. And some of them asked whether this Man, who had opened the eyes

of the blind, could not have kept Lazarus from dying. Their words can sound like words mixed with expectation and also like words mixed with lament, but all of their words remained on what had happened before Lazarus died. Jesus, again groaning in Himself, went to the tomb. He groaned as He saw that people were so powerless in the face of death and that they thought everything is over once a person dies. The people were looking back on what had already ended, but the Lord moved His steps toward the work of giving life.

Believe the word of the Lord rather than the circumstances before your eyes

Lazarus's tomb was a cave, and its entrance was blocked with a stone. Jewish tombs of that time were commonly made by placing the body in a cave cut out of rock and blocking its entrance with a large stone.

Let us read verses 39 and 40.

"Jesus said, 'Take away the stone.' Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, 'Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days.' Jesus said to her, 'Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?'" (John 11:39–40).

The very first word Jesus spoke at the tomb was that they should take away the stone. Then Martha said that he had been dead four days and there was already a stench. There was nothing wrong with the fact Martha saw. But the thought that, had he only just died, it might be another matter, but since four days had passed, what could even Jesus do—that thought was standing in the way of the work the Lord would do. A greater stumbling block than the stone that blocked the tomb was human

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

thinking.

There are times when such a stone is placed before our hearts as well. The thought of trying to become righteous by keeping the law, the thought, "I am so lacking—what kind of life of faith can I live?" and the labor and merits we think we have piled up block the way before the word of the Lord. The law is the holy word of God, but its work lies in making us realize sin. What is left to the person who clings to the law and tries to come to life is nothing but his own state, which is like a tomb of four days. So take away that stone. Take away the thought of keeping the law to come to life, and take away before the Lord your own thoughts, your own faith, and your own merits as well.

Jesus said to Martha, *"Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?" (John 11:40)*. Faith is receiving what God has said as the work God will accomplish. Then what is the glory of God? The glory of God is that the Lord Himself came and saved us, who had become like dead people because of sin, who had fallen because we could not live according to the word. Those who believe the word see this glory. Just as it is written, *"Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17)*, the power is not in us but in the word of God.

The work entrusted to us today is also done by this faith. If the Lord has had you serve the gospel and care for souls, then before you start by saying that your circumstances are inadequate, ask the Lord for what you need and believe in His help. Even when no fruit is seen right away after you have preached the gospel, remember the Lord, who spoke before the tomb of four days. In a place where, humanly speaking, there was no hope at all, Jesus raised the dead. Let us believe that the Lord, who gave us life through the word, will also give life to other souls through that word, and let us serve.

The Lord, who calls out the dead, looses them, and lets them go

When the people took away the stone, Jesus lifted up His eyes and looked up to heaven. Let us read verses 41 through 44.

"Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, 'Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me.' Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come forth!' And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, 'Loose him, and let him go'" (John 11:41–44).

Jesus thanked the Father for having heard Him. Even though He already knew that the Father always hears Him, He prayed aloud for the sake of the people standing around. It was so that they would believe that the Father had sent Jesus to this earth. What was about to happen before the tomb was a work that would reveal who the Son sent by the Father is.

First the stone was taken away, and then came the call. With the entrance blocked, even if Lazarus had come to life, he would not have been able to walk out. When Jesus called with a loud voice, *"Lazarus, come forth!" (John 11:43),* the dead man came out. People could take away the stone, but they could not put life into the dead. What brought Lazarus to life was the word of the Lord, who is the resurrection and the life, and all the people standing around saw that work.

The work by which the Lord gave us life is also like this. We were dead because of sin and had no strength to walk out of the tomb by ourselves. Where did the Lord remove our sins? He removed them at the Jordan River and on the Cross. Jesus had

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

all the sins we commit in this world transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John, received the judgment for those sins in our place on the Cross, and rose again to become our Savior. So whatever our circumstances may be, the Lord has already saved us. The person who believes this fact in his heart comes out of death into life, just as Lazarus heard the call and came out of the tomb.

Lazarus came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. He had come to life, but he was still bound. Jesus said, *"Loose him, and let him go" (John 11:44)*. If what is bound is not loosed, even a person who has come to life cannot go about and do his proper part.

Those who have not been born again are wrapped up in the law. Before the law that says, "Do this; do not do that," they feel upright on a day when they have done something well, but if they do even one thing wrong, they are bound fast by the thought, "Would God save someone like me?" Even those who have received the remission of sins are at times bound again by their own weaknesses and shortcomings, by legalistic thoughts, and by their own deeds. The very time when faith loses its strength is when a person is bound by his own deeds.

What loosens that bondage is the salvation the Lord has already accomplished. When we acknowledge our wrongs before the Lord just as they are and look to the Lord, the gospel of the water and the Spirit—that the Lord had even those sins passed on to Him through the baptism He received from John the Baptist and paid the price of sin on the Cross—loosens our hearts. After receiving the remission of sins, we only need to hear the word within the Church of God and, one by one, change into the truth the things we used to think legalistically and the things we used to measure by deeds. The One who looses those who believe in the Lord from all that bondage and lets them go

about freely is none other than Jesus, who is the resurrection and the life.

A life that hopes for the glory of the resurrection and is not shaken

Jesus' raising Lazarus again was a work by which He showed, in plain sight, that there is a resurrection for us as well. The hope given to those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit does not stop at living a little more comfortably on this earth. Those who have received the remission of sins obtain new life and live forever with God. And even after the death of the flesh, the Lord raises us again and clothes us with bodies that do not decay and do not die. Because the Holy Spirit is in our hearts, we are able to believe this resurrection.

The apostle Paul preached the resurrection of our bodies as follows.

"Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed— in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality" (1 Corinthians 15:51–53).

Now our bodies grow old, become sick, and grow weary. There are times when our hearts want to work for the Lord, but our bodies do not keep up. But the body the Lord will raise again is a body that has put on incorruption and put on immortality. The Lord has not only removed our sins but also gives new life even to this dying flesh.

If we forget this hope, the difficulties before our eyes look like the whole of life. We end up thinking only about how hard

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

today is, how lacking our circumstances are, and how people treat us. But as the apostle Paul said, *"The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Romans 8:18)*. Those who believe in the glory the Lord will give live with a hope greater than their present circumstances. They come to know how great that grace is, by which God made us His children and let us enjoy His own glory.

The hope of the resurrection does not make us take today's life lightly; it makes us carry out by faith the work now entrusted to us. It is looking to the risen Lord and walking step by step with Him, who is alive now. Lay down the heart that, while believing in salvation, tried to manage life by your own strength alone, and ask the Lord for what you need. Even without people's praise, and even when the results we want are not seen soon, there is a reason to serve according to the will of the Lord. After preaching the resurrection, the apostle Paul exhorted as follows.

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 15:58).

Before the tomb of Lazarus, Jesus revealed that He is the resurrection and the life. That Lord, who called Lazarus out with a loud voice, will raise us again too on the last day, and today He looses us from bondage through the word and lets us go. I hope that you will believe today in the Lord, who is the resurrection and the life, and walk freely with Him like Lazarus, who was loosed. ✉

Sermon 5 by Paul C. Jong

The person who believes in his heart what the Lord has done

< John 11:45–46 >

"Then many of the Jews who had come to Mary, and had seen the things Jesus did, believed in Him. But some of them went away to the Pharisees and told them the things Jesus did."

Lazarus, who had died, came back to life. A man who had been in the tomb four days, of whom it had been said that there was already a stench, heard Jesus' call and walked out. Not long before, the opening of the eyes of the man who was blind from birth had become a great topic of talk among the people, and this time a dead man came back to life. The people who were there saw with their own eyes the Lord giving life to the dead. But the people who saw the same work did not all go the same way. Many of the Jews believed in Jesus, and some among them went to the Pharisees and told them the things Jesus had done.

The words *"the things Jesus did"* are repeated in two verses. In verse 45, the people who saw that work believed in Jesus, and in verse 46, some people told that work to the Pharisees. What they saw was the same, but the places they took that work to were different. On one side, hearts went to the Lord who had done that work; on the other side, steps went to the people who

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

opposed the Lord. Then, is knowing the things Jesus did the same as believing in that Jesus?

We, too, hear the gospel, read the Bible, and learn the things Jesus did. Before that word, where are our hearts turned? Are we first looking at people's evaluations, or are we believing in the salvation the Lord has accomplished for us? The Lord does not want us to stop at gathering knowledge about Him. He wants us to believe in and follow the Lord Himself, who has given us life.

The people who believed in Jesus, who gives life

Let us read verse 45.

"Then many of the Jews who had come to Mary, and had seen the things Jesus did, believed in Him" (John 11:45).

The many Jews who had come to Mary were originally people who had come to comfort the sisters who had lost their brother. All that people could do was to weep together over the dead and comfort the family left behind. But there, Jesus raised the dead Lazarus. A body that had been decaying came back to life. Through this work, who the Lord is was revealed.

That day, there were some who saw that work and were amazed and glad, and there were also some who believed in Jesus. Being glad and believing are different. Those who believed in verse 45 did not stop at having seen an amazing work, but set their hearts on Jesus, who had done that work. They believed that Jesus is the Savior who gives life. However thoroughly a person may be able to recount the story of Lazarus coming back to life, if he does not believe in Jesus, he has not yet come before the Savior. The things the Lord did are the evidence given so that we may know Him and believe in Him.

Today, too, the things Jesus did have been made known to us

through the word. We have heard that Jesus came to this earth, received baptism from John, shed His blood and died on the Cross, and rose again from death. But reciting this fact from memory cannot take the place of faith in the heart. It is when we know why the Lord received baptism from John, why the One who was without sin received the judgment for sin on the Cross, and what that work has to do with us, and accept that salvation in our hearts, that it becomes faith.

My sin is not removed by my saying that I believe too because others say they believe, or by my assuming that I must have been saved because I have attended church for a long time. The Jesus I believe in is the Savior who bore my sin and washed it away.

The Lord gave life to the dead Lazarus, and He also gave salvation to us, who could not help but be judged because of sin. We do not come to the Lord after dressing ourselves up to look beautiful. We acknowledge ourselves just as we are, with no way to wash away sin by ourselves, and come to the Lord who saved us. Just as the power to raise the dead is in Him, so the power to save sinners is also in Him. Faith is receiving this Savior into our hearts.

Do not drift away from the Lord by following people's judgment

Let us read verse 46.

"But some of them went away to the Pharisees and told them the things Jesus did" (John 11:46).

Some among them went to the Pharisees. They, too, did speak of the things Jesus had done. But their steps headed in the opposite direction from those who believed in Jesus. They took

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

that work before the people who opposed the Lord. Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council. Knowing the Lord's work does not mean that even one's heart has gone to the Lord.

Even after seeing what God has done, people can hold on more to the people and the thoughts they have been leaning on. Even when the word teaches clearly, they first look at how people will see it and try to fit it to the judgment of the religion they belong to. If they are more conscious of people than of God, then, so as not to be hated, they end up believing just as many people know it and preaching it just that way. It is because what people will say sounds louder to them than what the Lord has accomplished.

Even when we hear the gospel of the water and the Spirit, it is easy to close our hearts because of people's reactions. But what determines the true gospel is not people's familiarity or opposition but what Jesus actually did. If we leave out the word that Jesus had our sins passed on to Him through the baptism He received from John, there may be fewer occasions to clash with people. But without knowing when and how the Lord bore our sins, those who hear have no way of knowing how the death on the Cross is connected with their own sins.

What we should keep in our hearts is being acknowledged by God rather than being acknowledged by people. Even if people call us saved people, we cannot enter the kingdom of God while still having our sins. The faith that God acknowledges as right is the faith that has received the remission of sins through the word. Believe in the salvation that God testifies of through the word, and stand on the assurance of the remission of sins that the word gives.

Believe clearly in the Savior who bore your sins

There is clear content in the statement that Jesus saved us. The Son of God came in a human body to save sinners. When He received baptism from John the Baptist at the age of thirty, the Lord had the sin of all people transferred to Him, and at that time He also bore my sin. And because of that sin, He received judgment on the Cross in our place. So the Lord's suffering is not a suffering to be left only as a moving story that He loved us; it was a suffering He endured while bearing my very sin.

Therefore, ask yourselves. When Jesus received baptism from John, did He have your sins transferred to Him too? Was the judgment He received on the Cross, bearing those sins, a judgment for you? Has the Lord, who rose again from death, become your Savior? To these questions, the answer "Since it is said that the Lord has saved us, I am saved" is not enough. The answer must come out of your heart on the basis of the word.

To examine one's heart is to check against the word whether we actually believe what the Lord has accomplished. An experience of a burning heart, or dreams and visions, cannot be the ground for washing away sin. Though human emotions change, the work in which Jesus had our sins passed on to Him through the baptism He received from John and paid the price of those sins on the Cross always remains the same. We believe that fact of salvation.

The apostle Paul spoke of the faith of the heart and the confession of the mouth as follows.

"That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Romans 10:9–10).

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

What Paul told us to believe in our hearts is the work of God raising Jesus from the dead. Jesus, who called Lazarus out of the tomb, died on the Cross because of our sins, which He had borne through the baptism He received from John the Baptist, and then rose again. If, while speaking words of salvation with our mouths, we do not accept in our hearts that the Lord washed away our sins, we cannot reassure ourselves with those words. God knows our hearts. When what the Lord has done is believed in the heart, that faith comes out as the confession of the mouth. No matter when one came to believe, the time when this work is acknowledged in the heart is the time of meeting God, and the Holy Spirit sets His seal on that faith as right.

This faith is not a faith that insists there is no sin while sin still remains. David sang as follows.

"Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered" (Psalm 32:1).

Who can cover our sins? The Lord had our sins passed on to Him righteously through the baptism He received from John, and received the judgment for those sins on the Cross in our place. Therefore, whoever believes in that Lord as the Savior becomes a person without sin before God. And the Holy Spirit dwells in his heart and causes him to call God Father. This covering is different from covering up sin and hiding it away. It is because sin has actually been removed that it has been covered before God.

The shortcomings of our flesh are still exposed. But we do not consider the Lord's salvation to have been shaken each time a shortcoming is exposed. We admit our own wrongs, turn back to the Lord, and believe in the Savior who bore even those sins. The assurance of a saved person lies not in his having become perfect himself, but in the Lord having saved him completely.

A life that follows the Lord and keeps the gospel with a believing heart

This word about the death of Lazarus and his coming back to life makes us reflect on our own last day as well. We do not know when we will finish our life on this earth. At that time, what matters is not how much praise we received from people but what gospel we believed. The wishes of our families cannot take the place of our faith, and religious rites cannot wash away our sins either.

If anyone asks us whether we are confident that we will go to the kingdom of heaven when our life comes to an end, we must be able to answer as follows: "When the Lord received baptism from John the Baptist for a lacking person like me, He bore all my sins, and having finished it all on the Cross and risen again, He is at the right hand of the Father's throne. I could not live perfectly on this earth, but my heart has been washed white as snow. Now I am going to the Father." This confession is not one made only in the face of death. The person who can make this confession every day that he lives is a blessed person.

The most important thing in a person's life is the remission of sins. Whether one has believed the gospel of the water and the Spirit, whether one has believed it and kept that gospel, whether one has followed the Lord though lacking—here eternal happiness and unhappiness are divided. If we leave our knowing of the gospel only as an experience of days gone by and live without regard to the Lord, we will end up turning our steps the other way even while knowing the Lord's work. Do not be drawn away by human thoughts and other teachings, but keep in your hearts the gospel that has given us life. Those who treasure the life the Lord has given also treasure His word.

People cannot help but speak when they have something they

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

believe. We preach the work of the Lord we believe in to our families and neighbors who do not yet know the remission of sins. What they need is not vague comfort but the news that their own sins have been washed away through the baptism Jesus received from John, the judgment of the Cross, and the resurrection. Some will hear and believe, and some will reject it. Let us not change the truth because we meet opposition, and let us do the work of serving the Lord and the work of praying by faith.

Jesus, who raised Lazarus, is God, who saved us from sin. That day in Bethany, the people who saw *"the things Jesus did"* were divided into those who believed and those who went to report it. We, too, who have heard of that work through today's word, stand at that crossroads. Do not stop at preaching what the Lord has done as if it were someone else's story, but believe in your heart in the Lord who did that work, and confess with your mouth. ✉

Sermon 6 by Paul C. Jong

Jesus, who became the sacrificial offering of atonement for us

< John 11:47–57 >

"Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, 'What shall we do? For this Man works many signs. If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation.' And one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said to them, 'You know nothing at all, nor do you consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish.' Now this he did not say on his own authority; but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, and not for that nation only, but also that He would gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad. Then, from that day on, they plotted to put Him to death. Therefore Jesus no longer walked openly among the Jews, but went from there into the country near the wilderness, to a city called Ephraim, and there remained with His disciples. And the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went from the country up to Jerusalem before the Passover, to purify themselves. Then they sought Jesus, and spoke among themselves as they stood in the temple, 'What do you think—that He will not come to the feast?' Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

given a command, that if anyone knew where He was, he should report it, that they might seize Him."

The council that put human advantage first and rejected the Lord

There were people who reported to the Pharisees that Lazarus had come back to life. Because of that, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council. Concerning Jesus, who had raised a dead man, a meeting was opened to discuss how they would kill Him. Before the Lord, who gives life, people made plans to kill Him.

The people gathered in the council, too, knew that Jesus was doing many signs. The sick had been healed, and there had also been the time when the multitude who had eaten bread in the open field tried to make Jesus king by force. This time, even Lazarus, who had died, came back to life. They worried, saying, *"If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him" (John 11:48)*. Their concern was that if, in a country under the rule of Rome, a separate king whom the people followed came forth, the Romans would come and take away their land and nation. It sounds like talk that is concerned for the lives of the people and the future of the nation. But there was a question that was actually missing from that discussion. It is the question of who this One is who raises the dead, and what God is accomplishing through Him.

Even after seeing the signs, they first reckoned up what would befall them. Although the work the Lord had done was clear, they first thought of the position and circumstances they wanted to protect. Far from rejoicing that the number of people who believed in Jesus was growing, they were afraid of it. So

the solution they found was to keep people from believing in the Lord. On the grounds of protecting their own peace, they tried to do away with the Lord of life. What they held on to was their present circumstances, and being saved from sin was not part of that discussion.

Before the word, we, too, easily weigh our own circumstances first. Thoughts of how our lives will change if we believe this word, and of whether we will lose what we now enjoy, come first. When those thoughts grow, we come to regard even the work the Lord has done as a burdensome thing, as the council did. The truth of salvation is not determined according to our circumstances. Knowing and believing how God washed away our sins through Jesus Christ comes before anything else.

The vicarious death foretold through the mouth of Caiaphas

Then Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to the council, *"You know nothing at all" (John 11:49)*. The solution he put forward as he rebuked the people who were only worrying was to kill one man, Jesus. His point was that it was beneficial for one man to die for the people so that the whole nation would not perish. The reckoning was that if they framed Jesus as a man who stood against Rome and handed Him over, Rome would not strike this nation.

Let us read verses 51 and 52.

"Now this he did not say on his own authority; but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, and not for that nation only, but also that He would gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad" (John 11:51–52).

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Caiaphas thought he was speaking his own mind, but those words were not something he said on his own. God governed the heart of this man, who was high priest that year, and caused him to say these words. This is called prophecy. Caiaphas himself only sought to gain peace for the flesh by disposing of Jesus on a charge of rebellion, and he had no interest in the remission of sins. Even so, God used the mouth of that office called the high priest and made known beforehand that Jesus would die for the people.

There is a meaning in the fact that this word came out of the mouth of the high priest. In the tabernacle of the Old Testament, when a sacrificial offering of atonement was brought, the very first thing done was the laying on of hands. When one laid hands on the head of the offering and passed sins on to it, that offering had the sins passed on to it and was killed in place of the person. The high priest was the very person in charge of that sacrifice. Jesus came as such a sacrificial offering of atonement. Though Caiaphas told with his own mouth who would die for the people, he did not know what he was saying. This was the very man who had rebuked the council, saying that they knew nothing at all.

Caiaphas told them that doing away with Jesus would be beneficial for them. Then, when Jesus dies, who truly gains the benefit? Verses 51 and 52 answer. First that nation gains the benefit, and next the children of God who were scattered gain the benefit of being gathered together and becoming one. That death is different from the death of one man that ended unjustly. It is a death of atonement for sinners.

When it is said that one Man dies for others, what matters is what He bears as He dies. We were people who had sin before God. Born as descendants of Adam, we neither heard nor believed the word of God and lived according to our own thoughts. We had neither the power to escape the judgment of

sin nor the power to wash away our own sins by ourselves. God poured out on His beloved Son the wrath He should have poured out on such people as us. That Jesus became the sacrificial offering of atonement means that He received in our place the judgment we should have received.

He bore our sins through the baptism He received from John and was judged on the Cross

Then why did Jesus have to be hung on the Cross? It is because He bore the sin of mankind. When and how did He bear that sin? The Son of God came to this earth in a human body, and when He received baptism from John, He had all our sins passed on to Him. This event makes clear the reason why the sinless Jesus received the punishment of sin.

This is the word from the time when Jesus received baptism from John.

"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 3:15–17).

Jesus said that it was fitting to fulfill all righteousness "*thus,*" and received baptism from John the Baptist. Just as the offerings of the Old Testament had sins passed on to them through the laying on of hands, at that time He had the sin of all mankind transferred onto His body. Then the heavens were opened, the Holy Spirit came upon Him, and the Father testified that He was

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

His beloved Son, in whom He was pleased. Because the Son, bearing the sin of mankind, had set out on the way of receiving the judgment for that sin on the Cross, the Father was pleased with that Son, who obeyed the Father's will.

Your sins, too, are included in that sin. The sins exposed to others, the sins hidden in the heart, and even the sins too shameful to speak aloud—the Lord bore them all at that time. We cannot count all our own transgressions, but the Lord knew all the sin of all mankind and bore it all at once. There is no reason to think that my sin alone is left out of that salvation.

What happens if we leave out the baptism He received from John and speak only of the Cross? If Jesus had died on the Cross without having our sins passed on to Him, what would that death have to do with me? Even if He died a hundred times, our sins would remain just as they are, and Jesus would be remembered only as One who showed love. Because the Lord first bore our sins at the Jordan River, His death on the Cross becomes the judgment for our sins. It is here that the heart that vaguely regards Jesus as a good person and the faith that believes in Him as the Savior who bore my sin become different.

Isaiah spoke of the suffering the Lord would receive as follows.

"But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:5–6).

The LORD made Him bear the iniquity of us all. Because there was sin that He bore, the Lord was wounded and bruised. Therefore His being wounded is my being wounded, His being bruised is my being bruised, and His death is my death. When

Caiaphas said that it was beneficial that *"one man should die for the people,"* that one man was the very One of whom the apostle Paul spoke.

"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).

The Lord paid in full on the Cross the price of the sin He had borne and rose again from death. Because He had our sins transferred to Him and died, when the Lord died we also died, and when the Lord rose again we also came back to life with Him. Whoever believes in this gospel of the water and the Spirit receives the remission of sins and becomes a righteous person, and the Holy Spirit dwells in him and has him walk with God.

The Lord, who gathers the scattered children together into one

The death of Jesus did not stay within the bounds of one nation. Verse 52 says that that death was to gather together the children of God who were scattered and make them one. Because He bore, through the baptism He received from John, both the sin of the people of Israel and the sin of the Gentiles, the Lord could also die for the people scattered throughout the whole world.

Then how do the scattered people become children of God and gather together? The Father receives as His own children those who believe in the Son, who suffered in our place. This is precisely the reason the sacrificial offering of atonement died as a substitute. We are people who were born in different places and whose languages, customs, and life circumstances differ. Yet by believing the same truth, that One bore our sins and died,

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

we have become children of one Father. What gathered us into one is the remission of sins we received from the same Lord. It was not similar tastes or worldly gain that bound us together.

When we think of that grace, the heart with which we treat one another also changes. We cannot treat lightly, by our own moods and judgments, the people whom the Lord gathered by giving up His own life. Even now, God calls the scattered children through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. When a person who has heard of the baptism Jesus received from John, His death on the Cross, and His resurrection believes that word, he too comes into this company. Our preaching of the gospel is a work in which we are used for this gathering that the Lord has already accomplished.

Jesus, who gave up His own life according to the appointed will

Verse 53 says, *"Then, from that day on, they plotted to put Him to death" (John 11:53)*. Jesus no longer walked openly among the Jews, but went to a town called Ephraim, near the wilderness, and stayed there with His disciples. As the Passover drew near, many people came up from the country to Jerusalem to purify themselves. They stood in the temple and asked one another whether Jesus would come to the feast, and the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a command that if anyone knew where Jesus was, he should report it so that they might seize Him.

The command to seize the Lord spread throughout all Jerusalem. But Jesus knew all of this. Before, too, people had tried to seize the Lord, but He escaped out of their hand and went away. The Lord did not fear the Cross, and He was the One who

would give up His life of Himself when the Passover the Father had appointed came. Let us read verses 17 and 18 of chapter 10.

"'Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father'" (John 10:17–18).

The Lord has both the power to lay down His life and the power to take it again. Would the One who raised the dead Lazarus not have had the strength to push back the hand of the council? Because the Lord came to give us life, He did not use that strength but gave up His life of Himself. The council thought that if they killed Jesus, His work would come to an end. But through that very death, the Lord received the punishment for our sins and accomplished salvation.

With the Passover ahead, people came up to Jerusalem to purify themselves. Jesus, whom they were seeking in the temple, was going to accomplish, at that very Passover, the work of truly cleansing people. We, too, wish to be made clean before God. That cleanness does not come from our preparations and rites. When we believe with our hearts in the Lord, who had our sins passed on to Him through the baptism He received from John and shed His blood on the Cross, our sins are washed away. The One whom the people were seeking as they asked one another whether He would come to the feast cleansed us at that very Passover.

All these things took place within the will God had determined beforehand. Even before the council plotted, God foretold the Son's death through the mouth of the high priest, and the Son gave up His life according to that will. The person who knows and believes concerning this death of atonement, "This was for a sinner like me; this was the will of God the

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Father"—that person is one who has been born again.

The Lord, who called Lazarus out of the tomb, now goes of Himself toward death at the Passover to give us life. Caiaphas thought that if they did away with just one man, Jesus, they themselves could live, but through the death of that One, God gave us life and gathered us, who had been scattered, together as children of God. Looking to that Jesus, who became the sacrificial offering of atonement for us, let us believe in and follow the Lord together with the children He has gathered. ✉

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

CHAPTER

12

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

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

Sermon 1 by Paul C. Jong

The fragrant oil offered to the Lord, who gave me life

< John 12:1–8 >

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

The feast that welcomed the Lord, who raised the dead

Verse 1 specifies the day, saying that this took place *"six days before the Passover."* The Passover is the feast by which

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

the people of Israel remember the day when they escaped the plague of death in Egypt by the blood of the lamb and were saved. Jesus was to be hung on the Cross at this Passover. So this feast in Bethany is a feast that Jesus received when the Cross was six days away.

Lazarus, whom Jesus had raised from the dead, was there. The household that only a short while before had been weeping in front of their brother's tomb now holds a feast for Jesus. Martha serves, and Lazarus is among those sitting with Jesus. A man who had been in the tomb for as long as four days was alive and sat at one table with the Lord. This is a joy they enjoy because the Lord came and gave life.

When we look at this feast, we come to look back on the grace that gave us life. Lazarus was a sinner who could not help but die, and spiritually speaking, we too were people just like him. Whatever we had in the world, we were poor people who could do nothing when faced with the problem of the soul. Jesus came to such people as us, removed our sins, and gave us life. So those who have met the Lord and received the remission of sins also have a feast. The very place where we gather together, hear the word, and share the joy of salvation is such a feast.

Verse 2 says that this feast was held for Jesus: *"They made Him a supper."* Jesus was at the center of the feast. This is also the reason believers gather. We do not gather to put ourselves forward before one another, but to welcome the Lord, who gave us life, and to rejoice in what He has done. The more we think about what the Lord has done for us, the more thankfulness arises in us, and a heart that wants to serve Him arises as well.

At that feast Mary brought very costly fragrant oil. When she poured it on Jesus' feet and washed His feet with her hair, the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil. This act holds Mary's heart toward Jesus. Let us not stop at the fact that she

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

offered something expensive, but let us find out who Mary believed Jesus to be, that she served Him in this way.

Mary offered something precious to her Savior

Let us read verse 3 again.

"Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil" (John 12:3).

Mary poured the whole pound of pure nard on Jesus' feet without setting aside even a little of it. And she washed His feet with her hair. Hair represents a woman's beauty. Mary washed Jesus' feet with what she treasured most. Her appearance was that of a person who worships God.

Why did Mary wash Jesus' feet? Those feet were the feet that had left the throne of heavenly glory and come to this earth, and the feet that had gone from village to village seeking sinners. Mary was so very thankful for the way He had walked to come and save her from sin. Washing His feet was her thanks for those steps.

Where did such service come from? To Mary, Jesus was not merely someone who would heal her brother's illness, but the Son of God, who raises the dead, and the Savior who would save Mary herself from sin and judgment. Mary believed that this One had borne Mary's sins and all the sin of mankind through the baptism He received from John, and that He was the One who would pay the price of those sins, die on the Cross, rise again, and save Mary. Because she had that faith, she did not begrudge this fragrant oil. What Mary did was a confession that revealed her faith.

Therefore, Mary's fragrant oil is not a price paid to obtain

grace. The Lord came to her first, and He gave life first. Mary served out of thankfulness as one who had received that grace. Can what we offer and the salvation we have received from the Lord be weighed on the same scales? Even if we offered our whole lives, it would be small compared with the eternal life we have received from the Lord. Yet the Lord accepts our small service offered in faith and regards it as precious. When we know this grace, offering does not feel like a heavy burden, and we become thankful that we can serve the One who gave us life.

Mary did not try to show people how precious a thing she had. She poured it just as it was on Jesus' feet. For those who follow the Lord, too, there comes a time to lay down their concern for appearances and their own thoughts. Whether it is work that is seen or work that others do not recognize, if it is work by which the Lord's will is fulfilled, we can take it on by faith. The person who thinks first about what pleases the Lord who saved him, rather than about how he is treated, serves as Mary did.

The service that prepared for the burial of the Lord, who bore our sins

Jesus spoke to Judas, who was displeased with Mary. Let us read verse 7.

"But Jesus said, 'Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial'" (John 12:7).

Jesus spoke of the fragrant oil Mary offered in connection with His own burial. He spoke of burial at a feast. Mary knew that Jesus would later die on the Cross in her place because of Mary's own sins, and she prepared for that burial in advance. That is why Jesus said not to stop that service but to leave her

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

alone.

Why did Jesus have to die? When John the Baptist saw Jesus coming toward him, he testified as follows.

"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).

The Lamb *"who takes away the sin of the world"* is put to death because of that sin. When Jesus received baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River, He had the sin of mankind transferred to Him once and for all. In that sin of the world are included all the sins that you and I have committed throughout our lives. The Lord did not pretend not to see our sins and simply cover them up. Because He actually had them passed on to Him and bore them, He had to receive death, the wages of that sin, and He shed His blood on the Cross and received judgment in our place. And He rose again from death and became our Savior. Whoever believes in this gospel of the water and the Spirit receives the remission of all sins, receives the Holy Spirit as a gift, and enjoys eternal life as a child of God.

The One Mary served is none other than this Savior. Jesus, who received the fragrant oil, was already bearing our sins on His body, and He was the One who, six days later, would become the sacrificial offering of atonement on the Cross. Think about how far He lowered Himself for us. From the heart that believes that love comes the service of offering oneself to the Lord.

Our faith does not rely on special dreams or moving moments. It is the faith that believes in the salvation Jesus accomplished according to the word. The person in whose heart this salvation is clear also has a clear reason to love and follow the Lord. Whoever believes in his heart in Jesus as his own Savior, as Mary did, knows how valuable what He has done is.

The heart of Judas, who calculated only the price of the fragrant oil

Though he was at the same feast, Judas harbored an entirely different heart. He said that it would have been good if the fragrant oil had been sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor. Since one denarius was a day's wages, three hundred denarii was the amount a grown man would earn by working for a whole year. Mary, too, knew that with that much money many poor people could eat their fill. What Judas said sounded like words of concern for the poor. But the Bible reveals the heart hidden behind those words. Let us read verse 6.

"This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it" (John 12:6).

While Judas kept the money box, he stole what was put in it. He put the poor forward, but he was looking after his own greed. He calculated how much the fragrant oil would bring if it were sold, but he did not believe who the One in front of him was. Even though, as a disciple, he followed Jesus around and called Him Teacher, to Judas Jesus was only a teacher, not the Son of God who would save him from sin. That he eventually came to betray Jesus also stemmed from this. To eyes that do not know grace, everything offered to the Lord looks like something thrown away in vain.

Mary offered her precious thing to Jesus, while Judas followed Jesus around and looked after his own things. Though they sat at one feast, what the two of them believed was different. Let us, too, look back on our own hearts in the light of this word. Are there not times when we begrudge the time we spend for the gospel, yet do not begrudge the time that pleases ourselves? When we serve the Lord, do we not weigh what we will gain,

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

while we readily spend our strength and material things for our own greed? We have already received grace too great to measure. There is no reason to reckon up loss and gain over our offering.

Even we who believe, if we stop serving and live only for ourselves, grow distant from the place where we served the Lord and end up following our own greed. A heart that has become like that even goes so far as to stand in the way of the Lord's work to protect that greed. Let us not regard Judas' calculation as wisdom, but let us follow the example of Mary's faith.

This word is clear also for those who are entrusted with the material things offered to the Lord. The saints offered what they had obtained through their labor with a heart that loves the Lord, and one cannot use it to satisfy one's own greed. Where what has been offered is used is as important as the offering itself. It must be used rightly for the work of fulfilling the Lord's will, so that souls may hear the gospel of the water and the Spirit and receive the remission of sins.

Treasure this present time, when you can serve the Lord

In verse 8 Jesus said that the poor would always be with the disciples, but that He Himself would not always be there. Before long, the Lord would be nailed to the Cross and become the sacrificial offering of atonement, and He would rise from the dead and ascend to the Father. The days on which one could pour fragrant oil on the living Lord and prepare for His burial were only a few. Mary did not put it off, thinking that she could do it later at any time, but poured the fragrant oil right then.

In the Gospel of Mark, too, the word that the Lord spoke about the woman who poured fragrant oil is recorded.

"But Jesus said, 'Let her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a good work for Me. For you have the poor with you always, and whenever you wish you may do them good; but Me you do not have always. She has done what she could. She has come beforehand to anoint My body for burial. Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her'" (Mark 14:6–9).

Jesus said that the woman had done a good thing with all her strength. While saying that the poor can be helped whenever one wishes, He accepted as precious this act that prepared for His burial in advance. And He said that wherever the gospel is spread, what that woman did would also be told in memory of her. The Lord remembers the service offered in faith for the gospel.

We, too, have been given a time when we can serve the Lord. We can work with our bodies, preach the word, pray, and offer what we have to the gospel. If we regard this opportunity as though it will always be there, we end up putting off until tomorrow the work we can do today. While we say that we will serve after our circumstances are all in place, the days when we can serve pass by. Let us do the Lord's work today with the time and strength given to us.

When Mary poured the fragrant oil, its fragrance filled the house. Since she poured as much as a pound of fragrant oil on His feet, the fragrance spread through the whole house. The labor and material things we offer for the gospel are like this fragrance. Helping those who preach the word, inviting people so that they may hear the gospel, and delivering writings that contain the truth of salvation actually take time and material things. What would be used for ourselves alone while we hold it in our own hands is used, once it is offered to the Lord's work,

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

for many people to hear the word of life. Like that fragrance, the gospel of the water and the Spirit spreads, and people return to the Lord and receive the remission of sins. Since we, too, heard this gospel because someone served in that way before us, let us now offer what we have so that the same gospel may be preached to those who have not yet received the remission of sins.

Some preach the word, some offer material things and time for that work, and there are also those who, like Martha, serve with their bodies. Though the places entrusted to us differ, the faith that serves the Lord is the same. And whatever we offer, what we must offer first is our hearts. When our hearts go to the Lord first, material things and time are also offered with joy.

As we serve, there are people who do not recognize our labor, and we also hear words that regard our service as foolish. At such times, think about whom Mary was looking at when she poured the fragrant oil. In Judas' eyes that act looked futile, but Jesus commended it. Even if people's praise decreases, the life we have received from the Lord does not decrease.

The Apostle Paul conveyed the meaning of the Lord's dying for us as follows.

"He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again" (2 Corinthians 5:15).

We have been called from a life of living only for ourselves to a life of living for the Lord, who died in our place and rose again. The fragrant oil was precious to Mary, but Jesus, who would die for her, was even more precious. That is why she could pour out the whole pound without leaving any. Today, when you can serve the Lord who gave you life, do not spare what is most precious to you, but offer it to Him. ✉

Sermon 2 by Paul C. Jong

The evidence of life that leads people to believe in Jesus

< John 12:9–11 >

"Now a great many of the Jews knew that He was there; and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead. But the chief priests plotted to put Lazarus to death also, because on account of him many of the Jews went away and believed in Jesus."

Who raised Lazarus, whom the people came to see?

When the news spread that Jesus was in Bethany, a great crowd of the Jews flocked there. What they had heard first was *"that He was there."* Yet the Bible does not hide another reason they came. They came not only to see Jesus but also to see Lazarus, who had died and come back to life. Since word had spread that a man who had been buried in a tomb was alive and walking about, they wanted to see his face for themselves.

But look at how verse 9 introduces Lazarus. It does not simply say *"Lazarus,"* but says *"Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead."* Just before this, in verse 1, he was introduced in exactly the same way. Lazarus was not a man who walked out

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

of the tomb by his own strength. As he lay in the tomb bound hand and foot with graveclothes, Jesus called him, saying, *"Lazarus, come forth!"* and made him come out. Anyone who saw Lazarus would have had no choice but to ask who had raised him, and there was only one answer.

So what people needed to know was not whether some special power had come upon the man who had died and come back to life. It was who Jesus is, the One who had raised him. Among the crowd there were probably also some who had come to watch a marvelous thing. But the living Lazarus did not hold people's eyes on himself; he turned them toward Jesus.

In this way, on account of Lazarus, many of the Jews went and believed in Jesus. The One in whom the people believed was not Lazarus but Jesus, who had raised him. Lazarus was a man who showed who Jesus is.

It is the same with our gathering to worship today. We may come to meet people, because it is a familiar place, or because someone urged us to come. Gathering and seeing one another's faces is also a good thing. But the word says that a person cannot live by bread alone but lives by the word that comes out of the mouth of God. Whatever the reason we came, the One we must meet in this place is Jesus, who gives us life, and what we must hear is the word proclaiming the work He has done.

The chief priests, who tried to do away with even the evidence of life

But there were people who were displeased with this. Let us read verses 10 and 11 again.

"But the chief priests plotted to put Lazarus to death also, because on account of him many of the Jews went away and

believed in Jesus" (John 12:10–11).

These two verses are joined together as one sentence. The reason the chief priests sought to kill Lazarus follows right after. It was because many of the Jews believed in Jesus on account of Lazarus. Lazarus was a man who had come out of the tomb alive, yet because of the very fact that he was alive, he came to be in a position to be put to death.

Look also at the words *"to put Lazarus to death also."* The chief priests had already agreed together in the council to kill Jesus. They thought that something serious had happened, saying that since He had raised the dead, more people would follow Him. Now that plot reached even the man who had received life from Jesus.

If people had seen Jesus raise Lazarus, what should they have done? They should have given thanks to God and believed in the Lord of life. The chief priests, who held the office of serving God, should have done so all the more. But instead of coming before the Lord who had given life, they tried to clear away from before their eyes the evidence of life that the Lord had given. Unbelief drags a person to the point of trying to do away with what God has done, even after seeing it.

But a plot to harm Lazarus does not make the raising of Lazarus something that never happened. Today, too, as we preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we meet hands that stand in our way. At such times, do not oppose them with human strength or lose heart and draw back, but ask the Lord to keep us from the hands of our adversaries. And do not hide the salvation the Lord has accomplished, but keep preaching it.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

The Savior, who brought us to life out of sin and death

Jesus, who raised Lazarus, is the Savior who gives us life. Just as the death of the flesh came to Lazarus, death comes to all people. Then why did death come? The Bible says that death came because of sin. God commanded the first man not to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, but man was deceived by the enticement of the serpent and disobeyed that word. The word of God is law, so disobeying that word becomes sin, and where there is sin, death comes. Sin separated man from God, and being cut off from God is death itself. If we are sinners before God, then even though our bodies are alive, we are spiritually dead. It is because we cannot come before God. If we do not know the fact that we are sinners before God, we do not know why we need a Savior either.

We cannot remove this sin by ourselves. Even if we regret our wrongs and resolve anew, and even if we hear others say that we are good people, the sin that lies before God remains as it is. Just as Lazarus could not open the tomb and come out by his own strength, we too needed a Savior who would bring us to life out of sin and death.

God first loved us, who were such people. So He determined to save us by passing our sins on to His Son and bringing down upon His Son the judgment we deserved to receive. Jesus came in a human body and received baptism from John the Baptist, the greatest among those born of women and the representative of mankind. Through that baptism He received from John, Jesus had the sin of all mankind transferred to Him all at once. Bearing that sin in His body, Jesus was hung on the Cross, shed His blood, and died, and He received in our place the judgment we deserved to receive.

Because Jesus first had our sins passed on to Him at the Jordan River, His Cross became the death in which my sins and your sins were judged. And three days later the Lord rose again from death. That resurrection, too, did not end as the work of Jesus alone, but became new life for us who believe in Him.

The apostle Paul proclaimed this victory, obtained through Jesus Christ, as follows.

"'O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?' The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 15:55–57).

The poisonous sting with which death stings people is sin. But Jesus had that sin transferred to Him, paid the full price of sin on the Cross, overcame death, and rose again. Therefore, for the person who believes in this gospel of the water and the Spirit in his heart, sin no longer reigns, and death cannot overcome him either. Those who believe receive the remission of sins, and their relationship with God is restored. A person who could not come to God because of sin now becomes a child who calls God Father, prays, and receives answers. The Holy Spirit dwells in his heart.

Just as the life Lazarus received was real, the remission of sins the Lord has given is real too. It is the salvation Jesus actually accomplished.

Through us, people who believe in Jesus are added

Let us, too, take to heart the word that on account of Lazarus many people believed in Jesus. In the Gospel of John, not a single word that Lazarus spoke is recorded. He pointed to Jesus just by being alive. So it is with us who have received the remission of sins. That a soul that was dead has come to life and

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

lives calling God Father—that life shows the Lord who gave us life. A person who was afraid to stand before God because of sin now prays to God boldly, and even in the face of death holds on to the hope of the resurrection. Such a change did not come about because we strove to put on an appearance, but came from the life we received from the Lord.

For this, what we believe must be clear. Someone will ask us how we received the remission of sins. A person who has learned it only in words may answer boldly at first, but if asked again and again, he becomes tongue-tied. But a person who believes and knows answers all the more clearly the more he is asked. He can speak because he believes and because he knows. So if there is something you do not know, do not be ashamed, but ask and confirm it in the word. Know and believe through the word when and how Jesus had your sins passed on to Him, why He died on the Cross, and how the risen Lord became your Savior. Only then will those who hear also come to know how their own sins were washed away. If we preach only the name of Jesus and leave out how He bore our sins through the baptism He received from John, those who hear may know the Cross, but sin remains in their hearts just as it is, and they still end up calling themselves sinners.

The purpose for which we preach the gospel lies not in making people exalt us, but in having those who are in sin come to know and believe in Jesus and obtain life. And it is not because the one who preaches speaks well that people are saved, either. It is because Jesus is the true Savior and the salvation He accomplished is perfect. So when someone hears this gospel and receives the remission of sins, we do not put ourselves forward but give thanks to the Lord.

This was also the work the Lord entrusted to His disciples after He rose again and before He ascended to heaven. He told

them to make disciples of all the nations, baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe what He had commanded. This means that they were to preach this work—that the Lord received baptism from John and bore our sins, received the judgment for those sins on the Cross, and rose again from death—so that people would be saved, and that those who were saved would in turn become people who preach this gospel. In this way the gospel has been preached from one person to another and has come even to us. Today, too, all over the world, there are people who hear this gospel and are saved. Each time one person receives the remission of sins, it is revealed once again that Jesus is truly the living God and that He has really saved us.

Our boast is that we have received the remission of sins from the Lord, and our thanksgiving is that the Lord has given us life. Just as many of the Jews believed in Jesus on account of Lazarus, I hope that the people who meet us, too, will see Jesus, who gave us life, and come to believe in Him. ✉

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Sermon 3 by Paul C. Jong

The King who came humbly and saved us

< John 12:12–19 >

“The next day a great multitude that had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, and cried out: ‘Hosanna! “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!” The King of Israel!’ Then Jesus, when He had found a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written: ‘Fear not, daughter of Zion; Behold, your King is coming, Sitting on a donkey’s colt.’ His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written about Him and that they had done these things to Him. Therefore the people, who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of his tomb and raised him from the dead, bore witness. For this reason the people also met Him, because they heard that He had done this sign. The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, ‘You see that you are accomplishing nothing. Look, the world has gone after Him!’”

Jesus, who came to Jerusalem receiving praise

On the day after the feast at Bethany, the news spread that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. A great multitude who had come to keep the Passover feast took palm branches and went out to

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

meet the Lord. Crying out *"Hosanna,"* they praised the King of Israel who comes in the name of the Lord. Verse 18 makes clear the reason the multitude came out in this way. It was because they had heard of the sign that Jesus had raised Lazarus, who had died.

But what the Lord rode on was a young donkey. The cheers of the great multitude, and the sight of Jesus coming among them riding on a young donkey, are captured in a single scene. The Bible says of this event that the word that was written was fulfilled. Jesus came as the King whom God had promised, and that King came riding on a donkey's colt.

We, too, praise Jesus as King. Then what did this King come to do? It was not that Jesus came up without knowing what awaited Him at this Passover. Because He knew that He would die, He came up to Jerusalem deliberately. He had come to this earth to become the sacrificial offering of atonement, and now, to accomplish that work, He was entering the city where He would give up His own life. The One who had called Lazarus out of the tomb now set out on the path of death in order to bring sinners to life.

In today's passage there is the multitude welcoming the Lord and praising Him, there are the disciples who did not understand that event at first, and there are the Pharisees watching with displeased hearts. Even though they saw the same Jesus, the hearts with which they received Him were each different. When we call on the Lord and praise Him, are we calling on Him knowing who He is and what He has done for us?

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

The King who rode on a donkey fulfilled the word

The event of Jesus riding on a young donkey contains God's promise. Let us look at the word of Zechariah to which verse 15 points.

"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey" (Zechariah 9:9).

God spoke long ago, in advance, of the King who would come. That King is righteous and grants salvation, and, being humble, He rides on a donkey's colt. The Gospel of John conveys this prophecy in the words *"Fear not, daughter of Zion" (John 12:15)*. The King who comes is the One who comes granting salvation. Jesus came exactly according to this word. The sight of Him riding on a donkey shows what kind of King the Lord is.

People measure the greatness of a person by the power and pomp that can be seen with the eyes. They look at what treatment he receives, how many people follow him, and what he has. But Jesus' honor does not come from His outward appearance. He is by nature God and the Lord of life. Even though He rode on a young donkey, His authority remains the same. The exalted One humbled Himself in order to save us.

When we think of the Lord's humility, we come to know how great a grace the salvation we have received is. We had neither the qualification to receive the Lord nor the strength to resolve our own sins. The Lord loved such people as us first and came to us. So do not listen to the Lord's humility as though it were someone else's story. Accept in your heart the fact that God humbled Himself for a person like you and came to take your sins upon Himself.

Also, the fact that the Lord fulfilled the written word makes our faith firm. God promised, and Jesus fulfilled that promise. We do not picture a Savior according to our own thoughts and then believe in him. We believe in Jesus, who came according to the word and accomplished salvation. Here lies the reason why, in order to know the Lord, we must first look at the word God has written rather than at the image we expect.

The disciples who understood after the Lord was glorified

Even the disciples, who were always with Jesus, did not understand this event at first. Let us read verse 16 again.

"His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written about Him and that they had done these things to Him" (John 12:16).

The disciples saw from right beside Him the Lord riding on a donkey and the multitude cheering. But at that time they did not know the fact that this event was the fulfillment of the word written about Jesus. Only after Jesus was glorified did the events of that day and the word connect and come to their remembrance. Being at the Lord's side and knowing the meaning of the salvation the Lord accomplishes were two different things.

Then what time does *"when Jesus was glorified"* refer to? In the word that follows right after, Jesus says, *"The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified" (John 12:23)*, and soon speaks of His own death. The glory of the Lord lay in the path of dying on the Cross and rising again. The word He had spoken about the temple, too, the disciples remembered and believed only *"when He had risen from the dead" (John 2:22)*. Before

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

departing, Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit, whom He would send, would *"bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you" (John 14:26)*. Only after the disciples had gone through the Lord's death and resurrection and had received the Holy Spirit did they realize what the things they had seen on the road to Jerusalem that day meant.

This word is important for us as well. Just because we know the stories of the Bible, never miss worship, and speak familiar words, it does not mean that we know all of the truth of salvation. We must know why Jesus came to this earth, why He received baptism from John, why He died on the Cross, and what salvation His rising again becomes for us. What the Lord did and the problem of our sins must be clearly connected in the word.

The way by which Jesus entered Jerusalem was the way on which He would become the sacrificial offering of atonement. If we look only at the cheers of the multitude, we cannot understand the Lord's death at the end of that way. At the age of thirty, Jesus received baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River and had the sin of mankind transferred to Him. Three years after that, He now went forward toward the Cross to receive the judgment for that sin. The King who came riding on a donkey was the *"Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29)*.

Bearing the sin of the world, the Lord went to the Cross, poured out His blood, and paid the price of that sin at the cost of His own life. Therefore those who believe are no longer under the dominion of sin. And in three days the Lord rose again from death and became our eternal Savior. Whoever believes in his heart that all these things were for him receives the remission of all his sins and becomes a child of God. The Holy Spirit dwells in that person and, as He did for the disciples, causes him to understand the word of the Lord.

When we know this gospel of the water and the Spirit, our praise toward the Lord also changes. It does not stop at a praise in which we cry out along with others because many people are crying out. It becomes a praise offered to the King who saved us from sin and judgment. Just as the disciples came to understand the fulfillment of the word, even though belatedly, let us also know through the word what the Lord has done, and believe it.

The testimony that spreads what the Lord did, and the hostile heart

In verses 17 and 18, two groups of people appear. One group is the people who were there with Him when Jesus called Lazarus out of the tomb. They testified of what they had seen with their own eyes. The other group is the multitude of the feast, who heard that testimony and came out to meet Jesus. Those who had seen spoke, and those who heard came out to the Lord. What people conveyed to one another was not someone's idea but what Jesus had actually done.

We, too, preach what the Lord has done. Rather than exalting Jesus with our own thoughts, we make known how the Lord took our sins upon Himself and how He saved us. That is, we preach the fact that Jesus had all our sins passed on to Him through the baptism He received from John, was punished on the Cross because of those sins, and rose again from death. Whoever hears and believes this gospel receives the remission of sins. So do not leave out what the Lord has done or change it into your own claims in order to look good to people, but preach it accurately, just as you have heard it.

But not everyone rejoiced at this. Let us read verse 19.

"The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, 'You see

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

that you are accomplishing nothing. Look, the world has gone after Him!'" (John 12:19).

The Pharisees said this *"among themselves."* Together with the chief priests, they had already plotted in the council to kill Jesus, and the chief priests sought to kill even Lazarus. Yet since the multitude still flocked to Jesus, they lamented to one another that what they had schemed was of no use. Their words contained not His work of raising a dead man, but only the worry that people were flocking to Jesus. In this way, before the Lord as He came into Jerusalem, there were two kinds of people. There were those who welcomed the Lord with joy, and there were those who sought a way to do away with the Lord.

But the words *"the world has gone after Him,"* with which the Pharisees lamented, held a greater meaning than they thought. Right after this, in verses 20 and 21, some Greeks who had come up to worship at the feast come seeking to see Jesus. Not only the Jews but even the Gentiles began to come to the Lord. And the way by which the Lord draws people to Himself was not the cheers of the multitude but the Cross a few days later. Even though there were people who tried to stop the Lord's work, the work of testifying of Him continued.

Which side are we standing on? We can be among the praising multitude and yet hold on in our hearts only to our own will. We may also complain because the Lord's work does not go the way we think. At such times, look at what the Lord is accomplishing rather than at whether what you want is being accomplished. The one who rejoices together when sinners hear the word of salvation and believe in the Lord is the one who stands on the side of those who welcome the Lord.

The grace of the Lord, who uses us though we are lacking

Jesus entered Jerusalem riding on a young donkey. The exalted Lord used that small animal. When would a donkey's colt—and a colt at that, not its mother—ever have received such treatment from people? But it was not because of the donkey that people cheered before it. It was because of Jesus, whom it carried on its back.

Seeing this sight brings to mind the grace of the Lord, who accomplishes the work of the gospel through us who have received the remission of sins. We are still lacking, we are stubborn, and we find it hard to lay down our own thoughts. God redeemed such people as us through the Lord, who is the Lamb, and has now made our hearts new as people who go about carrying Jesus Christ. And He entrusted the gospel to us and gave us the opportunity to serve the Lord.

Being used by the Lord does not mean that we have gained the qualification to boast. It is the grace of the Lord, who humbled Himself, receiving us and using us. If the thought comes to us that, since we have done the Lord's work, the Lord should now grant our demands, we become like a donkey that tries to be praised itself instead of the One it carries on its back. Be thankful for the fact that even a person like you has come to take part in the work of preaching the Lord's salvation.

In our service, too, the One who must be revealed is the Lord. If we weigh how much people recognize us, our hearts of service waver. But if we treasure the work of Jesus being preached through us and of someone receiving the remission of sins, we can take on by faith even the labor that goes unseen. Those who live carrying the Lord share in that glory together with the Lord.

So let us think about what we will spend the rest of our lives

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

on. Let us live not a life that ends with only satisfying the desires of our own flesh, but a life of carrying the King who saved us and serving Him. Whether we serve with prayer, serve with material things, or serve by giving our time, if through that labor the Lord we carry on our backs is revealed and people meet the Lord, that is a worthy life.

The disciples, too, did not understand the meaning of this event at first, but they came to understand the word through the salvation the Lord accomplished. Rather than putting our own thoughts first, let us also accept the word of the King who saved us and follow His guidance. Jesus, who came humbly riding on a donkey, is our King, who bore our sins through the baptism He received from John, received the judgment for those sins on the Cross, and rose again from death. We praise that King, who uses even us who are lacking. ✉

Sermon 4 by Paul C. Jong

Let us have hope in the Lord of the resurrection

< John 12:20–26 >

"Now there were certain Greeks among those who came up to worship at the feast. Then they came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and asked him, saying, 'Sir, we wish to see Jesus.' Philip came and told Andrew, and in turn Andrew and Philip told Jesus. But Jesus answered them, saying, 'The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified. Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.'"

The Lord, who is the door of the sheep

Before looking at the word of John chapter 12, let us first look back on the words the Lord spoke and the works He did in the preceding chapters 10 and 11. Our Lord said that He Himself is the shepherd of the sheep and the door of the sheep. Jesus said, *"All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them" (John 10:8)*. He also said, *"I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in*

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

and out and find pasture" (John 10:9), and He said that because He is the good shepherd, He lays down His life for the sheep. And He said, *"Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father" (John 10:17–18).* Because Jesus spoke such words, He went through many difficulties while He was on this earth. The Jews thought He was arrogant.

In the eyes of the Jews, when they listened to His words, He spoke as if He were God, and the words spoken by an ordinary man who had been born in a small town called Bethlehem and had grown up in the village of Nazareth were far too grand. Because of this, the Lord suffered much persecution. What our Lord is saying here is that He Himself is the door of the sheep, and that all who came before Him are thieves and robbers. It is because even before Jesus came to this earth, there were many people who said that they were the savior of this world or said that they knew the way of salvation.

There were some who said that they taught people the way of salvation, and there were also many famous people who acted as though they themselves were saviors. Even now there are quite a few people in the world who call themselves saviors. But the Lord called such people thieves and robbers. What does a robber do? A robber is a person who takes what belongs to others by threatening them. What the Lord said here is not a mere figure of speech. It is because, in fact, only Jesus could truly lay down His life for mankind, could remove the sin of mankind, and could rise again and become the eternal shepherd and the door of the sheep.

The Lord, who is the good shepherd

We believe that the true door of the sheep is Jesus, that the true Savior is also Jesus, and that the Lord of life is also our Lord. The Lord said, *"A hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees" (John 10:12)*. But the Lord said, *"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep" (John 10:11)*. The true shepherd for mankind is Jesus. Only Jesus is the real shepherd for us. As the shepherd, Jesus could lay down His own life for the sheep, and He could make them live again. He did so because He had such power. Once a person dies, there is nothing left unless the Lord makes him live again.

But because the Lord is the Creator who made all things in the universe and is the One who has such power, He was fully able to become the good shepherd. He could come to this earth for us, could have all the sin of the world transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John, could receive the judgment for that sin on the Cross, and could rise again from death by Himself. He had such power. That is why our Lord became the very best shepherd for mankind. We believe that only Jesus is truly the good shepherd. As the shepherd, the Lord has accomplished all the work of saving us. And the Lord said that His sheep recognize Him, and hear His voice and follow Him.

He said that His sheep all know whether it is the voice of the good shepherd or the voice of a hireling. The Lord said, *"I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own. As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep" (John 10:14–15)*. This means that just as we understand and follow the word of Jesus Christ, Jesus also knew the voice of the Father and believed and

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

followed it. Our Lord's coming to this earth and saving mankind as the good shepherd was all accomplished by the Father's commandment, that is, by the Father's order. This means that the Lord did not do it on His own, but did exactly what the Father had told Him to do. But since He spoke such words, would He have been treated well? All the more so since He said to the Jews, the physical descendants of Abraham, that God is His Father and that He, as the good shepherd, lays down His life for the sheep.

And He said, *"All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers" (John 10:8)*. Dear fellow believers, if you were to hear such words objectively, what would you think? Would it not sound as though He were saying that He alone is exalted in heaven above and under heaven? To the Jews, these were words so shocking as to leave them dumbfounded. Jesus was also a Jew, but when they, as fellow Jews, listened to the words of Jesus, it sounded to them as though they were all thieves and bad people, and as though they were neither shepherds nor people who believed in God. That is why the Lord was persecuted by the Jews. The Bible says, *"Therefore there was a division again among the Jews because of these sayings" (John 10:19)*.

Many of them said, *"He has a demon and is mad. Why do you listen to Him?" (John 10:20)*, and some said, *"These are not the words of one who has a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?" (John 10:21)*. The Lord said, *"But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you. My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand" (John 10:26–28)*. Our Lord is truly the shepherd of the sheep. He came to this earth for mankind and also for us, laid down His own life, gave us salvation, and gave eternal life to those who believe. And He poured out on us the faith and the Spirit by which we can

recognize the voice of the shepherd. So it is with you and me. We believe that because our Lord came as the good shepherd, we have received salvation and have become His sheep.

The Lord, who visited the house of Lazarus

Our Lord had great concern for the households of those who believed in Him. It seems that ordinarily He often visited the house of Lazarus and even had meals there. When Lazarus became sick and was about to die, the two sisters sent someone to Jesus and said, *"Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick" (John 11:3)*. They were asking that the Lord, who has great power, would come and do something about it somehow. But the Lord did not go right away. The Bible records, *"So, when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was" (John 11:6)*. And Jesus said of Lazarus's death, *"Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up" (John 11:11)*.

Jesus spoke of Lazarus's death as sleep, but to the people Lazarus was already a dead man. While the man was sick and dying, He did not come even though they pleaded with Him, and only after he had died did He say that they should go to wake him. In fact, Lazarus's body had died. Over the dead Lazarus, Mary and Martha, the family left behind, were truly distressed. But through this event Jesus spoke to Martha and Mary the words they truly needed, and He solved their problem. When Martha heard the news that Jesus was coming, she went out and said, *"Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You" (John 11:21–22)*. When Jesus said, *"Your brother will rise again" (John 11:23)*, Martha said, *"I know that*

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day" (John 11:24). Then Jesus said, *"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" (John 11:25–26)*.

The Bible says, *"She said to Him, 'Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.' And when she had said these things, she went her way and secretly called Mary her sister, saying, 'The Teacher has come and is calling for you'" (John 11:27–28)*. In the midst of talking with Martha, Jesus also called Mary and spoke to her. The words Martha spoke at first were mixed with resentment. That is, she was asking why He had not come quickly when they called Him, and why, after not coming while they waited anxiously, He had come only now. The people around them also wept a great deal. As we saw earlier, Jesus ordinarily visited Lazarus's household often.

The Lord used to visit that house, eat meals there, and pay much attention to that household. When Lazarus died, people who knew Jesus and many people connected with that household came and wept. The Bible records, *"Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled" (John 11:33)*. Jesus groaned in the spirit over the death of man and its futility, and He shed tears. In the Gospels there are two records that the Lord wept. One is here, and the other is when He saw that the people of Israel did not accept His word and did not believe in Him, and, foreseeing that their nation would be destroyed in the future, He had pity on that people and wept. The Bible records of Jesus, *"Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it" (Luke 19:41)*.

When He saw Mary and Martha weeping bitterly in the face

of Lazarus's death, Jesus also, seeing the death of man, the futility of life, and how miserable that death is, groaned in His heart and shed tears. The Bible says, *"Jesus wept. Then the Jews said, 'See how He loved him!'" (John 11:35–36)*. And some said, *"Could not this Man, who opened the eyes of the blind, also have kept this man from dying?" (John 11:37)*. When Jesus groaned in His heart, there were various feelings in His heart. He groaned in His heart when He saw that the human body dies, that people die because of sin, that the result of sin is death, and that this is destruction and has no hope.

And Jesus went to the tomb. It seems that Mary tended to believe the words of Jesus readily, and that Martha was a person who weighed reality first. The Bible says, *"It was a cave, and a stone lay against it" (John 11:38)*. The Jews hewed caves out of rock and used them as tombs, and when a family member died, they wrapped the body well with linen cloth and laid it inside such a cave. And they blocked the entrance with a large stone so that animals and the like could not get in. When the Lord went to Lazarus's tomb and said, *"Take away the stone" (John 11:39)*, Martha said, *"Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days" (John 11:39)*.

Our Lord said to Martha, *"Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?" (John 11:40)*. The Bible says, *"Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, 'Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me.' Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come forth!' And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, 'Loose him, and let him go'" (John*

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

11:41–44). The Lord raised Lazarus, who had been dead for four days.

The Lord, who became a grain of wheat

Our Lord said, *"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die" (John 11:25–26)*. He said that He Himself is the resurrection and the life. Just as He said, He raised Lazarus. The Lord said that He came to this earth as the good shepherd and lays down His life for the sheep. And when some Greeks came at the feast seeking to see Jesus, Jesus said, *"Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain" (John 12:24)*.

When a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it bears much fruit. Our Lord came to this earth as the shepherd of mankind, and with the sin of mankind transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John, He died on the Cross and rose again, and so He became a grain of wheat and bore much fruit. As the good shepherd and as a grain of wheat, the Lord gave His own body to us and saved us.

The Lord, who is the resurrection and the life, came to this earth as the shepherd and gave His own life and body for us. Through the baptism He received from John and His death on the Cross, He laid down His own life, and He rose again and gave us abundant new life. We must keep in our hearts these works the Lord has done for us. We must know that apart from the Lord, nothing at all can become our good shepherd. We can believe the fact that our Lord is the Son of God, our true shepherd and Savior, and our true God. Our Lord became a grain

of wheat, came to this earth, and gave His own life, and thereby He caused us to believe and caused many people to obtain salvation. He caused much fruit to be gained.

Putting hope in the Lord of the resurrection

Because our Lord became a grain of wheat, we have obtained salvation. Just as He said that He Himself is the resurrection and the life, our Lord rose again from death and ascended into heaven. And the Lord will come to this earth again. Even if our bodies should die, we must have the faith that believes that the Lord of the resurrection will raise our bodies again as spiritual bodies. The Bible says, *"It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body" (1 Corinthians 15:44)*. We must truly put our hope in the Lord and live with faith that believes in the Lord.

We must not put forward human righteousness, but must think of how our Lord became a grain of wheat, gave us new life, caused us to be born again, and caused us to obtain salvation. And we must become those who give thanks to God who saved us, that is, God who is Jesus Christ, and who believe in, fear, and serve that God. Our Lord is the Lord of the resurrection. We believe that our Lord will cause those who believed in the Lord and went before God to rise again and will make them live forever. Even if your body and mine should die, our Lord will raise you and me to life again. I hope that you will live with that faith.

We must live putting our hope in the Lord. We must not put our hope in other things, but must put our hope in the Lord. And we must live with faith that believes in the Lord. There is no one on this earth who has given us as much as the Lord has. Only the Lord has given us new life, and only the Lord became a grain of

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

wheat and enabled us to obtain true new life. We must live believing in the Lord and having hope, and even though we are lacking and have little faith, we must live with that little, believing in God who saved us and serving Him with thankful hearts. And we should live by the faith that believes that, as we live in this way, when the Lord comes, everything imperfect in us will obtain new life, rise again, and be made complete forever.

We should believe that our Lord is the One who raises the dead, and that He is God, who had all our sins transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John, died on the Cross, and rose again from death. Our hearts must not turn elsewhere; we must live with our hope set before the Lord of the resurrection. Though we are lacking, we must live that way, and we must have a heart of thanks to the Lord, who became a grain of wheat for us. And I hope that you will have the faith that knows that, just as the Lord did so, if we too sacrifice ourselves for the Lord, though we have little and are lacking, there will be many souls who obtain salvation.

"He who loves his life"

Following this, the Lord said, *"He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life" (John 12:25)*. He also said, *"If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor" (John 12:26)*. This means that God the Father honors the person who serves the Lord, that is, the person who serves the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Therefore, the person who has come to understand this gospel and serves the gospel is honored. This comes to pass just as the word of truth says.

While speaking about life, the Lord spoke of losing life and of having life kept. Who would hate his own life? Everyone loves his own life. People value their own lives and treasure them. But the Lord said, *"He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life" (John 12:25).*

We believe in the Lord because the Lord is the Lord of the resurrection, became a grain of wheat and saved us, and because the Lord's word is truth. Therefore, even if a person is despised and perhaps even dies while believing in and following the Lord, the one who lives for the Lord and for the truth will never die, and his life is kept. But this word means that the one who does not serve or follow the eternal truth and tries only to keep the life of his flesh alive loses his life. I know that the Lord said so because the Lord is the Lord of life. The Lord came to us as a grain of wheat, and by dying as a grain of wheat He enabled us to obtain new life and saved many souls.

Just as the Lord did so, if we too labor and sacrifice for the Lord and for the truth, we will bear much fruit. But the meaning of this word is that if a person seeks to keep only himself alive, he cannot give life to others either and will lose his own life as well. In fact, just as this word says, we sometimes see that even a born-again person who tries to keep only his own life and thinks only of himself ends up losing even his own life. It is not that someone made it so or left it that way; it is the word being fulfilled just as it is.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

A person who can give something

Therefore, what we must do is not try to live only for ourselves. We must think about what we can give to the church. We will probably not have much to give. It will probably be hard even to get by ourselves. But when we look at the Bible, Peter said to a man who had been lame from birth, *"Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you" (Acts 3:6)*. Likewise, we must consider what we can give to the church and to people, and what we, as persons, are able to give. We must consider a life lived for others. We may wonder what we could have to give when even living only for ourselves is not enough. But do we not have the faith that said, *"Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you" (Acts 3:6)*?

We can give faith, we can enrich people's souls by faith, and by faith we can enable people to obtain new life. We can do it by faith. This is what the Lord spoke of. All the words the Lord spoke are truth. Because Jesus is God, the words He spoke are truth itself. Truth never changes and is fulfilled forever. Things come to pass according to the word. Therefore, the word the Lord spoke, *"Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life" (John 12:24–25)*, is also fulfilled just as it is.

We can come to understand this word by faith. So we must become people who receive this blessing. But becoming like this does not go well from the start. We must start from faith. What is that? It is to think about what we can do for others, what we can do for the gospel, for the salvation of souls, for the church, and for the kingdom of God, and what the Lord has given us to be able to do. If there is nothing we can do, we must do it even

if only by praying. If we have no faith and truly have nothing at all, we must at least join in with our hearts and have a heart that wants to give something. In any case, I believe that we must become people who give real benefit to others.

When we truly become people who give benefit and live asking what we can do for others and what we can do for the gospel, at first we seem to do a little, but later we become unable to do anything. It is because people have limits. Strength, ability, and everything else are finite and insufficient. Then what must we do? We need prayer. We must ask God for help: "Father God, please give me such things. Give me strength. Give me faith. Give me blessings." In this way, we serve the Lord while believing the word of God and praying. I believe that this is exactly what is meant by the word that he who loves his own life loses it and he who hates it keeps it. And the word that the Father honors the one who serves the Lord is also fulfilled just as it is. The Lord came to this earth as the Lord of the resurrection and as the Lord of life. And He gave us true life and resurrection.

We must believe in the Lord and live by this faith in hope. We must not put our hope in the wrong place, but must live by faith in the Lord. I hope that you will look to the Lord with your hearts, rightly believe the fact that the Lord has become our good shepherd, and live the rest of your lives relying on the Lord. I hope that you will become people who can give something. The Lord came to us as the Lord of life and the Lord of the resurrection, became our good shepherd, and gave us life and resurrection. The Lord will surely fulfill this promise He has made to you and me. I hope that you will live by this faith. ✉

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Sermon 5 by Paul C. Jong

The Lord, who became a grain of wheat and gave us life

< John 12:20–43 >

"Now there were certain Greeks among those who came up to worship at the feast. Then they came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and asked him, saying, 'Sir, we wish to see Jesus.' Philip came and told Andrew, and in turn Andrew and Philip told Jesus. But Jesus answered them, saying, 'The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified. Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor. Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? "Father, save Me from this hour"? But for this purpose I came to this hour. Father, glorify Your name.' Then a voice came from heaven, saying, 'I have both glorified it and will glorify it again.' Therefore the people who stood by and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, 'An angel has spoken to Him.' Jesus answered and said, 'This voice did not come because of Me, but for your sake. Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. And I, if I am lifted up from the earth,

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

will draw all peoples to Myself.' This He said, signifying by what death He would die. The people answered Him, 'We have heard from the law that the Christ remains forever; and how can You say, "The Son of Man must be lifted up"? Who is this Son of Man?' Then Jesus said to them, 'A little while longer the light is with you. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you; he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going. While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.' These things Jesus spoke, and departed, and was hidden from them. But although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him, that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke: 'Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?' Therefore they could not believe, because Isaiah said again: 'He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, Lest they should see with their eyes, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them.' These things Isaiah said when he saw His glory and spoke of Him. Nevertheless even among the rulers many believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God."

The grain of wheat that dies in order to bear much fruit

Some Greeks who had come up to worship at the feast made a request to Philip, saying that they wished to see Jesus. Philip told Andrew, and the two of them together told Jesus what they had said. At that time, when even people from outside Israel

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

came seeking the Lord, Jesus knew that the hour had come. So He answered, *"The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified" (John 12:23).*

What is the glory of the Son of Man? The Son of God, who came as the Son of Man, had until then been hidden from people's eyes. But when Jesus accomplishes all the work of salvation, it is revealed that He is our Savior, our God, and the Judge. The way to complete that work was His death on the Cross and His resurrection. So Jesus immediately spoke about a grain of wheat. Let us read verse 24.

"Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain" (John 12:24).

The grain of wheat is Jesus Himself. The Lord spoke this word with His own death before Him. The grain of wheat that was to fall into the ground was His body, onto which He had the sin of the world transferred when He received baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River. Now, when that body dies on the Cross, the problem of the sin and death of many people is solved. Jesus came to this earth to become our sacrificial offering of atonement.

If the Lord had not died, what would have happened? All people would only have come to death as the wages of their own sin. For a long time people have struggled to solve the problem of death, but no one has solved it. The One who solved that problem is Jesus. The baptism Jesus received from John solved the problem of our sins; His death on the Cross, the problem of our death; and His resurrection, the problem of our eternal life. Only when we believe both in the work by which He had sins passed on to Him and in the Cross do we clearly come to know that the Lord's death was not His death alone but a death for us.

The Lord rose again from death. The Father raised the Son

so that He might also raise us again from death on the last day. Whoever believes this gospel of the water and the Spirit in his heart receives the remission of sins and becomes a child of God. In this way, people without sin, people who call God Father, come into being one by one. This is the much fruit that the Lord, who died as a grain of wheat, bears.

We, too, are that fruit. It is not because we were excellent that we became children of God. Because the Lord gave Himself up for us, we have obtained new life. If today, too, someone hears the gospel, believes, and receives the remission of sins, that, too, is fruit borne by the very grain of wheat that fell into the ground at that time.

The faith that dies with the Lord and follows Him with new life

After speaking of His own death, Jesus spoke about the life of those who follow the Lord. Let us read verses 25 and 26.

"He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor" (John 12:25–26).

Who would hate his own life? Everyone values and loves his own life. But "*his life,*" of which the Lord spoke, is the life of the flesh that we inherited from Adam. A person who lives only for that life ends up losing even that. On the other hand, a person who loves the Lord more than himself is kept for eternal life.

Then with what kind of heart do we live after receiving the remission of sins? We do not stop at the faith that Jesus had our sins passed on to Him, but live by the faith that our old man also

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

died with Jesus. And we follow the Lord by the faith that we have obtained new life together with the risen Lord. When Jesus received baptism from John, His being submerged in the water took the place of our death, and His coming up out of the water showed the resurrection. The Apostle Paul explained this faith of being united with Christ as follows.

"Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? 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 6:3–4).

When the Lord bore our sins and died, our old man, which belonged to sin, was also judged together with the Lord and came to an end. Now we have changed from people who made our own greed and pride our masters into people who belong to Jesus, who gave us life. The Holy Spirit dwells in those who have received the remission of sins by believing the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and He leads us into the life the Lord desires.

What happens if a grain of wheat is not buried in the ground but stays as it is on top of the soil? Birds come and peck it up. It disappears without ever sprouting even once. A life that knows the gospel and yet only fills its own pockets until it passes away is like that. Even in us who have received the remission of sins, the desires of the flesh rise up. When our will is thwarted, we get angry; when it seems we are losing out, we complain; and we want others to recognize us. At such times, hold on to that word, saying, "Yes, I am a person who died with the Lord." Then, instead of resentment and complaints, you will set your heart on the spread of the gospel, and you will grow into a faith that rejoices together when the things that please the Lord are accomplished.

Therefore, do not take lightly the Lord's word that he who loves only his own life will lose it. Even a person who has actually received the remission of sins by believing the gospel of the water and the Spirit, if afterward he does not follow the Lord but lives only for himself and forsakes the Lord, may fail to enter the kingdom of God and come to the resurrection of condemnation. The thought that, since we have received the remission of sins, it no longer matters how we live is far from the Lord's will. Even after saving us, the Lord says, *"Follow Me" (John 12:26)*.

There are many ways of serving the Lord. There are those who serve spiritually, those who give their bodies to work, those who serve with their thoughts and skills, and also those who make delicious food and feed the members. Not drawing the Lord into one's own plans but offering oneself to the work the Lord desires, and, as members of the church, which is the Lord's body, supplying one another with what is needed—this is service.

The Lord promised that the Father would honor the one who serves in that way. The Father honors him, gives him strength so that he can serve more, and blesses him so that he leads more souls to the Lord. He also said, *"Where I am, there My servant will be also" (John 12:26)*, so whoever serves the Lord has nothing to fear whenever he leaves this world. The place he will go is where the Lord is.

Jesus, who went through suffering and glorified the Father's name

With His death before Him, Jesus said that His heart was troubled. Let us read verses 27 and 28.

"'Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? "Father,

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

save Me from this hour"? But for this purpose I came to this hour. Father, glorify Your name.' Then a voice came from heaven, saying, 'I have both glorified it and will glorify it again'" (John 12:27–28).

Jesus knew how painful death on the Cross was. Imagine that we were to be nailed to a cross and die. Would we not want to avoid it if we possibly could? Moreover, the Lord had to be stripped of His clothes, be spat upon, and suffer being treated as less than human and being mocked. With that before Him, the Lord did not hide the anguish of His heart.

But the Lord soon said, *"For this purpose I came to this hour" (John 12:27)*. Since He had come to this earth to solve the problem of people's sin and death, He could not avoid this hour. Rather than escaping His own suffering, the Lord chose the way of accomplishing the salvation of mankind that the Father had purposed. Behind the salvation by which we received the remission of sins and came to call God Father lies this obedience of the Lord.

The Father's answer was heard from heaven. The crowd standing by said that it had thundered, and others said that an angel had spoken. Jesus said that the voice was not for His sake but for theirs. When the Son dies, rises again, and accomplishes salvation, the Father receives glory through that work. And the day will come when every knee will bow before the Son and exalt Him as Savior and God. So the Cross was the work of salvation that gives life to sinners according to the Father's will.

Let us read verses 31 through 33.

"Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself. This He said, signifying by what death He would die" (John 12:31–33).

The ruler of this world is Satan. From the beginning, Satan

enticed people so that they would not believe the word of God, and made them sin and so cut them off from God. Then how does the Lord cast him out? Jesus had all of that sin which Satan had planted in people transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John. And He received the judgment for that sin by shedding His blood on the Cross, and three days later He rose again from death. In this way the Lord removed the result of the attack by which Satan had made people fall. The judgment of this world took place at the very place where the Lord received in our place the judgment we should have received.

The word that He would be "lifted up from the earth" shows by what death the Lord would die. When the Cross is raised with His hands and feet nailed to it, the Lord's body is lifted up from the earth and no longer touches the ground. On that Cross the Lord received the judgment for our sins to the end. Here lies the very power that draws all people to the Lord. Because the Lord has put an end to the problem of sin, anyone can come to Him and be saved.

Therefore, do not just remain in despair in the face of your own sin and death. Look to Jesus, who for you received baptism from John at the Jordan River and so had your sins passed on to Him, and who paid the price for them on the Cross. Rather than struggling to solve again by your own efforts the problem of sin that the Lord has finished, accept into your heart the salvation He has accomplished. The Cross is the event that actually solved the problem of our death.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

While you have the light, believe in the light

The people asked why, when they had heard that the Christ remains forever, the Son of Man must be lifted up. With the thoughts they had held, it was hard for them to accept Jesus' death. Jesus told them to believe in the light while they had the light. Let us read verses 35 and 36.

"Then Jesus said to them, 'A little while longer the light is with you. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you; he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going. While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.' These things Jesus spoke, and departed, and was hidden from them" (John 12:35–36).

Consider the words *"a little while."* The days in which the Lord revealed Himself before people and preached the word of salvation were a little over three years. How many people could have met the Lord in person during that time? And now, in a few days, the Lord would be hung on the Cross, and after rising again He would ascend to heaven. The time the light was among them was truly short.

He said that he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going. A person who has rejected the light, even while diligently walking along according to his own thoughts, does not know that the road leads to destruction. One can enter the kingdom of heaven only with faith and assurance, but one goes down the road of destruction as a matter of course even without knowing it. So the word to believe while there is light is a call to accept the word of Jesus now.

This word comes to us today just as it is. Jesus has ascended to heaven, but the Holy Spirit, who was in His heart, is today in the hearts of those who have received the remission of sins first. Anyone who hears and believes the gospel of the water and the

Spirit that they preach is saved. So the time when someone who lets you hear the gospel is beside you is the very time when there is light. After those who believed first have left this earth, from whom will people hear this word?

Faith is receiving the word with a heart that fears God. When God says we are sinners, we admit that we are sinners, and when He says we are those who will be judged because of sin, we humble ourselves before that word. And when He says that, to save such people as us, Jesus received baptism from John, shed His blood and died on the Cross, and rose again, we believe that salvation in our hearts. To accept both the word that judges us and the word that saves us—this is the faith that believes in the light.

He said that if we believe in the light, we will become sons of light. It is all right even if our deeds are still lacking. At the very least, we must have a heart in which our inner man likes the light, likes the fact that Jesus has removed our sins, and wants to belong to the light. The Lord makes the person who comes to Him with such a desire a child of light.

The hardened heart that did not believe even after seeing many signs

Jesus performed many signs, from making wine out of water at the wedding feast in Cana to raising the dead Lazarus. It was to the point that there was no one in Israel who did not know Jesus. Even so, they did not believe. The problem was what their hearts were like before God.

This unbelief fulfilled the word of Isaiah the prophet. Isaiah asked who had believed the word that was preached and to whom the arm of the Lord had been revealed. He also spoke of

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

people whose eyes are blinded and whose hearts are hardened, so that they see and yet do not understand, and cannot turn and be healed. Let us read verses 39 through 41.

"Therefore they could not believe, because Isaiah said again: 'He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, Lest they should see with their eyes, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them.' These things Isaiah said when he saw His glory and spoke of Him" (John 12:39–41).

God made those whose hearts were obstinate even more hardened. To a person who does not respect God, opposes His word, and has firmly shut his heart, the work of salvation is not visible even when the Lord shows it before his eyes. The word *"heal"* here means the remission of sins. People who would have received the remission of sins if they had seen with their eyes, understood with their hearts, and turned, drifted away from that path because of their hardened hearts. King Pharaoh of Egypt, too, was a man who repeatedly went against the word of God until his heart became hardened, and who resisted to the very end.

It is no different today. The word that Jesus had our sins passed on to Him through the baptism He received from John, received the judgment for those sins on the Cross, and saved us is this clear, so why do people not believe? For a person whose heart is obstinate, even if the gospel is preached to him thousands of times, the word does not enter him. Only when there is first a heart that respects God does the word enter.

Therefore, when a heart that rises up against God wells up in you, do not defend it as right. Ask for help, saying, "God, have mercy on me," and rebuke and subdue yourself. Even we who have been saved grow in faith when we do not avoid but accept the word that points out our shortcomings.

Isaiah saw the glory of the Lord and spoke of Him. Jesus,

who is now before the people, is not an ordinary man whom they can judge by their own thoughts and then accept or discard. He is the Lord of glory and our Savior. Make the written word of God, rather than your own experience or people's assessments, the standard of your faith.

Let us love the glory of God more than the glory of men

Yet even among the rulers there were many who believed in Jesus. The rulers were, in today's terms, people in high government office. But because of the Pharisees they could not openly say that they believed. The Pharisees were people who had decided by their own thoughts that God was such-and-such a being and never accepted anything outside that. So, whatever words Jesus spoke and whatever signs He performed, they refused to believe. If someone said before those people that he believed in Jesus, he could be put out of the synagogue. Let us read verse 43.

"For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God" (John 12:43).

To love the glory of God is to desire that God be exalted. It is to fear the word of God more and to regard its authority more highly. But the rulers first thought, "If I say this, how will those people look at me?" The desire not to be pushed out by people, the desire not to lose the treatment and position they now had, was greater than the word of the Lord.

Jesus asked, *"Father, glorify Your name" (John 12:28)*, and went the way of giving up His own life to give life to sinners. But the rulers loved the glory of men more than the glory of God. How different are the way the Lord went and the heart they held

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

on to! Before the word that whoever would serve Him must follow Him, we too must choose one of these two.

The recognition people give lasts only a moment. People may recognize us a little, but as time passes they forget it all. Only when God recognizes us are we truly recognized. So the person who holds on to and believes the word God has spoken is the wisest person. We, too, preach the gospel and serve that work together not to be praised by people but because it is the work God desires.

Because Jesus became a grain of wheat and died, we have come to life. We who believe in the Lord, who bore our sins through the baptism He received from John, received the wages of those sins in our place on the Cross, and rose again from death, now live in newness of life by the faith that our old man died with the Lord. Before the Lord, who asked that the Father's name be glorified, I hope that you will live by the faith that loves the glory of God more than the glory of men. ✉

Sermon 6 by Paul C. Jong

Jesus Christ, who solved the problem of death

< John 12:20–33 >

"Now there were certain Greeks among those who came up to worship at the feast. Then they came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and asked him, saying, 'Sir, we wish to see Jesus.' Philip came and told Andrew, and in turn Andrew and Philip told Jesus. But Jesus answered them, saying, 'The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified. Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor. Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? "Father, save Me from this hour"? But for this purpose I came to this hour. Father, glorify Your name.' Then a voice came from heaven, saying, 'I have both glorified it and will glorify it again.' Therefore the people who stood by and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, 'An angel has spoken to Him.' Jesus answered and said, 'This voice did not come because of Me, but for your sake. Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself.' This He said, signifying by what death He would die."

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

The problem of death that people could not solve

From ancient times until now, people have struggled to solve the problem of death. From kings to commoners, all people have made every possible effort to work out this problem of death. But on this earth there has not been a single person who solved the problem of human death, nor anyone who knew the way to do so. When we look at the remains of ancient civilizations that archaeologists have excavated, there are traces of people having been made sacrificial offerings and offered to the sun god. Both those who became the sacrificial offerings and those who offered them were all seeking blessing from that god.

Those who were offered to the god as sacrificial offerings gave up their lives, thinking that there would be a glorious life and a resurrection in the afterlife, and those who offered the sacrificial offerings thought that by this the wrath of the god would cease. Also, when we look at how people made the dead into mummies and preserved them, we can see traces of how much people dreamed of the afterlife. Qin Shi Huang wanted to live forever and sent his officials in every direction to find the herb of immortality and bring it back, but those he sent never brought the herb of immortality back, and in the end he, too, died. Not only those who believed in the sun god, but all people on this earth who have a religion have struggled to have their own problem of death solved. Some became mummies, some offered themselves to the gods, and some piled up merits for the gods, built towers, and made offerings. Such things appear countless times in history.

All people think that there is an afterlife, and they believe so. For the time after his death, Qin Shi Huang had soldiers made by baking clay, and those soldiers, each with a different face, are known to number some eight thousand. They were buried

together in the ground beside his tomb. Looking at such things, we can see how hard mankind has struggled until now to solve the problem of death. This word shows the work by which the Lord solved the problem of human death.

"The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified"

This was the time of the Passover feast. When the feast came, all the people of Israel would come up to Jerusalem. Among those who had come up to Jerusalem there were some Greeks, and they went to Jesus' disciple Philip and asked, *"Sir, we wish to see Jesus" (John 12:21)*. Philip told Andrew, and Andrew and Philip went to Jesus and conveyed those words to Him. Then Jesus said, *"The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified" (John 12:23)*. This means that the time had come for Jesus Christ, the Son of God who came to this earth as the Son of Man, to be glorified. It means that the time had come for Him to solve the problem of death that came because of man's sin, rise again, and be glorified. Jesus said this keeping in mind that He would now soon be nailed to the Cross and die.

Jesus said, *"Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain" (John 12:24)*. This is a word Jesus spoke about Himself. If the Lord did not fall into the ground and die, that grain of wheat would remain alone, and all people would simply come to death as the price of sin. But it means that if the Lord died, a work would take place that solves the problem of death for many people and makes them live again. Jesus Christ spoke this word because He intended to solve our problem of death. Jesus said, *"But for this purpose I came to this hour"*

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

(John 12:27). It means that He came to this earth to solve the problem of human death.

Because the Lord had already had our sins transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John, if He now died on the Cross, the problem of sin and death for many people would be solved. The Bible says, *"The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23)*. It means that by bearing our sins and dying on the Cross, the Lord Himself received in our place death, which is the wages of that sin, and that by rising again from death He makes all people live. That is why Jesus likened Himself to a grain of wheat that falls into the ground and dies. He was saying that He came precisely to solve the problem of death for you and me, and that He solves that problem through His own death.

We were born sinners from the beginning. The Bible says, *"Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me" (Psalm 51:5)*. Because we were made in sin from our mother's womb and brought forth in iniquity, we were dead from the beginning. Because of sin, once we are born, we die as a matter of course when time passes, go to hell as a matter of course, and perish as a matter of course. The Lord came to solve this problem of death by dying on the Cross. The Lord said this because by dying on the Cross He solves our death and makes us live again and obtain eternal life. Through the death of Jesus Christ on the Cross, the problem of sin for you and me is solved.

"Now is the judgment of this world"

The Lord came to solve the problem of sin and death for you and me. Because there is sin, its result is death, and the Lord not only removed sin but also came to solve the problem of death. Because of sin, you and I have no choice but to die and no choice

but to perish, but the Lord came to solve our problem of death, and He solves that problem by being hung on the Cross and dying. So the Lord said, *"Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out" (John 12:31)*. Because the Lord had the sin of the world transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John, when He is nailed to the Cross, the judgment for the sin of all people who are born into this world is carried out there. Through the Lord's shedding His blood and dying on the Cross, all the problems of death are solved.

Because the Lord died for you and me, taking the place of our death, our problem of death has been solved. Even though the Lord had our sins transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John, if He had not died on the Cross, our problem of death would not have been solved, and we would have had to die. But by being nailed to the Cross and dying, the Lord solved the problem of death for those who believe. The Lord bore our sins, died in our place, and received all the judgment for those sins, and so, just as Jesus Christ rose again, we who believe in Him will also rise again. The Bible says, *"For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection" (Romans 6:5)*.

Dear fellow believers, have you ever agonized over the problem of death? Have you thought deeply about the problem of death? We do not usually think much about this problem, but what a person really ought to agonize over most is this problem of death. Can we not live forever? Can we not go to the kingdom of heaven and live forever? If only we could live forever, everything would be solved. Even if we suffered some hardship while living on this earth, how good it would be if there were no death! That is the hope we all have. But man has not solved this problem of death. However, the Lord became a grain of wheat

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

and fell into the ground, was nailed to the Cross, and received through death the judgment for all sins, and so He solved the problem of death for you and me. Those who believe have obtained life, and without tasting eternal death they will rise again, obtain new life, and take part in the resurrection. They will obtain eternal life and live forever.

"If I am lifted up from the earth"

The Lord said, *"And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself" (John 12:32)*. This word about being lifted up from the earth refers to death itself. The Bible says, *"This He said, signifying by what death He would die" (John 12:33)*. When He is nailed to the Cross and that Cross is set upright, the body of Jesus Christ is lifted up from the earth and does not touch the ground. He was speaking of the death of the Cross. It means that by dying, Jesus Christ solved the problem of death for you and me. Therefore, those who know that their own problem of death has been solved through the death of Jesus Christ do not cling to death and are no longer troubled over it.

There are not very many people who know that Jesus Christ came to this earth to save mankind from sin, to solve the problem of death, and to give new life, and that by dying on the Cross He solved all the problems of death for those who believe. There are not very many who believe it either. I once visited the grave of a saint who had gone before the Lord ahead of us. I went with several ministers and looked around to see whether the grass was growing well and whether a landslide might occur or water might sweep over it when the rainy season came. Then, as I prayed for a while, I once again ruminated on the faith that when the Lord makes us live again and draws us up, we will meet that

saint again too. I prayed, commending the family to God, and came back. The Bible says, *"The dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4:16–17)*.

Through the death of Jesus Christ on the Cross, the problem of death for you and me has been solved. He died on the Cross because He bore your sins and mine. His death is our death. His resurrection is our resurrection. This is not a doctrine but a reality. In the past, I, too, did not think that deeply about my own death. But just as the Bible records, *"It is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27)*, I believe that every person who has been born once dies once. And I know well that even if we die, we will rise again and go up to the Lord. When we think within this word, we can see that by being nailed to the Cross and dying, the Lord has solved our problem of death. That does not mean, however, that since the problem of death has been solved, it is fine now to live carelessly and then die.

If we have truly received the remission of sins and become children of God, we must now not be bound by sin but become servants of righteousness. The Bible says, *"And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness" (Romans 6:18)*. We must become servants of what is right, and we must step forward more actively of our own accord. It means that otherwise the flesh will again be dragged around by sin, so we must volunteer to become servants of righteousness. It does not mean that since the Lord has solved our problem of death, we may now live carelessly. Rather, it means that we should believe that the Lord died in our place and solved our problem of death, and now, no longer clinging to our own death, follow the will of God by faith.

Jesus Christ has solved the problem of death for all people.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

He has solved the problem of sin for all people. He has solved the problem of all people obtaining life. Jesus Christ said, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6)*. He also said, *"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" (John 11:25–26)*. Truly Jesus solved our problem of sin, solved our problem of death as well, and also solved the problem of eternal life—our living forever—and gave us eternal life. Those who believe in Jesus Christ obtain new life, and even if their bodies should die, they live again. And the Lord said, *"Whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die" (John 11:26)*.

We who live and believe in the Lord, if we remain alive until the time of tribulation comes and the Lord comes, will go to the Lord without tasting death. We believe in Jesus and live having had all of this problem solved by faith, and then, even if our bodies should die, we live again; and if we are alive until the Lord comes, this body obtains eternal life without tasting death. The Lord has also solved the problem of our eternal life. Faith must be supplied step by step, in its proper time. Just as the Word becomes flesh, in our hearts the problem of sin must be solved by faith, the problem of death must be solved, and the problem of eternal life must be solved. When all of these are solved by faith, we can truly live with faith.

Dear fellow believers, think about it. How has your problem of death been solved? The Bible says, *"Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29)*. It was solved by Jesus Christ bearing the sin of the world and being nailed to the Cross and dying. The Cross is not a vague symbol. It is the reality that solved our problem of death. Jesus had our sins transferred to Him through the baptism He received from

John and so solved our problem of sin; bearing those sins, He received on the Cross death, which is the wages of sin, and so solved even our problem of death; and rising again from death, He gave us eternal life and fulfilled our wish to live forever. Who is Jesus Christ to us? He is the resurrection and the life, the Lord who solved the problem of death, the Lord who gave eternal life, and the Lord who solved the problem of sin. Therefore, the Lord is our eternal God and our eternal Savior.

"He who loves his life"

The Lord said, *"He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life" (John 12:25)*. He said that he who loves his life will lose it. The life spoken of here is the first life that we received from our parents and were born with, in which neither the problem of sin nor the problem of death has been solved. This means that the person who loves too much that life he will lose has rejected the remission of sins, the solution to the problem of death, and the gift of eternal life that Jesus gave, because he loves himself too much—even though he could have acknowledged that he is a person who cannot but go to hell, believed in Jesus the Savior, and had the problems of sin, death, and eternal life solved by faith.

There are people who exalt themselves so much that they live as if there were no one but themselves above the heavens and under the heavens. We must love people and we must love ourselves too, but the One we must love more than ourselves and more than any person is God. It is Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, truly gave His own life to you and me and solved all our problems of sin, death, and eternal life.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Therefore, we must love the Lord more than ourselves. That is what is right. Yet, while many people on this earth want to have their problem of death solved, how many are there who know and believe that Jesus died on the Cross and solved their problem of death, and that He received all the judgment for their sins? How many have there been from long ago until now? Even famous rulers such as Genghis Khan, Alexander the Great, and Caesar of Rome seized power and won many things, but because they did not know the way to have the problem of death solved, they could not solve that problem. Countless philosophers wanted to know this, but they did not know it.

But today you and I have come to hear this word by which the problem of death is solved through Jesus Christ. How amazing a blessing this is! If we know that the problem of death for you and me has been solved by believing that Jesus Christ died on the Cross, how free we can be, no longer clinging to the problem of death! What amazing faith that becomes! Isn't it amazing?

When some Greeks who had come up to Jerusalem for the feast asked to see Jesus, Jesus knew that the time had now come for Him to die on the Cross. So He said, *"Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour" (John 12:27)*. Jesus Christ knew how painful the death of the Cross is. Dear fellow believers, imagine that you and I are nailed to a cross and die. Imagine being nailed there because we have sin. How we would hate it! Would we not try hard to avoid it if we possibly could? Moreover, people did not simply kill Jesus; they stripped Him of His clothes, spat on Him, despised Him, treated Him as less than human, like a worm, and mocked Him. The book of Psalms says, *"But I am a worm, and no man; A reproach of men, and despised by the people" (Psalm 22:6)*.

But the Lord knew that His dying on the Cross would solve the problem of death for you and me. Because of that, He knew that He had to be nailed to the Cross. That is why He said, *"Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain" (John 12:24)*. Because Jesus Christ was nailed to the Cross and solved the problem of sin and the problem of death for you and me, we, too, have come to live again by faith, just as Jesus Christ rose again. Dear fellow believers, do you believe?

The person who solved the problem of death before departing

This is the same for anyone, whether child or adult. It is the natural order for people to be born on this earth, grow old, fall ill, and die. In that public cemetery I visited, too, there were countless graves. But among them, how many would there be who solved the problem of death before they went? How many would there be who, when the Lord comes to this earth, will obtain new life, rise again, and go up before God? Supposing there are about ten thousand graves in a public cemetery, there would probably be almost no grave with the words "righteous person" written on its tombstone. But on the tombstone of that saint I mentioned earlier, who had gone before the Lord ahead of us, it was written, "Deacon So-and-so, a righteous person, sleeps here waiting for the second coming of the Lord." Dear fellow believers, isn't that wonderful?

When the time comes someday for me, too, to leave this earth and be buried, I would like it if they wrote on my tombstone, "Pastor So-and-so, a righteous person, sleeps here waiting for the second coming of the Lord, the resurrection, and eternal life."

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

And on one side I would like to put words telling God's people and servants to follow quickly after, and on the other side words preaching the gospel, telling people to believe. I am truly thankful. Every person must think deeply at least once about his own problem of death. But not many people have thought about it and solved it by faith. Many Christians speak well about this as if it were a doctrine, but those who have actually had it solved by faith are rare. Every year when Holy Week and Easter Sunday come around, many churches observe that season in a big way.

But what is important is not how we observe the season, but believing that the Lord's death has solved our problem of death. When I think of the Lord's death, I am truly thankful. Because I believe that the Lord died like that to solve our problem of death, there is thankfulness in my heart. Do you also believe so?

A life of serving the Lord without regret

Someday we, too, will leave this earth. But it does not matter when we go. This is because the problem of death has been solved, because when the Lord calls us to come, we simply go, and because when we go before the Lord, the eternal life we have already obtained by faith is actually given to us. Because the first resurrection is given to us who believe, we do not agonize or worry over that problem. If God needs us, He will keep us alive a little longer; if not, He will take us early. The Lord said, *"If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor" (John 12:26)*. He said that whoever follows and serves the Lord, the Father will honor. He said that the Father honors them on this earth as well, and that those who have served the Lord will also be together where the Lord is. That is why it does

not matter when we die. Only, if there is anything in the work God entrusted to me that I neglected, or did halfheartedly and carelessly without giving all my heart and strength, it pricks my heart.

I could do it well if I poured out my heart just a little more, but I regret that I could not give my whole heart and, because my flesh is weak, could not do it all. As I serve the Lord, I often have this thought in my heart: if I weave the word together like this and publish it in writing, it would be so good if readers read just this, and their problems would be solved. My heart is earnest, but because my flesh is weak, there are many things that do not go as I wish. Such work is not done just by having strength; there must be room in one's heart, and that does not come easily.

You will be the same. I know that, as you do the Lord's work, you have many regrets—I mean the feeling that you wish you had done God's work this way, or that way. There is one regret I hope never to have. Now we can preach the gospel freely, but when the time the Lord has determined comes and an age arrives in which the gospel can no longer be preached on this earth, I hope not to regret it. If I end up regretting, saying, "I should have worked a little harder back then; I should have done it more thoroughly back then," my heart will ache terribly, because it will be a regret that cannot be undone. It is truly good to have received the remission of sins and obtained eternal life, but I often think that if I am not faithful now, I will regret it. Jesus, too, said, *"I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work" (John 9:4)*. After being born again, I do not want to live a life of regret. I admit that I am lacking, but I have a heart resolved not to become a person who regrets after having met the Lord and lived serving and following Him. I, too, have many shortcomings. Whether I have done well is for God to judge, but I hope at least to become

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

a person who has no regrets.

To that end, I think that whether the results of the work turn out well or not, I will have no regrets only if I do what I can do. So I simply do it. The Bible also says, *"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 15:58)*. Believing that the problem of death for you and me and all the saints has been solved—that the Lord has solved our problem of death—I give thanks once again. I am truly thankful that the Lord's being nailed to the Cross held such a precious meaning and such glorious fruit. Dear fellow believers, do you believe this fact? Do you believe that Jesus Christ fell into the ground and died, and that you and I have become that much fruit?

At times we feel gloomy and find things hard, and we judge by stray human thoughts and make fleshly calculations. We must throw away such stray thoughts. We must throw away such thoughts, solve everything by faith, and by faith cast off the weaknesses that grab hold of us and bind us. The Lord has saved you and me completely in spirit. We have become perfect by faith. Our flesh is lacking, but by faith we have become holy. Therefore, we must follow by faith before God. I hope that you will believe that the Lord solved our problem of death through His own death, that you will no longer cling to your own problem of death or be distressed over it, and that you will live the rest of your lives as lives without regret before God, who gave eternal life and solved the problem of death and the problem of sin. My desire is to live by faith and to go by faith.

Waiting for the Lord, who will receive glory

In the world there are people who believe that if they are loyal to a vain god, they will have the problem of death solved, obtain eternal life, and go to the kingdom of heaven. Dear fellow believers, does the sun god let people go to the kingdom of heaven? That is a vain faith. Such things cannot solve a person's own problem of death. It is nothing but being loyal to a vain god. Jesus Christ is the God of creation, who created the universe, formed you and me from our mothers' wombs and caused us to be born, gave us the air and all of nature, solved our problem of sin and our problem of death, and enabled us to obtain the new life of eternal life. He is the God of salvation. He is God, who has truly become our shepherd.

Only that Jesus Christ is truly worthy to receive glory. When Jesus Christ came to this earth, accomplished all this work, died, and rose again from death, God the Father received glory. The Bible says, *"'Father, glorify Your name.' Then a voice came from heaven, saying, 'I have both glorified it and will glorify it again'" (John 12:28)*. Just as Jesus Christ obeyed and worshiped God the Father, now all created beings have come to kneel before Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and give Him glory. The Bible says, *"That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:10–11)*.

When Jesus Christ comes again in the future and the rapture, the judgment, the Millennial Kingdom, and the eternal kingdom come to pass, all things will kneel before Jesus Christ and confess, "The Lord is our God. He is our Savior." The very glory they gave to God the Father they will give equally to Jesus Christ as well. Jesus Christ receives glory just as the Father does, and

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

He has the authority to judge all things. The Bible says, *"The Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son, that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father" (John 5:22–23)*. God the Father, according to His plan of salvation for us, accomplished all these things through His own Son, and so He received glory through Jesus Christ and caused Jesus Christ also to receive glory. We believe in this God and give Him thanks.

We do not know how the world will change from now on, but the world is flowing toward the time when the Antichrist can appear, as recorded in the book of Revelation. In such an age, we must think of the Lord, who solved the problem of death, and we must think of the Lord, who gave us eternal life, and wait for Him. From now on we must become people who wait. You must not cling too much to this earth and fret; you must believe and give thanks that the Lord has solved your problem of sin, and you must receive by faith that He solved your problem of death through the death of the Cross. The Bible says, *"But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5)*. We must wait for the Lord with this faith. We give thanks to God, who has given us such faith. Let us live by faith.

Do not think as if you will live for ten thousand years. The world has changed a great deal. But that does not mean you should think carelessly and live carelessly either. I hope you will live doing your best in the work and the place you have now been given. We are not people who wait for the second coming by calculating dates. We speak by faith and wait by faith. And meanwhile we do our best until the day the Lord comes. Even if the end of this world comes tomorrow, today we will still preach the gospel and serve. As long as we can, we will still light the

fire, cook our meals and eat, and still do the work we have to do. I am truly happy. You, too, are truly happy people. Do you think so? Do you think there is no one as happy as you yourselves?

When we think about it, we are truly happy people. We are people who have no fear of the future, people whose future is guaranteed. People who have put away a lot in savings and receive pensions are commonly called people whose future is guaranteed. Those who receive pensions are people who have no worries in old age. But we have become people who receive the pension of faith. We receive eternal life. Never dying and living happily forever—that is our true provision for old age. We are people who have taken out the insurance of eternal life through the gospel. So how could we not be happy? If perhaps there is anyone who still cannot believe, think about it once again quietly by yourself. I hope you will think about how happy a person you are. We give thanks to God, who has solved the problem of death for all of us. ✉

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Sermon 7 by Paul C. Jong

The word of everlasting life that Jesus preached

< John 12:44–50 >

“Then Jesus cried out and said, ‘He who believes in Me, believes not in Me but in Him who sent Me. And he who sees Me sees Him who sent Me. I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness. And if anyone hears My words and does not believe, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak. And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak.’”

To believe in Jesus is to believe in the Father

We say that we believe in God. Then what kind of God is the God we believe in? Do you know and believe how God has loved you and how He has saved you? The word Jesus spoke in today’s passage clearly teaches what faith in God is.

Just before this, John wrote, *“But although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him” (John*

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

12:37). Today's passage is the word Jesus spoke concerning such people who did not believe. Verse 44 records that He *"cried out"* as He spoke this word. Let us read verses 44 and 45.

"Then Jesus cried out and said, 'He who believes in Me, believes not in Me but in Him who sent Me. And he who sees Me sees Him who sent Me'" (John 12:44–45).

The word *"He who believes in Me, believes not in Me"* sounds strange at first. But the Lord was saying that faith in Himself is none other than faith in God the Father. It means, "He who believes in Me does not believe in Me only, but believes in God the Father, who sent Me." To believe in Jesus and to believe in God are not two things but one.

There is a reason the Lord went so far as to say this. In the eyes of the people at that time, Jesus looked like someone clothed in the same kind of body as theirs. He ate food, spoke, and walked about among people. How many people would there have been who believed in such a One as God right away? Even the disciples came to know it only after following Him for a long while. But the One who was clothed in a human body is God, who made the universe, and the Savior, who came, in obedience to the Father's will, to save His own people from sin.

The God we believe in is not a god whom we vaguely imagine or have pictured with our own thoughts. We know and believe in the invisible God through the word that Jesus, who came to this earth, spoke and the work He accomplished. Let us read verse 18 of chapter 1.

"No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him" (John 1:18).

No one has seen God directly. But the one who has seen Jesus is the same as one who has seen what kind of One God is. What kind of One the Father is was revealed in the work the Son

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

did on this earth. To fulfill the Father's will, Jesus received baptism from John, and through that baptism He had the sin of mankind passed on to His own body. Bearing that sin, He was hung on the Cross, shed His blood, and died, and so became our sacrificial offering of atonement; and He rose again from death and became the Savior of those who believe. When we see this work, we come to know, "So that is what kind of One God is." In a word, God is love.

God hates sin. But He does not hate people, whom He made according to the image of God. That is why He did not abandon us, who were going to hell, but sent His Son. Heaven and earth were so far apart that from our side there was no bridge by which to cross over to God. The One who connected that gap is Jesus, and the One who sent that bridge is the Father. Therefore, to believe in Jesus is to believe in the love of God, who has loved us this much.

For the person who truly acknowledges God, believing in Jesus is not difficult. If the Father sent His Son and saved you from sin, what reason would there be to reject that Son? So do not let this word pass by unheeded, but confirm in the Bible how the baptism Jesus received from John and His death on the Cross are connected to your sins. Then faith in God moves beyond vague expectation and becomes clear.

The light of salvation that keeps us from remaining in darkness

Jesus said that He had come into the world as a light. Let us read verse 46.

"I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness" (John 12:46).

When the sun rises, all things come to life. Sprouts come up, grow, and bear fruit. Light gives life. That Jesus came as a light means that He came to give life to us, who could not but die. And He made His purpose clear: it is so that those who believe may not abide in darkness.

Darkness is the place where people who are in sin remain. It is a place under the curse, a place held fast under the dominion of Satan, and in the end a place that leads to hell. The Lord came seeking us so that we would not remain in that place. He came to this earth so that we would not remain sinners, and He saved us through the water, the blood, and the Spirit.

A person who has sin cannot remove his own sin by himself. Even if he outwardly seems sincere and very capable, the problem of sin and death remains as it is. He must meet the Savior who washes away sin, and Jesus came as that very Savior.

The gospel of the water and the Spirit is a word that makes known how Jesus saved us. When the Lord received baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River, He had even our sins passed on to Him. Because of those sins He was judged on the Cross, and on the third day He rose again from death and saved us. When a person believes this in his heart, he receives the remission of sins. The Holy Spirit comes into that heart and causes him to live calling God Father.

So the way to escape from darkness does not lie in proving how strong we are. It lies in believing this word that the Lord has removed our sins, which we could not solve. If, concerning the salvation the Bible speaks of, we hold on only to the thoughts we already had, then even when the light shines, our hearts remain in darkness.

The person who lives in this light lives under the love and protection that God gives. He holds the hope of everlasting life, and, escaping from the life in which he followed only his own

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

thoughts, he relies on God, who gave him life.

We must not refuse the word of the Lord, who came to save

The Lord said that He had not come to judge the world but to save it. Let us read verses 47 and 48.

"And if anyone hears My words and does not believe, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day" (John 12:47–48).

Look at the Lord's heart. He is not One who came to judge on the spot and destroy those who hear the word and yet do not keep it. Even if a person says he will not believe and rejects that love, instead of judging him at once, Jesus waits a long, long time for him while he is on this earth. It is because He came to save sinners. That is why He is truly our Savior.

But Jesus said right after this that there is one who will judge the person who rejects Him and does not receive His words. To 'reject' is to push away the word one has heard. It is to know, having heard it, what kind of word the gospel of the water and the Spirit is, and yet to spurn it, saying, "I won't believe it; it can't be true." The Lord spoke both of the love that saves and of the judgment that comes upon the person who refuses that word.

The one who will judge that person is *"the word that I have spoken."* The words Jesus spoke have been recorded just as they are, and that word itself, on the last day, judges those who do not believe. The words a king has spoken become law, and judgment is carried out according to those words. It is because a king's command does not disappear but is surely carried out. Since the

Lord, the King of kings, said that He gives everlasting life to those who believe in Him, that promise will surely be fulfilled. Let us read verses 16 through 18 of chapter 3.

"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. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John 3:16–18).

Then what is contained in those words that the Lord had recorded? It is that God loved the world and sent His Son, and that the Son came clothed in a human body, bore our sins through the baptism He received from John, was nailed to the Cross and received the judgment for those sins, and rose again from death. The Lord accomplished salvation in this way and had that work recorded. So the reason a person does not receive salvation is not that the Lord does not love him, but that he pushes away the salvation the Lord has accomplished for him.

The word of God is not a word that takes effect only when we agree with it. Whether it is a hundred years from now or five thousand years from now, people will stand before that word on the last day. So bring that word of the last day forward to today and believe it now. Whether a person receives blessing or receives judgment is decided not by his deeds or his wisdom, but by whether he believes or does not believe the word God has spoken.

Those who preach the word only preach the word God has spoken just as it is. It is not for the preacher to call down a curse out of his own feelings because the hearer does not accept it. The word the Lord spoke is what judges. Therefore, the one who

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

preaches must not change what is written or interpret it as he pleases, but must preach it just as he believes it, and the one who hears must accept it as the word of God.

God is waiting even now. While He is waiting, become one who believes. Now is the time of grace, while the Lord is letting you hear the word.

The command the Father gave is everlasting life

Where did the word Jesus preached come from? Let us read verses 49 and 50.

"For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak. And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak" (John 12:49–50).

Jesus spoke the words and did the works on this earth just as the Father directed Him. The Father Himself commanded the Son what He should say, and the Son preached it just as He had heard it. And He said that that command is everlasting life.

God is One who works by His word. In the beginning *"God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light" (Genesis 1:3)*, and after that, too, He made all things by His word. Even now God works by His word. So the statement that the word the Father gave through the Son is everlasting life is not empty talk. The one who receives that word receives the life that the Father gives.

Today's passage begins with *"Him who sent Me" (John 12:44)* and continues on to the command of *"the Father who sent Me" (John 12:49)*. Through Jesus we come to know God, and through the word of Jesus we obtain everlasting life. So to

make light of the word of Jesus is to make light of the word of the Father.

The Lord had His disciples record the works He did and the words He spoke. Because no one can believe without evidence, He left them in writing. Where is the evidence that God loves you? Here is the record that the Lord bore your sins through the baptism He received from John and paid the price of those sins on the Cross for you. Where is the evidence that you obtain everlasting life? Here is the Lord's promise that He gives everlasting life to those who believe. Not one jot or one tittle of the word God has spoken will disappear.

When a person believes this word in his heart, that faith also shows in his life. Because he believes in God's help, he prays, and because he knows what pleases the Lord, he follows that work even in his shortcomings. This is the faith of one who lives actually believing in God.

The faith that holds on to the word even when the heart is in distress

There are times when we grow weary while following the Lord. There are also times when our bodies are very tired, our hearts sink so that even hearing the same word gives us no strength, and only our own shortcomings look large. Our hearts are so easily shaken that we are sure of our salvation when we feel good and then doubt it when our mood sinks. But the word the Lord spoke remains as it is.

At such times all the more, think of the word of God. Think of how Jesus saved you and what He has asked of you. We cannot trust our own hearts. But when we hold on to the word, saying, "It is written this way in the word of God, so we believe,"

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

we stand as people who believe. God leads and blesses those who, though lacking, follow the Lord by faith in that way.

Jesus did not save us because we were strong and wise. He saved us, who were bound by sin and could not live by ourselves. Even now we live by the strength the Lord gives. Go to God, who knows your shortcomings, and ask Him to hold your heart fast.

This word must also be preached to those who have not yet accepted salvation in their hearts. When you see someone who has heard the word and yet pushes it away, pray that he will humble his heart and believe in the Savior, and make the Lord's salvation known to him as well. Since the Lord did not come to judge the world but came to save it, we, too, should treat him with that heart.

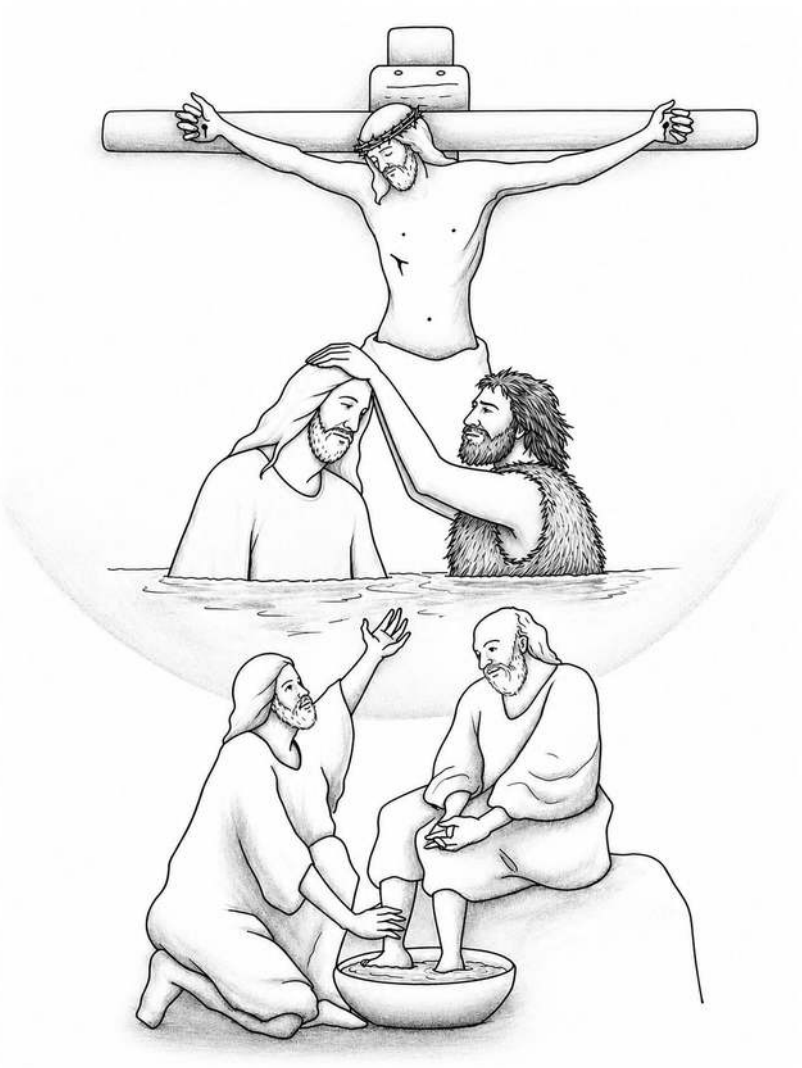
Through Jesus we have come to know the Father's love. We have received the remission of sins by believing in the salvation in which the Lord received baptism from John and had our sins transferred to Him, received the judgment for those sins on the Cross, and rose again from death. Let us not let go of the word because of the circumstances we see with our eyes, and let us not push away the Savior's love because of the weakness of our hearts. Since the word the Father Himself commanded is everlasting life, let us live holding on to that word even on the days when our hearts are weary. ✉

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

CHAPTER

13

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



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

Sermon 1 by Paul C. Jong

The endless love of the Lord, who washed away all our sins

< John 13:1–11 >

"Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end. And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded. Then He came to Simon Peter. And Peter said to Him, 'Lord, are You washing my feet?' Jesus answered and said to him, 'What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this.' Peter said to Him, 'You shall never wash my feet!' Jesus answered him, 'If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.' Simon Peter said to Him, 'Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!' Jesus said to him, 'He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you.' For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, 'You are not all clean.'"

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

The Lord, who knew the disciples' weakness and loved them to the end

The Lord poured water into a basin. He rose from the place where He had been eating supper, laid aside His outer garment, and wrapped a towel around His waist, and then He began to wash the disciples' feet one by one. This is the last thing that Jesus, who was soon to be hung on the Cross, did for the disciples He would leave behind on this earth when He departed. A person who is facing death leaves behind only the words he must leave. The foot-washing of this night is a teaching that the Lord left to His disciples, like a last will.

Let us read verse 1.

"Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end" (John 13:1).

The Passover is the day Israel was saved from Egypt. The plague of death passed over the houses that killed a lamb and put its blood on the doorposts and the lintel. But the lamb to be killed at this Passover was Jesus Himself. What Jesus, who knew that fact, showed first of all on this night was a love that loves *"to the end."*

Human love has an end. People love others while they are pleasing to them but turn away when they are disappointed, and at first they embrace others but grow weary when the same wrong is repeated. The Lord's love is not like that. That He loves to the end means that, even while knowing everything the disciples would do in the future, He takes responsibility for them to the end. He knew the heart of Peter, who confidently declared that he would follow the Lord, and He also knew Peter's weakness, which would crumble in the face of fear. The Lord,

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

who knew all of that, washed his feet.

Verse 3 says what Jesus knew at that time. He knew that the Father had entrusted all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and would return to God. The work the Father had entrusted to the Son was the work of saving sinners. It is the work of receiving baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River and having the sin of the world transferred to Him, paying the price of that sin on the Cross, and rising again to save us. Jesus, at the place where He was eating supper with the disciples, was already bearing the sin of the world on His body, even though it could not be seen with the eyes. Now the only thing left was the Cross.

Therefore, if we read this foot-washing only as an example of humility and move on, we cannot say that we have fully understood this word. Jesus said that if He did not wash Peter, Peter would have no part with Him. The relationship between the sinner and the Savior depends on the foot-washing. With the water in the basin, the Lord showed His disciples how the word of verse 1, that He loved them to the end, was fulfilled.

The faith that accepts the salvation by which the Lord washes us

Let us read verses 6 through 8.

"Then He came to Simon Peter. And Peter said to Him, 'Lord, are You washing my feet?' Jesus answered and said to him, 'What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this.' Peter said to Him, 'You shall never wash my feet!' Jesus answered him, 'If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me'" (John 13:6–8).

The other disciples, bewildered, let Him wash their feet, but

Peter protested vehemently. He was the one who had confessed Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God. That his own Lord should wash his feet must have seemed to him something that went against what was proper. Peter's refusal came from a heart that wanted to honor the Lord. But underneath that heart was a habit of measuring what Jesus does by his own thoughts.

There are times when we, too, try to believe in the Lord in that way. Rather than simply receiving what the Lord has done for us, we first ponder what we must do to be unashamed before the Lord. When our resolve is firm, our faith also seems solid, and when the same wrong is repeated, we feel as if even our salvation is shaken. What Peter needed was the faith to entrust himself to the Lord, to be washed just as the Lord washes him.

When Jesus said, *"You have no part with Me,"* He meant that the relationship would come to an end. If, after the Lord departed, even a little sin that had not been washed away remained in Peter's heart, things between him and the Lord would become estranged, and their fellowship would grow distant. Satan aims at exactly that gap and condemns, saying, "You still commit sins, so how can you be a righteous person?" Jesus knew this, and so He washed the disciples' feet before He departed.

Where was that washing accomplished? Through the baptism He received from John at the Jordan River, the Lord had all our sins transferred onto His own body. This is the word Jesus spoke when John the Baptist hesitated to baptize Him.

"But Jesus answered and said to him, 'Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.' Then he allowed Him" (Matthew 3:15).

On the Day of Atonement in the Old Testament, the high priest Aaron laid both his hands on the head of the sacrificial offering and passed on a year's worth of the sins of Israel at one time. In this same way, when Jesus received baptism from John

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

the Baptist, who represented mankind, He had all the sins of the world passed on to Him once and for all. That is why John the Baptist testified of Jesus as follows the next day. Let us read John chapter 1, verse 29.

"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).

The sin of the world does not consist only of the sins of the people who lived before we were born. It also includes the sins we commit today and the sins we will commit in the rest of our lives. While bearing that sin, the Lord went to the Cross, shed His blood, and died, and He received in our place the judgment for that sin that we should have received. And three days later He rose again from death. Whoever believes this gospel in his heart has all his sins washed away, receives the Holy Spirit as a gift, and becomes a child of God. The One who washed Peter's feet is none other than this Savior. To accept this salvation by which the Lord washes us is the faith of a person who has a part with the Lord.

The meaning of His washing the feet of him who is already bathed

Startled by the word *"you have no part with Me,"* Peter this time asked Him to wash not only his feet but also his hands and his head. Then Jesus let him know what a person who is already bathed needs. Let us read verses 9 and 10.

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

Even a person who bathed during the day washes his feet when evening comes. It is because dust settles on the feet while one walks along the road. We live treading this earth with these two feet, and wherever our feet reach, we do good things but also commit sins. That Jesus washed the feet rather than the whole body was something He did with regard to the sins we commit while walking on this earth after we have been saved. The water in the basin with which He washed those feet calls to mind the baptism Jesus received from John the Baptist at the Jordan River.

There are people who read this word and teach that original sin is washed away when one believes in Jesus, and that the actual sins committed after that must be washed away every day through prayers of repentance. They say that even though a person has bathed once, surely he must still wash his feet every day. To the eyes of the flesh, it seems plausible. But the Lord is not One who took away our sins little by little. If the sins committed today had to be washed away separately today and the sins committed tomorrow separately tomorrow, we would always have lived holding in our hearts sins for which we had not yet finished pleading. At the Jordan River, Jesus had the sins of our whole lives passed on to Him all at once, and on the Cross He paid the price of those sins once and for all. His intention in washing their feet was not that the disciples should deal separately with the sins they would commit in the future, but to let them know that He had already washed away even those sins.

Jesus' words to Peter in verse 7, *"You will know after this,"* also refer to this. Peter denied the Lord three times that night, and only after he met the risen Lord again did he understand its meaning. When he came to know why Jesus had received baptism from John at the Jordan River, he also came to know why the Lord had washed his feet that night. So it is with us today, too. As we live having received the remission of sins,

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

each time our shortcomings are exposed, we realize only then, "The Lord bore even this sin."

Also fix your eyes on Jesus' words *"He who is bathed."* The work of washing us is a work that is already finished. The Book of Hebrews testifies of the atonement the Lord accomplished as follows.

"For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified" (Hebrews 10:14).

By one offering He has perfected them forever. Even if we discover our own wrongs today, there is no reason for Jesus to go to the Jordan River again or to be hung on the Cross again to wash away those sins. On the contrary, a person who has never once taken this bath remains with his whole body still dirty, even if he tries washing only his feet every day. Only to the person who has believed the gospel of the water and the Spirit and had all his sins washed away once and for all does the word *"needs only to wash his feet"* become a comfort.

In the tabernacle of the Old Testament, too, there was a place for washing. When one entered the court, the laver was placed after the altar of burnt offering, and the priests washed their hands and feet with that water before entering the tabernacle of meeting. Just as it was said, *"So they shall wash their hands and their feet, lest they die" (Exodus 30:21),* they could not come before God without washing. Jesus' washing Peter's feet was the fulfillment of that picture. So that the disciples could come to God without any qualms even after He had departed, He washed away in advance even the dirt that would get on their feet in the future.

Acknowledge your sins and believe in the Lord's salvation

Even after we have received the remission of sins, our flesh is weak. We hurt others with our words, harbor hatred and greed in our hearts, and, while saying that we will rely on the Lord, are shaken by the matters before our eyes. Jesus began to wash the disciples' feet with the towel He had wrapped around Himself. When we stand before the law of God, we see the wrongs we carelessly let slip by. If there is something in our hearts that we treasure more and follow more than God, that in itself is already sin. The law makes us realize our sins, and the gospel lets us confirm that the Lord has already washed away even those sins.

At this time, we must hold on to two things together. Our wrongdoing is clearly wrongdoing, and the salvation of the Lord, who washed away that wrongdoing, is also a clear fact. If, when faced with our wrongdoing, we pretend that we have done nothing wrong, our hearts grow dull, and if we look only at that wrongdoing, we come to doubt the Lord's love. The Apostle John wrote as follows.

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

Confession is not informing the Lord anew of sins He does not know. It is acknowledging before God the fact that we are people who cannot help but commit sins until the day we die, and the wrongs we have actually committed. When we acknowledge them in this way, the One we can lean on is the Lord, who is faithful and just. Since the Lord has already had those sins passed on to Him and has received the judgment for them, the person who believes in His faithfulness confirms once again that he has already been made clean. The ground on which

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

we are made clean is not the words we confess or the tears we shed, but the atonement Jesus has already accomplished.

Even a righteous person who has no sin in his heart has times when his heart grows dark. After he has acted according to the thoughts of the flesh, his heart becomes heavy. At such times, what we must do is not strive to wash away our sins, but hear the gospel of the water and the Spirit again and ruminate on it once more. "Lord, I have committed this sin. But I believe that You had even this sin passed on to You at the Jordan River and received the wages of that sin in my place on the Cross." When we acknowledge and believe in this way, our hearts that had grown dark become bright again.

The person who believes the fact that the Lord received baptism from John and even suffered the punishment of the Cross because of his sins cannot take sin lightly in the light of that love, but instead becomes ashamed and thankful. Because there is the Lord, who washed away even this sin, he rises again from the place where he fell and follows Him.

Being near and believing with the heart are different

Finally, let us read verse 11.

"For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, 'You are not all clean'" (John 13:11).

The word *"but not all of you"* does not mean that the Lord's washing fell short. It is a word spoken about one of the twelve disciples, Judas Iscariot. Verse 2 says that the devil had already put into his heart the thought of betraying Jesus. The eleven disciples heard the word *"completely clean,"* but Judas, who held out his feet in the same place, was left out of that word. He

did not have a heart that believed in Jesus as the Savior who washes away his sins.

What separated Peter and Judas was not the size of their weakness but faith. Peter, too, committed a great sin that night. But he believed in the Lord, who had washed his feet, and Judas did not believe to the very end. The Lord is the Savior of those who believe. Even if we spend time with people who know the gospel and can speak the words of the gospel with ease, we must believe in our own hearts that the Lord is the Savior who has washed away all our sins.

If someone says he believes in Jesus but casts aside the work by which the Lord bore all sins through the baptism He received from John, and stubbornly insists to the end that actual sins must be washed away by his own repentance, sin always remains in his heart. If he leaves this world with sin in his heart, he will receive God's judgment for that sin. Do not alter the salvation the Lord has given according to your own way. Accept as your Savior the Lord, who washed away not only the sins of the past but also the sins revealed today and even the sins you will commit in the future.

Our shortcomings are nothing new to the Lord. That night Jesus already knew everything and washed the disciples' feet. If we know that love, what we must do now on our part is not to run away but to hold out our feet before Him. Even if we do not understand everything now, each day that we fall and rise again we will come to know more deeply the meaning of His washing their feet that night. Since the Lord, who poured water into a basin and washed the disciples' feet, loved us to the end, I hope that you will believe in that love and stand before the Lord without shame. ✉

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Sermon 2 by Paul C. Jong

Preach the gospel revealed in the washing of the feet

< John 13:1–17 >

"Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end. And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded. Then He came to Simon Peter. And Peter said to Him, 'Lord, are You washing my feet?' Jesus answered and said to him, 'What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this.' Peter said to Him, 'You shall never wash my feet!' Jesus answered him, 'If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.' Simon Peter said to Him, 'Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!' Jesus said to him, 'He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you.' For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, 'You are not all clean.' So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, 'Do you know what I have done to you? You

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.'"

What He did before the Passover

Through this word, in which Jesus washed Peter's feet, I am going to speak about washing.

The word Passover means 'to pass over.' It means that the judgment passed over. When the people of Israel were living in slavery in Egypt, God, while saving them through Moses, commanded the Passover. He had them kill the lamb of sacrifice and put its blood on the lintel of the door, and He told them in advance that the judgment of God would not come upon the houses where the blood had been put but would pass over them. So the people of Israel, who believed the word of God, all killed a lamb on that evening, the night of the LORD, and put its blood on the lintel and the two doorposts of the door through which they entered their houses. Even if they were Gentiles, even if they were Egyptians, those who knew God, feared Him, and believed did so.

That night, when God sent the messenger of death, the firstborn of every house that had not put blood on the lintel, whether Israelite or Egyptian, were all killed. But in the houses that believed the word of God, did as it said, and put the blood of the lamb on the lintel, the firstborn son among the family inside was not killed. So God said to the people of Israel,

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

"Consecrate to Me all the firstborn, whatever opens the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and beast; it is Mine" (Exodus 13:2). This event of the Passover was the sign that God had completely saved the people of Israel, who had been living in slavery in Egypt, and the Passover ceremony is that very sign.

Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, did not let the people of Israel go even after hearing the command to let them go. What caused such a Pharaoh to let the people of Israel leave his country was none other than the plague of the death of the firstborn. If it had not been for the death of the firstborn sons, Pharaoh would not have let so many people go. Among the ten plagues, God lastly sent the plague that killed all the firstborn of Egypt. From the firstborn of Pharaoh the king to the son of the servant, and even to the firstborn of the animals, all were killed that night. Because he was so terrified by that, Pharaoh allowed the people of Israel to leave his country and sent them away.

That is why the Passover is still one of the greatest feasts of Israel even today. Jesus, too, came up to Jerusalem at the Feast of the Passover, was arrested, and died on the Cross. The Passover refers to the day the people of Israel escaped from Egypt and were set free—that is, the day they were saved.

Before this Passover, Jesus knew that the time had come for Him to depart from the world. The Bible records, *"Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end. And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him" (John 13:1–2)*. Jesus knew everything, even that the devil had put such a thought into Judas's heart. We call this occasion the Last Supper, that is, the last evening meal of Jesus Christ. The Bible records what happened at that supper as follows.

"Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded. Then He came to Simon Peter. And Peter said to Him, 'Lord, are You washing my feet?' Jesus answered and said to him, 'What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this.' Peter said to Him, 'You shall never wash my feet!' Jesus answered him, 'If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me'" (John 13:3–8).

Knowing that He would die, why did Jesus, while having the last evening meal with His disciples ahead of the Passover, Himself draw water in a basin and wash the feet of Peter and the disciples? We must know the reason. Even though Peter firmly declined, the Lord wanted to wash Simon Peter's feet.

Why did the Lord Himself do the work of washing feet, of all things, ahead of the Passover, and why did He have to say this word to Peter? In the Old Testament there is no such ceremony of washing feet. Yet why did He have to wash their feet, and why did He go so far as to say to Peter, His chief disciple, *"If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me" (John 13:8)*? We must know the heart and the reason with which the Lord washed their feet, and we too must do it.

The Bible records what happened after He had washed their feet as follows: *"So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, 'Do you know what I have done to you? You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than*

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them'" (John 13:12–17). That is, the master served the servants, and the teacher served the disciples. And He said that since He had shown this as an example, they too should do as He had done.

Then let us suppose that we do this word literally. We too would have to begin every day by washing feet as soon as we come into the chapel. If this is a word telling us to wash physical feet, then everyone from the pastor to the evangelists and workers must set out several washbasins each and wash the feet of the people who come in. It is because it is the word of God. Then all the churches in the whole world must keep this word, and every chapel entrance must be equipped with facilities for washing feet. But no church in the world does this every day in this way. This is so even though the Lord clearly said that since He, the Teacher, had washed His disciples' feet, they too should do this to one another, and promised blessing to those who know and do it.

The gospel that washes the feet

The Lord was speaking about washing. When it comes to washing, there was also the laver in the tabernacle. When the priests went into the tabernacle of meeting to serve the Lord, they washed their hands and feet clean with the water of the laver before going in. Even though they were going in to serve on behalf of the people, if they went in without washing themselves clean, they too were put to death. The Bible says, *"When they go into the tabernacle of meeting, or when they come near the altar to minister, to burn an offering made by fire to the LORD, they shall wash with water, lest they die" (Exodus 30:20)*.

While washing Peter's feet, the Lord said, *"If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me" (John 13:8)*, and He also said, *"For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you" (John 13:15)*. At the Last Supper ahead of the Passover, He spoke this word to the disciples and Peter and set an example.

If the Lord does not wash Peter's feet, Peter becomes someone who has no part with Jesus. Jesus would be arrested by the chief priests before the Feast of the Passover and put to death. Even after Jesus had thus gone up to heaven first, Peter had to live on this earth longer. If the sins Peter committed while living that way—that is, his actual sins—still remained on Peter, if Peter again did something wrong after Jesus had left, if even a speck of sin remained on Peter, Peter would end up becoming a disciple who had no part with Jesus. This is because God said, *"Be holy, for I am holy" (1 Peter 1:16)*.

So the Lord said to Peter, *"What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this" (John 13:7)*, and He set an example so that they too would do this to one another. This is the reason the Lord had to wash Peter's feet. Peter confessed his faith, saying, *"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16)*, and he believed that Jesus was the Son of God and the Savior who had come to save Peter himself. But even though he believed in Him as the Savior, if even the slightest bit of the sins Peter committed on this earth after Jesus had gone up remained, he would end up becoming someone who had no part with the Lord. That is why the Lord had to wash Peter's feet and had to teach him this fact without fail. That is why, before leaving this earth and going to heaven, He spoke of this matter in particular to His beloved disciples.

Just as the people of Israel were completely set free and completely saved from the land of Egypt, the Lord has removed

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

all the sins of the disciples, that is, the sin of His own people. I believe that, to make this known, the Lord Himself taught this to Peter and to us by His actions and His words.

Today, as we preach the gospel, we must take to heart this word that the Lord spoke, *"For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you" (John 13:15)*. The Lord washed the feet of Peter and the disciples. This tells us that the Lord did not wash away only the original sin of His own people but washed away all their sins and transgressions, including the actual sins they commit on this earth and even the sins they will commit in the future. Has the Lord removed all our sins, or has He not? In saving us, the Lord did not remove only our original sin but removed all sins, including our actual sins.

And the Lord set an example for the disciples so that they too would do this to one another. Just as Jesus removed all our sins, He was telling those who had received the remission of sins—the disciples, the people of God, and His servants—to preach to the people living on this earth that Jesus Christ has removed all the sins they commit. He was telling them to wash their feet, that is, to wash all sins from their hearts. It was for this that the Lord washed Peter's feet. Here the feet refer to all the sins committed on this earth. The word to wash one another's feet means that a person who has received the remission of sins should preach that the Lord has removed all the sins in the heart—that is, actual sins and all kinds of offenses—and that he should speak to others so that they may receive the remission of sins.

We must not think of this word only in a physical sense. This is the word of God. Moreover, it is no different from the last will Jesus left before He died on the Cross. If this were a will telling us to wash physical feet, it would amount to those who say they believe in the Lord not keeping the last will that the Lord, their

Teacher and Savior, left on this earth.

Peter received the remission of all sins before God. Jesus' disciples also received the remission of original sin and actual sins—of all sins. The Lord shone His light and saved those who, like those disciples, met the Lord and found the light, so that they would not walk in darkness. Therefore, all those who say they preach the gospel on this earth must preach the gospel that washes the feet. The gospel that washes the feet means preaching that the Lord has already borne and removed all the sins we commit on this earth. Because the Lord knew how Satan the devil would deceive people with this matter, He taught this gospel that washes the feet to His disciples. It means that they should wash one another.

There are many people on this earth who preach the gospel. We go to various universities, too, and meet many people who believe in Jesus. But if you ask where the people who believe in Jesus are all uniformly stuck, it is that they have not had their feet washed. They have not had all the sins they commit on this earth, that is, their actual sins, washed away. But the Lord bore even the sins Peter would commit in the future, even all the sins he would commit with his feet and with his deeds. That is why the Bible says, *"Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin" (Hebrews 10:18)*.

We must preach the gospel that washes the feet. The reason the Lord Himself did this before the Passover was to convey to the disciples that He had removed all their sins and to nail this down firmly. It was because He knew that if He simply died, Satan the devil would surely interfere. So the Lord Himself drew water in a basin, girded Himself with a towel, washed and wiped the disciples' feet, did this work in person, and asked it of them. Satan the devil deceives people, saying, "Believe in Jesus. Then you will receive the remission of all sins. But actual sins must

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

be washed away every day." Knowing that people would be deceived in that way, the Lord did this so that we would spread this gospel that He is the Savior who removed even all the sins we commit on this earth, and so that we would not be deceived by Satan the devil. The Lord set His seal once again on this gospel that all sins have been remitted. It means that we should never be deceived again.

"He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet"

Have you had your feet all washed? Just as Peter had his feet washed, have you also had all the dirt of your feet washed away before Jesus? When Peter said, *"Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!" (John 13:9),* Jesus said, *"He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet" (John 13:10)*. When we believe in the Lord, we first know that the Lord is the Savior. We know that He is the Lord who bore all our sins and died on the Cross. But the word *"needs only to wash his feet" (John 13:10)* tells us to know this as well. He is telling us to know the fact that the Lord has washed away all the sins we commit, too, while believing in the Lord and living in this world.

Peter had his feet washed. We, too, have had our feet washed through the Lord and have had all the sins we commit washed away. But on this earth there are far too many people who, though they believe in Jesus, have never had their feet washed. If we look at the Bible, Jesus washed the feet of Peter and the disciples and said, *"You also ought to wash one another's feet" (John 13:14)*. The Lord did so in order that those who have heard the gospel and had their feet washed would preach this gospel to those who have not yet had their feet washed, that is, to those who do not know that all their sins have been remitted, saying,

"The Lord has washed away all your sins, all the sins you commit with your deeds, and all the actual sins you commit with your flesh."

Yet even now there are more people on this earth who have not had their feet washed than people who have. They believed in Jesus and had their whole body bathed, but their feet have not been washed. So people strive to wash their feet themselves. Their whole body is clean, but only their feet have become dirty, so they say they will wash their feet themselves. But that is wrong. Just as the Lord made our whole body clean, He has also washed clean all the dust and grime of our feet, which easily become dirty as we tread this earth and live. Through the baptism He received from John at the Jordan River He had all that sin transferred to Him, and on the Cross He bore all that sin and washed it clean.

Yet even now countless people are washing their own feet themselves and say that it is right to wash them every day. In the Bible, the One who washed feet was the Lord; how could a person do it himself? Did Peter wash his own feet? The Lord removed all sins; where in the Bible does it say that people remove sins by repenting? However carefully we search the context before and after, there is not a single verse that says so.

When we look at the hearts of those who say they believe in Christianity before God, because they have not had their feet washed, even now they do not hold out their feet before the Lord. They hold out everything else, but they do not hold out their feet. They think that they have received the remission of their original sin and of the sins they have committed until now, but not of the sins they will commit in the future. Not only that, they think that they have not received the remission of the sins they commit with their deeds while living on this earth—all the actual sins they commit knowingly, unknowingly, and out of weakness.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

There are many Christian believers who believe while thinking that the Lord was not able to take away all those sins. That is why, to teach that He has removed and washed away even all the actual sins of our lives, the Lord Himself performed the foot-washing ceremony before the Passover. I hope that you will know and believe this word.

When we preach the gospel, we must preach the gospel that washes the feet. If a person's whole body is clean but his feet have not been washed, he is not clean. However clean a person washes his whole body except for his feet and ankles, puts on good perfume, anoints himself with olive oil, and adorns himself in every way, if there is dung on both feet, he is not a clean person. However clean the whole body may be, if there is filth or something dirty or grime on the feet, that person is not a clean person. Only a person who is perfectly clean from the top of his head to the tips of his toes is a clean person. If dirt is on even one part of the whole body, that person is not clean.

In removing our sins, the Lord washed us perfectly clean, our whole body from head to toe. God said, *"Be holy, for I am holy" (1 Peter 1:16)*. The Lord removed all our sins and said on the Cross, *"It is finished!" (John 19:30)*. The Bible says, *"Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin" (Hebrews 10:18)*, and it also says, *"By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Hebrews 10:10)*. The Lord has made us completely clean.

But those who say that, after believing in Jesus, they received the remission of original sin, but that the actual sins they commit are remitted each time through prayers of repentance, have not had their feet washed. That is why they are sinners even after believing in Jesus. Their whole body is clean, but because there is something dirty on their feet, they are sinners and dirty people.

Because they have not had their feet washed by the Lord, people say that they are sinners even while believing in Jesus. That is not the will of the Lord. The Lord is telling us not to be deceived by that.

All the dust and filth that clung to us as we walked about treading with our feet—that is, all our sins—the Lord had transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John at the Jordan River, and He brought them to an end by dying on the Cross. He fulfilled all righteousness. The Lord Himself had all our sins transferred onto His body. The Book of Isaiah says, *"Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows" (Isaiah 53:4)*, and "*the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:6)*. He bore all the iniquities of our lives.

But because people do not know and do not believe what the Lord has done, they say that their whole body is clean but their feet are dirty. So they say that they cannot call themselves righteous and that they are dirty people. They wonder how, even if the Lord took away all other sins, He could have taken away even the sins they commit. Because they do not believe that and have not put out their feet before the Lord and had them washed, they do not believe in the remission of all sins, and even now, while believing in Jesus, they are living as sinners in their hearts. That is why the Lord is telling us that we too should do this to one another, that we should wash one another. When we preach the gospel, we must wash their feet.

Getting people to believe in Jesus is easy. But there is something here in which we can be deceived if we make one slight mistake. Judas appears here. The Bible records, *"But is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you. For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, 'You are not all clean'" (John 13:10–11)*. This word was spoken concerning Judas. The Lord said that, except for Judas alone among the

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

twelve disciples, their whole bodies were clean and He had removed all their sins. The eleven disciples received the complete remission of sins. They are perfectly and flawlessly clean. But the reason He said that not all of them were clean was Judas. Judas did not call Jesus Lord. To Judas, Jesus was always only a teacher. He regarded Him as a human being with lofty teachings. Therefore, Judas was not a person who had received the remission of sins. Among the twelve disciples, Judas alone was a person who had not received the remission of sins.

But among the people living on this earth, for those who truly believe in Jesus as their Savior, those who believe that Jesus bore their sins and died on the Cross because of them, Jesus became the Savior and removed all their sins. All the sins of those who believe in Jesus as the true Savior, even their actual sins, the Lord Himself long ago had transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John at the Jordan River, and He removed them all on the Cross. It is as if the Lord were saying to that person that He is his Savior and has made him completely clean. The Lord is the Savior of those who believe. He is not the Savior of those who do not believe but the Savior of those who believe.

The Lord is our Master. Though He is the Master, He removed all our sins. And He tells the people of God and His servants who believe in the Lord that they too should do this to one another, that they should wash one another. He is telling them to make others realize through the word that the Lord has removed all their transgressions. He is telling them to wash others with this gospel of Jesus Christ. This is the gospel. The true gospel is to preach that the Lord has removed the sins not only of the whole body but even of the feet—that is, even all actual sins. To preach this gospel just as the Lord set the example is the true spread of the gospel.

The Lord's last will

What is the barrier we run into when we preach the gospel? When we preach the gospel, people say that they believe in Jesus. When we ask them whether they have received the remission of sins, they say they have. But when we ask whether they have sin, they answer, "Where is there a person without sin? I have received the remission of original sin, but since I am still committing sins even now, how can I say that I have no sin?" That person does not know that the Lord washed Peter's feet. He says so because he does not know that the Lord has washed his feet as well. We must preach the gospel to such people and speak to them with this word.

Among us, too, there are many who had believed in Jesus since before they knew this gospel. When we believed in Jesus but did not know, did not believe, and did not realize that the Lord had washed away even our actual sins, had we received the remission of sins? No, we had not. Even after believing in Jesus, we were still sinners. But when we knew and believed that the Lord had removed all sins, including our actual sins—that He had washed them all away—our whole body became clean. This is the gospel. When we preach the gospel, we must preach that He has removed even all actual sins.

And the Lord said, *"If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them" (John 13:17)*. Did Jesus really wash His disciples' feet so that they would wash one another's physical feet? On the day before the Passover, knowing that He would be arrested and die on the Cross, He had an important word that He truly wanted to leave as His last will; was it that they should wash one another's physical feet so as to love one another and be reconciled? When people make a will, they say very important things. They do not speak of unnecessary things or

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

ordinary things. A will is the leaving behind of important things that must be said.

This is what the Lord wanted His disciples to know without fail. All the people of this world commit sins, and they commit sins even after believing in Jesus. The Lord, as His last will, set an example for the disciples and told them to spread the fact that the Lord has cleanly removed those sins as well. So that the disciples would not be deceived in this, the Lord set His seal on it at the last, telling them to believe and spread that their whole bodies and even their feet had been made completely clean and that He had removed even their actual sins. He put His stamp on it firmly. It was because Peter and the disciples could also be deceived.

There are many people in the whole world who believe in Jesus. But we must know how many people there are who, because they have not had their feet washed and do not know that the Lord has completely removed their actual sins, are living as sinners even now while believing in Jesus. When we preach the gospel, we must preach the true gospel. It is the gospel that He has washed even the feet, that is, even actual sins. The Lord did not remove only our sins; He also removed all the actual sins of all the people of the world. From the time they are born from their mother's womb, from the age of one, people scratch, pinch, glare, throw tantrums, and give their parents a hard time. And when they grow up, they commit all kinds of sins such as murder, adultery, envy, strife, lewdness, and pride. It means that the Lord has removed all those sins that people commit while living on this earth.

But although there are many people on this earth who believe in Jesus, very few know that Jesus washed Peter's feet. They are probably no more than one in a hundred million. That is how few the people are who know and believe this, who know and preach

this. So we, who know and preach this, are truly precious people.

In fact, when our sisters met and talked with the staff members of a certain group that claims to preach the gospel, those staff members could not answer even when asked to say how they had received the remission of sins. Though they said they had received the remission of sins at the church they used to attend, they could not say how they had received it. A person who does not know whether the Lord has washed not only his body but even his feet is not a person who has received the remission of sins. So when asked whether they are sinners or righteous, they answer, "I have been saved, but I am a sinner." Such people go to hell. It is concerning such people that the Lord said to do this to one another, to wash one another. He is telling none other than us to wash them. He is telling us to wash away their actual sins with the gospel we have.

When we preach the gospel, it is easy to tell people to believe in Jesus. It is also easy to talk about Jesus to people who say they believe in Jesus. But when we talk about how He has washed even the feet, they dislike it. People take a decisive stand against it with the word of Psalm 51 and this word of John chapter 13. They say that Jesus took away original sin but did not take away actual sins. They say, in the present tense, that He took away all other sins, but that actual sins must be washed away by repenting every day. So they say that one must achieve sanctification. Many people are deceived by this, and they stand against it with this word.

"You will know after this"

Jesus said to Peter, *"What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this" (John 13:7)*. Did Peter know

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

its meaning, or did he not? After Jesus died on the Cross and rose again three days later, Peter, disheartened, was fishing at night with the disciples on the Sea of Galilee. Then the Lord appeared on the shore and said, *"Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some" (John 21:6)*. When they cast the net on the right side of the boat, they caught so many fish that they could not lift the net, and when they dragged it up, it was *"full of large fish, one hundred and fifty-three" (John 21:11)*. When the disciple who was beside him recognized that the One speaking from the shore was Jesus, Peter put on his outer garment, jumped into the sea, and swam to shore. Jesus had prepared fish and bread on the shore and was waiting, and He gave them bread and fish and had breakfast with the disciples.

The Bible records what happened after they had eaten breakfast as follows: *"'Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?' He said to Him, 'Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.' He said to him, 'Feed My lambs'" (John 21:15)*. When the risen Jesus appeared to Peter again, gave him bread and fish, had breakfast with him, and then asked him this, Peter came to know at that time the meaning of the word the Lord had spoken, *"You will know after this" (John 13:7)*—that is, why the Lord had washed his feet.

Because he knew that meaning, Peter could answer, *"Yes, Lord; You know that I love You" (John 21:15)*. In that answer was contained the heart, "You have washed my feet completely, even all the sins I commit on this earth, even all the sins I commit out of weakness and by mistake, so I cannot help but love You."

Jesus asked the same question three times, and Peter could not help but give the same answer to the same question. The second time He said, *"Tend My sheep" (John 21:16)*, and the third time He said, *"Feed My sheep" (John 21:17)*. Peter's answer meant, "Since You have removed all my transgressions

and sins, how could I not love You?" If He had not washed away all his sins, Peter could have hated the Lord and could have said, "The Lord used to be my Savior, but now He is not my Savior." But since He had washed away all his sins, how could he say that the Lord was not his Savior, and how could he hate the Lord?

Peter could not help but love the Lord, who had accepted all his transgressions and washed them all away, and he could not help but be grateful to Him. Three times he gave the same answer to the same question, and three times the Lord made the same request. This word to feed and tend the sheep means to preach to the people of the world that the Lord has removed their sins and so to wash their feet. It means to spread this gospel that, just as the Lord washed Peter's feet, He has also washed the feet of the people of the world. It means to teach and feed them, that is, to shepherd them.

Peter could not help but confess so before the Lord. We too cannot help but confess so before the Lord. We have many transgressions and weak points. But the Lord has washed our feet completely. Have you had your feet washed before the Lord? When the Lord said, *"For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you" (John 13:15),* and said, *"If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them" (John 13:17),* He meant that we should preach this gospel that washes the feet. We must wash the spiritual feet of the people of the world. We must spread this gospel that the Lord has removed all their actual sins.

This is the true spread of the gospel: "The Lord has removed all the sins of all the people of the world. He has removed all your sins. He has removed not only the original sin of those who believe in Jesus but all their actual sins." We must spread this. But there are many people who cannot say this.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

"He loved them to the end"

This is a frustrating thing. Especially among those who claim to have the gospel, those who are called evangelicals in the world, there are also many who do not know this and who say that they have received the remission of all other sins, including original sin, but that actual sins must be washed every day. Are they washed every day? Did the Lord already wash all of Peter's transgressions and actual sins clean before the Passover, or did the risen Jesus appear after Peter had sinned, say that He would now wash his feet, and wash them later? The Lord had already washed Peter's feet. We must know this fact. But people do not believe this, nor do they know it. In that case, John chapter 13 should be torn out of the Bible and thrown away. There would have been no need for Jesus to wash Peter's feet before the Passover, before He died on the Cross, and no need for this word to be recorded.

But this event is recorded. At that important time before the Passover, Jesus Himself washed the feet of Peter and the disciples as though it were His last will, and set the example that they too should do this to one another. To wash one another's feet means to wash one another's feet with the gospel of truth that He has removed all sins, that is, with the gospel of the water and the Spirit. It means that all the people of the world should wash one another's feet. Though this word clearly exists, why do people stubbornly refuse to believe it? The event of His death on the Cross is important, but we must also know, believe, and do this word in which Jesus, before He died, before the Passover, washed the disciples' feet and set the example that they should do this to one another.

This is very important. People treasure the event of Jesus' death on the Cross. They all believe that Jesus bore all the sins

of this world and died on the Cross. Then they must also believe the fact that Jesus bore even the actual sins of all the people of the world and died. If they say they believe the gospel but do not believe this, their body is all clean but their feet are dirty, and if the feet are dirty, that body is dirty.

Let us suppose that, however clean we washed ourselves before going out, we stepped in filth on the way. Let us suppose that we sank up to our ankles, not in a cesspit but in a puddle of rainwater. Our socks are soaked black, our shoes are ruined, and we are dirty all the way up to our ankles. Then that body is dirty. If sin, that is, actual sins, remains after believing in Jesus, then one has not yet had his sins washed away. He is dirty, and he is a sinner. Only a person who has received the remission of sins perfectly and flawlessly through the Lord, from the tips of his toes to the top of his head, a person who has been washed clean, is a person who has received the remission of sins, a righteous person, and a saint.

The Bible also says this. Proverbs says, *"There is a generation that is pure in its own eyes, Yet is not washed from its filthiness" (Proverbs 30:12)*. It means that there are many Christian believers who, even while believing in Jesus, have sin in their hearts and yet do not want to have all those sins washed away. We too were once among such people. Because we believed in Jesus, we thought it was all right even if we had sin.

We must preach the gospel to such people. We must ask not merely whether they believe in Jesus, but whether they have had even their feet washed clean, whether they have received the remission of all sins, including actual sins. How many people are there in this world who believe in Jesus yet have not had even their feet washed? Very many. We too nearly went to hell. We would have stubbornly believed that we would go to the kingdom of heaven because we believed in Jesus. Those who

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

follow Calvinist predestination set up the equation, "I believe in Jesus, but I have sin. But because the Lord chose me, I believe in Jesus. Therefore, even though I have sin, because I believe in Jesus, I go to the kingdom of heaven." But Jesus has washed the sin of His own people completely clean.

How did the Lord love His own people? "*Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end" (John 13:1)*. The Lord knew that the time had come for Him to die on the Cross. And He loved to the end the disciples He would leave behind in this world. He had to show that He loved them to the end, and the way He did so was precisely by drawing water in a basin, washing the feet of Peter and the disciples, and wiping them clean. And to Peter, who did not know the reason, He said, *"What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this" (John 13:7)*. It was in order to show that He had removed to the end all the sins the disciples would commit throughout their lives, that is, even their actual sins, and that He had loved the disciples to the end, that He drew water in a basin and washed Peter's feet.

The Lord loved us to the end. After saving us, if we sin and are weak, does the Lord forsake us? The Lord never forsakes those who know and believe what the Lord has done, but loves them to the end. As long as we do not betray the Lord and nullify the Lord's merit, saying, "The Lord was not able to remove all my sins"—as long as we simply believe it—whatever transgressions and weaknesses we may have, all those sins are sins that the Lord has borne to the end and removed. That is why it is recorded that He loved them to the end. The Lord has removed all our sins, the sins we commit throughout our lives, to the end and once and for all. This is the gospel. The true gospel

is this.

To say that after believing in Jesus one received the remission of original sin but not of actual sins, and that actual sins are remitted every day whenever one repents, is not the gospel. That is deceiving people with the word of God. In it there is leaven, that is, human thought. That is a false gospel.

The gospel the apostle Paul preached

Let us look at the word in Galatians. *"Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen" (Galatians 1:4–5)*. It means that Christ, according to the will of God the Father, gave Himself because of our sins in order to rescue us from this evil age. We live in this evil world. The apostle Paul says that the Lord gave His own body in order to rescue us from all the sins we commit while living in that evil world.

Paul then says as follows: *"I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:6–8)*. He said that there is no other gospel. But he said, *"There are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ" (Galatians 1:7)*. Troubling you means shaking people's faith by saying that one receives the remission of sins only by diligently doing something. At that time there were people who said that even if one believed in Jesus, one became one of God's people only by being circumcised.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

In today's terms, it is to say that even after believing in Jesus, actual sins must be remitted through prayers of repentance. So, trying to receive remission by confessing the sins committed each day at every all-night prayer, every fasting prayer, and every prayer meeting—this is a different gospel, a gospel that shakes people's faith. Not believing that the Lord has already removed all sins, that He has washed even the feet, and trying to have actual sins washed away through prayers of repentance after receiving the remission of sins is a different gospel. The apostle Paul says that if anyone preaches a different gospel, even if it is an angel from heaven, he will be accursed.

The apostle Paul also says as follows: *"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified" (Galatians 2:16)*. The apostle Paul says that a person can never become righteous by the works of the law. It means that one cannot become righteous by any deed, but can be made completely righteous and become a righteous person only by faith, that is, only by believing the gospel that Jesus Christ has washed even the feet.

Let us look at the gospel the apostle Paul preached. *"But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Galatians 3:25–27)*. This is the very gospel the apostle Paul preached. He preached the fact that when Jesus Christ received baptism from John, our sins were all passed on to Him. To preach this—that through the baptism He received from John, Jesus Christ had all the sin of all mankind, all the sins until the last day of this world, transferred to Him, accomplished it all by dying on the Cross, and rose again from death three days later—

was the gospel the apostle Paul preached.

Let us look again at what kind of gospel the apostle Paul preached. *"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain" (Galatians 2:20–21)*. What does the word *"I have been crucified with Christ" (Galatians 2:20)* mean? As we saw earlier, the apostle Paul said, *"For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Galatians 3:27)*. It means that although Jesus Christ was without sin, when He received baptism from John at the Jordan River, He had all our sins transferred to Him and died on the Cross, and therefore we also died at that time. And it means that when Jesus Christ rose again, those who believe the fact that their sins were passed on to Jesus also rose again together with Him. The apostle Paul is testifying of the gospel in this way.

This is the very gospel the apostle Paul preached. When Jesus received baptism from John, He had our sins transferred to Him; His death on the Cross after that is our very death; and His rising again from the tomb three days after He died on the Cross is the proof that He gave us life and saved us. Jesus Christ rose again as the proof that He had rescued us from sin, as the sign that He had saved us. If it had ended with Jesus having all our sins transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John and dying on the Cross, we too would have died with Him and would have been dead forever, and there would have been no hope. But Jesus Christ rose again. He came back to life. Therefore, those who believe in that Jesus have died with Him on the Cross, have risen again with Him, and have obtained new life.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

This was the very gospel the apostle Paul preached. There is no other gospel. To preach this gospel of the water and the Spirit—that when Jesus received baptism from John, He had all sins transferred to Him, shed His blood and died on the Cross, and rose again from death three days later, and so removed all sins once and for all—this was the gospel the apostle Paul preached. How can you and I die on the Cross together with Jesus Christ? Those who believe the word that when Jesus received baptism from John the Baptist He had all our sins transferred to Him are the ones who are crucified and die together with Jesus Christ. And they rise again together with Jesus Christ and live again. To die with Jesus Christ and to live with Him is said concerning the faith of those who believe what Jesus Christ has done. Those who believe die with Jesus Christ, live again with Him, and obtain new life. This is the gospel.

The apostle Paul said that if anyone preached a gospel different from the one he preached, even an angel come down from heaven would be accursed. How sternly he is speaking! It means that even an angel who has come down from heaven with a special command from God will be accursed if he does not preach this gospel—that Jesus Christ came to this earth, received baptism from John the Baptist, and had all our sins transferred to Him, and that He died on the Cross and rose again from death three days later—but preaches it falsely. This is certain before God.

The gospel we preach, the gospel the apostle Paul preached, and the meaning of Jesus' washing of Peter's feet are this: the Lord has washed clean all the sins we commit until we die, even all those actual sins. To believe and preach this is the gospel. The Lord has made us perfectly and flawlessly clean. Is it shameful to preach this? When we preach the gospel, we must preach this.

Preach the true meaning of this word

If someone argues, saying this about the Greek and that about the Hebrew, tell him to open the Bible, read it himself, and try to explain it. Some people say that Jesus set this example so that they would love one another and cherish one another. But that is said without knowing this word. Would a person facing death leave behind only the words that they should simply not fight with one another but love one another? The Lord often said to love one another at ordinary times as well.

Before the Passover, knowing that the time had come for Him to go to the Father, the Lord, at the last, washed the feet of His disciples in particular, and of Peter, His chief disciple, to whom He would entrust the gospel, telling them not to be deceived by Satan the devil and that He had washed away all sins. And He said, *"You will know after this" (John 13:7)*, and told them to do to one another as He had set an example, to wash one another's feet. This was the Lord's final confirmation that He had removed and washed away all of Peter's sins, all the sins he would commit to the end while living in the world. It was because only by His confirming it in this way could Peter, as a person who had received the remission of all his sins, preach the gospel boldly to the people of later generations without being bound by his own sins, that Jesus performed this ceremony for the disciples. We must preach this meaning. We must know Jesus, who could not help but do so because He loved His disciples to the end and had removed all their sins.

We must preach this gospel. If there is someone who says, "Why do you keep saying such things with the story of the washing of Peter's feet?" tell that person to read it himself and explain it. If he acts too clever, tell him to interpret this word line by line from the beginning. One must not say unconditionally

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

that this is not its meaning without even knowing. If he does not know, he must close his mouth and learn. If both become teachers, there is no disciple. Of the two, one must teach and the other must learn.

At one time, washing one another's feet spread here and there like a fad. When I was attending seminary, a certain minister came to the dormitory and said that he had washed the feet of his church members. When I asked him why he had washed their feet, he replied by asking whether it was not written so in the Bible. He said that when he washed his church members' feet with soap and dried them with a towel, he could not tell me how much the members liked it and how humble they became, and how well they listened to him from then on. So I asked him whether, if that was really the meaning of that word, all the churches in the world should not do so. Even so, he said that whether that was the meaning or not, it was a good thing, so we should do it; but I said that I would not. The apostles also said, *"We will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word" (Acts 6:4)*, and did not say a single word about washing feet. Jesus washed His disciples' feet, but the meaning was not to wash physical feet.

Washing feet itself is not a great thing. If one intends to do it, one can do it as much as one likes. But what benefit would there be in doing it? Because there is no benefit, people do not do it. If there were truly a great benefit to the other person, why would they not do it? But even those who once did so do not do it now. It is because it was not something they did after rightly understanding this word. If it had truly been a right understanding, they would still be doing it steadily even now, whether others did it or not. Even in the churches of orthodox denominations that I know, it is rare now for pastors to wash their church members' feet.

Washing feet was something done by misunderstanding this word. This word tells us to preach to other people who have not yet received the remission of sins, "The Lord has washed away and removed all your actual sins." This is the meaning of this word. This gospel is something we can speak of without shame to anyone. The Bible must be viewed as a whole. And a person who has not been born again can never interpret the Bible correctly. It is not that I am saying I alone am great; this is exactly the gospel we preach.

We must preach this gospel. Preach this, whether to students or to anyone. Even if people pick a quarrel, speak confidently. We must preach this gospel boldly. However much we talk about other things, it is of no use. To those who already say they believe in Jesus, we must ask whether, while saying they believe in Jesus, they have had even their dirty feet washed clean. We must spread that. The Lord told us to do this to one another and asked it of us. I hope that you will become saints who preach this gospel that washes the feet and carry out the Lord's request. ✉

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Sermon 3 by Paul C. Jong

He has already washed away even our actual sins completely

< John 13:1–17 >

"Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end. And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded. Then He came to Simon Peter. And Peter said to Him, 'Lord, are You washing my feet?' Jesus answered and said to him, 'What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this.' Peter said to Him, 'You shall never wash my feet!' Jesus answered him, 'If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.' Simon Peter said to Him, 'Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!' Jesus said to him, 'He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you.' For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, 'You are not all clean.' So when He had

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, 'Do you know what I have done to you? You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.'"

Why did He wash Peter's feet?

Why did Jesus wash Peter's feet? Why, as He washed Peter's feet, did Jesus say, *"You do not understand now, but you will know after this" (John 13:7),* and what is the meaning of that word? In fact, Peter had also clearly made a confession of faith that he believed in the Lord as his Savior, as the Son of God, and as the King of kings. He confessed, *"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16).*

Then why did Jesus wash Peter's feet? In fact, Jesus knew that Peter would deny Him three times, and He also knew that Peter would commit sin before the Lord in the future. That is why Jesus washed his feet, in order to save Peter from his trespasses and actual sins. The Lord gave an object lesson in order to teach that He had borne even the sins Peter would commit in the future. If, after the Lord's ascension, even a little sin remained in Peter's heart, would there not be awkwardness in his relationship with the Lord? The Lord perceived the hearts of the disciples—the souls of the disciples. The Lord did not want the least hindrance in His relationship with Peter and all His other disciples. That is why the Lord washed Peter's feet.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

The Lord washed Peter's feet in order to show beforehand, "I have washed away in advance even all the sins you will commit in the future." If we, who live the life of disciples who believe in Jesus, commit actual sins against the Lord because of weakness, and so have sin of any kind in our hearts, could we have fellowship with the Lord? When there is a hindrance in our hearts, fellowship grows distant. That is why the Lord washed away the disciples' sins in advance. He washed His disciples' feet in order to show beforehand that Jesus had washed away all sins.

Jesus is the Son of God the Father, having come clothed in human flesh; to us He is the Creator and God, and He is the Savior of you and me. Now I am going to examine this word, which we know well.

Dear fellow believers, you know this word of John chapter 13 well, don't you? John chapter 13 is the part where Jesus gave His disciples a very important teaching before He was crucified. Through the Passover ceremony, Jesus spoke once again, with emphasis, to the disciples who followed Him about the solution to actual sins. While He was eating supper with the disciples, Jesus rose and washed their feet. He did this so that the disciples would not be deceived by Satan the devil—in order to teach them that Jesus had removed all their sins, that is, that through the baptism He received from John at the Jordan River He had already had all their sins transferred to Him, and that He would later receive all the judgment for those sins on the Cross. That is why Jesus said, *"You do not understand now, but you will know after this" (John 13:7)*.

The word says, *"Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end" (John 13:1)*. Jesus knew that

His time had come to be hung on the Cross and to go up to God the Father. Because He loved His disciples to the end, Jesus wanted to have the Last Supper with His disciples before He died on the Cross. The Bible goes on to record, *"And that He had come from God and was going to God, rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded. Then He came to Simon Peter. And Peter said to Him, 'Lord, are You washing my feet?' Jesus answered and said to him, 'What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this'" (John 13:3–7)*. In fact, Peter did not know the Lord's deep intention—why Jesus was washing his feet. The Lord washed his feet in advance so that, even if Peter committed sin in the future, he would not become a sinner who could not come before the Lord because of that sin. There was no way Peter could have known that. Jesus washed Peter's feet in order to teach him this—"I have removed all your sins. I have washed away even the sins you will commit in the future"—and also to keep Satan the devil from stealing Peter's heart because of Peter's sins.

Jesus washed Peter's feet in order to show that the Lord had already washed away all sins. If the Lord had not washed Peter's feet in advance, Peter would have had no choice but to go back to being a sinner again; that is why, before He went to the kingdom of heaven, the Lord washed Peter's feet and the disciples' feet. Peter came to know later the intention with which Jesus was washing his feet.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

The laver and the Jordan River

Dear fellow believers, originally there was a laver in the tabernacle of the Old Testament. The priests of the Old Testament washed their feet and hands clean with the water in the laver. In this way they escaped being put to death by God. The Bible records, *"For Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet in water from it. When they go into the tabernacle of meeting, or when they come near the altar to minister, to burn an offering made by fire to the LORD, they shall wash with water, lest they die" (Exodus 30:19–20)*. In the Bible, bronze speaks of the judgment of God. Silver speaks of the grace of God, and gold speaks of faith. In this way, through the water of the laver, God is telling sinners to believe the word of truth that has washed away all our sins and so have their actual sins washed away. The Lord has remitted all the sins of sinners through the baptism He received from John and the Cross, and He has made it so that they are saved from all actual sins as well. Those who have received the remission of sins know how important a part Jesus is speaking of in this word. Jesus kept the Passover rite and washed Peter's feet in order to teach the disciples clearly that before He died on the Cross He had washed away clean even the actual sins of all people.

It is as if the Lord were saying to the disciples, "You do not know now why I am washing your feet. But when you know the reason for the baptism I received from John at the Jordan River for your sins, you will know why I have washed your feet."

We must know that Jesus washed Peter's feet and saved him from all actual sins. Through the event at the Jordan River we must come to know, "So the Lord has truly removed all the sins of us sinners!" and we must also know, from the word the Lord spoke on the Cross, *"It is finished!" (John 19:30)*, that Jesus

took away the sin of the world. The Lord took away all our sins and removed them. Dear fellow believers, think about this: "Now that you believe in Jesus, do you have sin or not? Do you believe in Jesus rightly?" If you believe in Jesus rightly, you have no sin. Isn't that so?

Jesus is God. Jesus knows well how Satan the devil will deceive us in the future. The disciples of Jesus clearly believed that the Lord had become their Savior. Look at Peter in this word. Peter's heart was as follows: "Lord, how can You wash my feet? We believe that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God. Indeed, You are my God, my Savior, and our Prophet. You are the Son of God the Father."

When Jesus looked at His disciples, He knew that after He Himself had died on the Cross, risen again, ascended, and gone up before God the Father, these disciples would commit sins on this earth because of the weakness of the flesh. When the disciples commit sins later on, Satan the devil condemns them, saying, "You commit sins, and you have no sin? You are a sinner." But Jesus had already had all the sins of the disciples, even all their actual sins, transferred to Him once and for all through the baptism He received from John at the Jordan River, and He completely finished the judgment for them on the Cross. Because the disciples absolutely had to have the faith that believes this, Jesus washed the feet of Peter and the disciples. Not only the disciples of Jesus but also you and I in this age must ruminate on this again by faith and not be shaken. Only when we have the faith of having been saved by the water and the Spirit can we preach the Lord's gospel; only when we believe in Jesus in this way can we become righteous people without a single sin; and even when there are shortcomings after we have received the remission of sins, we can live a life of faith by faith and give thanks. That is why, as He washed Peter's feet, Jesus

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

spoke of the assurance of salvation.

Now, have you received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit? Do you believe that Jesus has removed all sins through the baptism He received from John and the Cross? If you have believed this and received the remission of all sins, do you become a sinner again because of the sins you commit after being saved? No. Since our Lord took away all sins, how could we become sinners again?

We righteous people cannot become sinners again. If you say that you have received the remission of sins and yet your heart comes to have sin again because of the sins you have committed, then you will have to go to the Jordan River, where Jesus bore the sin of the world to save you. And there you will have to examine again the fact that Jesus bore your sins, and believe in Jesus again as your Savior. If you have truly believed in Jesus as the Savior—if you believe that all your sins were transferred onto the body of Jesus through the baptism He received from John, and if you truly accept and believe the word of the death of Jesus and the resurrection of Jesus—then whatever state your circumstances may be in, you will never become a sinner because of your circumstances.

What made you and me righteous is the work the Lord did, so it remains unchanged forever. The Lord has become the Savior of all sinners. Are you a sinner? You are righteous. Believe in the Lord. And give thanks. But after receiving the remission of sins, do we commit sins because the flesh is weak, or not? We do commit sins. We commit sins, so why do we not become sinners? It is because the Lord had even the sins we commit out of weakness after receiving the remission of sins all transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John the Baptist, and because the Lord bore all the sins of sinners forever, that we have no sin through believing in Jesus. If Jesus

had ascended without treating this part as important and without speaking of it clearly, the disciples would not have been able to preach the gospel.

"You have no part with Me"

The Bible records, *"Peter said to Him, 'You shall never wash my feet!' Jesus answered him, 'If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me'" (John 13:8)*. Peter refused, but Jesus said clearly that if He did not wash him, he would have no part with Him. That is why Jesus had to wash Peter's feet. For only then would Peter come to know what Jesus had done, and only then could what Jesus had done become complete for Peter without being in vain. That Jesus washes feet means that Jesus has washed away all the sins people commit while they live in this world. It means that the Lord has washed away even the sins people will commit in the future. Even after Jesus died on the Cross and went up to the Father's kingdom, Peter committed sins, and those eleven disciples also committed sins out of weakness as they lived on this earth; only when they had the faith that believed the fact that Jesus, our Savior, had borne even all the sins we commit because of the weakness of our flesh could the hearts of the disciples become holy so that they could preach this gospel. That is why Jesus washed Peter's feet.

And this was the fulfillment of the Old Testament word concerning the laver of the Old Testament. The laver of the Old Testament, too, held water in a vessel made of bronze and washed away the filth of the hands and feet of the priests when they went into the Holy Place. Jesus, too, by washing Peter's feet completely in advance once and for all, saved Peter even from his actual sins—just as the water of the laver made of bronze

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

washed the hands and feet of Aaron and let him come before the Lord. That the laver of the Old Testament was made of bronze tells us that all the sins of sinners had already been judged through the sacrificial offering. As the bronze shows, because Jesus was judged in the place of all sinners, all of us have been able to come to God by faith. We must give thanks for the law of the Lord, who gave us the tabernacle and gave, in the tabernacle, the laying on of hands, judgment, and grace. If there had not been the word of God contained in the bronze laver, we could not have come to the Lord at all times.

Because our Lord had beforehand had the sin of the world transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John at the Jordan River, He could receive the punishment on the Cross, and by the ordinance of salvation the Lord carried out, we have come to receive the remission of sins. Before He died on the Cross, Jesus, as He washed Peter's feet, spoke of the reason He was washing his feet. When we look at Peter later on, that reason becomes truly plain. Jesus was arrested and interrogated by the high priest, and finally, in Pilate's court, He received a verdict that He was guilty and was handed over to the soldiers.

When Peter, that disciple who loved Jesus, held out, saying, *"You shall never wash my feet!" (John 13:8)*, Jesus said, *"If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me,"* and Peter said, *"Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!" (John 13:9)*. Then the Lord put an end to the argument by saying, *"He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean" (John 13:10)*.

Peter's denial and the weakness of the flesh

But Peter, the chief disciple of Jesus, denied Jesus as many

as three times in the courtyard of the high priest's house. It was for that time that Jesus spoke of washing his feet. Peter had said, "I will follow You, Lord, until I die," but Jesus, knowing all about what sin Peter would commit in the future, said to Peter, *"The rooster shall not crow till you have denied Me three times" (John 13:38)*. Peter said, "That will never happen. Whatever happens, I will not fall away from You. Until death separates me from You, Lord, I will not leave You," and then, not long after, he really did deny Jesus as many as three times, and even went so far as to curse and swear. The Lord had already had that sin, too, transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John, and by His death on the Cross He received the punishment of all mankind in their place.

In that courtyard there were servant girls who ran errands. The servant girls and those who stood by saw Peter and said as many as three times, "You are of that faction, too. You are one of that party." The Bible records that the first two times Peter denied it, saying, "No. I am absolutely not. I do not know that man," and that the third time he denied it with a curse and an oath. Let us look at the word of the Gospel of Matthew. *"Now Peter sat outside in the courtyard. And a servant girl came to him, saying, 'You also were with Jesus of Galilee.' But he denied it before them all, saying, 'I do not know what you are saying.' And when he had gone out to the gateway, another girl saw him and said to those who were there, 'This fellow also was with Jesus of Nazareth.' But again he denied with an oath, 'I do not know the Man!' And a little later those who stood by came up and said to Peter, 'Surely you also are one of them, for your speech betrays you.' Then he began to curse and swear, saying, 'I do not know the Man!' Immediately a rooster crowed. And Peter remembered the word of Jesus who had said to him, 'Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.' So he*

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

went out and wept bitterly" (Matthew 26:69–75).

Dear fellow believers, Jesus knows what sins the disciples who follow and believe in the Lord will commit. This means that the Lord knows the weak side of human beings. That is why Jesus said, *"What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this" (John 13:7)*, and also said, *"If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me" (John 13:8)*. Dear fellow believers, Peter truly believed in Jesus, truly followed Him, and really believed that Jesus was his own God, Savior, and Prophet. While Peter went about with Jesus, he got along well without any trouble, but when the Lord was being interrogated before the high priest, he denied Him, even cursing. We do not know what he said when he cursed, but a curse is an extremely harsh word. Yet Peter did not know that when things turned against him, he would end up denying Jesus. But Jesus knew Peter's weakness. That is why, as He washed Peter's feet, it was as if He were saying, "You will commit sin in the future. But I have already remitted even that sin." Peter believed in Jesus, yet, fearing that he might die, he ended up denying Jesus. This is precisely the weakness of human flesh. Knowing human weakness, the Lord washed Peter's feet. "I have borne even the sins you will commit in the future, and I have also received the judgment you were to receive in the future. I have become your complete Savior. I have become your God; I am your God, I am the Savior who has saved you from your sins, and I am your true Teacher." In order to plant this clearly in the hearts of the disciples, Jesus washed the disciples' feet at this Passover rite. Only when we know and believe can we be saved and even enter the kingdom of heaven. And by faith we can also become disciples of Jesus. We righteous people have already become disciples who follow Jesus, and we are following Him. We give thanks to the Lord.

Dear fellow believers, we commit sins as we live on this

earth. Dear fellow believers, even after receiving the remission of sins, because we still live in the flesh, there are areas where we commit sins out of weakness. Of course, we must not commit sins. But, dear fellow believers, like Peter, when we cannot follow the will of the Lord, when things are very much against us, and when we ourselves are truly in a situation where we would die, we tell lies before we know it, and before we know it we are dragged into sin and commit sins. Human flesh is weak and lacking and always commits sins. But the Lord has saved us from all these sins. It is not that we deny the very statement that Jesus is our Savior, but that when things turn against us, lies just come bursting out. When we follow the flesh, we also commit sins regardless of the will of the Lord. For sin begins from the instincts of the flesh. Jesus knew well the weakness of human flesh—of human instincts. That is why Jesus washed the feet of Peter and of His disciples. To the end, Jesus became our Savior. To the end, Jesus became the complete Savior, who removed all the sins of all sinners.

When Peter had denied Him once, denied Him twice, and denied Him a third time, the rooster crowed. At that moment, it is written, *"The Lord turned and looked at Peter" (Luke 22:61)*. When Peter's eyes met the eyes of Jesus, how his heart must have flinched, and how ashamed his conscience must have been! "I will never deny You." How wretched and how mortified he must have been—he himself, who had sworn so! But Jesus knew. It is as if the Lord were saying to Peter, "Did I not wash your feet, knowing that you would commit sin, and fearing that you would stumble and become a sinner again? Knowing that this would happen in the future, I bore even that sin. I received judgment even for that sin and became your complete Savior. I have become your God, and I have become your complete Teacher. Believe this forever. Even though you are lacking, I

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

loved you. My removing your sins is eternal. My heart that loves you will absolutely never change, forever." It was in order to let Peter and the disciples know this fact that He said, *"If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me" (John 13:8)*. Dear fellow believers, do you understand? Because this word is important, Jesus spoke this word.

Original sin and even actual sins

"Simon Peter said to Him, 'Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!' Jesus said to him, 'He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet'" (John 13:9–10). Now, dear fellow believers, original sin, which theology speaks of and which we are born with from our mother's womb, and even the actual sins we commit after believing in Jesus have all been passed on to Jesus Christ through the baptism He received from John. Then there is no sin in you yourselves. The sins committed after believing in Jesus Christ and receiving the remission of sins can be called sins committed with the feet. But our Lord says that by washing feet He Himself has borne even those sins. It was necessary for Jesus, before He died on the Cross, to tell His disciples clearly, "I have had all those sins transferred to Me through baptism. I have washed them all away. I have borne even the sins you will commit in the future and have washed them all away." Because it was necessary to plant the assurance of faith in them, He washed His disciples' feet.

But this is by no means saying that since the flesh is always weak, it is all right to commit sin. What is clear is that the first word in this John chapter 13 is this word: that our Lord removed the sin of the world, all the sins of sinners, and has completely saved as righteous people those who believe it. This means that

He has washed away all the sins that sinners and the righteous commit in this world. Dear fellow believers, do you believe? It means that Jesus not only washed our heads and bodies, but has washed even our legs. *"Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29)*. That is why, when we believe in Jesus Christ, we confirm and believe that all the sins of sinners were passed on to Jesus Christ at the Jordan River. And Jesus tells us that He had all the sins sinners commit transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John and received all the punishment for those sins on the Cross, and we believe it. And from then on, as we go on living, each time human weakness shows itself in us as in Peter, we confirm once again the fact that our Lord had even this sin transferred to Him at that time at the Jordan River and was judged for it all on the Cross. You and I come to make this confession of faith: "Thank You, Lord. Just as the Lord washed Peter's feet, knowing that Peter would do this, the Lord has washed away all my sins, knowing that I would do this. The Lord is my Savior and my God."

If you do not understand what this means, it can be said that you have not received the remission of sins. That Jesus washed Peter's feet means that He knew even the sins Peter would commit in the future and washed those, too, clean. If you say that someone who has believed in Jesus and been saved cannot become a disciple if he commits sin in the future, and becomes a person who cannot be saved if he commits sin, then you must be a sinner. A person who has truly received the remission of sins goes by faith to Bethlehem, to the Jordan River, to the Cross, to the place of the resurrection, and to the right hand of the throne of God the Father. And he believes. And by faith he gives glory, praise, and thanks to God.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Peter's confession of love

If we look at the last chapter of the Gospel of John, the risen Jesus went to find Peter at the Sea of Galilee and said, *"Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?" (John 21:15)*. At this Peter made the confession of faith, *"You know that I love You" (John 21:15)*, and the Lord said to Peter, *"Feed My sheep" (John 21:17)*. This faith of Peter came to stand completely in the truth through the foot-washing. Because he knew and believed the intention with which our Lord had washed Peter's feet, his faith in the Lord became firm.

Let us look at the word of that scene. The risen Jesus appeared to His disciples. *"So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?' He said to Him, 'Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.' He said to him, 'Feed My lambs'" (John 21:15)*. Jesus Christ entrusted Peter with feeding food to the Lord's disciples, to the Lord's people. Because Peter was a complete disciple who had been completely saved, a completely righteous person, and a complete servant, the Lord could entrust His people to Peter. Dear fellow believers, if Peter had become a sinner because he committed sins out of the weakness of the flesh, the Lord could not have entrusted His people to that sinner. But before His ascension after His resurrection—before He went up to the kingdom of heaven—Jesus said, *"Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?" (John 21:15)*, and Peter answered, *"Yes, Lord; You know that I love You" (John 21:15)*.

Dear fellow believers, let us listen to Peter's words. *"He said to him the third time, 'Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?' Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, 'Do you love Me?' And he said to Him, 'Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You'" (John 21:17)*. This confession of

faith is the gift of salvation that the Lord gave. If Jesus had not done this foot-washing found in John chapter 13 for Peter or for those eleven disciples, then when the risen Lord appeared to Peter and asked, *"Do you love Me more than these?" (John 21:15)*, how would Peter have answered? We must think about this. "I am lacking. I am a sinner. I cannot love You more than these." He would have had no choice but to say so. But let us lend an ear to the answer of Peter, who received the grace of salvation our Lord gave. *"You know that I love You" (John 21:16)*. Dear fellow believers, this came entirely from faith. It is the confession of faith that came from the faith that believes that the Lord had removed all of Peter's own sins. If Peter had not received the complete salvation of God's everlasting and infinite love—that the Lord removed even all the sins he committed out of weakness after believing in Jesus Christ, whether he committed them with his feet or with his hands—Peter would have believed in Jesus and then fallen back into being a sinner. But the Lord did not leave those He loves that way. Peter's salvation was salvation by Jesus. The faith in the remission of sins that Peter had was faith that came from the remission of all these sins Jesus accomplished through the baptism He received from John and His death on the Cross.

Dear fellow believers, is that so, or is it not? *"You know that I love You."* This means, "Since the Lord has saved me this completely, how could I not love You?" Dear fellow believers, is that so, or is it not? Since the Lord has removed our sins, the sin of the world, how could you and I not love the Lord? Dear fellow believers, is it possible for you not to love the Lord? No. Absolutely not. If the Lord had remitted our sins up to the time we believed in Jesus Christ, and remitted the sins we commit after believing by our offering prayers of confession every day, then, being lazy, we would fail to plead over every one of them,

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

and sin would remain in our hearts. If we become sinners, how can we love the Lord? We become unable to love the Lord. How can we believe in the Lord? We become unable to believe. How can we follow the Lord? Even if we want to follow the Lord, we become unable to follow Him. But the Lord Jesus had even all those sins of our weakness transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John. Because our Lord, who is our complete Savior, has removed even all the sins we commit in the world, we come to believe in the Lord, we come to be unable not to love the Lord, and we cannot but love the Lord. Dear fellow believers, do you understand? Dear fellow believers, if the Lord had left even a hair's breadth of my sins unremoved, I would have been someone who could neither believe in the Lord nor become the Lord's witness and work. Is it the same with you?

"'You know that I love You.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed My sheep'" (John 21:17). Dear fellow believers, it is to the Lord's people who have truly received the remission of sins completely that the Lord entrusts His lambs. Dear fellow believers, do you understand? Also, the Lord asked as many as three times, *"Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" (John 21:16)*, and Peter said, *"Yes, Lord; You know that I love You" (John 21:16)*. Dear fellow believers, our faith is not faith that believes by one's own will. What is our faith based on? If it is not faith that believes in oneself, is it based on faith that believes in the Lord? Yes, it is. It is a confession of faith that comes from faith that believes in the Lord.

Dear fellow believers, when we love someone, too, if we have a faith that believes by our own will, then when we are weak we end up stumbling. But if it is not our own will, and the strength of the other person's love is great, then even though we are lacking, the love with that person cannot but continue. Dear fellow believers, God's love for us is called agape (ἀγάπη) love,

and our believing in God is based on God's love and God's complete salvation. Our serving God as God's workers and our loving God are also love based on God's love. Dear fellow believers, is that so?

Dear fellow believers, if we believed in God with the faith of our own will, there would be many people who would believe well today, stumble tomorrow, curse their own faith, and give it up; but the Lord loved us so much that He removed all our sins and is holding on to us. Without leaving out a single person, the Lord removed all the sins of everyone, even those of this man here, Peter. Yes, it is so. If it were our will, our love, and our faith, we could not but become failures in our life of faith and in our faith, but if the Lord has saved us, we become successful ones. We are children of God. We have become righteous through the Lord. In fact, we have no sin. That we have been saved is not because of faith in ourselves or human love, but because of God's love and God's salvation. Because ours is the faith of those who have received the salvation based on God's law of the truth of salvation, we are righteous now, we are believers, we are living a life of faith as those who will go to the kingdom of heaven, and we have come to live a life of faith through God, praising God forever in the future. Dear fellow believers, do you believe?

That is why the Bible says, *"In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10)*. If God has saved us, then believing it is salvation. If God had not saved us, we could not be saved. But if God has accomplished the remission of sins, we are saved by faith. Our believing in God—our becoming righteous—is believing that God has remitted our sins, and that is being saved, and that is true faith.

The faith of sinners is a faith of the will; it is something

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

people do, saying, "I will follow the Lord even to death." People's faith, or people's faith of the will, or people's love of the will is in fact nothing. Dear fellow believers, that is neither love, nor faith, nor a life of faith. It is merely human will and human emotion. In this world there are many cases in which those who believed with their will when they first believed in Jesus are bound again by sin and give up their faith. But our Lord has saved us not only from the actual sins we have committed but even from the great, grave sins we committed knowingly. In order to teach how far He removed sins and saved us, in John chapter 13, before He Himself died on the Cross, while eating supper with His disciples, Jesus rose, drew water into a basin, and washed the disciples' feet. We must know and believe this.

But Peter alone held out. "You can never wash my feet." When Jesus drew Peter's feet toward Him to wash them, he said, "It is not right for You, Jesus, to wash my feet—never. Lord, You can never, ever wash my feet." But Jesus had already said earlier, *"What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this" (John 13:7)*.

Dear fellow believers, when did Peter come to know that intention of the Lord? He knew it when Jesus had died on the Cross, risen again, and appeared to him. We too must give God the praise of glory by believing that Jesus has already borne all our sins to the end.

Peter went fishing with the disciples of Jesus. While they had gone back to their old occupation and were fishing, Jesus appeared on the seashore. And He called the disciples. When they came onto land, Jesus had prepared breakfast and told them to eat together, so they ate together. While eating, Peter then came to know the meaning of the word He had spoken, *"You will know after this" (John 13:7)*. "So Jesus really has remitted all my sins! He knew even the sins I commit because of

weakness and even the sins I will commit in the future, and He has remitted them all!" After the meal, when Jesus said, *"Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?" (John 21:15)*, Peter at last answered, "Yes. Lord, it is so. You know that I love You. Since You have loved me so much, how could I not love You? You know. My loving You comes from Your love." Dear fellow believers, it was at this time that Peter came to know the meaning of the word *"you will know after this" (John 13:7)*.

The gospel the disciples preached at the risk of their lives

Therefore Peter and all the disciples staked their lives and spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit to people until their lives came to an end. In the harsh Roman era, when people who believed in Jesus were seized and put to death, they testified of Jesus. Here, among the twelve disciples, Judas betrayed Jesus and hanged himself. In place of Judas, the disciples of Jesus chose Matthias. But God chose the apostle Paul. The apostle Paul, too, was a disciple of Jesus.

Dear fellow believers, it is said that almost all of the twelve disciples were martyred. As they were martyred, the disciples spread this faith: "Jesus Christ has removed all your sins. He received baptism from John at the Jordan River and had your sins transferred to Him, shed His blood on the Cross and received judgment, and rose again from death and saved you. Believe. And receive the remission of sins." Many people heard the faith of the disciples, believed, and were saved. "Jesus is God. Jesus is your Savior." The disciples bore this testimony. Because of that testimony, you and I now hear this gospel and receive the remission of sins.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Dear fellow believers, we too became disciples of Jesus Christ through the love of Jesus and through the complete salvation of Jesus. Dear fellow believers, do you believe? We did not become disciples of Jesus because we were so outstanding. We became disciples of Jesus Christ because Jesus loved us this much. In order to teach this, Jesus washed Peter's feet and the disciples' feet. Jesus washed the disciples' feet in order to teach that He had washed away all the sins of the world that you and I commit, so that we would believe it. We give thanks for the Lord's deep love. We give Him praise.

Salvation and service

Look at the word that follows. *"So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, 'Do you know what I have done to you? You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them'" (John 13:12–17)*. That is what He said. Our Lord said, *"What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this" (John 13:7)*, and this means that the Lord has removed all our sins. Jesus washed the disciples' feet in order to show clearly that Jesus is our Lord and at the same time the Savior who served sinners and saved them as righteous people. Jesus performed the service of washing the disciples' feet in order to say, "Just as I have served you, it is right that you also—those of you who have become first—serve

those who have become last."

Dear fellow believers, that is why in the born-again church the people of God who have become first serve the brothers and sisters who have become last. Is that so, or is it not? Those who have gone ahead sometimes seem to treat you sternly, but when you come to know it, it is because there was the service of those who went ahead that you are here.

Dear fellow believers, you must know that there were two meanings in Jesus' washing the disciples' feet at the Passover ceremony in John chapter 13. Salvation and service. These two were clearly there, and these two still exist in the church today. Dear fellow believers, do you understand? In the Church of God these two exist now. Even if the Church of God and the servant of God seem to speak sternly to you, in fact God has saved people through the Church of God and the servant of God. And God has served us. It looks as though you are serving the Church of God, but in fact you are being served by the Lord. That is why the Lord said, *"A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master" (Matthew 10:24)*. Our preaching this gospel is doing this service as Jesus did. And you, too, do this same service for those who come in after you. In order to teach us this, our Lord did the work of washing feet for His disciples, and in order to teach this to us clearly so that we would not be deceived by Satan the devil, He recorded this and gave you and me the blessing of the remission of sins, the blessing of becoming righteous. Through the washing of Peter's feet, the Lord spoke to us of complete salvation and the remission of sins. Through the Passover rite He is now showing that the Lord has become our complete Savior. Dear fellow believers, do you believe that Jesus has washed away all your sins? Believe it. Only by believing the true gospel are we saved from all sins.

We are easily deceived by Satan the devil if we are the least

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

bit careless. Satan the devil speaks in this way: he asks how we can have no sin when we commit sins, and whether we are not sinners—he says such things. Then we in turn speak to Satan the devil: we ask how we are sinners, how we could become sinners when Jesus has taken away all sin, and how we could have sin again—how we could have any debt—when the Lord has paid off all the debt of sin.

Dear fellow believers, seen in the light of the truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, our words are right. When one does not believe in the gospel of Jesus Christ and looks with the flesh, what the devil says seems to be right. But the clear truth is that Jesus, the Son of God, has completely saved all people from all the sins of the world. Because Jesus washed the disciples' feet in advance, the disciples who believed that received the remission of all sins. God the Father has made us sinners completely His children through the Lord Jesus, and the Lord Jesus, by washing Peter's feet, completely served those who believe in Jesus and made them righteous. We cannot thank the Lord enough from the bottom of our hearts. ✉

Sermon 4 by Paul C. Jong

A life of serving one another by following the Lord, who washed away sin

< John 13:12–20 >

"So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, 'Do you know what I have done to you? You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them. I do not speak concerning all of you. I know whom I have chosen; but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, "He who eats bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me." Now I tell you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe that I am He. Most assuredly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.'"

Do you know what the Lord has done for us?

Jesus, who had washed the feet of all the disciples, put His garments on again and sat down. And Jesus asked the disciples,

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

"Do you know what I have done to you?" (John 13:12). The disciples had seen their own feet being washed with the water in the basin, and they had also felt the Lord wiping those feet with the towel with which He was girded. But seeing it with their eyes and knowing the meaning of that work were not the same.

Let us read verses 12 and 13.

"So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, 'Do you know what I have done to you? You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am'" (John 13:12–13).

What could the disciples have answered to that question? They probably thought as follows: "The One who walked on water and raised the dead has washed our feet. This must be a word telling us also to look after one another and serve one another." That was not a wrong thought, but they had seen only a very small part of what Jesus had done. In fact, that night the disciples did not properly know what the Lord had done.

The disciples called Jesus *"Teacher"* and called Him *"Lord."* Jesus said that what they said was right. He is the Teacher who taught the disciples, and He is their God and Savior. Such a One girded a towel around His waist and stood in the place of a servant. The One who is our God served His own people.

The reason Jesus washed their feet was that the disciples, while living on this earth, would be lacking and weak and would commit sins. To let them know that He had already borne even those sins and had washed them away, He did this before He was hung on the Cross. The Lord's service is on a different level from kindness between people. It is the service that resolved our sins and their judgment.

The Lord came to this earth to serve. The first step of that service was the baptism He received from John at the Jordan River. At that time He had all the sins of the world, including

even the sins we would commit throughout our lives, transferred onto His own body. The next service was the Cross. Bearing the sins that had been passed on to Him, He suffered contempt and pain, and by shedding His blood and dying on the Cross He received the judgment for our sins in our place. And three days later He rose again and became our Savior. Whoever believes in his heart this service as salvation for himself has all his sins washed away once and for all, receives the Holy Spirit, and lives as a child of God.

Jesus spoke of the purpose for which He came to this earth as follows.

"Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:28).

We have received salvation because the Lord served us this much. It is not that we served diligently and earned the washing away of our sins. Jesus first had our sins transferred to Him and gave even His life. A person who knows this grace comes to think first about how to help the souls the Lord loves, rather than about what kind of treatment he will receive from people.

The love that points out wrongs and raises a person up again with the gospel

Let us read verses 14 and 15.

"If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you" (John 13:14–15).

Jesus did not speak this word to leave behind a ceremony of washing one another's physical feet. The Lord had already washed away even the sins the disciples would commit in the

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

future. So washing one another's feet means washing away one another's sins with the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Even after receiving the remission of sins, we can harbor wrong thoughts and go astray. Sometimes we put our own desires ahead of the Lord, and sometimes, while working together with our brothers and sisters, we reveal stubbornness and impatience. At such times, the fellowship we are to share with one another is precisely the work of washing feet.

First, we must let the person know what has gone wrong. If we simply say that thoughts and actions that have departed from the word of God are right as they are, that person keeps going down the same path without realizing his own wrong. The Bible says, *"Love will cover a multitude of sins" (1 Peter 4:8)*, but merely covering over wrongs, using that word as an excuse, is not the love the Lord taught. When a person keeps repeating something without knowing that it is wrong, later he no longer even knows that it is sin.

But the work of washing feet is only half done if it stops at pointing out wrongs. In the end we must let the person hear the gospel: "Even that sin you are committing now, Jesus had passed on to Him through the baptism He received from John, and He received its judgment on the Cross." Only then will that person, even while knowing his sin, not be bound by sin. He does not stop at condemnation; the heart that had been weighed down is eased, and he turns back on his own, saying, "I was going down the wrong path." This is the fellowship the Lord spoke of when He told them to do *"as I have done to you" (John 13:15)*.

At this time, the One who washes away that person's sins is Jesus. It was Jesus who had the sins transferred to Him, and it was Jesus who accomplished atonement; we only preach the salvation the Lord has already accomplished. Just as the law of God reveals our sins and the Holy Spirit awakens our hearts to

sin, members who have become one body can also tell one another their wrongs. However, rather than always looking for faults and pointing them out, consider that person's circumstances. When a brother is in trouble and does not know what to do, embrace him, and wait for the person who can turn back on his own. But to the person who cannot turn back by himself, you must speak clearly. Turning a blind eye after seeing a wrong is not love; it is only a religious life that keeps up appearances between people.

The apostle Paul also spoke of how we should treat a person whose wrongdoing has come to light.

"Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted" (Galatians 6:1).

This word tells us to set such a person right with a gentle spirit and to look at ourselves, since we too can be tempted. Telling others of their wrongs is not something we do to show that we are cleaner than they are. We help that person because we too are people whose feet have been washed by the same Lord. A person who knows much of his own shortcomings can also cover the shortcomings of others. If we have the faith that the Lord, through the baptism He received from John, had both our sins and his sins passed on to Him, we can reveal our own shortcomings without hiding them and can generously accept the weaknesses of others as well. The church is a place where the strong bear the weaknesses of the weak.

In love there are also times when we must say words that are hard to hear. If a close brother or sister is following worldly desires and drifting away from the Lord, and we say nothing for fear that our relationship will become uncomfortable, we are not loving him. Saying, "I knew that would happen," after he has left is too late. Tell him while he is by your side. Warn him that

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

if he keeps going down that path, he will end up forsaking the Lord and leaving. Holding him fast so that he does not use the grace that washed away sin as an excuse for licentiousness is also the love that washes feet.

Also, when someone points out our wrongs with the word, we must know how to listen to what he says. Even if it is uncomfortable to hear, he says it because he loves us. A person who believes the gospel that the Lord has already washed away his sins does not have his salvation shaken even when he admits his wrongs. That is why he can correct them before the word without hiding them. When we share this gospel with one another, we do not keep our brothers and sisters bound under condemnation, but raise them up again within the Lord's grace.

Servants must follow the example the Lord has shown

Let us read verses 16 and 17.

"Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them" (John 13:16–17).

Jesus, our Master, received baptism from John and had the sin of the world transferred to Him. Suffering all kinds of humiliation, He bore that sin all the way to the Cross and served us to the point of suffering death, the wages of sin. When our Master has done this, can we, His servants, avoid serving and wish only to be treated with honor? If we clearly know who the Master is whom we serve, we do not make our own feelings and convenience the standard of every judgment.

The disciples, too, did not live that way from the beginning.

If we look at the other Gospels, while they were following the Lord they even quarreled with one another over who was greater. But after the Lord was hung on the Cross, rose again, and ascended to heaven, the apostles became different. When they came to know what the Lord had done, they became people who served by following that example.

When we do the Lord's work together, too, we must distinguish between our own pride and the will of God. There are times when our feelings are hurt because of the other person, and when we are upset because things do not go the way we want. At such times, think first of the gospel being preached and souls being saved. Do not lay down the Lord's work in order to ease your own heart, and do not turn away from the service entrusted to you because you were not recognized. The more our faith grows and the deeper our understanding becomes, the more service the Lord entrusts to us.

Jesus said that if we know this and do it, we are blessed. If we only know and do not do, we cannot enjoy that blessing, nor can we benefit the people beside us. When someone young in faith asks a question, take the time to listen. If there is something about the gospel that he does not yet know clearly, open the word and teach him. With a person whose heart has grown dark because he did wrong, have fellowship through the gospel. Even if you tell him once, he may not understand well and may fall again in the same place. Help him again, waiting until that person's faith grows.

Our faith, too, grew in that way. Those who believed first preached the gospel to us, explained the word we did not understand, and prayed and stayed by our side when things were hard. Behind the grace we now enjoy lies the labor of people who served with the love they had received from the Lord. Having believed first does not qualify anyone to receive higher

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

treatment. It is only an opportunity to serve more.

Among the many kinds of labor, the most precious is the work of serving the gospel. It is not catering to people's whims, but adding strength so that the gospel may be preached. Preparing a place where we can hear the word together, making time for the work of preaching the gospel, and taking on necessary tasks and laboring in them all belong to this. When someone preaches the word, others pray for that work and support it from behind. The work of preaching the gospel through literature, too, needs the hands of many people who prepare the writings and deliver them. Just as the flower-calyx supports the blossom, unseen service supports the spread of the gospel.

The Lord has accomplished complete salvation, and He has entrusted to us the work of preaching that salvation so that people may hear it, and of helping them to believe the word they have heard and live by it. We cannot hope that new believers will grow on their own while we do not serve. While praying, let us actually go to them and have fellowship, preach the gospel, and care for those who are young in faith. The blessing the Lord spoke of is given to the life that knows that word and actually does it.

The Lord spoke of it in advance, before it came to pass

After speaking of the blessing of serving one another, Jesus said that this word did not apply to all the disciples. Let us read verses 18 and 19.

"I do not speak concerning all of you. I know whom I have chosen; but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, 'He who eats

bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me.' Now I tell you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe that I am He" (John 13:18–19).

Jesus knew whom He had chosen. And He said that among those who ate bread at one table with the Lord, there was one who would rise against the Lord. Among the very feet the Lord had just washed were also the feet of a man who would lift up his heel against the Lord. Verse 18 quotes the word of Psalm 41.

"Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up his heel against me" (Psalm 41:9).

Eating bread at one table is a sign of a close relationship. The Bible recorded long ago that such a close person would lift up his heel and rise against him. The Lord knew that this word would be fulfilled in Himself.

The reason Jesus spoke of this in advance was so that, when it came to pass, the disciples might believe *"that I am He" (John 13:19)*. The word came first, and the event came to pass according to that word. When the events of that night happened exactly as the Lord had said, the disciples would come to believe who it was that had spoken that word.

Our faith, too, is built up in this way. People's steadfastness or circumstances do not become the ground of our faith. God spoke in advance in the Bible, and Jesus, according to that word, received baptism from John, paid the price of our sins on the Cross, and then rose again. As we care for one another in the church, there are times when our hearts are shaken because of someone's wrong. At such times, do not look at people, but look to the Lord, who fulfills the word He has spoken exactly as He spoke it. Let us discern wrongs by that word, believe that word, and keep following the Lord.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Receive those who are sent, and serve the gospel together

Let us read verse 20.

"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me" (John 13:20).

The One who sent Jesus to this earth as the Savior is God the Father. Therefore, the person who accepts Jesus as the Savior is accepting the Father, who sent Him. Now Jesus sends the disciples. He said that receiving those whom the Lord sends is receiving the Lord. The Father sent the Son, the Son sends the disciples, and through the word they preach, people are brought to meet the Lord.

Our hearing the gospel also came about in this way. God loved us and sent His Son, and a person who preached the salvation that Son accomplished came to us. By believing the gospel of the water and the Spirit that he preached, we received the remission of sins. To accept in our hearts the gospel preached by a person sent by the Lord is to accept the Lord Himself. Do not look at the outward appearance or worldly status of the one who preaches the gospel, but listen to the word of the Lord that is preached through him.

On the other hand, the person who rejects Jesus, whom the Father sent, and the salvation He accomplished is still in sin. The person who does not believe in Jesus does not believe in the Father who sent Him either. Many people reassure themselves with religious emotion and tears even though sin remains in their hearts as it is. Know and believe how Jesus had your sins passed on to Him through the baptism He received from John at the Jordan River, how the judgment for those sins was finished on the Cross, and that the Lord rose again and became your Savior.

If a person dies in sin while rejecting this salvation, he cannot escape the judgment of God. Accept it in your heart now, while you can hear the gospel.

The Lord saved us and now sends us. It is so that someone may hear the word we preach and receive the Lord. To those who have not yet heard the gospel, preach the salvation the Lord has accomplished for them.

When we think of the Lord who served us, serving does not look like merely a bothersome burden. The Lord gave His own body for us. It is fitting and blessed that we, who have received that grace, care for one another. When those who believed first serve those who believed later, and those who received help grow and in turn serve others, the joy of the gospel continues in the church. Let us all labor together with the gifts we have received and the work entrusted to us. Following the example of the Lord, who, though He is Lord and Teacher, washed our feet, let us live caring for the faith of our brothers and sisters and preaching the gospel. ✉

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Sermon 5 by Paul C. Jong

The Lord, who saved us even though He knew of the betrayal

< John 13:21–30 >

“When Jesus had said these things, He was troubled in spirit, and testified and said, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me.’ Then the disciples looked at one another, perplexed about whom He spoke. Now there was leaning on Jesus’ bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask who it was of whom He spoke. Then, leaning back on Jesus’ breast, he said to Him, ‘Lord, who is it?’ Jesus answered, ‘It is he to whom I shall give a piece of bread when I have dipped it.’ And having dipped the bread, He gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. Now after the piece of bread, Satan entered him. Then Jesus said to him, ‘What you do, do quickly.’ But no one at the table knew for what reason He said this to him. For some thought, because Judas had the money box, that Jesus had said to him, ‘Buy those things we need for the feast,’ or that he should give something to the poor. Having received the piece of bread, he then went out immediately. And it was night.”

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

The heart of the Lord, who knows of a disciple's betrayal

At the table where Jesus was eating supper with His disciples, He said that one of them would betray Him. It was not a matter of someone who did not know the Lord being hostile to Him from afar. It was one of the disciples who for three years had eaten from the same pot, slept together, and received His teaching. That person was now sitting in the same place as the other disciples.

Let us read verse 21.

"When Jesus had said these things, He was troubled in spirit, and testified and said, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me'" (John 13:21).

Jesus was *"troubled in spirit" (John 13:21)* when He spoke this word. Yet He did not cover the matter up, but testified plainly, saying, *"Most assuredly" (John 13:21).* That is exactly what the heart of a person who is betrayed is like. He knew that a disciple whom He had taught and with whom He had shared love would hand Him over to the chief priests, and that person was now in the same place, so the Lord's spirit was troubled. Even though He knew it in advance, the Lord's heart was pained. Still, Jesus held fast to the work He had received from the Father just as it was. The way of the Cross He was going was not a way He went because people recognized Him and were grateful to Him.

The Passover was drawing near and was close at hand. Jesus had already had all the sin of mankind passed on to His body through the baptism He received from John the Baptist at the Jordan River. What remained now was for Him to receive the punishment for that sin Himself and bring it to an end through death. For that, the Lord had to be nailed to the Cross, and right

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

at that juncture on the way, one disciple was about to betray the Lord. This table at which He spoke of Judas's betrayal was a place where that suffering was right at hand. This betrayal, too, was not something that happened suddenly. As the Lord had said a little earlier, citing the Scripture, the word recorded beforehand in the Old Testament was being fulfilled in the New Testament just as it was written.

The disciples looked at one another, uncertain of whom He was speaking. Every time their eyes met, their looks must have been asking, "Is it you?" Though they had spent three years together, they could not see into one another's innermost hearts. But Jesus knew from the beginning who would betray Him. Even a heart that can be hidden from people is plainly visible to the Lord. Though it may be covered up by outward appearance or by the work entrusted to us, what kind of One we believe Him to be is exposed before Him.

Even those sitting in the same place do not have the same faith

Let us read verses 23 through 26.

"Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask who it was of whom He spoke. Then, leaning back on Jesus' breast, he said to Him, 'Lord, who is it?' Jesus answered, 'It is he to whom I shall give a piece of bread when I have dipped it.' And having dipped the bread, He gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon" (John 13:23–26).

The disciple who was leaning on Jesus' bosom is the apostle John, who recorded this Gospel. Peter did not ask the Lord directly but motioned to John. He meant for John to ask about

whom the Lord had spoken. Leaning on the Lord's breast, John asked, *"Lord, who is it?" (John 13:25)*. Jesus answered that it was the one to whom He would give a piece of bread when He had dipped it.

And He dipped a single piece of bread and gave it precisely to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. At the very time God had appointed, He gave it to him, knowing clearly who the one who did not believe was. Judas was a man entrusted with work among the disciples, to the extent that he kept the money box. But the duty entrusted to him did not create faith in his heart. Even the three years he spent at the Lord's side could not take the place of the faith that believes in Him as the Savior.

Let us read verse 64 of John chapter 6.

"'But there are some of you who do not believe.' For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him" (John 6:64).

The Lord knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him. Judas, too, could have received the remission of sins if he had believed that Jesus was the Savior who had even his sins transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John the Baptist. The Savior was right before him, yet Judas did not believe in Him and stood on the side of the devil. The hands that received the bread were alike, but whom each believed the One who handed them the bread to be was different.

So, in the light of this word, you must ask yourself: Is Jesus your Savior, who bore your sins through the baptism He received from John the Baptist at the Jordan River and received the judgment for those sins on the Cross in your place? You may escape people's eyes, but you cannot deceive the Lord. If you are keeping unbelief and greed in your heart and hiding them behind the work entrusted to you, believe in the Lord as the

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

Savior now and stand honestly before Him.

Even the work of Satan cannot overthrow the Lord's salvation

Let us read verse 27.

"Now after the piece of bread, Satan entered him. Then Jesus said to him, 'What you do, do quickly'" (John 13:27).

Earlier, what the devil had put into Judas's heart was a thought. Now Satan himself entered into him. It was right after he received the piece of bread. The path Judas was taking was not a path on which his thinking was merely a little different, but a path of betraying and opposing the Lord. Here we see to what dreadful lengths a person goes when a heart that does not believe the Lord's word makes room for Satan.

Yet Jesus said to Judas, *"What you do, do quickly" (John 13:27)*. It means that he should go ahead quickly. Jesus knew even that the devil had entered into him. Even Satan cannot do as he pleases. God determines even the time and season in which Satan works. Before the foundation of the world, God planned in Jesus Christ the way by which He would save mankind. When the fullness of the time had come, He sent His Son, passed sin on to the Son, gave the Son up to the Cross, raised Him from death, and saved those who believe. What happened that night was not outside this plan either. We, too, are included in that plan, and by believing this salvation we have become children of God.

For the Lord, the very path by which Judas was betraying Him was the path to the Cross. Jesus had had our sins passed on to Him at the Jordan River, and to finish the judgment for those sins, He had to be hung on the Cross. That is why, though He

knew everything, He did not block that path but said, *"Do quickly" (John 13:27).*

The apostle Peter later testified of Jesus' death and resurrection as follows.

"Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it" (Acts 2:23–24).

Jesus was delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God. At the same time, people committed the sin of nailing Him to the Cross and putting Him to death. Jesus gave Himself up to save sinners, and Judas betrayed the Lord with an unbelieving heart. The Lord's obedience and Judas's betrayal are entirely different things.

Jesus also spoke clearly of the woe that would come upon the person who betrays Him.

"The Son of Man indeed goes just as it is written of Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born" (Matthew 26:24).

This word contains both the fact that the Son of Man goes just as it is written and the responsibility that the one who betrays Him must bear.

On the other hand, there is no reason either to look at people's betrayal or the work of Satan and think that the Lord's salvation has collapsed. Satan tried to drive the Lord into death, but God loosed Him from the pains of death and raised Him up. Jesus rose again from death and became the Lord of our salvation. The One we rely on is not One who was defeated in the face of betrayal, but the Savior who overcame the power of sin and death.

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

The Savior, who gave up His own body and finished the judgment for sin

In the scene where Judas goes outside, two paths part. Judas abandoned the place of grace and went out into the darkness, and Jesus, even that night, walked toward the work He had received from the Father. Outwardly, it was a matter of being handed over into people's hands and suffering, but on that very path Jesus paid the price of sin with His own body to deliver us from sin.

The sacrifices of the Old Testament showed that a sinner must die as the wages of sin. Psalm 40 is a psalm in which David sang, *"Behold, I come" (Psalm 40:7),* but within it, like a hidden picture, the One who was to come is portrayed. He is the One who would offer not animal sacrifices but His own body, bear sin in that body, and receive the punishment of that sin as a substitute. Hebrews testifies that this word was fulfilled through Jesus' offering of His body.

"By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Hebrews 10:10).

Through the baptism He received from John the Baptist, Jesus had the sin of the world transferred onto His body, and bearing that sin, He paid the price of that sin on the Cross in our place. That He bore sin in His own body and received even all its judgment—this was the sacrifice of atonement for us. The Lord offered His own body once and for all and made us holy, and He did not leave the problem of sin unfinished and have people fill in the rest with their own efforts. And He was buried, and three days later He rose again from death. Therefore, even a person who ought to be judged because of sin has his sins washed away if he believes this gospel in his heart, and he receives the Holy Spirit and obtains new life as a child of God.

That is why we love Jesus. It is because we know whose sins

were passed on to Him and for whom He died. It was for none other than us. Even with the one who would betray Him right before Him, and even though He knew all our weakness, Jesus went the way of salvation to the end.

Hold fast to this gospel even on the day when you face opposition and betrayal while following the Lord. Even when suffering comes, the Lord does not forget His own people. Nor can the threats of the enemy take away the remission of sins the Lord has accomplished. The power that enables us to keep our faith lies not so much in our own firm will as in the Holy Spirit, who is within us. To those who believe the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the Holy Spirit gives a bold heart even in moments of fear. A person who knows the Lord, who gave up His own body and saved us, relies on that love even in the face of the world's threats.

Even on the night Judas went out, the Lord went the way of salvation

Let us read verses 28 through 30.

"But no one at the table knew for what reason He said this to him. For some thought, because Judas had the money box, that Jesus had said to him, 'Buy those things we need for the feast,' or that he should give something to the poor. Having received the piece of bread, he then went out immediately. And it was night" (John 13:28–30).

Those sitting there never imagined that Judas was going out to betray the Lord. Because Judas had the money box, some thought that He was telling him to go and buy the things needed for the feast, and some thought that He was telling him to give something to the poor. This is how far apart people's thoughts

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

were from what was actually happening. The only One who clearly knew what was happening was the Lord.

Judas received the piece of bread and went out immediately. As soon as he received the bread, he got up from his place. And John added a single remark: *"And it was night" (John 13:30)*. Judas went straight from there to the chief priests. A person who had heard the Lord's word up close got up from his place and went out to betray the Lord. Merely having seen grace up close was not enough. We, too, must not stop at hearing and knowing, but must believe that word in our hearts. Turn back from the path of using what you have received from the Lord for your own greed, and follow the Lord, who gave Himself up for you.

But though Judas went out, the Lord of salvation was there in that place. Jesus said everything He had to say to the remaining disciples, and that night He went forward to accomplish the work He had received from the Father. Even on the night of a person's betrayal, the Father's will went on being fulfilled just as it was. The work of saving us does not depend on human goodness or faithfulness. The Lord accomplished that work by His own love and power.

Judas's unbelief is a warning to us. And the way the Lord went, knowing even that betrayal, is our hope. Jesus is not One who promised salvation without knowing our sins. Knowing everything, He had those sins passed on to Him through the baptism He received from John the Baptist, received the judgment for those sins on the Cross, and rose again. Let us not lose hold of this Savior because of the people or circumstances before our eyes. That Savior, who did not stop but went to the Cross even on the pitch-dark night when Judas went out, is holding on to us today. ✉

Sermon 6 by Paul C. Jong

The Lord, who knows our weakness and leads us to follow Him

< John 13:31–38 >

"So, when he had gone out, Jesus said, 'Now the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in Him. If God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and glorify Him immediately. Little children, I shall be with you a little while longer. You will seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, "Where I am going, you cannot come," so now I say to you. A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.' Simon Peter said to Him, 'Lord, where are You going?' Jesus answered him, 'Where I am going you cannot follow Me now, but you shall follow Me afterward.' Peter said to Him, 'Lord, why can I not follow You now? I will lay down my life for Your sake.' Jesus answered him, 'Will you lay down your life for My sake? Most assuredly, I say to you, the rooster shall not crow till you have denied Me three times.'"

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

The glory of the Son, who accomplishes the Father's salvation

After Judas received the piece of bread and went out, the first word Jesus spoke to His disciples was a word about glory. The one who would hand the Lord over had already set out, and the suffering of the Cross had drawn near, right in front of Him. This word must have sounded difficult to the disciples' ears. How could the One who had suffering just ahead of Him speak of glory?

Let us read verses 31 and 32.

"So, when he had gone out, Jesus said, 'Now the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in Him. If God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and glorify Him immediately'" (John 13:31–32).

In these two short verses, the word *"glorified"* appears again and again. The Son receives glory, the Father receives glory because of the Son, and the Father in turn gives glory to the Son. The glory Jesus spoke of was not people's applause and praise. It means that He now had before His eyes the work the Father had entrusted to Him. To be used for a very precious work, and to take on that work and accomplish it—this is glory. That work entrusted to the Lord was now about to be carried out right away.

What was that work? The Son of God came clothed in a human body and had the sin of the world transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John the Baptist. Now it was His turn to give His body over to the Cross in order to receive the judgment for that sin. The One who had committed no sin would receive in our place the curse and suffering that we should have received, and by shedding His blood and dying, He would bring God's wrath toward mankind to an end.

The reason the Father receives glory also lies here. Through

the Son, God delivered from judgment all who believe in Jesus. That sinners would come to live calling God Father—that was the Father's will. Jesus regarded obeying that will as His own glory, and the Father received glory through the Son who obeyed.

At the end of verse 32, the Lord said that the Father *"will also glorify Him in Himself, and glorify Him immediately" (John 13:32)*. Just as that word said, the Father raised the Son from death and exalted Him. It was three days after He died on the Cross, so it was truly a glory given immediately. We believe in and worship Jesus, who thus rose again, as our Savior and God.

This glory extends even to us who believe. Those who, by believing in the Lord who came by water and blood, have received the remission of sins and become children of God are people who partake in that glory. We often regard it as glory when people recognize us and exalt us. But we who believe in Jesus give glory to God when we believe in the salvation the Lord has accomplished and are used for His will. Even if our names are not made known, it becomes our joy that the Lord, who saved us, is held in honor.

Disciples who love one another with the love they received from the Lord

In verse 33, Jesus called His disciples *"Little children" (John 13:33)*. In the Gospel of John, the word *"Little children"* appears only here. At the moment when He was speaking of how He would soon depart, He addressed the disciples who would be left behind as if they were His own young children. The Lord said to the disciples, too, what He had earlier said to the Jews, namely, the word that they could not come where He was going. But what follows is different. To the Jews, the word *"will die in*

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

your sin" (John 8:21) had been spoken along with it. To the disciples, the promise is given that they will follow afterward, as in the word He spoke to Peter a little later, in verse 36. And before He left, the Lord entrusted to the disciples the work they were to do now.

Let us read verses 34 and 35.

"'A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another'" (John 13:34–35).

With the word *"as I have loved you" (John 13:34)*, the Lord set the yardstick of love. A little earlier, after washing their feet, He had also said that He had given them an example so that they too would do *"as I have done to you" (John 13:15)*. The standard by which the disciples were to love one another was the love they had just received. The Lord knew the disciples' shortcomings, and even while knowing the weakness they would reveal that very night, He loved them to the end.

Our receiving salvation, too, was not because we were gentle and full of patience. The Lord first loved and saved us, who had put forward our own righteousness, insisted on our own way, and put ourselves before the Lord. The Apostle John testifies of where that love began as follows.

"In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another" (1 John 4:10–11).

God sent His Son as the peace offering for our sins. It is not a love that pretended not to see our sins, but a love that passed those sins on to the Son and resolved them through the Son's death. When a brother's shortcomings catch your eye, think first of that Son. If you yourself live by grace and yet say that you

will be with a brother only if he has no flaws, you have forgotten the love you received. Jesus' new commandment is a commandment kept among the people who have received the love of the Son, who came as the peace offering.

People do not only listen to our words; they also look at how people who have received the same salvation treat one another. The Lord said that when the disciples loved one another, *"All will know that you are My disciples" (John 13:35)*. The sight of people who each differ in character and ability serving the Lord together within one church is that very evidence. The person who believes that the Lord has accepted him accepts his brother as well and follows the Lord's will together with him.

The Lord, who knows Peter more deeply than his own resolve

As the word that He was leaving was repeated, Peter sensed that the matter was serious and asked the Lord where He was going. The place Jesus was going was the Cross. Among the disciples, Peter was always the one who asked most frankly.

Let us read verses 36 through 38.

"Simon Peter said to Him, 'Lord, where are You going?' Jesus answered him, 'Where I am going you cannot follow Me now, but you shall follow Me afterward.' Peter said to Him, 'Lord, why can I not follow You now? I will lay down my life for Your sake.' Jesus answered him, 'Will you lay down your life for My sake? Most assuredly, I say to you, the rooster shall not crow till you have denied Me three times'" (John 13:36–38).

Jesus said that Peter could not follow Him now, but Peter answered that he would lay down his life for the Lord. It was an answer different from what had been asked—an answer beside

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

the point. He thought that he would be a man who would give up his life and guard the Lord at His side. But Peter did not know at all what kind of faith he had and what condition he was in at that moment. The Lord knew all the weakness behind that resolve. He knew that, far from giving his life, Peter would deny Him three times that night before the rooster crowed.

Peter was a man who had confessed, *"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16)*. The Lord said that even such a man would come to deny Him. Even after believing, people fall in this way.

We are no different. As we listen to the word, we resolve to follow the Lord no matter what happens. Then, when we suffer loss or meet something fearful, that heart wavers. Our characters also differ from one another: some people's anger shows plainly on their faces and then they quickly regret it, while others are quiet on the outside but seethe inside and only later realize their wrong. Then, looking at themselves, they try to give up of their own accord, thinking, "I must not be cut out for a life of faith." The word spoken to Peter makes us realize how little we know ourselves.

Even so, Jesus did not speak only of Peter's failure. In verse 36 He had already said, *"You shall follow Me afterward" (John 13:36)*. The Lord called Peter knowing fully what kind of person he was, and He also knew how He would lead him. Giving him the word at the proper times and having him go through many things, He made his faith grow firm, and in the end He made him a man of faith.

The risen Lord came to Peter, asked him three times, and entrusted him with the work of feeding the sheep. He established him, who had been so hot-tempered, as a man who led the early church. And He also told by what kind of death Peter would one day give glory to God. Let us read verse 19 of John chapter 21.

"This He spoke, signifying by what death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, 'Follow Me'" (John 21:19).

The Lord, who in verse 31 called the accomplishing of the Father's work glory, also told Peter that he would *"glorify God" (John 21:19)*. The man who could not follow that night finally followed the Lord and went down that path. It was not because he had been strong from the beginning that Peter endured even death, but because Jesus led him to follow. He caused a man who had trusted himself and pushed ahead to grow into a man who believes and follows the word of the Lord. So we should not look at our own character and lay down the path of faith. We need only hear the word of the Lord, who knows us and saved us, and turn back each time He makes us realize our wrongs.

The complete salvation in which even the sins yet to come to light were borne

The Lord knew beforehand the sin Peter would commit by denying Him. And yet, a little earlier, He had washed his feet. He washed his feet because of a sin not yet committed. Through the baptism He received from John the Baptist, Jesus had already borne even the sins Peter would commit in the future, and He taught this through washing his feet. It was so that, after he fell, he would not be crushed under that sin, turn his back on the Lord, and go out into the world.

We do not know what sins we will commit in the future. But Jesus knows. The Lord's salvation is not a salvation that dealt only with the sins before we believed and left the sins after that to us. Within the sin of the world that was passed on to Jesus when He received baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

River at about the age of thirty are contained all the sins a person commits throughout his life, from the cradle to the grave. The sins of those who believe, the sins of those who do not believe, and even the sins of a baby just born at the end of the world—Jesus received them all at that time. And the judgment He received on the Cross three years later was also the judgment for all those sins.

Let us look at the answer the Lord gave when John tried to stop Him.

"But Jesus answered and said to him, 'Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.' Then he allowed Him" (Matthew 3:15).

The Lord said that it was fitting to fulfill all righteousness *"thus" (Matthew 3:15)*. This method of having the sin of the world transferred to Him by the hand of John, who represented mankind, was the most proper way to fulfill all righteousness. The Lord, who received our sins, paid the price of those sins on the Cross and rose again from death. Therefore, when our wrongs are exposed, what we must return to and believe is this gospel. Confirm through the word the fact that the Lord had this sin, too, passed on to Him, and that the Lord also received the judgment for this sin.

If people leave out the baptism He received from John and believe only in the Cross, they come not to know where to take the sins they commit after believing. So they think that they must receive retribution on this earth in proportion to the sins they have committed, or they consider that they must add good works to pay off the remaining price of sin. If we, who commit sin every day, had to receive retribution for each of those sins, our lives would be suffering every day. Instead of charging us the price of sin, the Lord took full responsibility and paid that price in full. We receive the remission of sins by believing that work.

By no other way can one obtain the assurance of salvation.

To the person who believes this gospel of the water and the Spirit, the Lord gives the Holy Spirit as a gift, as a token that he has believed. Before, we ourselves were the masters of our hearts, but now, because the Holy Spirit is present, Jesus has become our Master. Therefore, if we deliberately commit sin on the grounds that we have been saved, the Holy Spirit within us dislikes it and is grieved. On the other hand, if we realize our wrongs through the word and accept it by faith, the Holy Spirit rejoices, and our hearts too become bright. The path by which the Holy Spirit leads us is the word of the Lord. Let us read verse 26 of John chapter 14.

"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" (John 14:26).

The Father spoke through the Son, and the Son came to this earth, bore our sins at the Jordan River, accomplished salvation through the Cross and the resurrection, and then sent the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit leads us, using that word as the standard. So do not take something as God's will right away just because it seems you heard some voice in your heart, but stand on the written word. A person who has the Holy Spirit speaks both to others and to himself through the words of the Bible.

A warning given to those who bury the salvation they have received

The Lord, who washed away all our sins, has a purpose in calling us. If we keep only the fact that we have been saved tucked away in our hearts and do not set our hearts on the Lord's will, we must hear the story of the servant who received one

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

talent, which the Lord told in a parable.

The servant who had received one talent buried in the ground the money he had received from his master, and when his master returned, he handed it over just as it was. The master rebuked him as a wicked and lazy servant. The end of that servant, of which the Lord spoke, is as follows.

"'And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth'" (Matthew 25:30).

The person who, after being saved, does not follow the Lord, but keeps what he has received to himself and buries it in his heart without even preaching it to others, is like this servant. The Lord treats him just the same as those who do not believe and judges him. If you regard only your own life as important and do not follow the Lord's will, yet try to settle everything with a single word that you have been saved, you must stand before this warning. Do not lightly change this warning to mean that one receives slightly fewer rewards. Hear just as it is the word of judgment that says one will be cast out into the outer darkness and will weep and gnash his teeth.

Jesus already knows all about our weakness. There is no reason to turn away from the Lord's calling on the grounds that we are lacking. Take into your hearts together both the word that the price of sin cannot be paid by our deeds and the warning that those who have been saved must follow the Lord.

A life used for the Lord's will even with little ability

To Peter were given both the word that foresaw his failure and the promise that He would raise him up again. We too believe in that Jesus. The Lord called both people who are as

quick-tempered as fire and people who lack wisdom, and He places them in suitable positions within the church and uses them. Even if they have rough edges, He does not throw them away, but grinds and polishes them, refining them into people in whom God delights, and uses them. Do not make your own personality and abilities a greater standard of judgment than the Lord.

Not everyone does the same work. But to take on by faith the work the Lord has entrusted is a share given to everyone. It is to care for our brothers with the word, to serve together in the spread of the gospel, and to turn back from insisting on our own will and follow the Lord's will. Do not envy other people's abilities and bury what you have received, but devote your heart to the work the Lord has entrusted to you.

Those who believe in and follow the Lord become instruments that reveal the Lord's righteousness. We are vessels used by God. In the parable of the talents, the master praised the servant who had made a profit with what was entrusted to him, saying, *"Good and faithful servant" (Matthew 25:21)*. On the last day, the Lord praises us for having obeyed and followed His will, even with little ability, and gives us rewards. Offer yourselves, just as you are with your shortcomings, to the Lord, who knew that Peter would deny Him three times before the rooster crowed and yet said that he would follow afterward. And follow after Him together with your brothers, according to the new commandment to love one another. ✉

Download eBooks and audiobooks www.bjnewlife.org

◇ About the Next Series

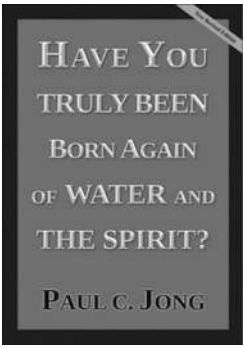
The ***'Biblical Exposition & Sermon Series from the Perspective of the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit'*** will continue to be published following this book.

We sincerely hope that the books by Pastor Paul C. Jong, which will continue to be published, will serve as spiritual nourishment to strengthen your faith.

News about newly released books, as well as various ways to access them—including eBooks (PDF, EPUB), audiobooks (M4A, MP3), and online reading—can be found at **www.bjnewlife.org.**

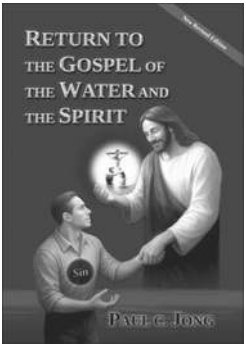
Paul C. Jong's Sermons

HAVE YOU TRULY BEEN BORN AGAIN OF WATER AND THE SPIRIT? [New Revised Edition]



Among many Christian books written about being born again, this is the first book of our time to preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit in strict accordance with the Scriptures. Man can't enter the Kingdom of Heaven without being born again of water and the Spirit. To be born again means that a sinner is saved from all his lifelong sins by believing in the baptism of Jesus and His blood of the Cross. Let's believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and enter the Kingdom of Heaven as the righteous who have no sin.

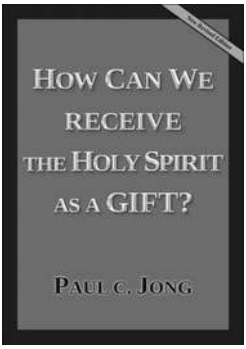
RETURN TO THE GOSPEL OF THE WATER AND THE SPIRIT [New Revised Edition]



Let's return to the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Theology and doctrines themselves can't save us. However, many Christians still follow them, and consequently have not been born again yet. This book clearly tells us what mistakes theology and doctrines have made and how we can believe in Jesus in the most accurate and certain way.

Scan the QR code to view the book's details!

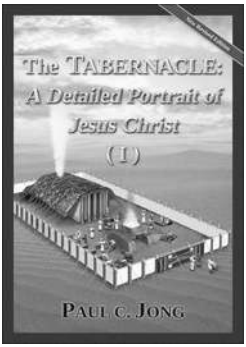
HOW CAN WE RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT AS A GIFT? [New Revised Edition]



In Christianity, the most significantly discussed issue is salvation from sins and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. However, few people have the exact knowledge of these two topics. Nevertheless, in reality people say that they believe in Jesus Christ while they are ignorant of true redemption and the Holy Spirit.

Do you know the true gospel that makes you receive the Holy Spirit? If you want to ask God for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, then you must first know the gospel of the water and the Spirit and have faith in it. This book will certainly lead all Christians worldwide to receive the Holy Spirit through the washing away of all their sins.

The TABERNACLE : A Detailed Portrait of Jesus Christ (I) [New Revised Edition]

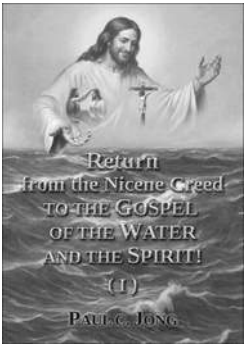


How can we find out the truth hidden in the Tabernacle? Only by knowing the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the real substance of the Tabernacle, can we correctly understand and know the answer to this question.

In fact, the blue, purple, and scarlet thread and the fine woven linen manifested in the gate of the Tabernacle's court show us the works of Jesus Christ in the New Testament's time that have saved the mankind. In this way, the Old Testament's Word of the Tabernacle and the Word of the New Testament are closely and definitely related to each other, like fine woven linen. But, unfortunately, this truth has been hidden for a long time to every truth seeker in Christianity.

Coming to this earth, Jesus Christ was baptized by John and shed His blood on the Cross. Without understanding and believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, none of us can ever find out the truth revealed in the Tabernacle. We must now learn this truth of the Tabernacle and believe in it. We all need to realize and believe in the truth manifested in the blue, purple, and scarlet thread and the fine woven linen of the gate of the Tabernacle's court.

Return from the Nicene Creed TO THE GOSPEL OF THE WATER AND THE SPIRIT! (I)



-Why must we return from the Nicene Creed to the gospel of the water and the Spirit? –

The gospel that the early church preached was precisely the gospel of the water and the Spirit. That gospel was the gospel that Jesus actually shouldered and washed away the sin of the world through the baptism He received from John.

The baptism Jesus received from John was to fulfill the law of the sacrificial system found in Leviticus. That is, just as sin was transferred to the sacrificial offering through the laying on of hands, the substance of that sacrificial law was fulfilled through Jesus's baptism.

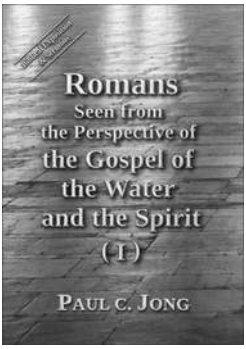
However, in the process of the Nicene Creed's formation, the ministry of Jesus having the sin of the world transferred to Him by being baptized by John was deleted from the creed's contents. As a result, this truth has been passed down in a hidden state within Christianity for about 1,700 years, reaching the present day.

Today, many people are struggling to receive the removal of their sins without knowing when their sins were transferred to Jesus. Because of this, even while saying they believe in the gospel of the cross, they fail to reach true assurance of salvation and live amidst repetitive repentance and the pangs of conscience.

The reason we must return to the gospel of the water and the Spirit is clear. This is because only this gospel allows us to meet the Jesus who became the sacrificial offering as the sin of the world was transferred to His body, and thereby have assurance of salvation.

Paul C. Jong's Biblical Exposition & Sermons

Romans seen from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit (2-Volume Series)



When Looking at Romans from the Perspective of the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit,

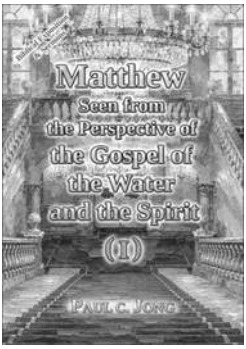
A person who embraces the gospel of the water and the Spirit in their heart comes to read Romans completely differently. The moment one opens this letter holding onto the gospel that Jesus had the sins of the world transferred to Him by receiving baptism from John, completely received the judgment of those sins on the cross, and resurrected, it finally begins to be seen why Paul introduced himself as a "debtor to the gospel" and so boldly declared, "I am not ashamed of the gospel."

The Apostle Paul, after revealing the sins of the Gentiles and the hypocrisy of religious people in turn, proclaims the righteousness of God manifested apart from the law. That righteousness is not a righteousness built up by human moral effort, but the righteousness completed by the baptism Jesus received from John, the blood of the cross, and the resurrection. The righteousness Abraham received when he was uncircumcised is the evidence of it, and the "blessing of not imputing sin" that David sang of is the result of it.

A person who believes this gospel knows that he is one who has already been justified. Only upon that conviction does peace with God reside, and the path opens where even tribulation leads to perseverance, character, and hope. This mystery—that a life which was placed under the reign of death over sin through one man, Adam, has received the removal of sins through one person, Jesus Christ, and has been transferred under the reign of righteousness—takes its place within us.

Salvation has already been completed at once. Now, what remains is the matter of receiving that gospel with the heart and living as a righteous person.

Matthew seen from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit (6-Volume Series)



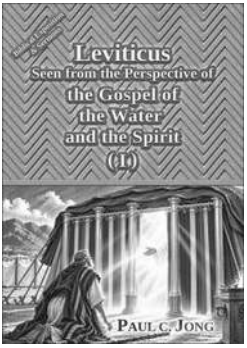
Why does sin still remain in your heart, even after believing in Jesus, reading the Bible for years, and attending church faithfully? Through Matthew chapters 1–4, this book answers clearly from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Tracing Jesus' birth and the wise men's worship, the ministry of John the Baptist as the last high priest, the saving work Jesus began with His baptism in the Jordan, the temptation in the wilderness, and the proclamation of the gospel of the kingdom of heaven, this book testifies that through His baptism by John the Baptist, Jesus took the sins of mankind upon Himself, was judged and died on the cross, and rose from the dead, overcoming sin and death.

If you know the blood of the cross but not when and where your sins were passed on to Jesus, look to the unchanging word of salvation rather than your feelings. In the Bible-based gospel of the water and the Spirit, see what the 'all righteousness' God fulfilled truly is.

Scan the QR code to view the book's details!

Leviticus seen from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit (4-Volume Series)

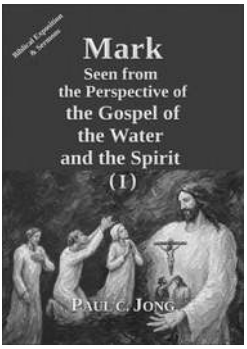


Leviticus seen from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit (I) examines how the Old Testament law of sacrifice prefigures the salvation of Jesus Christ, looking at the burnt offering, the grain offering, the peace offering, the sin offering, and the trespass offering, as well as the consecration ceremony of the priests, Aaron's first sacrifice, and the incident of Nadab and Abihu.

The author, Pastor Paul C. Jong, has long preached the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and in this book, he also explains the eternal atonement Jesus completed with the baptism He received from John and the blood of the Cross, connecting it to the sacrifices of Leviticus.

How can a sinner be made sinless? This book gives a clear answer to that question through the Bible.

Mark Seen from the Perspective of the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit (4-Volume Series)



Who do you believe Jesus to be? Through Mark chapters 1–4, this book testifies to the beginning of the gospel, the Lord's authority to remit sins, and the ground of the heart that hears the Word.

Through the baptism He received from John the Baptist, Jesus had all the sins of the world passed onto Him, bore the punishment for those sins in our place on the Cross, and rose from the dead and gave us eternal life. Whoever believes this gospel of the water and the Spirit receives the remission of all his sins at once and the Holy Spirit as a gift.

Do not read this book merely to add to your knowledge. Examine what kind of ground your own heart is, and lay down your own righteousness and religious stubbornness. Receive the Word of life just as it is and enjoy true rest, and relying on the Lord even in the storms of life, bear the fruit of faith.

Scan the QR code to view the book's details!

John Seen from the Perspective of the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit (4-Volume Series)



John seen from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit (I) is a book that examines, through the entire Gospel of John, how the Word, who is God, came to this earth clothed in flesh and saved sinners from sin.

The author, pastor Paul C. Jong, has long preached, through the word of the Bible, "the gospel of the water and the Spirit" that Jesus Christ completed with the baptism He received from John the Baptist, the Cross, and the resurrection. This book does not explain the signs and words of the Gospel of John as mere knowledge of the Bible or records of miracles, but guides readers to the faith by which they are saved from sin and obtain everlasting life by believing that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

May everyone who opens this book meet Jesus Christ, of whom the Bible testifies, and obtain true life.

Luke Seen from the Perspective of the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit (6-Volume Series)

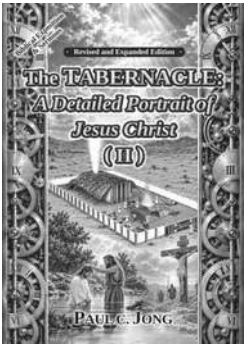


"Luke Seen from the Perspective of the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit (I)" expounds the Word from Luke chapters 1 through 6 from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Each chapter is composed of three parts: Biblical Exposition, Questions and Answers, and Sermons. The central message conveyed by this book is clear. Salvation is not accomplished by human goodness or merit. Rather, Jesus, who is God, received the sins of the world through the baptism He received from John the Baptist, died on the Cross to pay the price for those sins, and rose from the dead, thereby giving complete salvation from all sins to those who believe in this truth.

Pastor Paul C. Jong of The New Life Mission is a servant of God who has devoted his life to preaching the true gospel. Through the Word he preaches, this book will lead souls held captive by sin to the joy of the remission of sins and to eternal life in Jesus.

Scan the QR code to view the book's details!

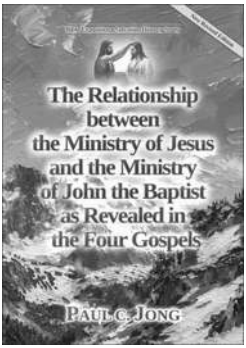
The TABERNACLE: A Detailed Portrait of Jesus Christ (3-Volume Series)



God had the tabernacle set up in the wilderness in order to dwell among the people He had delivered out of Egypt.

Through the Biblical Exposition of Exodus chapters 25–31 and the sermons on the tabernacle, this book conveys the heart of God, who wants to make His sinful people holy and keep them near. The promise of salvation contained in the tabernacle was fulfilled when Jesus had the sin of the world transferred to Him by receiving baptism from John, received the judgment of that sin by shedding His blood on the Cross, and rose again. Looking into the utensils and sacrifices of the tabernacle and the office of the high priest, we come to know the meaning of the remission of sins received by believing in this gospel of the water and the Spirit, and of the eternal atonement. Through the tabernacle, we seek to know God's love for us and to share the joy of living together as His people.

The Relationship between the Ministry of Jesus and the Ministry of John the Baptist as Revealed in the Four Gospels [New Revised Edition]



The Ministry of Jesus and John the Baptist — Preparation and Fulfillment: The Gospel of the Water and the Spirit, Believed in the Order the Bible Records It

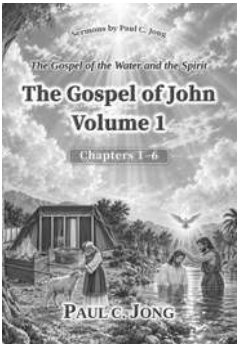
Why do the four Gospels introduce John the Baptist before speaking of Jesus' public ministry? Matthew records the baptism by which He fulfilled all righteousness; Mark, the messenger who prepared the way; Luke, the birth into a priestly family; and John, the testimony of the Lamb who takes away the sin of the world. These four books of the Bible—the four Gospels—together shed light on the ministry of Jesus and the ministry of John the Baptist.

This book makes clear that we receive the remission of sins not by human zeal, but by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Just as sins were passed on to the sacrificial offering through the laying on of hands in the Old Testament, so Jesus took upon Himself the sin of the world through the baptism He received from John the Baptist, was judged and died on the Cross, and rose again to complete our salvation.

We must believe in the ministry of Jesus and the ministry of John the Baptist exactly as the Bible records them, receive the remission of sins, abide in the assurance of this completed salvation, and live as witnesses to it.

Scan the QR code to view the book's details!

The Gospel of the Water and the Spirit: The Gospel of John (3-Volume Series)



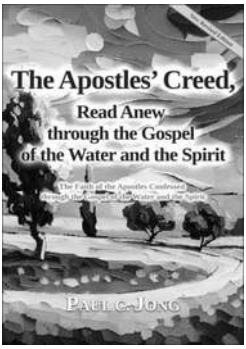
"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

John chapters 1–6 reveal who Jesus is. He is the Savior—the God who created all things, who Himself came in the flesh, received baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River, bore the sin of the world, received its judgment on the Cross, and rose from the dead, thereby saving us perfectly once and for all. The testimony of John the Baptist, the wedding feast at Cana, Jesus' words to Nicodemus about being born again, the Samaritan woman, the sick man at Bethesda, and the bread of life all point to the same One, and the Word is unfolded in light of the salvation accomplished by Christ Jesus. Those who believe in the work of salvation accomplished by Jesus, who is God, are born again of water and the Spirit and receive eternal life.

Scan the QR code to view the book's details!

Paul C. Jong's Special Features

The Apostles' Creed, Read Anew through the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit [New Revised Edition]

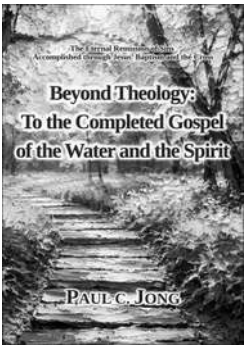


As you recite the Apostles' Creed every week, have you ever asked whether its statements are consistent with the gospel of the water and the Spirit proclaimed in the Bible? Countless Christians recite the Apostles' Creed, yet live without assurance as to whether they themselves have received the remission of sins and been born again.

This book examines this confession of faith, shaped and refined by people, article by article in the light of the "gospel of the water and the Spirit" to which Scripture testifies. In the light of this gospel—the gospel in which Jesus took upon Himself all the sins of the world by being baptized by John, bore the judgment for sin in our place by shedding His blood and dying on the Cross, and completed salvation by rising from the dead on the third day—this book points out what the Apostles' Creed leaves out.

The aim of this book is not to help the reader recite the Creed more skillfully. "Have I truly been born again through the gospel of the water and the Spirit?" When we come to answer this question through the Word, we will at last offer a living confession as those who have received the remission of sins and been born again.

Beyond Theology: To the Completed Gospel of the Water and the Spirit



Even as we confess that we have been saved, why does the weight of sin still remain in one corner of our hearts?

Countless saints live carrying this question. Each denomination has a different answer, but the Bible testifies to one story from beginning to end.

This book does not belong to any denomination. It sets out what each tradition—Calvinism, Lutheranism, Methodism, Catholicism, and others—teaches, acknowledges their contributions, and then brings them all before the gospel of the water and the Spirit. It is the gospel by which Jesus bore the sins of the world through the baptism He received from John, was judged on the Cross, and completed our eternal salvation through His resurrection from death.

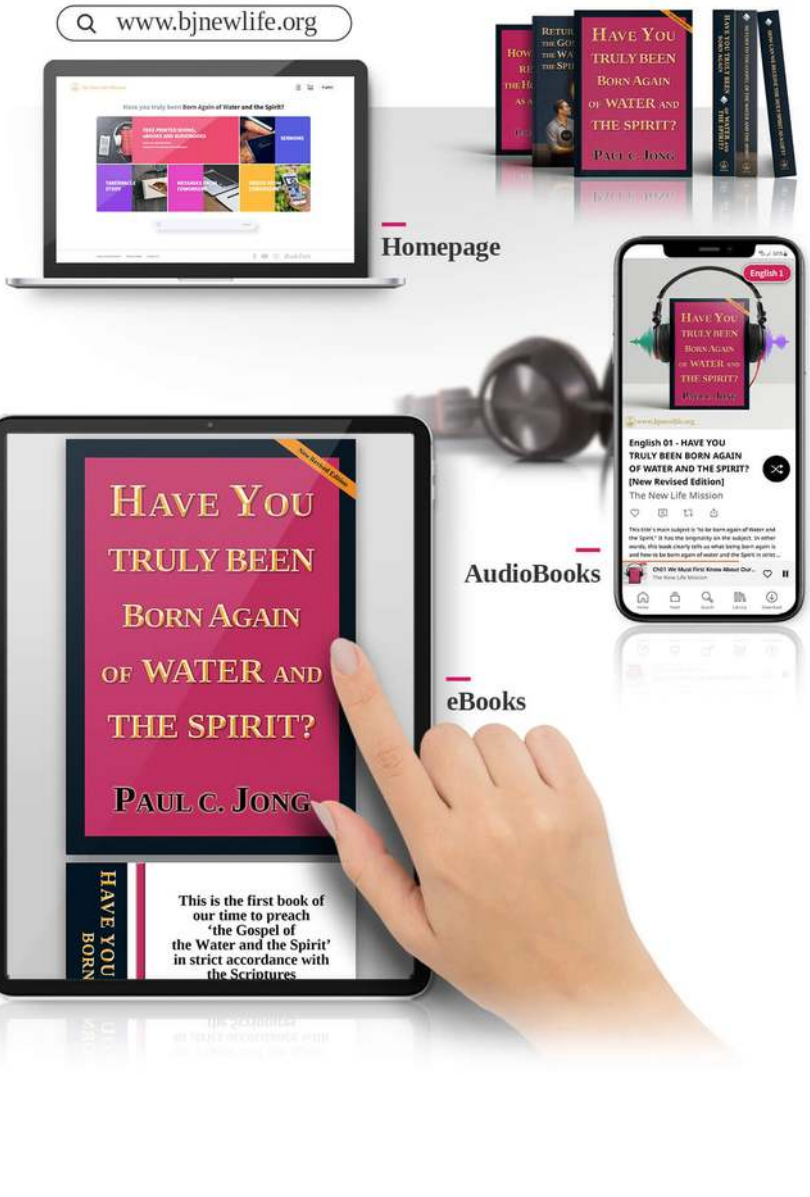
This book does not condemn any church. It only invites you to lay down your familiar theology for a moment and to discover anew, before the gospel of the water and the Spirit, where unshakable assurance begins.

Visit our website to discover this and other Christian books,
available as e-books (PDF/EPUB) and audiobooks.

Scan the QR code to view the book's details!

DOWNLOAD

Rev. Paul C. Jong's Christian ebooks and audiobooks
on your smartphone, tablet or PC at our website.
After downloading, You can read and listen to them anywhere, even when you don't have an internet connection.



Our The New Life Mission is distributing Pastor Paul C. Jong's spiritual books in 'printed book' form through coworkers who have been born again by water and the Spirit.

If you wish to possess printed books to build up spiritual nourishment, or if you sincerely wish to participate in our gospel spreading ministry, please apply by writing your reason, name, contact information, and address to the email address below.

If there is a coworker officially certified by our mission in your area, we will deliver the free books you have requested.

Would you like to join us in our mission of bringing the word of truth to more people around the world? If so, we would greatly appreciate it if you could link to our website on your blog, social media, website, etc.

►www.bjnewlife.org

Please help us spread the true gospel of Jesus Christ through our books so that more people can be born again of the water and the Spirit. We would also be grateful if you could introduce our website and books to many people and invite them to visit.

THE NEW LIFE MISSION
Contact: John Shin, General Secretary
E-mail: newlife@bjnewlife.org



Recommendation for E-book and Audiobook Storage and Downloads

In preparation for rapidly advancing AI, rapidly changing world affairs, and environmental changes, we strongly recommend downloading and storing God's true sermon messages to your personal storage devices.

Please prepare in advance by saving e-books and audiobooks to your external hard drives, USB drives, CDs, mobile phones, or MP3 players, so you can read and listen to them from your personal storage during the last days.

We pray that you will live a victorious life through God's blessings in these last days within the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

"The New Life Mission's sermon series and audiobooks are available worldwide in multiple languages, offering both paid books and free e-books."

www.bjnewlife.org

Sincerely,
The New Life Mission



Pastor PAUL C. JONG

Currently, Pastor Paul C. Jong leads 'The New Life Mission', where he and his fellow workers are spreading the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Although he believed in the crucified Jesus, he suffered for a long time because his problem of sin remained unresolved. In the midst of this agony, he came to believe that Jesus took upon Himself the sins of the world through His baptism by John the Baptist, and subsequently bore the judgment in our place on the cross.

For about 40 years since then, he has been preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit to those who only believe in the Cross, documenting his actual sermons in writing, and publishing sermon collections and Biblical Exposition Series that expound the Bible chapter by chapter, based solely on the Word of God.

His works continue to be published and have been translated into more than 110 languages, reaching readers in over 160 countries. E-books and audiobooks are available free of charge at www.bjnewlife.org, while paperback editions can be purchased on Amazon.

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

What saves us from sin?

Jesus said, “You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32). This freedom has a clear basis. Jesus had all the sin of mankind transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John the Baptist, and He received the judgment for that sin in our place on the Cross. And He rose again from death and became our eternal Savior. This is the truth that makes us free.

The One who lets us hear this truth is Jesus, the good shepherd. The Lord said, “He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out” (John 10:3). The shepherd knows all about the sheep—their weakness, their stubbornness, and even the sins hidden in their hearts. And He gave His own body for all those sins. That is why the sheep, without hiding their faults or being afraid, follow the voice of the shepherd who calls them by name.

The Lord also said, “I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture” (John 10:9). Through Jesus, who has completely saved us with the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we have become those who are no longer bound by sin and who feed on the pasture of the word. Following the Word in John chapters 7 through 13 that this book proclaims, let us meet the truth that makes us free.

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