Biblical Exposition & Sermons

# John

## Seen from the Perspective of the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit

## ( III )



PAUL C. JONG



John Seen from the Perspective of the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit (III)

Biblical Exposition & Sermons

Hephzibah

**“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)**

**Everyone faces sin and death, which cannot be overcome by human strength alone. How can a sinner come to God the Father? This book expounds John chapters 11 to 15 from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit and presents a clear answer to this question.**

**When Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist, all the sins of mankind were transferred to Him, and after being judged for those sins on the Cross, He completed salvation by rising from the dead. Whoever believes this truth of salvation from the heart receives the remission of all sins and comes to God the Father through Jesus, who is the way, the truth, and the life.**

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***and read now,***

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***as this world is heading toward destruction.***

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# John
## Seen from the Perspective of the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit ( III )

PAUL C. JONG

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

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***John seen from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit (III)***

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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.

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# Preface

*"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).*

Everyone goes through parting from a loved one, and comes to stand before death, which no one can overcome by his own strength. Even when people want to believe in God with their hearts, they are weighed down by the circumstances of real life, and even when they resolve to follow the Lord, they fall because of their own weakness. Then where is the life that is stronger than death, and where is the way by which a sinner can come to God the Father? And on what can a saved person rely in order to keep his faith and bear the fruit of love and of the gospel?

John chapters 11 to 15 present a clear answer to these questions. Jesus calls the dead Lazarus out of the tomb and reveals that He is the resurrection and the life. He also says that by becoming a grain of wheat and dying He will bear much fruit of life, and by washing the feet of His disciples He shows that He is the Savior who loves them to the end. To the disciples facing the Cross, He makes clear that He is the way, the truth, and the life, promises the Holy Spirit, the Helper, and teaches them to abide in the Lord, the true vine, and bear fruit.

## Jesus Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life

Jesus is not merely a prophet who performed the miracle of raising the dead, or a religious leader who taught a good life. He is God, who made all things by His word, and the Son of God, who came to save mankind bound by sin and death. Jesus said

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that He is the resurrection and the life, the way, the truth, and the life, and the true vine, because the salvation and life and every spiritual fruit that a sinner must obtain come only from Him.

By receiving baptism from John, Jesus bore all the sin of mankind in His own body, and bearing that sin, He was hung on the Cross and judged. And by rising again on the third day after His death, He became the Savior who gives the remission of sins and new life to those who believe. This is the perfect gospel that Jesus accomplished with the water and the Spirit. Therefore, true faith does not stop at knowing the salvation of Jesus as a vague doctrine or as something of the distant future. It is to believe now with the heart that He has already washed away my sins with His baptism, the Cross, and the resurrection, and to live in that word.

The Holy Spirit, the Helper, comes upon those who have received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The Holy Spirit does not leave believers alone; He makes them understand the word of Jesus and helps them live according to that word. A saved person does not produce fruit by his own resolve and ability; he comes to bear the fruit of love, service, and the spreading of the gospel when he abides by faith in Jesus, the true vine, and is led by the Holy Spirit.

## From the life of the resurrection to the fruit of love

John chapters 11 to 15 show, as the Cross of Jesus draws near, both who He is and what He will accomplish, and how the saved saints must live. The word that begins with the life that overcomes death passes through the sacrifice of Jesus, the grain of wheat, and leads on to the love that washes away sin, the companionship of the Holy Spirit, and the fruit borne in the Lord.

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In chapter 11, Jesus stands before the tomb of Lazarus, who has been dead four days. Martha knew of the resurrection at the last day, but Jesus asks her whether she believes that He is the resurrection and the life right now. The sign of Jesus calling Lazarus out of the tomb testifies that He is the Son of God, who rules over death, and shows that He Himself would die and rise again to give life to those who are dead in sin. Also, the scene in which the religious leaders plot to kill Jesus after Lazarus is raised shows that His Cross is drawing ever nearer.

In chapter 12, Mary pours fragrant oil on the feet of Jesus, and Jesus enters Jerusalem riding on a young donkey. The people welcomed Jesus as they would welcome a king, but Jesus knew what kind of death He would suffer. The word that a grain of wheat must fall into the ground and die in order to bear much fruit points to the fact that Jesus would die as the sacrificial offering of atonement for mankind and rise again, and so give life to countless souls. His being lifted up on the Cross is not a defeat; it is the way of glory that ends the judgment of sin and leads people to salvation.

In chapter 13, Jesus washes the feet of His disciples before the Cross. This was not merely to set an example of humble conduct. It engraves on our hearts that Jesus, with the baptism He received from John, bore and washed away even all the sins that the disciples and all mankind would commit throughout their lives. The Lord commands the disciples to love one another, just as He loved them to the end. But Peter, though he was confident that he would follow the Lord even at the cost of his life, soon comes to deny Jesus three times. Through this we come to realize that we must believe not in human resolve, but in the salvation of the Lord, who has already borne all weaknesses and sins.

In chapter 14, Jesus tells His troubled disciples to believe in

God and to believe in Him. He is the only way by which a sinner comes to God the Father, the unchanging truth of salvation, and the life that gives life to those who believe. Jesus promises that He will not leave His disciples as orphans, but will send the Holy Spirit, the Helper. The Holy Spirit abides in those who have received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and teaches them the word of Jesus and brings it to their remembrance. Therefore, the saints can enjoy true peace by believing not in the circumstances before their eyes, but in the promise of the Lord.

In chapter 15, Jesus likens Himself to the true vine and His disciples to the branches attached to that vine. Just as a branch cannot bear fruit of itself apart from the vine, a saved person cannot bear spiritual fruit apart from the word of Jesus and the gospel. To abide in the Lord is to keep on believing in the salvation He accomplished and to unite one's heart with that word. Then the saints come to bear the fruit of loving one another, serving the gospel, and boldly preaching Jesus Christ, of whom the Holy Spirit testifies, even amid the hatred of the world.

In this way, the word of John chapters 11 to 15 testifies that Jesus is the Lord of life, who overcomes death, the sacrificial offering of atonement, who gave Himself for sinners, and the only way to come to God the Father. At the same time, it shows that those who have been saved by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit must live abiding in the love of the Lord and bearing the fruit of the gospel with the help of the Holy Spirit.

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## The way to read this book

This book is arranged so that the word of John chapters 11 to 15 may be examined through ‘Biblical Exposition,’ ‘Questions and Answers,’ and the sermons of Pastor Paul C. Jong. The Biblical Exposition follows the flow of the text of each chapter and unfolds in turn the meaning conveyed by its events and conversations, parables and teachings. In this process it also examines other passages of Scripture related to the text, and reveals what each text testifies concerning Jesus Christ and what salvation He accomplished with the water and the Spirit. In ‘Questions and Answers,’ the reader concisely and concretely confirms the main verses and themes of each chapter, and is helped to put in his own words the content examined in the Biblical Exposition. The sermons of Pastor Paul C. Jong that follow show vividly how the gospel of the water and the Spirit is proclaimed and applied in the actual faith and lives of the Church and the saints.

When you read this book, I hope that you will not receive each event merely as a miracle or a lesson that happened in the past, but examine your own faith in the light of that word. I hope that you will examine yourselves: Do I now believe with my heart in Jesus, who is the resurrection and the life? Do I believe that He bore all my sins with the baptism He received from John? Do I believe that He received the judgment of sin on the Cross in my place? I hope that you will also reflect on whether you are relying on your own resolve and strength, and whether you are abiding in Jesus, the true vine, and being led by the Holy Spirit.

When I believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit with my heart, the word of Jesus is no longer an old record that has nothing to do with me; it becomes the word of life that now saves me from sin and leads me to faith. That word makes me believe

in the resurrection even in the face of death, and when I realize my own weakness, it makes me look to the perfect salvation that the Lord accomplished. It also leads the saved saints to live a life of loving one another, serving the gospel, and testifying of Jesus Christ together with the Holy Spirit.

I hope that through this third volume you, the readers, will more clearly know Jesus Christ, who is the resurrection and the life, and the way, the truth, and the life, and come to believe with your hearts in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that He accomplished. I hope that everything contained in this book will exalt only the name of Jesus Christ and lead you, the readers, to Him, of whom the Scriptures testify. And so I hope that you will believe with your hearts that Jesus bore all our sins with the baptism He received from John, received the judgment of those sins on the Cross, and then rose from the dead. I earnestly hope that in this gospel of the water and the Spirit you will obtain the remission of sins and eternal life, and that, abiding in the word of the Lord, you will bear the fruit of love and of the gospel abundantly. ✉

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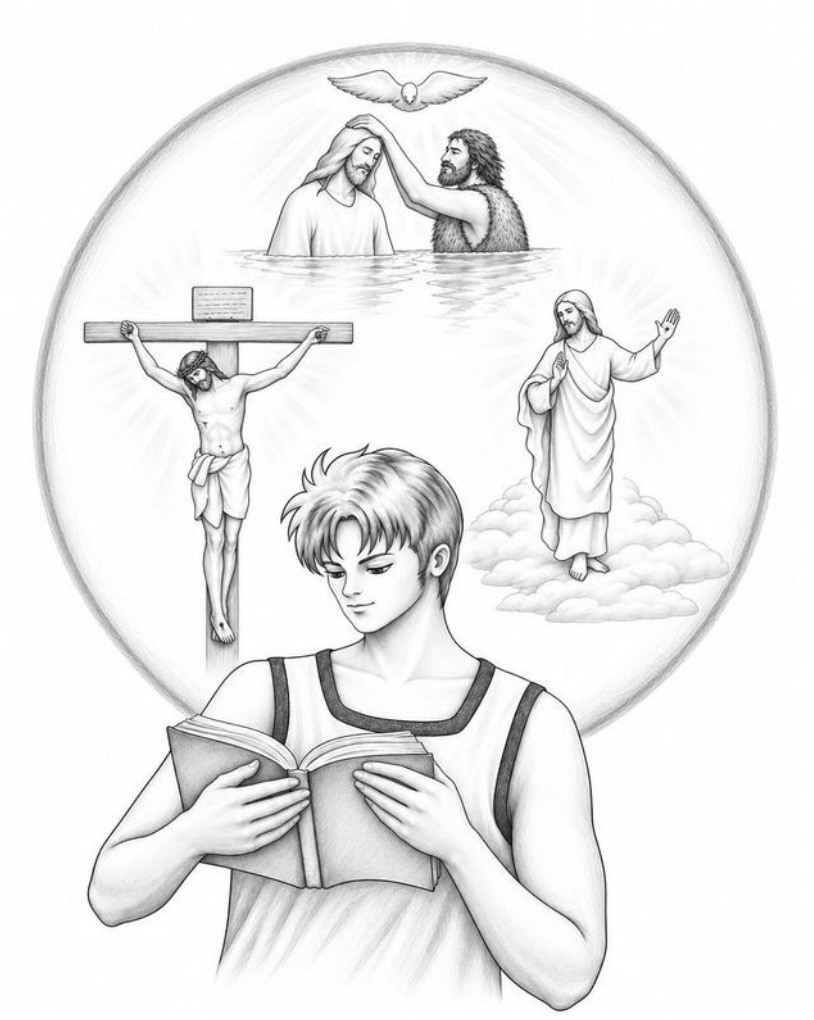


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# CHAPTER

# 11

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# John Chapter 11 seen from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit

## In John 11:1–2, what kind of faith did Mary's family have in Jesus?

Mary's family, which appears in John 11:1–2, was a family of faith made up of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. The faith of this family was not a faith that knew Jesus merely as a prophet who heals diseases, but a faith that believed in Him as the Savior who loves them and even raises the dead. Yet in the face of Lazarus' death, their human thoughts and limits were also revealed, and Jesus led their faith to become more perfect.

### 1. It was a faith that was in a relationship of love with Jesus

When Lazarus fell sick, the two sisters sent someone to Jesus and said,

*"Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick" (John 11:3).*

They did not ask Jesus to love Lazarus. They already knew that Jesus loved Lazarus. Jesus Himself also called Lazarus "*our friend,"* and John 11:5 testifies that Jesus loved Martha, Mary, and Lazarus.

Therefore, the faith of this family was not a religious relationship that sought Jesus only when needed, but a faith that had known the love of Jesus all along and relied on Him.

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## 2. It was a faith that sought help from Jesus when trouble came

When Lazarus became critically ill, Mary and Martha did not look only for human means but sent word to Jesus. This was because they had faith that Jesus could heal Lazarus.

They did not command Jesus to do this or that, but entrusted the fact to Him, saying, *"He whom You love is sick."* Believing in the love and power of Jesus, they laid their situation before the Lord.

## 3. Mary had a faith that treasured Jesus and received His word

John 11:2 introduces Mary as the one *"who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair."* In the act of pouring fragrant oil and wiping the feet of Jesus with her hair, Mary's faith and devotion, which exalted Jesus as the most precious One, are revealed.

Mary sat at the Lord's feet and listened to the word, and even in her sorrow she fell down at the feet of Jesus. She was not a person who knew Jesus only intellectually, but a person who believed in Him with her heart, humbled herself, and served the Lord.

Martha also confessed clearly as follows.

*"Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world" (John 11:27).*

Therefore, Mary's family was a family that believed in Jesus as the Christ and the Son of God.

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## 4. Their faith still had human limits

Both Martha and Mary said to Jesus, *"Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died."* They believed that if Jesus had come earlier, He could have prevented Lazarus' death. But they did not fully believe that He would raise Lazarus, who had already died, right there on the spot.

Martha believed in the resurrection at the last day, but before the word that Jesus could raise Lazarus now, she said, *"By this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days."* She had faith, but it was blocked by reality and human judgment.

## 5. Jesus led their faith to become a present-tense faith

Mary's family knew the fact that Jesus had healed the sick in the past, and they also believed the fact that there would be a resurrection at the last day. But Jesus made them come out of a faith that stayed in the past and the future and believe in Him now.

*"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).*

Jesus did not merely say, "I will give the resurrection in the future." He declared, *"I am the resurrection and the life."* This means that the resurrection and the life are in Jesus Himself, and that His word must be believed now.

The faith we need today is the same. It is not a faith that only knows the fact that Jesus did amazing things in the past, or that vaguely waits for Him to save us someday. It is to believe with the heart that Jesus bore all our sins with the baptism He received from John, received the judgment of those sins on the Cross, rose

again from the dead, and has now become our Savior and our life.

### Conclusion

The faith that Mary's family had was the following kind of faith.

1. It was a faith that knew the love of Jesus and had fellowship with Him.

2. It was a faith that relied on Jesus and sought His help when trouble came.

3. It was a faith that believed in Jesus as the Christ and the Son of God.

4. It was a faith that treasured Jesus above all and humbled itself before Him.

5. It was a faith that had human limits, but grew deeper through the word of Jesus and the resurrection of Lazarus.

Jesus loved this family, and by raising Lazarus from the dead, He revealed that He is the resurrection and the life. The perfect faith that Mary's family needed to have was not a faith that only believed that the Lord would do something in the future, but a present-tense faith that believed in Jesus, who was speaking now, and received His word just as it was.

## In John 11:3–6, why did Jesus, even though He knew that Lazarus was critically ill, stay where He was two more days and then go to Lazarus?

That Jesus stayed two more days even though He knew that Lazarus was critically ill was not because He did not love Lazarus. It was to reveal through Lazarus' death that He is the

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Lord of the resurrection and the life, and to lead His disciples and Mary's family to a more perfect faith.

## 1. It was to reveal the glory of God

Jesus spoke about Lazarus' sickness.

*"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).*

Lazarus actually died. But that death was not the final outcome. By raising Lazarus from the dead, Jesus intended to reveal the glory of God and His own divinity.

Through the raising of a man who had been dead four days, rather than the healing of a sickness, it was revealed all the more clearly that Jesus is the Lord of life and the Son of God.

## 2. It was to show that Jesus is the Lord of the resurrection and the life

People thought that if Jesus had come earlier, He could have healed Lazarus' sickness. Martha and Mary likewise said, *"Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died."*

But Jesus did not intend to make them believe in Him merely as One who heals diseases.

*"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).*

That Jesus stayed two more days and then went to Lazarus was to reveal that He is God, who has not only the power to heal diseases but also the authority of resurrection to raise the dead.

## 3. It was to make the disciples believe more firmly

After revealing the fact that Lazarus had died, Jesus said,

*"I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe. Nevertheless let us go to him" (John 11:15).*

That Jesus was glad does not mean that He was glad about Lazarus' death. It means that He was glad that through the sign of raising Lazarus, the disciples would come to believe in Jesus more clearly.

The disciples were following Jesus, but they did not fully know that He is the God of life who rules over death. Through the death and resurrection of Lazarus, Jesus established the faith of His disciples all the more firmly.

## 4. It was to lead the faith of Mary and Martha to a present-tense faith

Martha believed in the resurrection at the last day. But she could not fully accept the word that Jesus could raise Lazarus now. Mary, too, thought that if Jesus had come earlier, Lazarus would not have died.

The faith of the two sisters stayed at believing in the power of the past and the resurrection of the future. By actually raising Lazarus, Jesus made them believe the fact that He is the resurrection and the life now.

*"Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?" (John 11:40).*

True faith is not merely knowing the fact that Jesus performed works of power in the past, but a faith that receives with the heart the word of the Lord, who is speaking now.

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## 5. The love of Jesus was a love that fulfilled a purpose greater than human impatience

John 11:5 first makes clear that Jesus loved Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, and then records that He stayed two more days. Therefore, the delay of Jesus was not evidence that He had no love, but a process of love that led them to a greater faith and glory.

That family wanted Lazarus to be healed right away, but Jesus, by raising Lazarus from the dead, showed that He is the Lord of life. He gave them an answer that was greater and more fundamental than what they had expected.

## Conclusion

The reasons why Jesus stayed two more days and then went to Lazarus are as follows.

1. It was to reveal the glory of God through the resurrection of Lazarus.

2. It was to show that He is the Lord of the resurrection and the life.

3. It was to lead His disciples and Mary's family to a firmer faith.

4. It was to change a faith that stayed in the past and the future into a present-tense faith that believes in Jesus, who is speaking now.

Seen from the dimension of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the sign of raising Lazarus shows that Jesus is the Savior who gives life to those bound by sin and death. Jesus bore all the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John, received the judgment of that sin on the Cross, and rose again from the dead. It is Jesus who gives the remission of sins and eternal life to those who believe in this salvation with their hearts,

and who will raise them again at the last day.

Therefore, even if the Lord's answer seems to come late, we must not take it to mean that the Lord has no love. The Lord is the One who brings about faith, life, and the glory of God in a place deeper than the present crisis that human beings see.

## In John 11:7–32, what was the difference between the faith of Mary and the faith of Martha?

Both Mary and Martha believed in Jesus. Therefore, the two cannot be divided into "one who believes and one who does not believe." The difference lay in whether their faith in Jesus stayed in their thoughts and words, or whether it was shown in their hearts and actions.

| Category | Martha | Mary |
|---|---|---|
| Attitude in meeting Jesus | Went out first and met Jesus | Heard the call and came quickly |
| Expression of faith | Confessed clearly with knowledge of the faith and with words | Fell down at the feet of Jesus and showed faith and sorrow |
| Limits revealed | Thought of the resurrection only as a matter of the last day | Thought that if Jesus had come earlier, Lazarus would not have died |
| Characteristics of faith | Strong in doctrinal and intellectual faith | Notable for personal, heart-centered faith |
| Growth needed | Believing the Lord's word as a present reality | Believing in the Lord's power of resurrection beyond sorrow and human thoughts |

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## 1. Martha's knowledge of the faith and her confession were clear

When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out first and met Him. She confessed to Jesus as follows.

*"Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world" (John 11:27).*

Martha knew and believed accurately that Jesus is the Christ and the Son of God. She also knew the fact that the dead would rise again at the last day.

But when Jesus said, *"Your brother will rise again,"* she answered like this.

*"I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day" (John 11:24).*

Jesus told her that her brother would rise again, but Martha understood His words as referring to the resurrection at the last day. Her knowledge of the faith and her confession were clear, but there was a limit in receiving the Lord's word as a present reality.

## 2. Mary showed her faith by falling down at the Lord's feet

Mary did not go outside at first but sat in the house. But when Martha told her, *"The Teacher has come and is calling for you,"* she responded at once.

*"As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly and came to Him" (John 11:29).*

Mary came to Jesus and fell down at His feet.

*"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'" (John 11:32).*

Mary's faith was shown more in her attitude than in many words. When she listened to the Lord's word, she sat at His feet, and even in her sorrow she fell down at the Lord's feet. It was a faith that exalted Jesus, humbled herself, and entrusted her heart to Him.

## 3. But Mary, too, had limits in her faith

Mary, too, said exactly as Martha did, *"Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died."* Both of them believed that if Jesus had come earlier, He could have prevented Lazarus' death, but neither of them said clearly that He would raise Lazarus, who had already died, now.

Therefore, we cannot divide them by saying that Mary had a perfect faith from the beginning and that Martha had no faith at all. Both of them believed in Jesus, but before the reality of death, they were caught up in human thoughts and sorrow.

## 4. Martha relied more on her thoughts and knowledge, while Mary stood out for her heart and personal trust

Martha had many conversations with Jesus and expressed her knowledge of the faith. But even after hearing the word of Jesus, she thought first of the concept of the resurrection that she already knew and of the reality that Lazarus had been dead four days.

In contrast, Mary did not say much, but when she heard the Lord's call, she came to Him quickly and fell down at His feet. Martha's faith was "a faith that stays in thoughts and concepts," and Mary's faith was "a faith that receives with the heart and entrusts oneself to the Lord."

However, in this passage Mary did not explicitly confess the

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immediate resurrection of Lazarus. Both of them had to grow into a deeper faith through the sign that Jesus showed them.

## 5. What Jesus wanted was a faith that believes in the present tense

Martha spoke of the resurrection at the last day, but Jesus did not explain the resurrection only as an event in the distant future.

*"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 faith Jesus wanted was not merely having knowledge about the resurrection, but believing with the heart that Jesus, who was standing before her right then, is the Lord of the resurrection and the life.

The gospel of the water and the Spirit is the same. We must not stop at knowing only as knowledge the fact that Jesus bore all our sins once and for all with the baptism He received from John, received the judgment of those sins on the Cross, and rose again from the dead. We must receive that word with our hearts and believe that Jesus is the Savior who has now removed all my sins.

## Conclusion

Martha's faith was clear in its knowledge about Jesus and its confession of faith, but it had a weakness in receiving the Lord's word as a present reality. Mary's faith stood out in the faith and devotion of the heart that responded at once to the call of Jesus and fell down at His feet.

But in the face of Lazarus' death, both of them stayed in the past condition of *"if You had been here."* By raising Lazarus from the dead, Jesus made both of them believe that He is the God of the resurrection and the life who is still alive and at work now.

Therefore, the point of this passage does not lie in condemning one of the two, Mary or Martha. It lies in not stopping at having knowledge about Jesus, but going on to a faith that believes with the heart what the Lord has spoken now and sees the glory of God.

## In John 11:33–38, is Jesus the One who sympathizes with all our pain and sorrow, knowing and feeling them?

To sympathize means not merely to look at another person's pain from the outside and feel pity, but to deeply understand that person's situation and weakness and to feel with that person.

Jesus is the One who knows and sympathizes with all our pain and sorrow. The tears of Jesus shown in John 11:33–38 clearly show that fact.

### 1. Jesus felt the sorrow of Mary and the people together with them

When Lazarus died, Mary and the people who had come to comfort her all wept.

*"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*

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*Him, 'Lord, come and see.' Jesus wept" (John 11:33–35).*

Jesus did not simply observe Mary's sorrow. He groaned in the spirit and was troubled, and He shed tears Himself before Mary and the people.

He already knew that He would soon raise Lazarus, but He did not take lightly the sorrow of the people who had lost a loved one and were weeping right then. The tears of Jesus show the fact that He truly loved Mary, Martha, and Lazarus.

## 2. Jesus experienced our weaknesses as a true man

Jesus is God Himself in essence, but He came to this earth clothed in human flesh. While He lived as a man, He felt hunger and weariness, He suffered rejection, misunderstanding, and betrayal, and He even went through sorrow, physical pain, and death.

The Book of Hebrews says the following about Jesus.

*"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).*

Jesus had no sin at all, but He actually experienced the weakness and pain that human beings go through. Therefore, He knows our pain not only as knowledge, but knows it deeply as One who went through it Himself.

## 3. Jesus groaned over the pain that death had brought

The passage records that Jesus *"groaned"* twice. Jesus saw the death that had come to a family and the tears that people shed because of that death.

Death is an enemy that came into mankind through sin. Jesus

did not grieve helplessly in the face of death; He felt deeply the pain that sin and death had brought to mankind, and He went to the tomb to overcome that enemy.

After shedding tears before the tomb of Lazarus, Jesus called to the dead Lazarus, *"Lazarus, come forth!"* The sympathy of Jesus did not end with tears but led to the saving act of raising the dead.

## 4. Jesus Himself bore the problem of our sin and death

Jesus is not One who came to comfort our sorrow only with words. He came to this earth to solve sin, the root of all human pain and death.

Jesus bore all the sin of mankind in His own body once and for all with the baptism He received from John. And by bearing that sin and shedding His blood on the Cross, He received the judgment of sin in our place, and by rising again from the dead, He overcame the power of sin and death.

Therefore, the sympathy of Jesus is not mere emotional compassion. It is the love of the Savior who Himself bore our sins, judgment, and death, and who gives the remission of sins, new life, and the hope of the resurrection to those who believe.

## 5. We can come boldly to Jesus in the midst of our pain

Because Jesus is the One who sympathizes with our weaknesses, Hebrews chapter 4 exhorts us as follows.

*"Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16).*

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When we go through sickness, failure, loneliness, parting, and the sorrow of death, we do not need to hide our hearts from Jesus. The Lord already knows our situation and our hearts, and He understands even our tears and sighs.

### Conclusion

Jesus is the One who knows and sympathizes with all our pain and sorrow.

1. As God, He knows all our circumstances completely.
2. He came as a true man and experienced human weakness and pain Himself.
3. He was with Mary and the people in their sorrow and shed tears.
4. By bearing our sins and being judged, He resolved the root cause of pain and death.
5. By rising again from the dead, He gave eternal life and the hope of the resurrection to those who believe.

Jesus is the One who weeps with us, and at the same time He is the God of the resurrection who wipes away our tears and raises us from the dead. Therefore, those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit can rely on Jesus, who knows and loves them completely, even in the midst of pain, and come boldly to the throne of grace.

## In John 11:39–45, did Jesus become the Lord of the resurrection?

Yes. Jesus is the Lord of the resurrection. But to be exact, it is not that Jesus became the Lord of the resurrection only after

He raised Lazarus. Jesus is God, the Lord of life from the beginning, and by raising Lazarus from the dead, He revealed that He is the resurrection and the life. And by rising again from the dead Himself, He confirmed the eternal resurrection of those who believe.

## 1. Jesus is God, who is the resurrection and the life from the beginning

Before raising Lazarus, Jesus had already said,

*"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).*

Jesus did not merely say, "I will give the resurrection." He declared, *"I am the resurrection and the life."* The resurrection is a gift that Jesus gives, and at the same time it is the authority of life that is in Jesus Himself.

## 2. By raising Lazarus, He revealed the authority of the resurrection

Lazarus had been dead four days and was in the tomb. Martha said, *"By this time there is a stench,"* but Jesus said,

*"Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?" (John 11:40).*

When Jesus called, *"Lazarus, come forth!"* Lazarus, who had been dead, came out alive. Jesus did not use any medicine or human method. With a single word, He gave life to a dead man.

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This shows the fact that the word of Jesus is the word of God that creates life. Jesus is not One who stands helplessly looking at death, but the Lord of life who calls out the dead and gives them life.

## 3. Jesus revealed that He is the Savior whom God the Father sent

That Jesus prayed to God the Father before raising Lazarus was not because He had no power and asked for help. It was so that the people standing around would believe in Jesus as the Savior whom God the Father sent.

*"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" (John 11:42).*

When Lazarus came back to life, many of the Jews who saw it believed in Jesus. This sign testified that Jesus is the Son of God and the Savior who raises the dead.

## 4. the raising of Lazarus was a sign that showed the resurrection of Jesus in advance

Lazarus came back to life from death by the word of Jesus. But Jesus was the One who would Himself pass through the death of the Cross and rise again.

Jesus bore all the sin of mankind in His own body once and for all with the baptism He received from John. By bearing that sin and shedding His blood on the Cross, He received the judgment of sin, and He rose again on the third day after His death.

Lazarus received the life of the flesh again by the power of Jesus, but the resurrection of Jesus was an eternal resurrection over which death no longer has dominion.

*"Knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him" (Romans 6:9).*

Therefore, the event of raising Lazarus is a sign that showed in advance that Jesus would die on the Cross and rise again, and that He would raise those who believe at the last day.

## 5. Jesus is the Lord who gives the resurrection and eternal life to those who believe

The resurrection of Jesus does not end as the victory of Jesus alone. He gives new life and the hope of the resurrection to those who have received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

*"But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive" (1 Corinthians 15:20–22).*

Because Jesus bore all our sins with the baptism He received from John, paid the price of sin on the Cross, and then rose again from the dead, those who believe in this salvation are saved from sin and judgment and receive eternal life. Even if the flesh dies, the Lord will raise them again at the last day.

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## Conclusion

It is not that Jesus became the Lord of the resurrection by raising Lazarus; rather, as God, who is the resurrection and the life from the beginning, He revealed His authority.

1. By raising the dead Lazarus by His word, He showed the authority of life.

2. He testified that He is the Son of God whom God the Father sent.

3. He showed in advance His own death on the Cross and His resurrection.

4. He revealed that He is the Savior who gives the remission of sins and eternal life to those who believe.

5. He confirmed that He is the Lord of the resurrection who will raise the saints again at the last day.

Therefore, Jesus is not One who only taught about the resurrection. Jesus Himself is the resurrection and the life, and He is the Lord of the resurrection who overcame the power of sin and death with the baptism He received from John, the blood of the Cross, and His resurrection, and who gives eternal life to those who believe.

## Does John 11:46–53 say that Jesus Christ came to this earth, bore the sin of the world with the baptism He received from John, was nailed to the Cross, shed His blood, died, and rose again, and thereby removed our sins, saved us from the judgment of sin, and became the Savior of those who believe?

Through the prophecy of Caiaphas, John 11:46–53 shows in

advance that Jesus, as one man, would die in the place of many people for their sins. This death was the vicarious death for the sin of the world that He had borne with the baptism He received from John, and through the Cross and the resurrection, Jesus completed the salvation of those who believe.

## 1. The reactions of those who saw Lazarus' return to physical life differed from one another

When Jesus raised the dead Lazarus, many of the Jews believed in Jesus. But some people went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done.

They saw the same sign, but some believed in Jesus as the Son of God and the Savior, while others reported Him to the religious leaders. This shows the fact that one is not saved merely by seeing a sign; what matters is who one believes Jesus, whom the sign testifies of, to be.

## 2. The religious leaders were concerned about their own position and the safety of their nation rather than the truth

The chief priests and the Pharisees could not deny the fact that Jesus had performed many signs. This was because the dead Lazarus had come back to life. But they did not believe in Jesus, and were concerned as follows.

*"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" (John 11:48).*

Rather than trying to know who Jesus is, they feared that

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their religious position and political order would collapse because of Jesus. As a result, they began to plot to kill Jesus.

## 3. The words of Caiaphas prophesied the vicarious death of Jesus

Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said,

*"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" (John 11:50).*

Caiaphas tried to get past a political crisis by sacrificing the one man Jesus. But through his words, God revealed His greater will of salvation.

*"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).*

Jesus was the One who would die not only for the nation of Israel but for the sinners of the whole world. It is a prophecy that by the one man Jesus Christ dying in the place of many, those who believe would be saved from sin and judgment.

## 4. Jesus died on the Cross because He had borne the sin of the world

The death of Jesus on the Cross does not end as an event in which one sinless man died unjustly. Before He was hung on the Cross, Jesus bore all the sin of mankind in His own body once and for all with the baptism He received from John.

When Jesus received baptism from John, He said,

*"Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness" (Matthew 3:15).*

After that, John looked at Jesus and testified,

*"Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29).*

Jesus had the sin of the world transferred to Him with the baptism He received from John, and bearing that sin, He went to the Cross. Therefore, the death of Jesus on the Cross is the death of atonement for the sin of the world, and the judgment He received in the place of sinners.

## 5. Jesus bore the judgment of our sins on the Cross

Because the wages of sin is death, judgment surely follows sin. Because Jesus had borne our sins, He was nailed to the Cross, shed His blood, and died.

The scourging, the nailing, and the death that Jesus received were the punishment of sin that we should have received. God the Father brought down the judgment for the sin of mankind on His own Son, and Jesus bore that judgment completely.

Therefore, the death of Jesus was the vicarious death of one man dying for the people. Because Jesus bore our sins in our place and was judged, those who believe in this salvation are saved from the judgment of sin.

## 6. By rising again from the dead, Jesus completed and confirmed salvation

The work of salvation of Jesus did not end with His death on

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the Cross.

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

Jesus bore the sin of the world with the baptism He received from John, received the judgment of sin on the Cross, and rose again on the third day after His death. By rising again, He overcame the power of sin and death and became the Savior who gives new life and eternal resurrection to those who believe.

## 7. The salvation of Jesus gathers the scattered children of God together as one

The purpose for which Jesus died does not stop at removing the sins of individuals. John 11:52 says that He died so *"that He would gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad."*

Whether Jew or Gentile, whoever believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that Jesus accomplished receives the remission of sins and becomes a child of God. These people become one people by believing in the same gospel, and they come to follow the one shepherd, Jesus Christ.

## Conclusion

John 11:46–53 testifies in advance that Jesus is the sacrificial offering of atonement who would die in the place of many people.

1. Jesus bore the sin of the world in His own body once and for all with the baptism He received from John.

2. Bearing that sin, He was nailed to the Cross and shed His

blood, and thereby received the judgment of sin in our place.

3. By rising again from the dead, He overcame the power of sin and death.

4. He removed the sins of those who believe in this salvation and saved them from judgment.

5. He made those who have received the remission of sins the children of God and gathered them as one people.

Therefore, Jesus did not become the Savior merely by the fact that He shed His blood on the Cross. He bore our sins with the baptism He received from John, and bearing those sins, He was judged on the Cross, and by rising again from the dead, He became the perfect Savior of those who believe. This is the truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit contained in the prophecy of John 11:51–52.

## In John 11:54–57, since Jesus Christ removed the sins of sinners with the truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit and became the Savior, did He become the object of hatred to those who did not acknowledge Him and did not believe in Him?

John 11:54–57 shows the situation in which the religious leaders were plotting to kill Jesus after He had raised Lazarus. Jesus was the One who came to save sinners, but to those who did not acknowledge Him, He was regarded rather as an object that had to be removed.

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## 1. The resurrection of Lazarus clearly revealed the divinity of Jesus

Jesus raised Lazarus, who had been dead four days, by His word. Many of the Jews who saw this sign believed in Jesus. But some people told the Pharisees what Jesus had done.

The chief priests and the Pharisees, too, could not deny the sign of Jesus. They said, *"What shall we do? For this Man works many signs."* The problem was not that there was a lack of evidence, but that even after seeing clear evidence, they did not receive Jesus as the Son of God and the Savior.

## 2. The religious leaders tried to protect their own authority

They were concerned that if they left Jesus alone, everyone would believe in Him and Rome would take away their land and nation. Outwardly they worried about the nation, but in reality they feared losing the religious authority and position they had been enjoying.

As a result, the Bible says, *"From that day on, they plotted to put Him to death."* In the end, the chief priests and the Pharisees even gave a command that anyone who knew where Jesus was should report it so that they might seize Him.

Jesus gave life to sinners, but those who held on to their own authority and their own righteousness tried to kill Jesus, who gives life.

## 3. The fundamental reason why Jesus was hated was that He exposed sin and falsehood

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

When light shines, what was hidden in the darkness is exposed. When Jesus came as the light of the world, people's sin and hypocrisy, their self-righteousness and unbelief, were exposed. So those who acknowledged their sins and wanted to be saved came to Jesus, but those who wanted to protect their self-righteousness and religious authority hated Jesus.

*"This is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (John 3:19).*

They hated Jesus not because there was any fault in Him, but because sinners loved darkness rather than light.

## 4. While keeping the Passover, they rejected the true Passover Lamb

The passage records that as the Passover drew near, many people went up to Jerusalem to purify themselves. But the religious leaders, even while performing the outward rites of purification, were trying in their hearts to seize and kill Jesus.

The rituals of the law and religious acts alone cannot wash away the sins of the heart. The true Savior to whom the sacrificial lamb of the Passover points is Jesus Christ. Yet while keeping the Passover, they rejected Jesus, the true Passover Lamb.

The gospel of the water and the Spirit proclaims that one does not become righteous by one's own works, but receives the

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remission of sins by believing in the salvation that Jesus accomplished. To those who hold on to their self-righteousness, this gospel becomes a word that tears down their own merits and religious boasting, so it is easier for them to oppose it than to receive it.

## 5. Jesus went to Ephraim in order to accomplish the work of salvation in God's time

Jesus did not walk openly among the Jews, but went to Ephraim and stayed there with His disciples. This does not mean that Jesus had been defeated by them and fled. It was because the time for Him to be hung on the Cross had not yet fully come, so He waited for the time that God had appointed.

Jesus had already had all the sin of mankind transferred to Him once and for all with the baptism He received from John. Now, like the Passover lamb, He had to bear that sin, be hung on the Cross and shed His blood, and rise again from the dead to complete salvation. Jesus is not One whose life was taken away from Him by force by people, but the Savior who laid down His own life according to the will and the time of God in order to give life to sinners.

## Conclusion

Jesus came to save sinners with the gospel of the water and the Spirit, but He became the object of hatred and persecution to those who did not acknowledge Him as the Son of God and the Savior.

They rejected Jesus not because they had failed to see His

signs, but because acknowledging Jesus would mean laying down their own authority and their self-righteousness. But even their plot could not stop God's plan of salvation. Jesus had the sin of the world transferred to Him with the baptism He received from John, received the judgment of that sin on the Cross, and by rising from the dead, He completed salvation and confirmed that He is the Savior.

Therefore, this passage does not ask us only whether we are looking for Jesus. It asks whether we are holding on to our self-righteousness and our own interests, like the leaders who looked for Jesus in order to remove Him, or whether we are believing with our hearts in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that He accomplished. ✉

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# Questions and Answers on John Chapter 11

## [Question] 1. What characteristics and meaning does the sign that Jesus performed in John chapter 11 have?

The sign recorded in John chapter 11 is the raising of the dead Lazarus. This sign is different even from the events in which He healed the sick or raised someone who had just died. Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days and was in a state where there was even the stench of decay. When no possibility at all remained by human power, Jesus raised him.

Even after hearing the news that Lazarus was sick, Jesus did not go to Bethany right away but stayed two more days where He was. This was not because He did not love Lazarus, but in order to reveal the glory of God and to make the disciples believe in Jesus. Jesus said, *"I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe."* Therefore, this sign was not a miracle that happened by chance, but a work He performed in order to reveal clearly who Jesus is.

At the center of this sign is the word of Jesus, *"I am the resurrection and the life."*

*"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).*

Jesus is not One who merely teaches the resurrection, but God, who is Himself the resurrection and the life. When Jesus

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cried with a loud voice, *"Lazarus, come forth!"* the dead Lazarus came out of the tomb bound hand and foot with graveclothes. This shows that the word of Jesus, who created the heavens and the earth by His word, has the power of life that raises the dead.

The raising of Lazarus is a sign that showed concretely the fact that there is also resurrection and eternal life for those who believe in Jesus. For a person who has received the remission of sins by believing in Jesus, even if his flesh dies, that is not the end of him forever. The Lord will raise him again and will change his corruptible body into an incorruptible body so that he may enjoy eternal life. Jesus, who called Lazarus out of death, will also raise up again at the last day those who have fallen asleep in Christ.

This sign is also connected to the work of salvation of Jesus. Jesus, who gave life to Lazarus, bore the sin of the whole world by receiving baptism from John the Baptist, and bearing that sin, He was hung on the Cross and received judgment, and by rising again from the dead, He became the Savior who gives the remission of sins and new life to those who believe. The resurrection of Jesus is the evidence that salvation has been completed, and the guarantee that there is also resurrection for those who believe.

This sign also clearly revealed the faith and unbelief of people. Many of the Jews who saw Lazarus come back to life believed in Jesus, but some people went to the Pharisees and told them about it. The chief priests and the Pharisees, even after seeing such a clear sign, did not believe in Jesus but rather plotted to kill Him. As a result, through the mouth of Caiaphas, it was foretold that Jesus would die not only for one nation but in order to gather together in one the scattered children of God.

Therefore, the sign of raising Lazarus is a sign that revealed

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that Jesus is God, the Lord of the resurrection and the life, that showed the fact that eternal life and resurrection are given to those who believe His word, and that revealed the faith and unbelief of people with the salvation that would be accomplished through the baptism, the Cross, and the resurrection of Jesus lying ahead.

## [Question] 2. In John 11:1, where was Bethany, the town where Mary and Martha lived?

Here Bethany refers to the small town where Mary, Martha, and Lazarus lived. The expression *"the town of Mary and her sister Martha"* does not mean that the town was their possession, but that it was Bethany, well known as the place where Mary and Martha lived. Their brother Lazarus also lived there.

This Bethany was located near the Mount of Olives outside the city of Jerusalem, and it was about three kilometers away from Jerusalem.

*"Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles away" (John 11:18).*

This distance is about two kilometers in today's measure. Jesus loved Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, who lived here, and He visited their home and ate and had fellowship with them. The place He came to when Lazarus died and raised him again was also this very Bethany. John chapter 12 describes Bethany again as the place *"where Lazarus was who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead" (John 12:1).*

This place is different from the Bethany that appears in John 1:28. The Bethany of John chapter 1 was beyond the Jordan, where John the Baptist was baptizing, and the Bethany of John chapter 11 was near Jerusalem. Therefore, *"Bethany, the town*

*of Mary and her sister Martha"* refers to the town of Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, which was located about two kilometers from Jerusalem.

## [Question] 3. In John 11:2–3, what kind of people were Lazarus and his two sisters?

Lazarus, Martha, and Mary were three siblings who lived together in Bethany, and they were people who believed in and followed Jesus and received His special love. Lazarus was the brother of Martha and Mary, and Jesus called him *"our friend Lazarus."* That the two sisters sent someone to Jesus and said, *"Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick"* also shows the close relationship between Lazarus and Jesus.

When their brother fell sick, Martha and Mary relied on Jesus first before any other means. Because they believed that Jesus loved Lazarus and could solve the problem of his sickness, they sent someone and let Him know the news. Later, Martha confessed Jesus as *"the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world."* In the face of Lazarus' death they also showed sorrow and the limits of their faith, but they were people who believed in Jesus as the Savior and relied on Him.

In particular, Mary is introduced in John 11:2 as the one *"who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair."* She did not treat Jesus as a mere teacher or a man of power, but believed in Him as the Christ who would save her. So she poured costly fragrant oil on the feet of Jesus and wiped His feet with her own hair, showing her faith, gratitude, and love.

Martha was a person who served Jesus diligently, and Mary was a person who believed who Jesus is and gave her precious things without sparing. Lazarus, too, believed in Jesus and was

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a friend who received His love. Therefore, these three siblings were a family of faith that believed in and served Jesus while having close fellowship with Him. By raising Lazarus again from death, Jesus led their faith to become an even clearer and more real faith.

## [Question] 4. What kind of love do John 11:3 and 11:5 show that Christ had for Lazarus and his two sisters?

The love that Christ had for Lazarus, Martha, and Mary was a personal love in which He had close fellowship with them and shared their circumstances and sorrow with them. Jesus visited their home and shared food with them, and He called Lazarus *"our friend Lazarus."* When Lazarus died and He saw the two sisters and the people weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled, and He shed tears Himself. This means that He did not merely look at their pain from afar, but shared their pain in His heart.

But the love of Jesus did not stop at immediately removing the pain that had come upon those He loved. Even after hearing the news that Lazarus was sick, Jesus stayed two more days where He was. That He went to him after Lazarus had died was not because He did not love him, but because He intended, by raising the dead, to make His disciples and that family believe in Jesus as the Lord of the resurrection and the life.

Martha and Mary thought that if Jesus had come just a little earlier, Lazarus would not have died. But Jesus went beyond merely healing a sickness and called the dead Lazarus out of the tomb. He did not merely let those He loved escape the immediate difficulty, but made them see the glory of God, who overcomes

even death, and made them believe in the resurrection and eternal life. Therefore, even the delay of Jesus was within His love that established their faith even more clearly and in a more real way.

This love is the saving love of God, who has compassion on those who are in sin and death and gives them life. Jesus not only shed tears with people in their sorrow, but in order to save mankind from sin, He received baptism from John the Baptist and bore all the sin of mankind, received the judgment of that sin on the Cross, and rose again from the dead. The raising of Lazarus from death shows what kind of love the love of Christ is, which gives the remission of sins, new life, and eternal life to those who were dead in sin.

Therefore, the love with which Christ loved Lazarus and his sisters is a love that draws near and suffers with them, a love that is patient and waits, and finally a saving love that leads from death to life and makes them see the glory of God. This love is not favoritism that stays with one family only, but the love of God, who gave Himself in order to save all people from sin and death.

## [Question] 5. In John 11:11–14, what did Christ mean when He called the death of Lazarus *'sleep'*?

Jesus Christ understood the death of Lazarus as 'a state of sleep.'

*"Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up" (John 11:11).*

The disciples understood this word as sleeping and resting physically. So they thought that if he was sleeping, he would get well. But Jesus said plainly, *"Lazarus is dead."* Therefore, the

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word that Lazarus was sleeping does not mean that he had not actually died or that he had merely lost consciousness. His body had clearly died and was buried in the tomb.

Jesus called death sleep because He would raise Lazarus from death just as a sleeping person wakes up again. To people, death looks like a hopeless state in which everything is over, but to Jesus, the Lord of the resurrection and the life, raising the dead was like waking a sleeping person. So after saying, *"I go that I may wake him up,"* He called before the tomb, *"Lazarus, come forth!"* and Lazarus heard that voice and came out alive.

The event of Lazarus also shows the fact that there is a resurrection for all people. The flesh dies and sleeps, but it rises again when it hears the voice of the Son of God. For a person who has believed in Jesus and received eternal life, the death of the flesh is not eternal destruction or the end of existence, but is like sleeping for a while until the Lord raises him again. Therefore, the Bible expresses those who have died in Christ as 'those who have fallen asleep.'

Jesus received baptism from John the Baptist and bore the sin of mankind, received the judgment of that sin on the Cross, and rose again from the dead. Those who believe in this gospel of the water and the Spirit receive the remission of sins and eternal life. Even if such a person's flesh dies, Jesus raises him again and makes him live with glorious life. Therefore, the words in which He called the death of Lazarus sleep contain the authority of Christ, who overcomes death, and the hope of the resurrection that He will give to those who believe.

## [Question] 6. In John 11:15, why was Christ glad that He had not been there before Lazarus died?

Jesus Christ was not glad because of the fact that Lazarus had died. Jesus saw the people grieving over the death of Lazarus and shed tears together with them. The reason He was glad was that through the event in which Lazarus came to die because He was not there, the disciples would come to believe in Jesus more clearly.

*"I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe. Nevertheless let us go to him" (John 11:15).*

If Jesus had been there when Lazarus was sick, He would have healed that sickness. Then the disciples would have seen one more sign of Jesus healing the sick. Jesus waited until Lazarus had surely died and been buried in the tomb and four days had passed, and then went to him. Now, in a state where nothing could be done by human power, by raising the dead Lazarus again, He revealed that He is not One who merely cures sickness, but God, who gives life to the dead.

While praying before the tomb, Jesus made clear that the purpose of doing this work was to make the people standing around believe the fact that the Father had sent Him. And when He said, *"Lazarus, come forth!"* the dead Lazarus came out alive. The disciples and many people who saw this came to be able to believe that Jesus is the Son of God and the Lord of the resurrection and the life. This is the reason why Jesus was glad for the sake of His disciples.

The death of Lazarus was sorrow and despair to people, but to Jesus it became an occasion to reveal the glory of God and to establish faith. Through this event, the disciples saw that Jesus is the One who rules over death and gives eternal life and resurrection to those who believe. This sign also shows that

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Jesus would bear the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John, receive the judgment of that sin on the Cross, and then rise again from the dead and become the perfect Savior.

Therefore, the joy of Jesus was not joy over the death of Lazarus, but joy over the work by which He would turn that death into life, strengthen the faith of His disciples, and reveal the glory of God. By not stopping at healing Lazarus of his sickness but raising him from death, He made them believe with certainty that Jesus is the Son whom God sent and the Lord of the resurrection and the life.

## [Question] 7. In John 11:16, what kind of person do the words and attitude of Thomas show him to have been?

Thomas was one of the twelve disciples of Jesus, and he was a person who had loyalty and courage toward the Lord. Going back to Judea, where the Jews had tried to stone Jesus not long before, was a very dangerous thing. Nevertheless, when Jesus said to go to Lazarus, Thomas said to the other disciples, *"Let us also go, that we may die with Him."* It meant that they would not send Jesus alone into a dangerous place, but would be with Him to the end themselves. Here the sincerity and devotion of Thomas, who wanted to follow the Lord, are revealed.

But the resolve of Thomas did not necessarily mean a perfect faith. Jesus said that He was going to wake the dead Lazarus, but Thomas understood it as Jesus going back to Judea to die. Rather than believing in the Lord's power and will to raise Lazarus, he looked only at the danger and death before his eyes. His heart to love and follow the Lord was strong, but he was lacking in hearing the Lord's word accurately and believing it.

This disposition of Thomas appeared even after Jesus rose again. When the other disciples told him that they had seen the risen Lord, he said that he would not believe unless he saw the marks of the nails on Jesus and put his hand directly into the wound. He was a realistic and empirical person who would believe only after seeing with his eyes and confirming with his hands. Jesus did not abandon such a Thomas but came to him again and said, *"Do not be unbelieving, but believing" (John 20:27)*. Then Thomas confessed clearly to the risen Jesus, *"My Lord and my God!" (John 20:28).*

Therefore, we must not see Thomas merely as a doubting disciple. He was loyal and brave enough to step forward to die with the Lord, but he was a disciple who put his own judgment and visible facts ahead of the Lord's word. Such a Thomas met the risen Jesus and came to believe in Him as his Lord and his God. The figure of Thomas shows that true faith does not stay in human loyalty, resolve, or experience confirmed by the eyes, but lies in believing the word of Jesus and the salvation He accomplished. Today we cannot see Jesus with the eyes of the flesh, but we must believe in Jesus, who, as it is written in the word, bore sin with the baptism He received from John, received judgment on the Cross, and then rose again and became the Savior.

## [Question] 8. In John 11:25–27, what word did Christ give to lead Martha from a conceptual faith to a real faith?

Martha was not a person who did not believe in Jesus. She said to Jesus, *"Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died,"* and confessed that even now, if Jesus asked God,

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God would grant it. But when Jesus said, *"Your brother will rise again,"* Martha did not take that word to mean that Lazarus would come back to life now, but answered, *"I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."* She believed in the resurrection that would take place in the distant future, but she could not believe the fact that Jesus, who was standing before her right then, could raise her dead brother.

To such a Martha, Jesus said, *"I am the resurrection and the life."* This means that the resurrection is not only in an event that will happen in the distant future, but is in Jesus, the Lord of the resurrection and the life. Martha had knowledge about the resurrection, but Jesus turned her eyes from the doctrine of the resurrection to the Lord of the resurrection, who was standing before her right then. The power to raise Lazarus was not in any human means or possibility, but in Jesus, the Lord of life.

Then Jesus went on to say, *"He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die."* Jesus is not only the One who raises the dead again, but the One who gives eternal life to those who believe in Him. Even if the flesh dies, He raises it again, and the life received by believing in Jesus never perishes. The calling of Lazarus out of death was a sign that revealed that Jesus really is the God of the resurrection and the life.

Then Jesus asked Martha, *"Do you believe this?"* This was not a question asking whether she knew the doctrine of the resurrection. It was a question asking whether she believed that He who was speaking right then is the resurrection and the life, and whether she believed that He is the Christ and the Son of God, who can raise her brother. To this Martha answered, *"Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world."* Jesus led the faith of Martha from a vague expectation about the distant future to a faith that believes in the

Christ standing before her right then.

But when Martha heard the word to take away the stone before the tomb, she said again, *"By this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days."* With her mouth she had confessed Jesus as the Christ and the Son of God, but in the face of the reality of death and the stench of decay, she had not yet fully received that word. So Jesus said again, *"Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?"* and actually called Lazarus and brought him out alive. Through this, Martha came to experience the resurrection she had known about in the reality before her eyes.

A conceptual faith stays at knowing and speaking as knowledge the fact that Jesus is the Savior and that there is a resurrection at the last day. A real faith is receiving with the heart now the word that Jesus has spoken. If we believe the word that Jesus bore all our sins with the baptism He received from John, bearing those sins, received judgment on the Cross, and rose again from the dead and saved us completely, we receive the remission of sins now, become righteous, and become the children of God and receive eternal life. Living faith is not vaguely expecting to be saved someday, but believing the salvation that Jesus has already accomplished as a present fact.

Therefore, the core word that Jesus gave to Martha is the declaration *"I am the resurrection and the life"* and the question *"Do you believe this?"* Jesus wanted Martha to be not a person who merely had knowledge about the resurrection, but a person who believes now in the Lord, who is the resurrection and the life, and sees the glory of God according to His word.

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## [Question] 9. In John 11:25–26, what does the word "He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live … shall never die" mean?

Jesus said, *"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live."* Here the word *"though he may die, he shall live"* means that even a person who believes in Jesus grows old, gets sick, and dies in the flesh, but everything does not end with that death. This is because Jesus raises him again. He called the death of Lazarus sleep also because there is a resurrection in which one wakes up again after death.

Even if the flesh of one who believes in Jesus dies, it comes back to life as an incorruptible body when the Lord comes again. Just as the word says, *"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 15:52–53),* we will take off the weak and mortal body of now and put on a new body that never dies again. Therefore, to those who believe, the death of the flesh is not eternal destruction but is like a sleep waiting for the resurrection.

The word that follows, *"Whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die,"* does not mean that a person who believes in Jesus never dies at all in the flesh in this world. It means that a person who, while alive, has believed in Jesus and received the remission of sins and eternal life does not come to eternal death and destruction. His flesh may die, but the life he received from Jesus is not cut off. So Jesus said, *"I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand" (John 10:28).*

What leads people to death is sin. Jesus came to this earth in

order to solve this problem of sin and death. By receiving baptism from John the Baptist, He bore all the sin of mankind in His own body, and bearing that sin, He was judged and died on the Cross, and He rose again from the dead. The baptism of Jesus was the work of bearing our sins, the death on the Cross was the work of paying the price of those sins, and the resurrection was the work of giving us new life.

Therefore, believing in Jesus is not merely acknowledging the fact that He exists. It is believing with the heart the fact that Jesus bore all of that person's own sins with His baptism, received the judgment of those sins on the Cross, and rose again and became the perfect Savior. A person who believes in this gospel of the water and the Spirit is saved from all sin now, becomes righteous, becomes a child of God, and receives eternal life. Because his sins are gone, eternal death and judgment can no longer rule over him.

This word also contains a promise for the saints who are alive when the Lord comes again. The saints who have already died will rise first, and the saints who are still alive at that time will be changed into bodies that do not die and will meet the Lord. Because the dead come back to life and the living are changed, in the end all who believe in Jesus will live with the Lord forever.

Therefore, the word *"though he may die, he shall live"* is the promise of the resurrection that even the death of the flesh cannot end the life of one who believes, and the word *"shall never die"* means that the eternal life received from Jesus does not come to eternal judgment and destruction. The reason why one lives again even though he dies, and never perishes if he believes while alive, is that Jesus Himself is the resurrection and the life.

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## [Question] 10. In John 11:54, where was Ephraim located, and what kind of town was it?

Ephraim was a town located near the wilderness. When many people believed in Jesus after Lazarus came back to life, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and plotted to kill Jesus. From then on, Jesus no longer walked openly among the Jews, but went to Ephraim with His disciples and stayed there.

*"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" (John 11:54).*

In the passage, Ephraim does not refer to the tribe of Ephraim or the northern kingdom of Israel in the Old Testament, but to the actual town where Jesus stayed with His disciples. Because it was near the wilderness, it was a place where He could stay away from people's eyes, unlike when He was working publicly in Jerusalem.

Therefore, Ephraim is the place where Jesus stayed for a while with His disciples when, after the sign of raising Lazarus, the opposition of the Jewish leaders developed into an official plot to kill Him. The passage that follows records that the Passover was near, and that 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. In this way, Ephraim was the town where Jesus stayed with His disciples, avoiding public activity, with the Passover and the Cross ahead of Him.

## [Question] 11. In John 11:55–57, why did the people who had come to Jerusalem to keep the Passover show interest in the whereabouts and safety of Jesus?

The Passover was a great feast at which the Jews who lived scattered in each region gathered in Jerusalem. People came up to Jerusalem early in order to purify themselves before taking part in the Passover rites. They gathered in the temple, sought Jesus, and asked one another, *"What do you think—that He will not come to the feast?"*

The direct reason why they were curious about the whereabouts and safety of Jesus was that the whole of Jewish society was in a great stir because of the sign of raising Lazarus. Many people who had seen Lazarus come back to life after he had been dead and in the tomb for four days believed in Jesus. When this news reached the Pharisees, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and were concerned that if they left Him alone, everyone would believe in Jesus. They also feared that if the people tried to make Jesus king, Rome would intervene and take away their land and nation.

In the end, following the words of Caiaphas, the leaders reached the conclusion that they would kill one man and preserve the nation, and from that day they plotted to kill Jesus. After that, Jesus no longer walked openly among the Jews, but went to Ephraim and stayed there with His disciples. The chief priests and the Pharisees gave a command that anyone who knew where Jesus was should report it so that they might seize Him.

Therefore, the crowd knew two facts surrounding Jesus. One was that the rumors and interest about Jesus had reached their peak because He had raised even the dead Lazarus, and the other was that the Jewish leaders were trying to arrest and kill Jesus.

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In this situation, as the Passover drew near, people were curious whether Jesus would appear in Jerusalem at the risk of danger, or whether He would not come even to the feast.

It was not that Jesus did not know about the leaders' plot to kill Him. By receiving baptism from John the Baptist, He had borne the sin of mankind, and now He was facing the Passover at which He would be judged on the Cross bearing that sin. People were curious whether Jesus would come to the feast, but Jesus was walking the way on which, according to the will of God, He would go up to Jerusalem, die on the Cross, and rise again, and thereby save all mankind from sin. ✉

Sermon 1 by Paul C. Jong

# There is a resurrection of the good and a resurrection of the wicked

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

**"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.'"**

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It is November, and I hope that this year, too, we will preach the gospel even more. There have been many things this year, and I hope we finish it well. These days I see that many people are receiving our books and that many testimonies of salvation are coming in. As word keeps spreading, more people will believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and be saved from sin. Our circumstances have become far better than when we first began to spread the gospel. The Book of Acts says, *"The Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved" (Acts 2:47)*, and in this age, too, we see the Lord adding daily to the Church of God those who are being saved.

This evening I would like to speak about the resurrection. In the daytime I spoke much about eternal life, and in the Bible, each chapter has a theme that the Lord wants to speak about. John chapter 11 is the chapter of the resurrection. What is the resurrection? To die and come back to life is called the resurrection. We can see to whom the resurrection happens and how it works.

## The Lord grants the resurrection of eternal life to those who have received the remission of sins

Looking at the word of John chapter 11, it says, *"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" (John 11:1–2)*. Here we see Martha, Mary, and Lazarus. Lazarus was the brother of the two sisters, and Mary and Martha were sisters. Bethany was a small district, and Lazarus, who lived here, fell sick. But the Lord was saying that this sickness was not unto death, but a sickness that existed in

order to reveal the glory of God. Mary here was the one who had poured fragrant oil on the Lord and wiped His feet with her hair, a person very well known in the village.

In whom does the Lord work? First we can know that the Lord grants the resurrection, that is, the resurrection of eternal life, the good resurrection, to those who have received the remission of sins. Today I will share just a little of that as an introduction and close. This woman who poured fragrant oil on Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair was Mary, and this Mary believed that Jesus was her Savior. So the whole household believed. Her older sister believed, she herself believed, and her brother believed; it seems that their parents in the flesh were not there. So the three siblings were living together, and it was a family in which they all believed in the Lord.

It seems that the Lord loved this family especially. Looking at the storyline of this word, it seems that the Lord often went to this family and had meals with them. At any rate, it was a household that had a close relationship with Jesus. But what the Lord wanted to say here was that He intended to bring glory to God through the death of Lazarus. Lazarus fell sick, and Jesus, even after hearing the news that he was sick, stayed two more days, and in the end went to him after Lazarus had died. The news came that Lazarus was sick and it was urgent, but Jesus stayed two more days in the place where He heard the news, and then told His disciples plainly that Lazarus had died, and went to him, saying that it was in order to reveal the glory of God. And He said, *"Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up" (John 11:11)*.

The Lord's word that he was sleeping meant that Lazarus had clearly died. The Lord could have gotten up right away when He heard the news, gone to him, laid His hands on him, and healed his sickness, but we can see that the Lord deliberately did not go

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to him for two days. He stayed two more days and went there after he had died. In any case, while saying that it was in order to reveal the glory of God, the Lord is showing us now that there is also a resurrection for us.

## The resurrection of the good and the resurrection of the wicked

This resurrection, as I also said in the daytime, is divided into the resurrection of the wicked and the resurrection of the good. Let us look at John chapter 5, verses 25 to 29. *"Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man. 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."* So this is the word that the hour is coming when all the dead on this earth will hear the voice of the Son of God, Jesus Christ. The hour is coming when they will hear, and He said that it is now, and that those who hear will live.

He said that Jesus Christ became a man and saved us from sin with the truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and that He will also appear in the future with the authority to execute judgment. And then He said, *"Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation" (John 5:28–29)*. It is the word

that those who have done good will come forth to the resurrection of life. Looking at 1 Corinthians chapter 15, it speaks about that part again. It said that those who belong to the Lord will rise first, and that later there are others who will also rise.

Here the resurrection of the wicked and of the good appears, and He said that those who have done good will come forth to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of condemnation. Like Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, we meet the Lord of the truth and receive the remission of sins by faith. And just as the Lord went to Lazarus when he had died and raised him with His word, it is the word that the Lord raises those who have done good again in order to give them eternal life and let them live forever.

## After receiving the remission of sins, it is right to live by faith, denying oneself

A person lives on this earth and then dies once. Then the Lord said, *"The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God" (John 5:25),* and the Lord will come at the time of the last tribulation, around the end of the Tribulation. So He raises the dead; He raises those who are in the graves again and takes them up to heaven, and He said that those who have done good will come forth to the resurrection of life. What we must know here is the fact that even among the righteous there are the wicked. But it said that those who have done good will come forth to the resurrection of life.

Having believed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and met the Lord of salvation, though it is hard and difficult to serve Him, we must truly do the Lord's work, serve the gospel in order

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to save other souls from sin, and at times deny ourselves as well. All of us are weak in the flesh and live relying on the Lord, but those who live for the Lord are people who have received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. After receiving the remission of sins, these are people who live for the expansion of the Lord's kingdom, for the Lord, and for the spreading of the gospel. These are people who live on this earth as a grain of wheat in order to save the souls of many other people from sin. It is the word that He will raise such people again with the resurrection of those who have done good.

In fact, the remission of sins is truly important, but after receiving the remission of sins, it is right to live by faith, denying oneself. If one's heart before God is not evil or wicked, and one has a pure heart that believes in God, anyone can receive the word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit and receive the remission of sins. But after receiving the remission of sins in their hearts, many people betray the Lord. While betraying Him, some people even become adversaries, and some people become those who hinder the gospel of God so that it cannot be preached. Some people become truly wicked before God. It is just as the Lord may say, when He looks at them, "You wicked and lazy servant, I do not know you either; cast this one out into the darkness." Even after being truly born again, there are many wicked people. Those who care only about themselves can easily become like that.

Before God, a pastor is the same pastor, the same worker of God who has received the remission of sins by the gospel of the water and the Spirit, yet there are those who draw the saints to their own side. This means that they do not use those saints for spreading the gospel and accomplishing the will of God, but rather use them for their own desires. If those who have become pastors lead the saints for the benefit of spreading the gospel, it

is good, but there are those who lead them to care more about the pastors themselves than about the gospel. Such people are actually like Absalom before God. David was the king of Israel, and Absalom was his son. When his father was rebuked before God and was in difficulty and hardship, Absalom tried to win the hearts of the people and seize the throne.

Absalom sat at the city gate, and when the people of Israel went to the king to be judged, he judged their cases himself in order to win their hearts. When the people had a problem in their lives and tried to go before the king, Absalom intercepted them in between, telling them that there was no need even to go before the king, and judged their cases in a fleshly way so that it would benefit him. Just as the hearts of the people then went to Absalom, there are such people in this age as well. There are such people among the ministers, and there are many such people among those who are not ministers. This means that although they were born again in the same way by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, there are people who truly do good before God, while on the other hand there are people who do evil. There are people who are for the Lord, and there are people who are for themselves. On the one hand there are those who, when it is the Lord's work, gather all their strength and do the Lord's work even at the sacrifice of everything, and try to live in line with the Lord's purpose in order to please the Lord; on the other hand, there are those who use the Lord's name as a pretext to care for their own flesh. Such people are in the Church as well.

Those who have done good before the Lord receive true eternal life with the resurrection of life, and the Lord raises such people again so that they may live happily forever. But it is the word that He raises those who have done evil in order to judge them. The Lord judges all those who have not been born again

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because they do not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and the wicked who are in the Church. It is the word that even among those who believe in the righteousness of Jesus, He also judges according to whether they have done good or done evil. When the Lord comes, at the time of the Tribulation, there are people whom He lets take part in the first resurrection. But those who, after meeting the Lord, hinder the spreading of the gospel most severely, the Lord judges. Such people He raises with the resurrection of condemnation at the last time. He raises them again, too.

The Lord said that the hour is coming when even those who are in the graves will hear the voice of the Son of God. Because the Lord came to this earth as the Son of God clothed in human flesh and saved us from sin with the truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, now, in the future, He will come as the Lord of judgment. When He comes the second time, He will come not as the Savior but as the judge. It is in order to judge sinners and the wicked, and in order to judge sinners for their sins and bring them to destruction. Some He raises with the good resurrection in order to let them receive eternal life, and the wicked He raises with the resurrection of the wicked in order to judge them.

## How will you live after meeting the Lord?

So we must know these things well and engrave them on our hearts. Even among us there may be those who will suffer the resurrection of condemnation, and there are also those who will rise again in order to receive eternal life and enjoy riches and glory. So while we live on this earth, whether we have known the righteousness of God, exalted the righteousness of God, and lived by faith, or not, is extremely important. We need to think

about the word of God and think about whether we are truly right before God or not. After we have met the Lord through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we must know how much more serious and troubling this matter is than meeting the Lord.

How will you live after meeting the Lord? In my case, after meeting the Lord I was very troubled because of my life. I was trying to carry out my purpose of preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit to the people of the whole world, but it was extremely hard. I knew this truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and when I opened the Bible, I knew what this word was saying because the Lord had taught me. I knew that the Lord had saved me with the truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and I had to preach this truth to many people, but looking at the circumstances, it seemed that if I preached it, I would be called a heretic. In fact, when I preached the gospel of the water and the Spirit to Christians, I was called a heretic and was persecuted. I saw that those who heard the gospel of the water and the Spirit rather acted even more wickedly. So I was even more troubled. How will I live after meeting the Lord? Will I compromise with Christians who are not born again and live that way, or will I throw off falsehood and cry out that the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the truth, even if it means becoming a beggar? Will I compromise and live eating well and living well, being treated well, gaining honor, and being served? I agonized between these two. I agonized a great deal. I cannot tell you how much it troubled me.

How will you, too, live after meeting the Lord? Will you live for the flesh, only to feed your own body? Or will you live united with the Church of God in serving the gospel of the water and the Spirit? After we are born again, this is the part that troubles us greatly. It is this question that troubles us. After being born again, will I do good or will I do evil? What is good and what is

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evil? What is clear about this question is the fact that living for the gospel of the water and the Spirit, sacrificing for the gospel, is good, and living only for oneself is evil. It is the word that the Lord will come to judge such people and judge them. It is the word that to those who have done good He gives eternal life and raises them with a resurrection that lets them receive eternal life, and those who have done evil He raises in order to judge their sins.

## Who is wicked before God?

Have you not struggled with this matter, too? Receiving the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit is simple. Since it is received purely by faith, if only it is preached properly, and if one's heart is pure, one only has to receive it and is saved. From then on, life is troubling. Dear fellow believers, if after meeting the Lord you do not preach this gospel of the water and the Spirit and do not serve the gospel, you are more wicked than a person who is not born again. Who is wicked before God? A person who knows the gospel of the water and the Spirit, who believes it, and yet does not preach it; a person who not only does not preach it but also does not serve united with the Church of God, a person who does not work, a person who is not for the gospel and not for the Lord—such a person is wicked. A person who is not for those who preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit, but harms, hates, and envies them, is extremely wicked. I cannot tell you how wicked such a person is. The truly wicked are those who have been saved and yet do not serve the gospel.

Dear fellow believers, if you yourself have been saved from sin, you should live for the spreading of the gospel of the water

and the Spirit for the sake of other people's souls; how can you be saved from sin only for yourself and not preach it and not serve it? It is the word that the Lord judges such a person with the resurrection of the wicked. The person more wicked than a person who has not been saved is the one who knows and believes the gospel of the remission of sins and yet does not serve this gospel and is not united with the Church of God, so he is the most wicked one. Truly, even if it were me, I would judge such a person. It would be better for a person who does not know, since one only has to teach him; but if one knows, believes, and yet does not preach, does not serve, and lives only for oneself, then, as the word of the Bible says, he is a truly vicious one who has nothing to say even if he is beaten with many stripes.

Dear fellow believers, do you think that after believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit there is no judgment for doing evil? It said that the Lord comes as the judge who judges the wicked and sinners. It said that the Son of Man comes as the Lord of judgment. Jesus, the Son of God, was born into this world for a while as the Son of Man, and through His life of thirty-three years, He received baptism from John, died on the Cross, and rose again from the dead, and thereby saved us.

Because Jesus went through such harsh suffering, persecution, and hardship and saved us from sin with His own life, God the Father gave His Son the authority to execute judgment. *"And has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man" (John 5:27)*. The Lord has received the authority to execute judgment. He has received the authority to judge the wicked who do not preach this gospel after receiving the remission of sins by believing in the Lord, and the Lord has also received the authority to judge those who are not born again. It is the Lord who decides between those who will receive eternal life and those who will not. That is why we must

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know this well while believing in the righteousness of the Lord. Is it enough just to be saved from sin? It is not.

If I did not serve this gospel of the water and the Spirit, and said that this gospel is right and that gospel is right too, I would be even more wicked. And what if I lived only for my flesh? My caring for my flesh is to treat and look after it in order to serve the gospel of the water and the Spirit more; but if I looked after my body only so that my flesh may be healthy and live well, and lived only for myself, I would be wicked.

When you judge, too, if I am not for the gospel and do not serve the gospel, if I do not live for that purpose, I am wicked. It is the same when I look at you. It is the same. It is the same when God looks at us. It is the same for everyone without exception. Yet there are a great many truly wicked people, and they have become that bold spiritually. Do you think anyone does not live for himself because he does not know how? Do you think anyone does not do it because he does not know that being comfortable is good? It said that from one to whom much has been given, much will be required. Everyone knows. Everyone knows what is good, and knows everything. If I am not for the gospel, then although God has saved me, He will judge me.

All the people of the whole world do not know this gospel of the water and the Spirit. At present, a population of about six billion, whether Christians or unbelievers, does not know this gospel. Yet if I kept my mouth shut, gave up the work of preaching the gospel to the whole world, gathered many people and collected money, put up a building of about a hundred stories, and lived enjoying riches and glory, that in itself would be wicked. Why? It is not that I would not be working. I would be working, but when the Lord looks at it, since all the people of the whole world do not know the gospel, someone is needed to preach the gospel to all the people of the whole world.

Then we must preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit to all the people of the whole world, yet if one cares only for one's own church and only for oneself, how wicked is that in itself? Most people would say, "What is wicked about that?" since, rather than preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit to the people of the whole world, it is hard enough just to lead their own church right now and hard enough to manage their own church's finances. But if the people of the whole world do not know this gospel of the water and the Spirit, we must preach the gospel to all the people of the whole world, and if we do not do so, that in itself is wicked. Seen by the Lord's standard, if we do not do so, that in itself is wicked.

## If the Lord is with us, we can preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit to the whole world as much as we like

That is why we serve the Lord. We remove the dregs from our hearts and, though we are lacking and weak, live for the spreading of the gospel. Am I anything special? What is different between you and me? There is nothing different at all. We are the same. The word says that Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, yet he prayed earnestly and it did not rain for three years and six months, and he prayed again and God gave rain (James 5:17–18). In the flesh we are the same. Our emotions are the same, and what we feel is the same. There is nothing different at all. Whether we know the Lord's will and are for the Lord or not—that is what it comes down to. It said that the one who knows and yet does not do will be beaten with many stripes.

Dear fellow believers, will you not serve the gospel and not preach it even though you know? When all the people of the

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whole world have not received the remission of sins, what reason is there to preach the gospel only in our country? Even if our workers, our saints, and the servants of God were fewer than now, we would preach the gospel to the whole world. It is not that we preach the gospel to the whole world because we have many in number. If we preach the gospel with sixty people, then one person is dealing with a hundred million people. Can one deal with a hundred million people, or not? One can deal with them well enough. If it comes to a contest of a hundred million to one, do we win or lose? We can win without any difficulty. Why? Because the Lord has the work of life; it is the word that if the Lord is with us, anything is possible.

We must keep firmly in mind that there is a resurrection, and that in that resurrection there is both a resurrection of the good and a resurrection of the wicked. ✉

Sermon 2 by Paul C. Jong

# Be those who believe in the present tense like Mary

**< 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**

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**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 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.'"**

Today's passage speaks about the resurrection of Lazarus. Lazarus was the brother of Mary, who poured fragrant oil on Jesus and wiped the Lord's feet with her hair. There were three siblings in this house; Martha and Mary were sisters, and Lazarus was their brother. These three siblings were living without parents, and Mary had already met Jesus before.

When Lazarus, the brother of these sisters, fell sick and seemed about to die, the two sisters sent someone to let Jesus know. Bethany was about three kilometers from Jerusalem. It is about half the length of the tunnel near us. It was a distance one could cover quickly if one ran, and it was also a place that could be called far if one called it far.

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So the sisters asked Jesus to come and look at their brother, since he was dying. Even after hearing that, Jesus stayed two more days where He was, and in the meantime Lazarus died. At the very time when Lazarus died in Bethany and the sound of wailing was rising, Jesus, who was far away, knew that Lazarus had died and said, *"Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up" (John 11:11)*. When the disciples said that if he was sleeping he would get well, Jesus told them plainly that Lazarus had died. When Jesus was with His disciples, there were truly many frustrating things about the disciples. When He said that Lazarus had died, the disciple called Thomas, who was rather lacking in faith, interpreted those words in his own way, saying that since Jesus was going to die, let us also go to die with Him. This is an answer beside the point.

At any rate, Jesus took His disciples and went to the village where Lazarus had died. As they went, people were weeping and the sound of wailing was rising, and Martha came running out. Martha came running out and met Jesus, saying, "Jesus, if You had come just a little earlier, our brother would not have died, but You came so late that he died." And then she said, "But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You."

## The faith of Martha and the faith of Mary

The whole content here is that Lazarus comes back to life, and through this the Bible tells us about the faith of two people. Speaking of the faith of Martha and the faith of Mary, it is also speaking to us. The people of that time had all heard, as stories passed down from mouth to mouth, that Jesus raised even the dead, opened the eyes of the blind, healed leprosy, and calmed the storm when a storm arose on the sea while the disciples were

crossing in a boat. Martha had heard, and Mary had heard. That is why Martha said this: "If the Lord had been here, my brother would not have died, but even now, if You, Lord, pray before God the Father, I believe that the Father will hear and answer and my brother will come back to life."

When Jesus said, *"Your brother will rise again" (John 11:23)*, Martha answered, *"I know that 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)*. And this word continues to unfold. Martha answered, "I believe that my brother will rise again at the last day," and the word of Jesus was that if she believed His word, her brother would come back to life now. Jesus spoke in the present tense, and Martha said, as a religious concept, "I believe that he will rise again at the last day." These are the two. The word of Jesus is that if you believe His word, he comes back to life now, and Martha's answer is, "I believe that he will come back to life later."

There are two kinds in our life of faith. We all know and all believe that Jesus will raise us again at the last day, that we will be resurrected then, that we will come back to life. We all believe that Jesus is our Savior, too. That Jesus is God, that He is our Savior, that He is the One who saved us from sin, that He is the judge, and that He will raise us again at the last day—all these things we all know and all believe. But what the Lord is saying here is that if you believe His word, you will come back to life later, but you also come back to life in the present tense now. He is saying to believe in the present tense now. Coming back to life later is something everyone knows, and at the last day God will raise even the wicked again. God will resurrect them and put them into the unquenchable fire. And He will raise the

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righteous again and let them enter the kingdom of God, God's kingdom. All this we know.

But the question is whether you believe that you will come back to life in the present tense. Martha kept saying that he would come back to life at the last day. Jesus was saying that her brother would come back to life, that if she believed His word he would come back to life, but Martha kept saying things beside the point. She was thinking religiously. Dear fellow believers, even people in Christianity who are not born again all talk religiously. They all know and all believe that Jesus is the Savior and that at the last day He will resurrect us and also rapture us. What matters is whether you believe in the present tense now. What Jesus demands of us is a faith that believes in the present tense.

After going back and forth like this, Jesus had not yet entered the village but was still in the place where Martha had met Him. When Mary heard that Jesus had come, she got up from her weeping, went before Jesus, knelt down, and wept. And she said the same thing as Martha. She wept, saying, *"Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died."* As the Jews who had come with her also wept beside her, Jesus, too, seeing them weeping, groaned in the spirit and asked, *"Where have you laid him?" (John 11:34)* and then shed tears. Then some of them said, "Could not the One who opened the eyes of the blind have saved this Lazarus? Why did He leave him to die?" By the time the sisters had sent word to Jesus and Jesus had come after staying two days, Lazarus had been dead four days. Because it was already four days since his death when Jesus arrived, there was a stench.

When Martha cut in at that point and said that there was a stench, Jesus said, *"Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?" (John 11:40)*. In the nation of

Israel, tombs are caves. They dig out a round cave, put the coffin in it, and block the entrance from the outside with a stone so that animals cannot get in. The villagers opened that stone door. Jesus prays. Saying, *"Father, I thank You that You have heard Me" (John 11:41)*, He said that He was saying this now *"because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me" (John 11:42)*. It means that it was a word He spoke in order to make them believe that God the Father had sent Jesus to this earth. And then He called with a loud voice, *"Lazarus, come forth!" (John 11:43)*. At that moment Lazarus came out with his whole body bound in cloth. Everyone was astonished. And Jesus said, *"Loose him, and let him go" (John 11:44)*.

## We must believe that the Lord has saved us from the curse of the law

This is a record of a factual story, but what matters is what we must really learn from it here and what the Lord is saying to us. When Jesus called, 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)*. Those who have not been born again are wrapped in the ordinances of the law of God. They are wrapped in those ordinances that say, "Do this," and "Do not do that." So when they do something well, they hold their heads up, and if they do even one thing wrong, because of it their whole body is bound tight, and they are captured by thoughts like, "Would He love someone like me? Would He save someone like me?" and are dying. When we see the Bible saying, *"His face was wrapped with a cloth" (John 11:44)*, this word is also telling us that a person who believes in Jesus but has not

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been born again is still wrapped in the law, that he is in a state in which he has not yet been set free from the law and has not been saved from sin.

But when we believe in Jesus Christ, we must believe that the Lord has saved us from that curse of the law. In order to save you and me from sin, the Lord came to this earth, received baptism from John the Baptist, and bore the sin of us, mankind, and He was hung on the Cross and shed His blood. And He died and rose again and became our Savior. He said, *"It is finished!"*

## Whoever looks at the bronze serpent shall live

The Old Testament spoke of Jesus being hung on the Cross through the bronze serpent in the wilderness. When the people of Israel, living in the wilderness, complained, saying, "Has God brought us to this wilderness to kill us because there was no place to bury us?" God sent fiery serpents and had them bite the people. Those bitten by the fiery serpents swelled up all over their bodies and were dying. When Moses prayed to God, God said to make a bronze serpent and hang it on a pole, and that whoever was bitten by a serpent, if he looked at that bronze serpent, would live. So Moses tied a serpent made of bronze onto a pole and set that pole up high on the ground. Since they were told that they would live if they looked, the people heard that word and looked. Immediately all the swelling went down and they were healed.

What does this tell us? It said that the wages of sin is death. Satan the devil enticed Adam and Eve, made them pick and eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and made them sinners. So all their descendants were born with sin, and bearing sin on this earth, they were dying with the poison of sin

spread throughout their whole bodies. This word, that whoever looked at the bronze serpent lifted up high would live, means that Jesus bore that sin in His own body with the baptism He received from John and received the judgment for sin on the Cross. It is the word that the wages of sin is death, and Jesus bore that death for us. So whoever looks lives.

Because you and I were born as descendants of Adam, we cannot keep the law of God perfectly. It is a law we try to keep but cannot keep. Because the difference between God and us human beings is so great, we cannot keep it with our hearts, and we cannot keep it one hundred percent with our deeds either. Because we cannot keep it, we can only die at any time because of that sin we inherited from Adam. Yet because we learned the law wrongly, we think it was given to us to keep, but it said, *"By the law is the knowledge of sin" (Romans 3:20)*. God gave the law in order to teach you that you are such a sinner, and that you will come to death, be destroyed, and go to hell. And it says to you, who can only go to hell, "Look at the Lord; the Lord received baptism from John the Baptist and bore your sins, was nailed to the Cross and received the judgment for sin, and said that it is finished." It is saying that He has finished it all, that Jesus received the judgment of a sinner in His flesh in your place, and that if you look, you live.

Instead of your dying, Jesus died for you, and instead of your remaining a sinner, Jesus bore our sins with the baptism He received from John the Baptist, received the judgment for our sins in the form of a sinner for a while, and did the work of saving us. It is the word to look to that, to look to it and believe. It is saying that we should believe, yes, but believe in the present tense. It is saying to believe in the present tense the fact that the Lord is alive and said, *"I am the resurrection and the life,"* that is, that the Lord is the One who is alive now and is with us. It is

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the word not to keep thinking only that later He will not send us to hell, that later He will make us live, that later He will resurrect us, and that later He will send us to heaven. He will do so then, too, but it is the word that in the present tense as well, when we are in difficulty and truly need the Lord's help, if we pray, the Lord will always incline His ear to our prayers, hear them, and help us in the present tense. We must believe in the present tense.

## Mary and Martha differed in their faith.

Mary was one who believed in the present tense, and Martha was one who believed in a religious way, in a doctrinal way. Hers was a faith of thought, which says, "I believe that the Lord will do as I have heard." But Mary was one who had experienced it. Mary knew before the Lord that she was such a sinner and that the Lord had come to this earth to save her from sin. So she was the one who poured on the feet of Jesus that fragrant oil she had saved up to get married—that fragrant oil which, if sold, would have been her means for getting married—and wiped the feet of Jesus with her own hair. So she knew and believed it all: who Jesus is, that He is the Savior, and how He bears her sins.

In this event of Lazarus, when Jesus said that if she believed His word her brother would come back to life, all Martha had to do was say, "Yes, I believe that the Lord will bring him back to life," but Martha said again that she believed he would come back to life at the last day. She kept believing religiously. Dear fellow believers, a theoretical faith is not faith. A real faith is faith. The Lord is speaking now. "Your brother will come back to life; I will bring him back to life." The people had already opened the entrance of the tomb. When Jesus said, *"Lazarus, come forth!"* Lazarus came out bound with graveclothes. And

He said to loose him completely and let him walk.

Even after being saved, there are many times when we lose Jesus and live on our own. There are many times when we live by our own strength, our own wisdom, and our own cunning. And when we meet real difficulty, all we have to do is pray before the Lord and believe the fact that the Lord is with us, but we believe this religiously and conceptually. We only know it to the extent of saying, "I believe that God will help me." We must believe in the Lord in our actual lives. The Lord wants a faith that believes in Him in our actual lives.

Dear fellow believers, if you and I have sin and our hearts are uneasy, since the Lord has already borne your sins and mine with the baptism He received from John and has also received all the judgment for them, if we believe in the present tense, we receive the remission of sins. Even those who, though they believe in Jesus, have heard the gospel from someone who preaches it clumsily and so know it well in theory but do not feel it in their hearts, only have to believe in the present tense. The Lord raised the dead Lazarus. The Lord has given life to you and me, who were dying because of sin, with the truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, with that truth of salvation by which He came to save us. He bore your sins and mine, and by being nailed to the Cross, He received the judgment for those sins and saved us.

Satan the devil tempted our ancestors and made them sin, and we, being weak, could only keep sinning and die. But instead of our dying because of that sin, Jesus came to this earth, received baptism from John the Baptist, was hung on the Cross, and received the judgment for our sins. The Lord's receiving the judgment means that you and I have received the judgment. The Lord's having sin transferred to Him with the baptism He received from John is His having borne your sins and mine. If

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we believe, we receive the remission of sins, and even after believing, when there are difficulties, we come to pray before the Lord. If we asked for something that is not right before God, that would be another matter, but if we ask, united with the Church, for the spreading of the gospel that the Lord desires, it is the word that He solves that problem, just as the Lord said, "Your brother will rise again." He solves it right away. So this is saying that we must have a realistic faith.

Dear fellow believers, you must not have a faith that is too conceptual, a faith of thought. Why do the righteous have no strength? There would be various factors, but it is because they do not believe in the Lord in the present tense. Then someone might say, "Then why don't you heal even your toothache by faith?" but that is a different matter. If my tooth hurts, why would I not pray? But if praying really made it not hurt at all, what need would there be for hospitals? Then God would have to overturn the whole order of this world. Apart from such things, when help is truly needed in the work of God, do we not pray? It means that if we pray for overseas missions, for printing books, for business, God helps. We must believe in the Lord in our actual lives. I believe in Him in my actual life. Because I believe, I work. Because I believe, I do business, and because I believe, I serve the gospel to the whole world. What the Lord earnestly desires is precisely that faith.

It is saying to have a faith like Mary's. What did Martha do? Rather than believing, she was busy serving the Lord, and rather than believing, she was busy acting. She would say, "At a time like this I should do this, and at a time like that I should do that." But we must first believe with the heart and pray, and first believe the word the Lord has spoken. He said, *"If you would believe you would see the glory of God."* How many words the Lord has spoken in the Bible! He said, "Ask, seek, knock," and

how often He said that if we ask we will receive, if we seek we will find, and the door will be opened! All we have to do is believe like that, but because we do not believe, like Martha we keep saying things different from what the Lord says.

What the Lord wants is that we believe. Do you believe that the Lord has become your Savior, that He received baptism from John and bore all your sins, that He received all the judgment for those sins by being hung on the Cross, and that He died and rose again and became the God of salvation? Do you believe that He has removed all your sins? Do you believe that He bore all those sins and was judged for them? And when you face truly difficult obstacles in your life, when you are in circumstances where you cannot follow the Lord and when you meet with danger, do you believe that each time, if you pray before the Lord, the Lord is really alive and keeps us and helps us? Believing like that is faith. *"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1)*. It is the word that although it is not visible to the eyes, if we ask with the heart and believe with the heart, it appears in reality.

## The person who ends with knowing the word and the person who believes it in the heart

Dear fellow believers, we are handing out our booklets to many people, and there are two kinds of people who read them. Some people read them and only know, "Ah, so the Lord bore sin like this." And some people believe, "The Lord bore sin like this and removed it like this, so then I have no sin." To the person who believes the Lord's word, salvation comes and blessing comes, and he becomes a worker. But some people end with knowing. They are people like Martha. If one ends with knowing,

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what benefit is there?

When Lazarus died, Jesus deliberately went late. He went after Lazarus had surely died and people had bound the body and put it in the tomb. He could have gone quickly and made him live, but if He had gone and made him live like that, it would have been healing a sickness. But if He went after he had died and said, *"Lazarus, come forth!"* it would be raising a dead man back to life. It is the word that Jesus came to this earth to make known the fact that He is the life and the living God, that is, that He is the Son of God the Father, our God, and our Savior. So we must know it that way and believe it that way. Although the gospel is being spread like this, there are many people who stop at merely knowing it, and people do not readily receive it.

They say that when we hand out the books, there are also many people who reject them. The story is that they reject them, saying, "It has been a hundred and thirty years since the church came into this country, and how much wrong has it done in that time, and how much has it deceived people?" What those people say is understandable in a way. For a hundred and thirty years the churches of our country have preached only that Jesus died on the Cross, and with that faith one cannot be saved. One can never be saved by it.

Recently I told someone, "Go and look once into the Local Church of the Watchman Nee line, and find out what their process of salvation is like," and had him search the internet, but it does not come out in detail. But the leader who led that church was put in prison after China fell to communism long ago, and suffered there for many years, and a testimony he left from prison has been passed down. He said, "I cannot tell you how much I suffered in the prison cell; I was abused and tortured a great deal. But that is fitting, because I am a sinner before God; because I am a sinner, it is fitting that I am treated as a sinner,

suffer pain, and am abused."

Seeing that, I thought this. Look. That leader himself says that he is a sinner; then no matter how well the people under him believe, will they receive the remission of sins? It is a truly frustrating thing. They believe only in the blood of the Cross and do that. But with that, sin does not disappear. Dear fellow believers, among those who say they have received the remission of sins by believing only in the blood of the Cross, there is not a single person who has received the remission of sins, no matter how long you search. When they die, they all confess that they are sinners and die.

When the Lord came to this earth, He called sinners, but after we have met the Lord, the Lord receives the righteous, not sinners. Why? Because the Lord Himself is the Savior, and because the Lord has borne our sins and removed them all. A person who believes in Jesus and yet always says that he is a sinner is sinning before the Lord and mocking the Lord. He is opposing the Lord, saying, "You did not remove all my sins; You are a liar; You did not remove all my sins, yet You say that You did." Did the Lord really fail to remove your sins and mine? The Lord came to this earth clothed in human flesh, and as He had promised, He received baptism from John and bore our sins.

And the Lord was hung on the Cross as He had said. It said, *"He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel" (Genesis 3:15)*. Because Jesus received baptism from John and bore the sin of mankind, He was hung on the Cross and His feet were lifted up from the earth. It means that He was cursed. The Lord saved us like that. The Lord saved us not only with the blood of the Cross, but with the water, the blood, and the Spirit. The Spirit is God, and Jesus is the water, that is, the Savior who came to this earth clothed in human flesh. He received baptism from John the Baptist, was hung on the Cross, and rose again

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from the dead, and thereby saved us. He saved us perfectly like this.

It is a lie to say that the Lord did not take our sins, did not bear them with the baptism He received from John, and yet saved us by being hung on the Cross. If one has run up a tab at a mart or a store and has not paid the money, even if one says, "I have paid off my whole tab; I am not a debtor," one's conscience says, "I am a debtor." And such a person cannot walk past that store. When the debt piles up to a certain point, he runs and hides. He goes around by another road, runs up a tab at another store, and goes on to yet another store. If one has the experience of having paid one's debt honestly, one can walk past that store with one's head held high. Our believing in Jesus is like that. Jesus is our Savior. He bore your sins with the baptism He received from John. He received the judgment for your sins. So He died and rose again and became our Savior God.

The reason we speak of the water, the blood, and the Spirit is this. Since the remission of sins must be attested by God the Holy Spirit, the One who testifies to our hearts and consciences, "You have no sin," is the Holy Spirit. Next, the One who came to this earth and bore our sins is Jesus. And the One who had this work done is God the Father. The Triune God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, is the same God to us, and these three planned, carried out what They planned, and in the end the Holy Spirit attests what was carried out. Dear fellow believers, do you believe? The Lord has removed all your sins in the present tense. It is the word that He has saved you just as He raised Lazarus. He has saved you. You have no sin. Do you have sin? Do you believe in the present tense? Even after praying, we believe in the present tense.

## Believe the word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit in the present tense

So we must look at how those who have gone ahead live. Faith is not something that everyone can have easily. Because those who have gone ahead must live for God, they believe the word in the present tense. That is why they become people of faith, and those who come behind do not have many such difficulties, so they do not have much faith either. So they watch what those who have gone ahead do and follow them, and as they do so, they come to respect those who have gone ahead, saying, "Ah, it really turns out like that according to faith," and they also learn faith.

Dear fellow believers, if after being saved you are not in the Church, you are like an abandoned child. You are one without parents, a pitiful being. It is a blessing to be saved and to be in the Church, where there are those who have gone ahead and there is a guide. Dear fellow believers, between Mary and Martha, who would be the guide? Mary is the guide. Mary is one who believes in the present tense the word the Lord has spoken. Martha is one who believes conceptually, in thought. She still has a long way to go.

Dear fellow believers, faith must be believing in the present tense. The Lord says at any time, "I will do this." We believe that in the present tense. The Lord says that He will take us to the kingdom of heaven. He said that He has given us new life. He said that He has given us eternal life. Then the one who believes believes this: "Ah, though the death of my flesh will be there for a while, I will come back to life and live forever with a body that never dies." Because we believe it, it is good, and because we believe, strength comes.

So what I want to say is this word: believe in the present

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tense, and be one who believes like Mary. Do not be one who, like Martha, does not believe but only thinks and only keeps it in the heart. When you hear the word of God, believe it right away. If you believe when the word is preached like this here, how well you can believe! The one who preaches tells you the whole gospel, yet if you try to sort it out by yourself after it is over and then believe, will faith come? The word all disappears. You must believe in the present tense. Dear fellow believers, without faith you do not receive blessing. In the word of God there is not only the word of salvation; there are also many words of promise in other parts. We must believe this word. If we do not believe, that blessing does not come.

Dear fellow believers, there are many ministers in the Church. There are people who believe what I say and follow, and there are also those who do not believe. Some people even say that I am deceiving them, that this place is a fraud ring. But because I pity that person's life so much, I pretend not to have heard and wait for him. I only say this in my heart: "Think once about the fact that you said such words with your own mouth. If this place were really such a place, would there be any need for you to be here?" But I do not flare up in anger; I say, "All right, I will wait for you; I will be patient a great deal; if I bear with you a long, long time and you are saved, I will bear with you."

Dear fellow believers, you must believe in the present tense. You must also believe the words of those who have gone ahead. If you do not believe and only hold it in your thoughts as knowledge, it is of no benefit at all. If you want to gain knowledge, read books instead. If you read books, you acquire much knowledge. I hope you will be those who believe. I believe. I believe that the Lord has given me life, that He has become my God, that He keeps me, and that He keeps the Church. That is why I speak to the children and also tell the workers, "Call and

do this and that." I do it because I pity that soul. I am not harsh, because I think of what comes later. So I guide, bear with them, and endure.

Long ago I was a person of a truly quick temper, but after meeting the Lord I am patient. Even if someone deeply distrusts me for twenty years, I bear with him. I say, "It is because you do not know; if I bear with you a long time, you will come to know; if you believe the word of God, you will know." If one believes, one knows. Do you think I do not get angry because I do not know? Even though I know, I am patient a long time. I endure it as I endure a toothache. It is necessary to do so, because this is a matter concerning salvation.

How have we lived our lives of faith until now? Have we lived truly believing in the Lord in our actual lives, or have we lived like Martha, conceptually, thinking of it as something that will happen only at the last time? I believe that people all over the world, too, receive salvation through our booklets. There are not many people who receive salvation right now. But because we are sowing seeds now, if we wait after sowing the seeds, sprouts will come up. Dear fellow believers, that is faith. Occasionally some people may think, "We hand these out like this, yet there is no news at all, so isn't this a wasted effort?" It is not so. I say it again and again: if there had been just one book like this when I was in the world, I would not have spent all that time in vain, and I would have saved countless people.

If this gospel that we preach had come into our country just a hundred years ago, the whole world would have been evangelized. The evangelization of the whole world has begun now. It has just begun now, so will sprouts come up right away? After sowing the seeds, one must wait a good while, one must water them, and the humidity must be right for the sprouts to come up. Even when the sprouts come up, at first one does not

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know whether they are weeds or grain. But once they have grown to a certain point, one knows.

I meet people to whom I preached the gospel long ago even in this city now. I will not say who they are, but those people say that they heard the gospel from me. Although they do not come to our church, the story is that they work as I do in order to show that they heard this word. So I am leaving them alone for now. It is hard to lead by force a person who does not know the Church well. When he is in difficulty himself, he must meet the Church. He must be guided. Only then can he live a normal Christian life. If he does not meet the Church, he has only been saved and is an abandoned child, a pitiful being without a home, without a father, without brothers and sisters, without a family. He lives in the world in anguish and hardship.

I have so much work to do. The work of preaching the gospel to the whole world together with you is so much. There is also the work of preaching the gospel within the country, as well as new work to do, and at any rate I will have the souls within the country saved as well within a short time.

Faith is like this. If He says, “Your brother will rise again,” all one has to do is believe, is it not? If the Lord says that He will bring him back to life, should Martha not have said, “Yes, bring him back to life; though there is already a stench, here he is; roll away the stone and bring him back to life”? Martha was saying that the Lord would bring him back to life someday, at the last day. Mary, grieving, probably also had in her heart a resentment that was not quite resentment, thinking, “Lord, You could have brought him back to life, so why did You come so late?” And as Mary was weeping in such great sorrow, Jesus, too, saw her, had compassion on her, and grieved with her. Jesus knows us well. He is the One who has sympathized with our weaknesses. To sympathize means to have experienced together. He experienced

weakness, too, and though He did not experience sin, He knows well how sorrowful the death of a person and parting are. Because the Lord Himself knows all about going to hell at the moment of parting, He is the One who sympathizes. There were a few times when the Lord shed tears after coming to this earth, and this was one of the times He shed tears. He sympathized. And He brought him back to life. *"Lazarus, come forth!"* Lazarus came back to life.

Dear fellow believers, I hope you will be those who believe the Lord's word in the present tense, right now. Only when you have such faith can you please the Lord and also receive blessing. I have finished the word. Let us think about this word and pray, asking Him to make us those who believe the word of God in the present tense. ✉

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Sermon 3 by Paul C. Jong

# Live your life of faith with your heart, not with your thoughts

**< 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**

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**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 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**

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**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.'"**

Amen. Have you been well? This age is an age that makes the hearts and souls of people utterly devastated. It is an age in which the weariness of all things cannot be expressed in words, but I am truly thankful that the Lord is with us, and I truly give thanks that we can live looking to the Lord. Today we have looked at the word of John chapter 11.

Looking at the word here, we can see that Jesus loved from the beginning Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, that is, these three siblings, of whom Lazarus was the brother and there were two sisters. It says, *"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)*. They were people who believed in and followed the Lord very much. Their brother Lazarus fell sick and was dying. So Martha and Mary sent someone and asked, "Our brother is dying, so please come quickly; please come and visit us." Even after hearing that word, Jesus did not go for two more days. Then, on the fourth day, He went there.

When He went there, Martha came out to meet Him and said, "If Jesus, who opened the eyes of the blind and raised the dead, had been here, our brother would not have died; it is so grievous." Yet Martha also showed her expectation, saying, "But I believe that whatever the Lord prays to God for, God grants it." When the Lord said, *"Your brother will rise again" (John 11:23)*, Martha answered, *"I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."* When 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)*, Martha said that she believed. The point is that Mary and Martha appear here, and the fact is that Martha believed with a religious point of view.

## Is our life of faith like Mary's, or like Martha's?

When her brother had died and Jesus said, *"Your brother will rise again,"* Martha answered, *"I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."* But the Lord's word was that her brother would come back to life now, that he would come back to life right there. Martha did not receive that word that way, but said that he would come back to life at the last day. After Jesus met Martha, Mary, who had been in the house receiving the mourners as the chief mourner, heard from her

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sister that the Teacher had come and was calling for her, got up quickly, and fell down at the feet of Jesus and wept. And just like her sister, she grieved, saying, "If Jesus had been at our house, our brother would not have died."

Here this word shows our life of faith well. These days the world is very difficult. What is more, in our country politics is extremely noisy. As you know well without my saying it, the politicians do not understand the people, but are in an uproar fighting among themselves over their own rice bowls. It seems that our country would do well without politicians. It even makes me think that we could just export them. The people of our country are having such a hard time. Our hearts, too, are becoming devastated, spreading the gospel is becoming harder, the economy is not moving, and there is no hope for the future. At such a time our hearts, too, keep dying and growing weary. Whether we know it or not, we, too, are living under the control of our environment.

This means that at such hard times we must look at how we are living our life of faith. The four Gospels are a record of the works Jesus did when He was on this earth. So they are extremely good. If you want to meet Jesus, read the four Gospels. If you want to read the history of the spreading of the gospel, read the Epistles of Paul. I, too, am having a hard time because my heart is taken up so much with work. These days I am having teeth pulled and getting root canal treatment, and when I get anesthetic injections in my gums once or twice a week, the nerves shoot up to my head, and at any rate it is hard. I wanted to meet Jesus, and though I believe, I wanted to draw closer to Him, so I read the word of the Gospel of John, and there Martha was living a truly conceptual life of faith, a life of faith of thought.

When Martha said, "If Jesus had been here, our brother

would not have died," the Lord said, *"Your brother will rise again."* Then all she had to do was say "Amen" and believe, "He is going to bring him back to life today," is it not? But Martha said, *"I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."* This word shows our life of faith through these two people, Martha and Mary, and we can see that even after believing in the Lord, our life of faith is bound far too much to the realm of thought. There are such hearts like Martha's in us, too. Even though Jesus was saying that if she believed what He said, her brother would come back to life right away, Martha kept saying that, as she knew it, she believed the Lord would raise her brother again, too, at the last resurrection. Are we not the same? When a person dies, we, too, naturally think only that way. But Mary was not like that.

Mary spoke to Jesus while weeping, and the villagers also wept with the same heart. Later some of the Jews were troubled, saying, "Could not the One who opened the eyes of the blind have made Lazarus live? Why did He leave him to die?" When Jesus asked, *"Where have you laid him?" (John 11:34)* the people answered, *"Lord, come and see."* When Jesus said, *"Take away the stone" (John 11:39)*, Martha said, *"By this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days" (John 11:39)*. Martha kept disobeying this word and going against it. The Jews do not bury in the soil as we do, but carve out a rock, put the coffin inside it, and block the entrance with a block of stone. After the flesh has all decayed, when another member of the family dies, they put that body into that rock tomb as well. So it is called a family tomb.

When Jesus said to take away the stone that was blocking the tomb, Martha was in unbelief, saying that it was already four days since his death and there was a stench. So Jesus said, *"Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory*

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*of God?" (John 11:40)*. He was saying, "Why do you keep having negative thoughts? Did I not say that if you believe My word you will see the glory of God, that your brother will come back to life? Stop saying it cannot be done, and take away the stone." When the stone was taken away, Jesus prayed. He prayed, "I know that God the Father always hears My prayer, but I am praying like this before these people so that they may know that God the Father has sent Me to this earth," and then said toward the tomb, *"Lazarus, come forth!" (John 11:43)*. Then Lazarus came out bound in the white linen with which bodies are bound. His face, too, was covered with a cloth. So Jesus said, *"Loose him, and let him go" (John 11:44)*.

Looking at this word, we can see how much, even after receiving the remission of sins, we can live a life of faith bound to concepts, a life of faith lived with thoughts. On the other hand, this word lets us know that we can live a life of faith not with concepts but with a faith that really believes. Dear fellow believers, if the Lord says, "If you believe My word, your brother will rise again," all we have to do is believe it as it is. All we have to do is believe, saying, "Yes, since the Lord has said it, I believe that it will surely be so," but Martha said that she knew he would come back to life only at the resurrection at the last day, and said that there was already a stench. In this way, one keeps looking at the circumstances and saying that it cannot be done because of the situation. When this happens, it becomes hard to live a life of faith. It is like that when one has too many thoughts of one's own.

Mary was different. Mary did not say that there was a stench, but fell down at the Lord's feet and poured out her whole heart. Only one thing: Mary fell down at the Lord's feet, saying, "If the Lord had been here, my brother would not have died, but because You were not here, he died." When Jesus asked, *"Where*

*have you laid him?"* the people answered, *"Lord, come and see" (John 11:34)*. Even when Jesus said, *"Take away the stone,"* Mary said nothing at all. Rather, she would have moved the stone together, united with the people.

It is the same in our living our life of faith. The Lord came to this earth and saves us from sin with the word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit; the Lord bore our sins by receiving baptism from John, and received the judgment for our sins by being hung on the Cross. The Old Testament said, "Whoever looks shall live." When the people of God complained, God told Moses, who was praying, to tie a bronze serpent and hang it on the top of a high pole and set it up. And He said that whoever was bitten by a serpent would live if he looked at it, and according to that word, those who looked lived. Bronze means metal, so it was a serpent made of metal.

Jesus came to this earth and became what the word of the prophecy in Genesis said. It said, *"He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel" (Genesis 3:15)*. This means that our Lord completely crushes the serpent and destroys its power, but the Lord Himself is lifted up from this earth, that is, He is put to death. It means that the Lord came to this earth and received baptism from John the Baptist in order to save us from sin, and had all sins transferred to Him with that baptism. And He was hung on the Cross, was nailed, shed all His blood, said, *"It is finished!"* and died. The Lord saved us like that. It is the word that He rose again on the third day after His death and saved you and me from sin.

Then, since the Lord did so, it is not that He makes us live only at the last day, but that He has already made us live. He has removed your sins and mine. Because the Lord has said so. It means that the Lord recorded in the Bible the work He did after coming to this earth, that He delivered the recorded word to us,

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and that since we do not know it well, He also spoke to you and to me through the servants of God who preach the word. Then when we hear that word, just as it said that whoever looks shall live, all we have to do is believe, "Ah, the Lord has received all the judgment for sin." Satan the devil enticed Adam and Eve and made mankind fall into sin, and made their descendants inherit all that sin when they were born. It said, *"The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23)*. This means that we were born with sin, as the seed of evildoers carrying the poison of sin from birth. When a human being born with sin lives and then dies, that is the end.

But since the Lord bore our sins and received the judgment for our sins by being hung on the Cross, the Lord's being hung on the Cross was His crushing the power of the devil. The devil breathed sin into our hearts and brought about the result of death for us, and how sorrowful a thing death is, and parting! It means that the Lord solved that problem. Then when we hear this word, all we have to do is believe it in the present tense. It means that it is not a matter of what will happen at the last day, or of being sanctified later and then receiving salvation.

When we hear the word, if He says, "If you believe My word, you will see the glory of God; your brother will rise again," then if we simply receive that word with an "Amen," our brother comes back to life. But when we live our life of faith, we keep blocking it with our own thoughts. This means that we keep defending ourselves by pointing to our circumstances, saying, "Because my situation is like this, this cannot be done; at a time like this it cannot be done because of this; I sinned because my situation was like this, but I am not originally that kind of seed, and I am not such a base person." There is no need to defend ourselves. When the Lord speaks, all we have to do is say, "Yes, that is so," just as it is. Just as the brother comes back to life if

one believes the Lord's word, you and I, too, have no sin if we believe in the present tense. Dear fellow believers, do you have sin? You do not. Why not? Because the Lord has said so, because the Lord has done the work, and because He has told us the work He did—that is why we have no sin. Receiving the remission of sins is absolutely not so difficult and hard.

Is our life of faith like Mary's, or like Martha's? Martha was living a formal life of faith, a religious life of faith, a conceptual life of faith of thought. Saying, "At a time like this I should do this, and at a time like that I should do that"—that is formality. Formality is religion. That formality is made by human beings. But the Lord said that if you believe His word, you will see the glory of God. All we have to do is believe, just as the Lord said, that the Lord is God, that He is the Lord of my salvation, that He is the One who removed my sins, that He is the One who sends me to the kingdom of heaven, that He is my Savior, my shepherd, and my judge. If we believe, the Lord is the One who is alive and is the Savior. Then we come to see the glory of God. This is what the life of faith is.

## If you acknowledge what you are and look to the Lord, the Lord has already removed even that sin.

Dear fellow believers, if we are now having a hard time being immersed in work and want to meet the Lord, all we have to do is come and see the scene where the Lord worked. The four Gospels are the scene where the Lord worked when He was on this earth. Looking at the word, we can see, "The Lord met Martha and Mary and such a thing happened, and at that time He said such a word." We can also see, "The Lord wants us to believe and receive right away what He says, but Martha does

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not receive it and has a faith of thought; but Mary earnestly expects Him to bring her brother back to life and makes no excuses." When the Lord asks, *"Where have you laid him?" (John 11:34)* the people answer, *"Lord, come and see."* Mary does not even say that there is a stench. When the Lord says to take away the stone door, the people take it away. When He says, *"Lazarus, come forth!"* Lazarus comes out.

The Bible records in verse 44, *"His face was wrapped with a cloth."* What is it saying? When we live our life of faith, when does faith die? It dies when we are captured by the law. It dies when we are bound to our own deeds. As we go on asking whether our deeds are right or not, what is inside us is exposed, and that exposed figure is our real self and our heart. Then if it is exposed and we are rebuked or something, all we have to do is acknowledge it as it is. If we acknowledge it and look to the Lord, the Lord has already removed even that sin. Therefore, our hearts do not remain bound. It means that there is no reason to be bound like a corpse and lie in the tomb.

## There are two kinds of life of faith

We must move according to what the Lord is pleased with. That is the life of faith. Through this event of the death of Lazarus, with Martha and Mary, what is the Lord saying? The Lord said, "If you believe My word, you will see the glory of God," and Mary believed, but Martha kept making excuses. As we live our life of faith, too, I cannot tell you how much we live this kind of conceptual life of faith. Even though it differs from my present thoughts, I look into it: "What does the Lord say? Is this what the Lord wants? Is this what the Lord is pleased with?" So when it is clearly settled that it is what the Lord is pleased

with, I unite there with the heart of the Lord. Then peace comes upon our hearts. When one meets with an unjust matter, does one not want to pay it back somehow? Are you not like that? It seems that you are sages.

From the time I was a child, even walking along the street, when I saw something unjust I could not bear it. When several people were beating one person, I could not bear it. Saying, "You should fight fair; why do you gang up on him?" I would jump in and fight, and get thoroughly beaten up myself, so when I think of it now, it was a foolish thing. It is not a good thing. But even if the nature of the flesh is like that, after we meet the Lord, the Lord says that if you believe His word, you will see the glory of God. What the Lord is saying is that if only you believe the word He has spoken, you will see the glory of God.

Although we have not seen with our own eyes the work the Lord did in that age, we can know it through this word in which the work the Lord did is recorded. This word testifies that the Lord came to bear our sins and bore them with the baptism He received from John, that by being hung on the Cross He received all the judgment for sin and removed that death, and that He gave us new life and gave us salvation. It is the word that if we believe what the Lord has spoken about that, we receive the remission of sins and also become workers of God and servants of God. We also receive the blessing of God.

There are two kinds of life of faith. There is a life of faith of thought, and there is a life of faith lived with a faith that really believes. If we believe the word of God, it comes about by faith. If we believe the word God has spoken, it comes about as we believe. Dear fellow believers, it is not only at the last time that one dies and comes back to life. One can die and come back to life on this earth, too. Of course, it is appointed for us to die once, and after that there is the judgment, so it will be as God appoints,

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but still, if we believe the word the Lord has spoken, we see the glory of God. We receive the remission of sins, we can also yield our hearts before God, and we can also be united with the Lord. Look at Mary. Mary and Martha are very different. Looking at Luke chapter 10, the Bible says that Martha was busy with much preparation, while Mary sat at the Lord's feet and concentrated on hearing His word. Through this word I, too, though I am a person who believes in the Lord, face the Lord again and meet Him again.

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).* I believe that I have eternal life. Since I have eternal life, death is not so frightening. Rather, it is more frightening to live in pain on this earth. When one suffers from illness, it is hard. There are truly many times when we, living our life of faith, fail to unite with the Lord and our insides get twisted. There are also many times when there is no joy in our hearts. We must live looking to the risen Lord. We must walk with the Lord, looking to the Lord, who is alive now.

There is no hope at all in the world. What will happen before long is that classes will arise among human beings. They will be classified into three or four kinds: superior humans, slightly less superior humans, and inferior humans. People manipulate genes, put them in incubators, put in things like artificial intelligence, and even put chips into their heads to make higher human beings who can do all calculations. Before long they will come out. You may say, "That man is talking about what he does not even know," but, dear fellow believers, before long they will come out. When those higher human beings come out, there will be nothing to calculate and no need to go to school. They say that if a chip is implanted, all communication is possible, and the

chip does all the calculating and connects to the nervous system so that one understands. Their calculation is fast, their actions are fast, their strength is good, and they have no disease. Looking at the word of Revelation, an age comes in which people want to die but cannot die.

I hope that we, too, will not be in pain. Having a tooth pulled is all right, but I wish I did not have to get root canal treatment. There are many teeth that need root canal treatment because the cavities have eaten in and the bone has melted away, and it hurt so terribly, like scraping the inside of my head with a hook, that I endured it for about a month. Then I thought, "It would be better to just have the tooth pulled; it would be better not to chew food," and told them to pull it. But the doctor said, "This one has to be pulled, and that one has to be pulled; they all have to be pulled." So I said, "Don't do that; first pull only one side and leave the other side so that I can at least chew food a little, and after treating and reinforcing this side, let us deal with that side." And I said, "You should speak with a little more kindness; just because you are a doctor, you should not say that they all have to be pulled unconditionally, should you?" When the situation is like that, one should say, "Let us do this side first, reinforce it, and then pull that side." Doctors do not know other people's pain well.

## Our life of faith depends on whether we believe the word the Lord has spoken.

I live my life of faith by that word, "If you believe My word, you will see the glory of God." The Lord is alive even now, and if my heart is uneasy and I want to fight and want to vent my anger, that is something the Lord is not pleased with. When the

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Lord is not pleased, our hearts seethe. When our thoughts, too, are thoughts the Lord is not pleased with, our hearts seethe. But if we turn those thoughts toward what the Lord is pleased with and clearly settle our hearts, peace of heart comes. Peace, peace—that peace comes.

You and I must become people like Mary. Without giving reasons, we must become those who look into what the Lord says, hold on to that word and believe it, see the glory of God, and walk with God. Right now Christians all over the world are living a conceptual life of faith. Saying, "I have received the remission of sins, I am receiving it, and I will receive it"—that is a conceptual life of faith. How wrong that is! When the Lord says, "If you believe My word, your brother will rise again," if one believes right away, he comes back to life right away.

If we believe the word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, our sins disappear right away. We become righteous right away. We become the children of God right away. We become workers. We go to the kingdom of heaven. We receive eternal life. It is the word that if we believe the Lord's word, it comes about that way. But today all of Christianity lives a conceptual life of faith. It means that they are played by their own thoughts. Are you and I perhaps like that, too? We have been saved, and yet are we not living a life of faith with our thoughts? The question is whether we believe the word the Lord has spoken. It means that if we believe, it comes about as we believe. Dear fellow believers, do you believe?

We may do our work well, or we may not do it well. But our life of faith, after we are saved, depends on whether we believe the word the Lord has spoken. If we believe, peace always comes to our hearts and our faith grows and deepens. Dignity arises in our hearts. If we do not believe the Lord's word and live a conceptual life of faith, that is, a life of faith with our thoughts,

fire always rises within us. Our insides are in turmoil and we cannot bear it, and we cannot control ourselves. It is because we are so angry. Are you perhaps like that? We must pay attention to uniting ourselves with the Lord. We must look back and ask, "Why is my heart so uneasy? If I had united my heart with the Lord, would it be uneasy?" If only you unite with the Lord, what your flesh wants, what your heart wants, and what your faith wants are all accomplished.

He said that if we abide in His word we become His disciples, and that if we abide in His word, believe, and pray, the Lord accomplishes it all, and it has been accomplished. Even now I have received the accomplishment of many things in that way. You would have done so in your own way, but so have I. Before the Lord, I, too, keep doing the work of supporting you so that you can work, asking, "What would the Lord be pleased with?" I keep doing it while uniting with the Lord, asking what He would be pleased with. Of course, there are many times when it does not go well as I do it, and many times when it is hard. Still, if it is what the Lord is pleased with, I do it. Then the Lord accomplishes it again. When it does not work and I struggle and pray, the Lord brings it to mind and accomplishes it.

I have had many experiences. Just because I have experienced it, I cannot tell you to follow me, but one thing I can say clearly is the fact that if you believe the word the Lord has spoken, it comes about according to that faith. It comes about according to the word. It surely comes about if you believe the word. You can believe the word of God, and I can believe it. We are in the same position. The point is whether we believe or not. The question is whether, instead of believing, we judge and decide with our thoughts, and try to scheme and lead ourselves. Then from that moment fire rises within us. Because it does not go as we want. And if that thing is accomplished, we are ruined.

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When that plan set up by one's own concepts and thoughts is accomplished, at the moment it is accomplished that person is ruined. That it was not accomplished is a happy thing and something to be thankful for. Dear fellow believers, do you agree? Looking at myself, and looking at you as well, I often feel that it is truly fortunate that it was not accomplished.

## Now is the time to sow seeds

The Lord is pleased with the preaching of the gospel on this earth. But people are not interested in the gospel, in salvation. It seems that we are very interested. When the sister who came recently gave her testimony a while ago, she said that in fact she was not someone who had sought God so earnestly. As it turns out, unless one is someone who has been bound by sin and suffered enough to want to die, it is hard to have such a desperate, earnest heart to receive the remission of sins. Such cases are rare. One only sought the Lord because the flesh was so miserable and one wanted to live a somewhat happy life and live well; when did one ever have as one's purpose such good things as receiving the remission of sins, going to the kingdom of God, becoming righteous, and becoming a worker of God? Dear fellow believers, did you meet the Lord with such a purpose? Did you not believe in order to live well and to live happily? At times there are also those who believed because of sin, and because I was someone who suffered enough to want to die because I had sin, I was truly desperate. That part is a little different.

When I listen quietly to the testimonies in our country, there are many whom the Lord met and saved even though they hardly sought Him. Being saved is all the same and working is the same,

but because I think there may be people like me, I want so very earnestly to hand out and preach the gospel. But those who receive it are not very interested. Then somehow they read the book and come to say, "So this is what it says; it says the Lord has removed my sins; then I have no sin."

If we believe the Lord's word, "If you believe My word," that, too, is believing the word God has spoken. If we believe, our sins disappear and we become righteous. One comes to experience that one has become righteous, and to experience that one has become a worker. There are many lost souls in this world. I will preach the gospel in our country, and I will preach the gospel to the whole world. These days there is an organization in our country that sends books to our compatriots abroad. I have already sounded them out. It is a place that collects books from our country and sends them to those countries, and when we showed them, saying, "This is a Christian book, a book with sermons printed in that country's language and in Korean," and asked, "We would like to send this book; will you accept it?" they looked at the book and said they would accept it. And they said they would accept five hundred copies at a time. When I asked, "How many countries are there?" they said there were a great many. This year is already closed, and they take orders and send books from next year. If we send books abroad directly, it costs a lot of money, but if we just bring the books to such an organization, they send them. The books will reach our compatriots.

That person said, "We think that sending a single book is nothing much, but our compatriots living abroad, when they receive a single book from our country, are so happy they do not know what to do and shed tears." Because there are no books in Korean in those countries, their attitude toward books and their environment are different. What is more, if they received a book

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that contains this gospel and is in that country's language and in Korean, how glad they would be! How many people there, too, attend church and live a life of faith! Thinking of such things, I push forward slowly, step by step. I cannot work in the manner of launching something noisily all at once and then quitting. When I try to do something, I prepare and do it step by step, and accomplish it to the end. You are also handing out the books well to the people who have come into the country. Even when you hand them out, there is no one who says he has received the remission of sins, and there is no news at all. But now is the time to sow seeds. After sowing seeds, one must wait a good while; have you ever seen a grain that sprouts as soon as it is sown? There is none. Though we farm, we must wait a long, long time. We must adjust the humidity and give water, too.

Even an animal knows well when a person likes it. Once I said to a dog, "So you have come to live here; you are lovely; you must have been very lonely all this time, with no one to look after you or give you food," and I gave it food as well. Then when I went to see it the next day, it thought of me as its master, flopped over on its back, wagged its tail, and made a great fuss. I said, "Yes, thank you for thinking of me as your master," rubbed its belly, and said, "Let us live well here." We had met for two days, and it liked me completely. Human beings cannot give their hearts wholly, and they edit their thoughts. They pick and receive only what they like and only what they want to think, and do not listen to the whole of what is said. There are many such people. But an animal receives everything when you talk to it.

Our following the Lord is also like that. The Lord said, "If you believe My word, you will see the glory of God." It is simple. The life of faith is simple, and being saved is simple, too. But people do not believe. They are not interested in the Bible, and

not interested in receiving the remission of sins. Even so, I will preach it to them. Because there must be many who are lost before God. I earnestly hope that I, and you as well, will be those who receive the word our Lord has spoken, and I believe that you will receive it that way. I have finished the word. ✉

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Sermon 4 by Paul C. Jong

# You will see the glory of God by believing His word

**< John 11:1-57 >**

**"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**

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**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 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.'**

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**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.' 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. 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 given a command, that if anyone knew where He was, he should report it, that they might seize Him."**

Today's word is from the Gospel of John. This word is a passage that tells us about Jesus raising the dead Lazarus, and about the faith of his family and the people around them. The scene appears in which Jesus goes to the village of Bethany and raises the dead Lazarus.

When Jesus was on this earth, it seems that He went to this family, where the siblings Lazarus, Mary, and Martha lived, and ate meals and often had fellowship with them. But Lazarus, who lived in Bethany, fell sick and was about to die. So his sisters sent someone to Jesus and asked Him to do something, since Lazarus was about to die. When Jesus heard that news, He said, "That sickness is not unto death, but a sickness by which the Son of God will reveal the glory of God," and did not go.

Jesus stayed two more days after hearing that news and then went there. Jesus said that Lazarus was sleeping, and the disciples did not understand that word as it was, and the disciple called Thomas said something absurd: *"Let us also go, that we*

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*may die with Him" (John 11:16)*. Dear fellow believers, Jesus was talking about a very serious spiritual matter right then, but he took it as a matter of the flesh and said such an absurd thing.

Right then Jesus was saying that Lazarus had fallen asleep and was intending to go and wake him up. Jesus knows everything about what will happen in the future. Because Jesus is God, He speaks knowing everything, but the disciples of Jesus and the people around Him, being human beings who are created beings, knew nothing at all. So they thought only that Jesus was really speaking of sleeping and resting, and said, *"Lord, if he sleeps he will get well" (John 11:12)*, and even after Jesus said plainly, *"Lazarus is dead" (John 11:14)*, Thomas, who did not understand properly and had an absurd thought, said, *"Let us also go, that we may die with Him."* I think that Jesus, hearing that, must have laughed a great deal.

## Only when we believe from God's point of view do we not give answers beside the point

In the house of Lazarus there were two sisters named Martha and Mary. These two sisters were siblings of Lazarus. Judging from the word, Martha seems to have been hot-tempered by nature, and Mary seems to have been gentle. When she heard that Jesus was coming, Martha went out and welcomed Jesus, saying, *"Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died" (John 11:21)*, and 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)*. When Jesus, pointing to Himself, asked, *"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, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world" (John 11:27)*. At any rate, I know that without a faith that thinks about and believes the words that appear in this Bible from God's point of view, we will end up giving answers beside the point, like Thomas and Martha and many people here.

Jesus came in order to wake up that Lazarus, who was dead in our eyes but asleep in the eyes of Jesus. That is, Jesus had come to raise Lazarus again. When Martha said, *"Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died,"* Jesus said, *"Your brother will rise again." "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 Himself spoke of the point that He is God and the Lord of life, but Martha was speaking doctrinally, saying that he would come back to life at the last day.

Even after saying this word, Jesus did not enter the village but remained in the place where Martha had met Him, and He saw Mary weeping and the Jews who had come with her weeping. Jesus, too, groaned in the spirit and was troubled, and said, *"Where have you laid him?" (John 11:34)*. When they said, *"Lord, come and see" (John 11:34)*, it says that Jesus shed tears. Jesus shed tears in the face of the death of Lazarus. And He went before that tomb where Lazarus was sleeping and told them to take away the stone, and Martha said again, "It is already four days since he died. There is a stench." Martha had her own thoughts.

When the Lord said, *"Take away the stone" (John 11:39)*, Martha said that there was a stench, and at that time the Lord said, *"Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?" (John 11:40)*. And our Lord looked up to heaven and prayed, and said toward the dead Lazarus, *"Lazarus,*

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*come forth!" (John 11:43)*. Then the dead Lazarus came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, with his face wrapped with a cloth, and Jesus said, *"Loose him, and let him go" (John 11:44)*.

In fact, if someone looks at the miracles of God that appear in the Bible, or at all the things that God will do, from the point of view of human thoughts or deeds, they would be thought of as things that cannot happen. The tribulation of Revelation, the appearance of the Antichrist, the plagues of the seven trumpets, the plagues of the seven bowls, the tribulations that happen in this world, and the work of saving the saints and the people of Israel are all like that. So are the work of saving countless people at the last time, our Lord's rising from the dead, the saints being martyred and, after martyrdom, rising from the dead and being raptured and then being with the Lord in the Millennial Kingdom, and going to the new heaven and the new earth and reigning there. All these things are perfectly possible and believable when seen with a faith that believes in God, but they are hard to believe when seen with human thoughts. What is certain is the fact that whether we believe or not, all these things are things that will come about exactly as the word says.

## The greatest stumbling block to faith is human thought

What is a stumbling block to our believing and following the word of God is legalistic thoughts. When the Lord said, "Take away the stone blocking the tomb," it was also because of human thought that Martha stood in the way of Jesus, saying that it had been four days since Lazarus died. So what is the greatest stumbling block to our believing in the Lord and believing and

following the word of God? Human thought is the greatest stumbling block, as when Martha said, "There is already a stench. It has been four days since he died, so is there any need to open the tomb?" If he had just died, there might at least be a possibility of revival, but he had been dead four days and there was a heavy stench, and with her own thought that, even if He was Jesus, how could He bring him back to life, Martha was blocking in this way the things Jesus was going to do. So with human thoughts one could not understand and follow Jesus; one could follow Him only by faith.

If one cannot yield one's own thoughts and keeps putting forward one's thoughts, faith does not arise. We must remember that Jesus said, "Did I not say that if you believe My word you will see the glory of God? If you believe, you will see the glory, yet you do not believe. At any rate, take away the stone."

When they took away the stone as Jesus had told them, Jesus prayed and called with a loud voice, *"Lazarus, come forth!"* and it says that he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes. Because the written word of God is the works that God has done, we must believe that word. If we believe the word of God and the works God has done, we come to see the glory and the work of God. By faith we come to take part in all that glory of God, and also by faith we can follow the Lord. What would happen if we were captured by weak human thoughts and did not believe the word of God? Then how could we taste the work of God?

What is utterly impossible in our thoughts is not impossible in God's sight. God can do anything, and can accomplish anything with His power. When you and I, living our life of faith, think with our own ability at the center, we have many thoughts like, "This can be done, and this cannot be done." Generally such people may do well in social life, but in living a life of faith, that

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can become a stumbling block and a barrier. So God tells us to put away human thoughts and to believe what God will do and what He has said. We must believe in our hearts the word God has spoken just as it is. When God has planned and says He will do so, do we have anything to say?

What faith is, is believing that what God has said is what God will do. Believing not from our own point of view but from God's point of view—that is faith, and that is uniting our hearts with God. When we follow by faith, we come to see all the things God accomplishes, and we receive the grace of taking part in the glory of God.

Practically speaking, people may wonder why God would open the age of Revelation in this peaceful world. Therefore people speak of the pre-tribulation rapture theory. They have many thoughts like, "Would God leave the saints in this terrible plague? Would He leave the people of God as they are?" But it is not so. There are clearly things that God has planned to accomplish as recorded in Revelation, and through all those things He intended to reveal the glory of God. Also, God's permitting the tribulation in the age of Revelation is in order to give the saints the blessing of making their faith firm, and to give rewards to those who have overcome by faith. In addition, it is because He has determined to completely destroy Satan the devil, who opposes God, and his followers. That is why we must unite our hearts with the things God will do and His plan, receive them by faith, and follow by faith.

## Take away the stone that is blocking the door of your heart

Are not some negative thoughts or legalistic thoughts of yours and mine blocking the door of faith in your hearts and mine? If there are such things, we must take them away. Setting aside our thoughts, we must have the faith that if God has said it and it is what God will do, God does it without any difficulty.

When our Lord was coming to raise Lazarus, too, He said, "Lazarus is sleeping. I am going to wake him up." The Lord knew everything. And because the Lord had the power, He could bring him back to life, and all we had to do was simply believe that fact. It means that Lazarus was sleeping because he had no power, and Mary and Martha could do nothing because they had no power, but Jesus could do it. Martha should have believed in the power of Jesus and believed all the things He would do. Then she would have seen the glory of God and would not have been put to shame.

That is the spiritual meaning the Lord wants to tell us through the passage. It is the word that if we keep putting forward our own human thoughts as we live our life of faith, we cannot go forward by faith and are put to shame. It means that our thoughts are blocking our own souls from going forward by faith.

## God changes us, who have been saved, into disciples who can follow the Lord

What about it when we are at times weak and lacking? Even so, God changes you. No matter how lacking and fleshly you are, when you hear the word of God, God changes you, God saves you, God makes you people of faith, and He has you do the work

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of God. It is the word that because God has determined it, He does it all.

At times we look at our own weakness and are discouraged, thinking, “Someone like me seems utterly unable to make it. The life of faith does not seem to suit my constitution.” Even while running straight ahead, there are times when we look at ourselves and such thoughts come. There are times when we think, “What could someone like me do? Following the Lord suits the quiet brothers or sisters among the brothers and sisters of this church, but not me.” Dear fellow believers, there will also be times when you have thoughts of giving up on yourself, thinking, “They can follow the Lord and for them living by faith is possible, but someone like me will not make it.”

But that is a wrong thought. Because God has saved you, God leads you so that you can follow. It means that when God supplies the word and you hear the word, hold on to it, and say that you believe, it is not that you change by yourselves, but that God changes you into disciples who can follow the Lord. That is why we can follow the Lord.

Our seeing the glory of God is the same. At the last day our Lord raises us again and lets us go and live in the kingdom of God, lets us reign in the Millennial Kingdom, and lets us live reigning forever in the new heaven and the new earth. Because God does so for us, we can enjoy it.

It is not because you and I have some special power or some special faith by which we can rise from the dead; it is because God has planned it for us, spoken it, and accomplishes it, so we simply unite our hearts with the work God does and believe. It means that there is nothing else. If we believe, we see and enjoy that glory.

You and I will enjoy glory and see glory as we believe in and follow the Lord. The way to walk with the Lord and follow the

Lord in this world is nothing else. There is no other way than only to believe in the Lord and to follow by faith the work He has done and His word. Only when we unite our hearts with the Lord can we walk with the Lord, and while uniting with Him we can follow the Lord.

If our hearts are united with the Lord now and we walk with Him with the same heart, know the things God will do, unite with them in our hearts, and follow along together, we see the glory of God. Then following the Lord is not hard, and even when we are sometimes exhausted, we gain new strength. But because thoughts keep coming, as we calculate with our own thoughts, that this seems possible and this seems impossible, our life of faith becomes hard and we lose heart. Following when it fits our own thoughts and staggering when it differs even a little from our own thoughts is not walking with the Lord. At such times the Lord goes ahead and you and I fall behind, so the life of faith can only be hard. The life of faith is setting aside our own thoughts and our own ability, and living by faith in God's thoughts and the power God will exercise. That is precisely the life of faith. The world of faith is like this. What the Bible speaks of is precisely this kind of faith.

What becomes a stumbling block to you and me in living our life of faith is your thoughts, and trusting in your own ability, thinking and judging by yourselves, and trying to do something with that, gives birth to wrongdoing. Not relying on the Lord and not uniting with the word the Lord has spoken leads straight to death. Believing that everything will come about according to the word of God, concerning the word God has spoken and all the things He will accomplish in the future, and following the Lord by faith in the power of God, is real faith and the real life of faith. We must truly live our lives with such faith.

It said, *"With the heart one believes unto righteousness, and*

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*with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Romans 10:10)*, and it said, *"So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17)*. It is the word that the power is not in us, but the power is in the word of God, and that God Himself makes us have power. We are saved by faith. By believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that the Lord accomplished for us, we are washed clean of all our sins, and as the children of God we enter the kingdom of God and take part in the glory. And we come to enjoy that glory forever and ever. These things are faith. Dear fellow believers, do you understand the world of faith?

At times, do you not look at yourselves and become discouraged? That can happen. At such times, do not look at yourselves but look to God. Look to the word God has spoken and also believe in the power of God. If God says He will do so, let us believe that He will do so, hold on to it, and follow by faith. Then I believe that you can do many more things than your ability and your strength allow. And at such times, I know that you will receive many more blessings before God and experience many more glories.

## Without the Holy Spirit one cannot live a life of faith

The life of faith is something that cannot be lived without the Holy Spirit. It is impossible for a person without the Holy Spirit to live a life of faith. Long ago there was a famous theologian in Germany, a great conservative who had graduated from a seminary that taught Calvinism. Calvinist theology puts forward a word-centered faith that goes when the word goes and stops when the word stops. But in that age when Germany started a

war, a man in power imprisoned this theologian and brainwashed him, and that theologian's faith later changed completely. He became a very good person. This means that he became a good person in human terms.

The life of faith is impossible without the Holy Spirit. One who has received the remission of sins in his heart by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit not only becomes a child of God by the grace of God, but also receives the Holy Spirit. By believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit we are saved, by faith we receive the Holy Spirit, by faith we become the children of God, and by faith we take part in the glory of God. By faith we come to see the glory of God. There is nothing but this.

If one has not received the Holy Spirit, one cannot live a life of faith. No one can. No matter how much one has the power to cast out demons and the power to actually heal sickness by laying on hands, if one does not have within oneself the faith that holds on to and believes the word of the water and the Spirit, the Holy Spirit is not within one, and without the Holy Spirit that power is maintained to some degree and then comes to an end.

Yet usually many people are living their life of faith that way. Many people perform wonders and miracles, are fervent when they believe in Jesus, are zealous, pray noisily in tongues, do fasting prayers and mountain prayers, and diligently go to all-night prayers. If one believes that being so zealous and showing extra zeal, wearing sashes in public squares and shouting, "Believe in Jesus, go to heaven!" going into churches and speaking in tongues and healing the sick, is having received the Holy Spirit, it is a great misunderstanding. When you meet such people a few years later, they are completely limp like boiled cabbage, half dead. Because the Holy Spirit is not in them, they show zeal and extra zeal at first, but after only about five years

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they end up empty-handed. It is too late to be disappointed after that. Everyone without the Holy Spirit is like that.

Even a person who has been born again of water and the Spirit and has the Holy Spirit in his heart is always disappointed when he looks at himself. When you look at yourselves, are you disappointed, or not? You are disappointed. That is why the apostles of Jesus said that we should look to Jesus Christ, who has made us perfect. Let us look to the works our Lord has done for you. The Lord saved us with the gospel of the water and the Spirit and made us the children of God, and He is with us in all of our lives and becomes our shepherd and leads us. We must look to that. And we must look to the kingdom of God that the Lord has prepared for us in the future, the things God will do for us, the things God has entrusted to us, and the things God will accomplish through us. Then we gain strength, and the work of God arises through us. Faith is looking to the Lord and believing, united with the Lord's word. And experiencing power by faith is faith. Today I say that to you.

## The word of God becomes power to you and becomes power to me.

Here we see the part where Martha and Mary could not hold on to the Lord's word as it was. When our Lord said that He was going to wake up the one who was sleeping, believing it as it was with a "Yes" is real faith. Did the Lord wake up Lazarus according to His word, or not? He woke him up. In the Lord's sight he was not a dead man but a sleeping man. *"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 spoke of the point that

He Himself is the Lord of life. What about it when we face death? If we believe in the Lord, does our soul die? It does not die. It lives forever. Even if our flesh dies, we live again by faith.

Lazarus died and came back to life. The tomb of Lazarus was a cave and was blocked with a stone. The Lord said, *"Take away the stone,"* and said, *"Lazarus, come forth!"* Then Lazarus got up and walked out. The people had bound the whole body of Lazarus with graveclothes, but when Jesus said, *"Lazarus, come forth!"* Lazarus got up just as he was and came out. And when Jesus said, *"Loose him, and let him go,"* the people loosed all the graveclothes bound on the body of Lazarus, and when they had loosed them all, Lazarus must have taken a deep breath. Did the people see this, or not? All the villagers saw it. If you and I go before God when our time comes on this earth, or sleep after being martyred at the last time, will the Lord bring us back to life like this, or will He not be able to? He will bring us back to life. In this way, faith overcomes death. Faith is receiving the resurrection from death.

The dead Lazarus coming back to life was, in the Lord's sight, waking up a sleeping man, and in our sight, raising a dead man. In fact, it was a matter of the flesh dying and coming back to life.

Many of the Jews saw all the things Jesus did, saying, *"Loose him, and let him go" (John 11:44)*, and believed. But there were also people who did not believe this fact. Do you believe? You all believe. If we believe this, the faith arises that believes that at the last day the Lord will raise your flesh and mine again, change it into a spiritual body that does not die, and let us live again in the new heaven and the new earth and in the Millennial Kingdom. If we believe this, it comes about as we believe. This is precisely faith.

When death comes upon the saints, they do not fear death. Before that they may be afraid, but when real death actually

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comes upon them, they are not afraid. This is because the Lord of life is in their hearts. That Lord of life is also the Lord of the resurrection. He is the Lord who raises us who were dead back to life. It is because He is the Lord of life. *"I am the resurrection and the life" (John 11:25)*. The Lord is the Lord of power who raises the dead, and the God of life who gave us life in the first place.

Because the Lord in whom you and I believe is such a Lord, if you and I believe in the Lord, we come back to life. And by faith we receive the authority of kings and live forever in the Millennial Kingdom and in the new heaven and the new earth. You and I enjoy such glory by believing in the Lord.

Let us live our life of faith by faith. Rather than living our life of faith and following the Lord with human thoughts or calculating thoughts, even if it seems impossible according to our own thoughts, this means that we should set our own thoughts aside. Since it does not work at all if we try to follow the Lord with our own thoughts, let us set them aside, look to the word of God, and believe the word. I hope that you, too, will believe the word of God. Dear fellow believers, do you understand? Believe the word of God. That word becomes power to you and becomes power to me. By believing the word, we become people of faith, gain power, become people of power, and become workers of God. And through the Lord we are clothed in all this glory. The Bible speaks of that.

Even if everyone were to be clothed in glory like this, religious people cannot be clothed in glory. Those who look to spiritual things can, but religious people cannot. This means that a person who pursues only comfort of the flesh and only getting along well in a fleshly way cannot.

Because God is the Lord of life, He creates new things every day. That is why He opens new works. God will open the new

heaven and the new earth in the future, and when we go there, because everything is new, we praise God forever and ever. If we were bored, how could we praise Him? Because God is the Lord of life, He plans new works and new things every day and accomplishes them every day. Those who have become the children of God by believing in God, by the gospel of the water and the Spirit, praise God forever by believing in the plans God will carry out and the powers of God. We are always like that. I hope that you, too, will learn such real faith.

What hope is there for mankind? Everything will surely come about according to the word of God, and if that is so, who becomes the true hope for you and me? Jesus Christ becomes our true hope. All things will be accomplished as Jesus Christ has planned, and our hope lies there. Therefore, we live our life of faith by looking to the Lord, and by faith we come to receive glory.

Dear fellow believers, I hope that you will know faith well and set your own thoughts aside. And I hope that you will hold on to the word of God. There are many times when it is hard as we serve the Lord. That is the fact. Still, when we work by faith in the things God will do, even when we are worn out, we gain strength. Also, once we have done some work, we are at ease. Those who work feel truly refreshed when they finish their work. If you and I set our thoughts aside, hold on to the word of God, follow by faith, and everything is accomplished according to the word of God, will it be refreshing, or not? It will be refreshing. Those refreshing things are approaching us. The time when the Lord will accomplish all these things He has promised us is approaching, and the time for this world to end has nearly come. I unite my heart with that word, *"Come, Lord Jesus!" (Revelation 22:20)*. And I unite my heart with all those plans of God that appear in Revelation.

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## The seven ages that God has planned

God has made a plan. He planned to open the age of the gospel and to maintain the age of the gospel until the day the Lord comes, and He has accomplished it according to that plan. That is the first age. What is the second age? It is the age in which Satan the devil gains power in this world and torments the people of this world. Why? Because unless Satan the devil torments people, people do not return before God, the Lord has allowed Satan the devil to run wild in this world. And the third age is the age of famine, both spiritual and physical. Because without these famines people do not seek God and do not wait for the kingdom of God, He has allowed the age of famine.

The next is the age of the pale horse, that is, the age of martyrdom. In that age the Antichrist runs wild, and the saints keep their faith and are martyred, and He shows before Satan the devil that the faith God has given overcomes Satan the devil. God will give an eternal reward to you and me who have labored like that.

After that, what age comes? The age of the resurrection and the rapture takes place, and after that the age of the end comes upon this world, and when this world has been destroyed, the Millennial Kingdom is established and the Lord comes to live with the saints. God has planned such seven ages. They are the seven ages, the seven trumpets, and the plagues of the seven bowls.

## I hope you will have a faith united with the Lord

We agree with the work God does. Until now many people have not agreed, but we must agree again with the word of God and kindle the fire of faith. We must rekindle the fire that has gone out. At this last time we must raise it once more. This means that you and I must kindle the fire of faith, and rekindle the fire of faith in people's hearts, so that the fire of their spirits does not go out and they rise again by faith. The Lord has given us the power to do so. We must accomplish everything with the power the Lord gives, having such a united faith. A faith that believes, uniting our hearts with the things the Lord will do—in such faith God works and is with us, and He accomplishes all the precious works of the Lord through such united people. He accomplishes them through those who, though lacking in deeds, believe in Jesus in their hearts and are united with Him. Dear fellow believers, do you believe?

I hope that you, too, will have a faith united with the Lord. Even when it is hard, unite with the word of God. Though we are weak and lacking, let us live by faith. Let us go forward with faith, walking with the Lord step by step. Do not look too much at your lacking selves. If you look at yourselves, there is only disappointment. There is nothing in human beings to lean on. There is hope only in God, and we can place our expectation only in the word God has spoken. I give thanks before God. I have finished the word. ✉

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Sermon 5 by Paul C. Jong

# Do you truly believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit?

**< John 11:45-57 >**

**"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. 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**

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**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 given a command, that if anyone knew where He was, he should report it, that they might seize Him."**

## It is expedient that one man should die for the whole nation

Today I intend to preach the word of John chapter 11 and finish quickly. Seeing the things Jesus did when He came to Bethany, many people believed that Jesus is the Savior, while on the other hand many people did not believe and informed on Him. They said this: "Our country is in a serious situation. A man called Jesus performs many wonders and signs in our country, and this time He raised a dead man. So will not the people of the whole country be led astray? Last time He opened the eyes of a blind man and it became the talk of the whole country, and this time He raised a dead man." That is what they said.

Even granting that a blind man might have his eyes opened, this time He raised a man who had been dead. When a man dies, many people come and weep, and there were those who had shrouded the body and those who had prepared food. There was even the smell of decay from the body, and yet what was going to rot came back to life. So the whole country was turned upside down, and while Rome was ruling Israel as a colony, word spread that a remarkable man had appeared in Israel, and it became a serious problem. The concern was that if that man were to instigate the people and start a riot, would it not become serious? So the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said this. They said that if they left this man alone, the

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Romans would come and take away their land and nation.

Originally the office was for life, but by the New Testament era it had become corrupt, and the Roman rulers replaced the high priests at will. So it had become a formality. They valued only the rituals and made use of the office. Originally it was not so. One had to be a descendant of Aaron, and the Levites who served in the tabernacle of meeting did that work from the age of twenty-five to fifty. The reason those who were old could not do it was that in those days there was much heavy work, slaughtering oxen and slaughtering sheep. The priests of old had no day of rest in the tabernacle. All day long people brought sacrificial offerings, so they slaughtered sheep and oxen, wrung the necks of doves, baked bread, and offered them before God, and could not rest. So later, as the descendants of Aaron became many, people came to take turns serving as high priest. When our whole family gathers on a holiday, how many there are! They say that some man had as many as seventy children by several wives. When those children grew up and had children in turn, they became a tribe. Originally the nation of Israel is the descendants of Abraham. They began to have children and became a nation. It is an understandable thing.

When the people were worried, a man called Caiaphas spoke. Verses 50 to 52 say this. *"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."* God spoke this through the mouth of the high priest, regardless of how the system of the high priesthood had changed among human beings. Caiaphas said, "I know that it is expedient for one man to die and save the

whole people of Israel. Yet you are not thinking, but only worrying. Listen to what I have to say."

Because Caiaphas was the high priest, he said in advance that Jesus would die—that they would hand Jesus over to the Roman soldiers and kill one man for the sake of the nation, and not only for the nation but in order to make the children of God one. So the fact is that God spoke through Caiaphas, the high priest that year.

Among the nation of Israel, the scribes and the Pharisees were worried about their own nation. This was because Jesus raised the dead, opened the eyes of the blind, made the lame stand up, and blessed the food in the fields and made much bread and fed the people, so that the people were later going to make Jesus king. They were going to make Him the king of the land, the king of the nation of Israel. Because Israel was a colony, it was in a situation in which there must be no king. At this time a governor sent from Rome was ruling. Rome had appointed one man from among the nation of Israel and told him to rule as Rome directed.

It is like the case in which, after the United States invaded Iraq and won, it told Iraq to hold an election and choose a president, and not an American but an Iraqi was to be chosen as president, yet was to act under the direction of the United States. The Romans had appointed a governor and were running things in this way, and now it looked as though a king of their own was going to come forth. Then Rome could only sweep away the whole nation completely. This was what this nation feared. In fact, even after Jesus rose again and ascended, independence movements kept arising, and as the independence fighters rose up and opposed the Roman army, in A.D. 70 a Roman general came leading a huge army and completely demolished Jerusalem. They killed even the women with child, and sold those who

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surrendered to every country.

Toward the back of the Bible there are Hebrews and James, and these are epistles sent to the scattered Jews. From long before, the people of Israel had gone through wars and tribulations, been carried off to various countries, and lived scattered abroad, and after persecution arose in Jerusalem, the believers in Jesus were also scattered everywhere. Since there were believers in Jesus among those living scattered like that, the letters were written. When such a letter was sent to an influential person, that person read the letter and gave it to another person, and as everyone read it in turn, they were nurtured. The literature ministry we are doing now is done in the same way.

When the high priest called Caiaphas said, "If our nation is not to perish, we must hand over the man called Jesus to the Roman soldiers," they accused Him of having opposed Rome and having called Himself the King of the Jews. So on the Cross the inscription of His charge was posted in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek. They said, "He called Himself the King of the Jews. Originally there is only one king, yet He called Himself the King of the Jews, so He is a rebel against Rome," and killed Him on that charge. Jesus was nailed to the Cross by the Roman soldiers, but on the side of the Jews they were killing Him for the crime of blasphemy.

When Jesus said that God and He are one, that They are the same, the Jews thought that He was far too arrogant, that if He was the same as God the Father, was He not saying that He Himself was God, and that such a man must be killed quickly. They applied that charge, but because they themselves had no authority to kill, they handed Him over to the Roman soldiers, and when Jesus was being interrogated by Pilate, the people shouted to kill Him and said that this man had called Himself the

King of the Jews. When Pilate asked, "Did You really do so?" Jesus said, *"It is as you say."* But when Pilate interrogated Him, He had committed no crime, and judging from His character, He was not a person who would start a rebellion. This means that Jesus was extremely meek, and in Pilate's eyes there was nothing to find fault with.

But the crowds, starting a riot, pressed him, saying, "If you do not sentence Jesus to death, you are not a servant of the Roman emperor." Pilate was ruling Israel as governor at that time, and if things went this way, he would be driven out of that position, and if a riot broke out, he would lose all his authority. So although there was no crime, he came to sentence Him to crucifixion. Because Jesus had borne the sin of the world with the baptism He received from John, He was sentenced to crucifixion, carried the cross, was nailed on the hill of Golgotha, said that it is finished, died, rose again, and became our Savior.

## Why did Jesus have to be hung on the Cross?

It is the will of God that one man should die for the nation, and gather into one not only the nation but also the scattered children of God. It is exactly as Caiaphas said. But today people speak of Jesus like this. They say that Jesus came to this earth and died on the Cross and saved us, and so if we only believe, we receive salvation. When asked what the gospel is, they say that Jesus came to this earth, was nailed to the Cross, shed His blood, and saved us, and so if we only believe in Him as the Savior, we are saved from sin and become the people of God. But is that really so? It is a fact that Jesus died for His people. Jesus received baptism from John, bore the sin of the world, died on the Cross, and rose again from the dead, and thereby saved

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those who believe. Just as the Bible says, *"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)*, Jesus died on the Cross and rose again from the dead and became our Savior. But is that all?

Many people say that Jesus died on the Cross and saved us. They say it too easily, and they speak of the gospel that way. Did Jesus really save us only by dying on the Cross? That is not the gospel. Jesus said that His blood is true drink and His flesh is true food. Jesus bore our sin, the sin of mankind, in His own body by receiving baptism from John, and bearing the sin of the world, He was hung on the Cross, shed His blood, died, and rose again, and thereby saved us. This is the gospel by which the Lord saved us. Many people speak of believing in Jesus too easily, but it is not so.

Because Caiaphas was the high priest, God gave him such wisdom. It was the calculation that if they handed Jesus over to the Roman soldiers, framed Him with the crime of treason against the state, and disposed of this one man only, the Roman soldiers would not kill or abuse the nation of Israel. Under the present colonial policy the rest of life would be left as it was, but if this were left alone, the nation of Israel would be in danger.

So Caiaphas made the decision that it was right that the whole nation should not perish by handing over one man, and he also spoke the spiritual word that this was intended to gather the scattered people of God and make them one, not only this nation. God gave the high priest wisdom. And the policy the high priest set up hit the mark. When they had Jesus hung on the Cross, the nation of Israel was preserved. Jesus had already borne the sin of the world by receiving baptism from John, but they did not believe this; they merely tried to kill Him for the crime of rebellion and sought to gain peace in the flesh, and it had nothing

to do with the remission of sins. Even so, God used him.

It is a fact that Jesus died on the Cross and rose again and saved us. But the genuine truth of salvation, as you also know, is not that He saved us by the death on the Cross alone. It is the fact that He came to this earth, bore our sins with the baptism He received from John, bore the sin of all mankind once and for all, and by giving His body to the Cross, and also by rising again from the dead, became the true Savior of those who believe in the Lord. We must keep this firmly in mind.

Why did Jesus have to be hung on the Cross? Because He had borne the sin of mankind. How did He bear it? It is the word that Jesus bore it by receiving baptism from John the Baptist at the age of thirty. When Jesus received baptism, the sin of all mankind passed on to the head of Jesus. The sins of the Israelites and the sins of all the Gentiles also passed on to Him. So Jesus became the Lamb before God. This means that although He is the Son of God, He gave His own body as the sacrificial offering for His people.

When we believe in Jesus, if we believe in Him only as the Jesus who saved us by being hung on the Cross, that becomes a vain faith. There is a gathering of a certain denomination, and when I went in there and asked how they have the assurance of salvation, they insisted that they had been saved because it is written in the Bible that Jesus has saved us. They say that since John chapter 6 says that he who believes in Him has eternal life and that he who believes receives salvation, and since the word says so, they have received salvation. But it is not so. That the Lord has saved us is attested by the word. Because Jesus received baptism from John the Baptist at the age of thirty and bore our sins, He testified for three years, and then died on the Cross and rose again from the dead, and so He could become our true Savior. It means that the answer is clearly given in the word.

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Yet they pull out only a single verse of the word, saying, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son," but such a word is only one example.

Concretely, how did He save us? The Lord received baptism from John, bore the sin of the world, was nailed to the Cross and died for us, and rose again from the dead, and thereby saved us. It is written in the Bible. We can be saved when we know the truth and believe it. To say that He saved us just by being hung on the Cross, unconditionally, is a truly absurd thing to say. Dear fellow believers, even when people go to a Buddhist temple, they do not know what Namu Amitabha means, but they think that if they just pray, they will be given something—that is human thinking. So the Lord said, *"You shall know the truth" (John 8:32)*.

## Jesus fulfilled all righteousness by receiving baptism from John at the age of thirty

Jesus received baptism from John the Baptist at the age of thirty. When Jesus received baptism, He spoke. He said that it was fitting for them to fulfill all righteousness in this way—that it was fitting for Him to receive baptism from him, and for John the Baptist to give Him baptism, so that He would have the sins of all people transferred to Him and fulfill all righteousness. When Jesus received baptism and came up out of the water, God the Father testified from heaven. He said, *"This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17)*. God the Father attested it. He was saying, "My Son bears the sin of mankind by receiving baptism from John, and while bearing that sin He is hung on the Cross and judged for the sin of mankind; because He does this in obedience to My will, He is the One in

whom I am well pleased and the One whom I love."

Jesus is put to death when the Passover comes. It said that it was six days before the Passover. Six days before, Jesus came to the house of Lazarus, seated Lazarus, who had died and come back to life, beside Him, and was entertained. A feast was held. Jesus knew that He would die a little later. When Mary poured fragrant oil on the feet of Jesus and wiped them with her own hair, He said that this woman was pouring fragrant oil on His feet for His burial. Before this happened, Caiaphas, the high priest that year, had said that it was expedient for one man to die for this nation and for many people. On the next day, Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

The Passover is the greatest feast. As for what custom there was at this time: in our country, too, there is what is called the Liberation Day amnesty, by which model prisoners among the convicts are released on Liberation Day, and the Roman soldiers, while ruling that country, released one of the prisoners on that day, partly to celebrate the feast. Who was the one who received that benefit at that time? It was Barabbas. After raising Lazarus, Jesus came to Bethany six days before the Passover and went up to Jerusalem the next day. By this time Caiaphas had already proclaimed and plotted that seizing and killing Jesus was expedient for his own nation and for the scattered people of God. Because the man called Jesus had led this nation astray, there was ample charge on which to kill Him, and since the nation could not exist if He were left alone, they ordered that whoever saw Him should report Him. Jesus knew all of this.

By Jesus being sacrificed for us, we have been saved. Jesus did not save us only by being hung on the Cross; He came to this earth, bore our sins by receiving baptism from John at the age of thirty, received the judgment for sin by being hung on the Cross at the age of thirty-three, and rose again from the dead, and

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thereby saved us. We must know and believe it that way.

You and I must put a question to ourselves. How have I been saved? Then you yourselves must produce the answer. It must not be a matter of saying that since the Lord says He has saved me, I have been saved. It means that there must be a faith that believes in the heart, "The Lord came to this earth and received baptism from John the Baptist and bore our sins. At that time He had the sins of all people transferred to Him, and at that time He bore my sins as well." Dear fellow believers, do you believe this? You all believe. *"He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities" (Isaiah 53:5)*. The reason He could truly receive such harsh suffering and punishment on the Cross was that He had received baptism from John the Baptist and borne our sins, and the suffering, death, and resurrection He went through have truly given salvation to you and me. One must be a person who questions oneself by faith and makes a confession of faith oneself. Otherwise one cannot call the Lord "Lord." One cannot call the Lord "Savior."

## One's faith must be acknowledged as right by God

If one only says that Jesus died on the Cross and became our Savior, one is not hated. This means that if one says so, one is not hated, because one has not received the remission of sins and is one of the people of the devil. People have such a faith in order not to be hated by people. But we must know that not being hated by people means not being loved by God. Those who are loved by God are hated by people, and those who are acknowledged by the people of the devil are not acknowledged by God. That is why we must know this well as we go about it.

Because many people are conscious of people rather than of

God, in order not to be hated by people they try to believe and preach as ordinary people know it. How wrong that is! God clearly saved us with the gospel of the water and the Spirit, yet people say that Jesus died on the Cross and saved us, and that whoever believes that receives the remission of sins. But that is a wrong faith. Because Jesus received baptism from John before He died on the Cross and bore our sins, it is all too clear that He died on the Cross and rose again from the dead and saved us.

Then how can one leave that out and say that it is right to believe as many people believe? And can one gain the assurance of salvation through visions or dreams? That is evidence that one is conscious of people. If we are to be saved, we must be acknowledged by God. You and I must question ourselves and the answer must come out from the word of truth, and our faith must be acknowledged by God as right. If one is not acknowledged by God, that is not salvation.

If Jesus had not received baptism from John, had not borne your sins and mine, and had died on the Cross, what would Jesus have to do with you and me? Even if He died a hundred times or a thousand times on the Cross, what would it have to do with us? Only when He had your sins and mine transferred to Him with the baptism He received from John and died on the Cross do His being wounded become my being wounded, His being bruised become my being bruised, His death become my death, and His resurrection become my resurrection. If not, your sins and mine remain as they are, and even if Jesus had been hung on the Cross and died hundreds of times, Jesus could become a symbol of love but would have no relationship at all with you and me.

For Jesus to have anything to do with you and me, Jesus must have died on the Cross with your sins transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John, and must have risen again. There must be a relationship. But how easily many people today

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speak of having been saved! Because they believe that Jesus was nailed to the Cross and died and saved us, they have no assurance of salvation and cannot serve God. They cannot follow Him. They cannot go to the kingdom of heaven when they die. Even though they believe in Jesus, they cannot be without sin. I cannot tell you how serious a matter this is. If one speaks with the truth, it can be finished with just one or two conversations, but when one deals with people who have the faith that Jesus died on the Cross and saved them, even speaking of the gospel of the water and the Spirit thousands of times is not too much. How wrongly people know and wrongly believe! This means that they wrongly know a Savior who has nothing to do with them. This means that those who believe that way are religious people. Then there is no difference between Christianity and Buddhism. Yet how many among Christians go to a shaman's house to have their fortunes told, or convert to Buddhism! There are also many who quit being pastors and became Buddhist monks. Why is that? This means that it is because they do not know the truth of how their sins passed on to Jesus. So they are ruined. If one hears and believes what such a person preaches, one is the same. It said that if the blind lead the blind, both fall into a ditch. When I see such things, it is so pitiful. If one does not believe that Jesus bore sin when He received baptism from John, was nailed to the Cross and died, and rose again, and does not preach it to others, how wrong is that?

## The most important thing in a person's life is the remission of sins

When we are asked, as our life is slipping away, whether we are confident of going to the kingdom of heaven, we must be

able to answer with confidence. There must be a confession of faith like this: "Lord, You came to this earth for someone as lacking as I am, and when You received baptism from John the Baptist, You bore all sins, and at that time Jesus bore all my sins and fulfilled all righteousness. You bore not only my sins but all the sins of the world. And bearing the sin of the world, You were nailed to the Cross, said that it is finished, died, and rose again, and because You are now seated at the right hand of the throne of God the Father, I go before God. The time has come for me to leave this earth, but I have not the slightest uneasiness. Now I return to the Father. Receive me. Though I did not live perfectly in the flesh on this earth, I believe that God the Father had Jesus Christ receive the sin of all mankind with His baptism and die on the Cross, and thereby saved me. There is not a speck of stain in my heart. It has been washed white as snow. It is clean. The Lord is my Savior. God the Father is my Father. The time has come for You to take me, and now I want to be held in the Father's arms and live truly gloriously, not in this world but in the world of heaven. Pain is over, and happiness begins." Can you make such a confession? Everyone says they can. We must know how to make this confession of faith. Not only when we die, but always, as we live, we must make this confession. Such people are very blessed people.

It said, *"Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered" (Psalm 32:1)*. It is not that we say we have no sin when we have sin; the Lord righteously received and bore our sins with the baptism He received from John, washed away our sins and removed them, and taking our sins went to the Cross and was nailed in our place, so that we would not be judged.

Who can cover our sins? Jesus bore our sins with the baptism He received from John, died on the Cross, and rose again, and

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became our Savior. When we believe that, our sins are covered before God. It is not that they are covered by forcibly covering them over; because we believe in that Jesus as the Savior, we come to have no sin before God the Father, and so our sins are covered. Jesus, the Son of God the Father, has removed our sins. So we become blessed people.

How many people in this world believe in Jesus? If you go to a crematorium, where the dead are burned, they hold a service once with the body placed there. Then when they open the door and put the coffin in, the door is locked and a light comes on outside. It is a sign that it has begun. If they are believers in Jesus, they sing the hymn "In a few days we shall meet across the Jordan." Dear fellow believers, many people sing such hymns there, but when the coffin goes into the crematorium, even believers in Jesus weep and make a great commotion. Why is that? It means that they have no assurance of having been saved. It is because they have no assurance of salvation by the word. When a person dies, what is the most important thing? What matters is whether this person was saved or not, and what gospel this person believed. It means that what matters is whether the soul was saved. Because he has already died, it means that whether this person's happiness or his misery begins now is decided according to whether he believed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit or not. When one of his saints dies, the evangelist goes to the funeral and vouches that this saint knew the gospel of the water and the Spirit, believed it fully, lived a life of faith, and departed. He also vouches for whether he went to the kingdom of heaven or to hell.

The Lord gave His disciples such authority. They judge by whether this person believed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit or not. It said that Jesus, too, was troubled when He saw that Lazarus had died. When Lazarus died, Mary, Martha, and

the villagers wept and wailed and made a great commotion. They shed tears, saying that such a sincere man had caught a terrible illness and died, and that it was a pity, since he had led the household. When Jesus went there and said, *"Lazarus, come forth!"* Lazarus came out of the tomb.

Dear fellow believers, the most important thing in a person's life is the remission of sins. It is the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Did one believe this truth or not? Did one believe and keep the gospel or not? Though lacking, did one follow the Lord or not? This is the most important thing. From here happiness and misery begin. We are living a second life. So we must live twice. We must be born again. I cannot tell you how important this is. If a member of your family has died, what matters is whether he believed this gospel or not; nothing else matters. Even if this person lived a good life, if he did not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and opposed it, it is a miserable thing. They say that the father of one evangelist of our church refused to listen even as his life was slipping away, and rejected it. How miserable that is! All he had to do was hear and receive it, but he did not even listen.

We must engrave on our hearts and believe how important it is that one man received baptism from John and died on the Cross for the people. Because Jesus came to this earth, received baptism from John, and was sacrificed on the Cross, you and I have come back to life. Because Jesus was sacrificed on the Cross at that time, the Israelites, too, were able to live longer. If Jesus had started a riot on this earth, saying that He was the King of the Jews, the Roman soldiers would have come and killed the whole nation of Israel. Jesus is the One who, even if a million Roman soldiers came, could lift up the entire Eurasian plate and overturn it.

But because Jesus did not come to go against this world and

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kill people but came to give life, He received baptism from John the Baptist and was sacrificed in order to give life to you and me. Even if you believe in Jesus, the faith that Jesus saved us only by dying on the Cross must be changed. How wrong that is! How simple this logic is! For Jesus to die on the Cross, He had to bear our sins, and how did He bear sin? He bore it with the baptism He received from John. How well it fits, even as a formula! To say that He accomplished salvation only on the Cross is one's own thought, an insane thought. If the Lord says He did it that way, He did it that way.

## There is no sacrifice of atonement without the laying on of hands

God spoke of the laying on of hands, baptism, death, and resurrection all in the law of the Old Testament, and if there were no such thing as Jesus receiving baptism from John, then there should also be no passing on of sin by laying hands on the sacrificial offering in the Old Testament. If the laying on of hands were unnecessary, they would have slaughtered the animal as soon as they brought it, cut it into pieces, and offered it, or something like that. It would mean that once one has brought the sacrificial offering, there is no need to lay hands on it or anything. But was the tabernacle sacrifice of the Old Testament like that? When one brings the offering, what is the first thing one does? One surely lays hands on it. There is no sacrifice of atonement without the laying on of hands. There are some peace offerings without the laying on of hands, but in the sacrifice of atonement one must surely pass one's sin on to it. That is why it is called the sacrificial offering of atonement.

Jesus came to this earth as the sacrificial offering of

atonement. That is why He was called the Lamb of God. He was sacrificed as the sacrificial offering of atonement. I cannot help speaking of how important this is. There is a reason why we must speak of this gospel every day, and there is something to say every day, because of how important this gospel of the water and the Spirit is. If someone does not speak of this, that person is a liar. If an evangelist speaks only of ethics and morality, that person is deceiving. Why? Because this is more important than ethics and morality.

Dear fellow believers, do you believe that Jesus did not save us only by dying on the Cross, but that Jesus received baptism from John and died on the Cross and thereby saved us? You must ask yourselves. I ask myself. Do you really believe? Jesus received baptism from John and had all sins transferred to Him. And He died on the Cross and rose again and saved us. Did my sins pass on to Him at that time? Yes. It said that one believes with the heart and confesses with the mouth and receives salvation. We must ask the question in our own hearts and give the answer. It means that although we know the gospel, we must ask the question in our own hearts. And you must listen to the testimony of faith in your hearts that says that you believe. When we believe with the heart, it is true salvation. Whenever we believe, the moment it is acknowledged in the heart is the moment we meet God and believe. At that moment the Holy Spirit stamps His seal, saying, “Your faith is right.”

## Whenever we speak, we must speak of the gospel of the water and the Spirit

Dear fellow believers, because a person is born once and dies once, it is extremely important. We do not know when we will

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die. After death, the most important thing is whether one believed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit or not. We must be those who believe. Do you preach the gospel to your family and to other people like this? Are you perhaps ashamed of this gospel? Today those who believe in Jesus are all ruined because of the evangelicals. They say they believe in Jesus even though they themselves do not know the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and countless people become religious people and are ruined. They rely on the church and go to hell. If we made books here with such a faith, translated them, and sent them abroad, we would get replies like this: "99.9 percent of the people of our country believe that way, so do not invest the precious money for making books in this; just believe well yourselves, and give such money to the homeless instead." Although I have not been to many countries, when I went to Taiwan and asked to see a sermon collection translated by someone from our country, there was only one by a famous pastor, and even when you go to Japan there are a few people besides him, but they are not displayed well and are not even put on the shelves.

If you say that Jesus died on the Cross and saved us, in a place like Europe one hundred percent believe it. Catholic believers, too, say that He died on the Cross and saved them. Even shamans draw a cross and stick a knife in it when they drive out demons. Even the demons all know it. This means that they know the fact that Jesus came to this earth, died on the Cross, and rose again from the dead. And the demons, too, are afraid of the fact that all sins passed on to Jesus when He received baptism from John. If one speaks only of that, a demon-possessed person falls asleep, refuses to listen, and goes into a frenzy. Whether they listen or not, if one speaks of it and asks whether they believe, and they acknowledge it, the person's face brightens. What the devil hates most is the fact that sin passed on to Jesus

when He received baptism from John.

Whenever we speak, we must speak of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The apostle Paul did so, too. Even though it had been a long time since he met the Lord, he always spoke of it. Even when I do not speak of it because I am doing other work, when I look at what believers in Jesus say, it is truly frustrating. They bring in church members who know nothing, frighten them, and extort money from them, and so no matter how great someone is said to be, I do not even deal with them and simply ignore them. This means that they are not even worth debating. If the word of God says so, one should look up whether it is so or not and debate with one another, but this means that they are not worth debating.

The son of my sister whose funeral we held this time, my nephew, says that he went along to the retreats of a certain evangelical gathering as many as five times. So I said, "Then you must know the truth of salvation. Tell me about it," and he said that Buddhism and Christianity are the same. If he had been to the retreat five times, he should have learned it all. Still, at that church they call him "brother," but because he drank so much and behaved so rudely to the evangelist, he is disliked and cannot go to that church. Let someone behave that rudely to the evangelist of our church. Would we stay still? We would not leave it at that. This means that he knows nothing. So I thought in my heart that I must give him a book or something.

If one does not speak of the baptism Jesus received from John, Buddhism and Christianity are the same. One sins and goes and chants Namu Amitabha and offers money and rice, and in Christianity one sins and goes and offers prayers of repentance and gives money and rice, so what difference is there? And saying that one has to go there to know whether one goes to the kingdom of heaven or to hell is the same, too. Many

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theologians say that they have been saved, but when asked whether they go to the kingdom of heaven, they say, “How can one know that?” Does one have to die to know? Do you know, or not, whether you are going to the kingdom of heaven or to hell? You all know. That is why the Bible says that it is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting. If you go to the house of mourning, there is much to learn about life. But if you go to the house of feasting, there is nothing but eating and coming back.

After coming back, my body is tired, but I cannot tell you how foolish people are. How good it would be if there were people other than us who preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit! I would never stop them. I would tell them, “Thank you for doing precious work.” Even if it is not our gathering, if only they preach this gospel, we can support them. How frustrating it is that they say only that He died on the Cross and saved us, unconditionally! Is it that they know and do not say it? Is that really so? If a person has something he believes, he cannot help saying it. What is more, if you place a dead corpse before them, it is revealed clearly. I give thanks that Jesus came to this earth, received baptism, died on the Cross, and rose again, and thereby saved us. I have finished the word. ✉

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# CHAPTER

# 12

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# John Chapter 12 seen from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit

## In John 12:1–8, was Mary's pouring of fragrant oil on the feet of Jesus meant to spread to the whole world the work of Jesus, who saved mankind from all sin?

In John 12:1–8, Mary's act of pouring fragrant oil on the feet of Jesus was an act that revealed her thanks and her faith, believing in Jesus as her own Savior. Mary did not pour the fragrant oil after making a plan for world missions herself, but Jesus received that act as the testimony of a faith that had prepared for His death, and He caused it to be told together with the gospel in the whole world.

### 1. Mary believed in Jesus, who gives life

This event took place in Bethany, where Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead. Lazarus was sitting with Jesus, Martha was preparing the food, and Mary poured fragrant oil on the feet of Jesus.

The fact that Lazarus, who had been dead, was sitting with Jesus shows that Jesus is the Lord of the resurrection and the life. Mary was not thankful only for the raising of her brother; she believed that Jesus was the Son of God and the Christ who had come to save sinners.

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## 2. Pouring the fragrant oil was an expression of faith and thanks

*"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).*

The fragrant oil of pure nard was something very precious, worth three hundred denarii. Mary gave to Jesus without reserve what she had treasured. Moreover, by wiping the feet of Jesus with her hair, she humbled herself and exalted Jesus as her Lord.

Mary's act was not a confession of faith made with words only. Her faith that Jesus was the One who saves her from sin and death was expressed in thanks and devotion.

## 3. Jesus said that Mary's act was a work that had prepared for His burial

Judas Iscariot took issue with the fact that the fragrant oil had not been sold and given to the poor. But his interest was not in the poor. At this, Jesus spoke as follows.

*"Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial" (John 12:7).*

Jesus accepted Mary's act as a work that had prepared for His death and burial. At that time, Jesus had already had all the sin of mankind transferred to Him once and for all with the baptism He received from John. Now the time was drawing near when He would bear that sin, be hung on the Cross and shed His blood, and rise again from the dead to complete salvation.

Mary believed that Jesus was the Savior who would become that very sacrificial offering of atonement, and she did an act of faith that prepared for His burial in advance.

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## 4. Jesus connected this work with the spreading of the gospel in the whole world

In the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, it is recorded that Jesus connected Mary's act directly with the spreading of the gospel.

*"Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her" (Mark 14:9).*

Mary did not go about the whole world preaching the gospel herself, but her faith and devotion became a testimony that is told together with the gospel in the whole world. Jesus left what Mary did to remain forever in the history of the spreading of the gospel.

Therefore, Mary's fragrant oil did not end as a mere personal gift of thanks. It became evidence that showed that Jesus would die to save sinners, and that showed how a person who believes in that grace of salvation loves and serves the Lord.

## 5. Just as the fragrance of the oil filled the house, the gospel has been spread in the world

When Mary poured the fragrant oil, its fragrance filled the house. Her act did not end hidden but was revealed to everyone who was there. In the same way, the gospel of salvation that Jesus accomplished must not remain in one person's heart only but must be preached to other people.

Jesus had all the sin of mankind transferred to Him with the baptism He received from John, received the judgment of that sin on the Cross, and by rising again from the dead, became the Savior of those who believe. A person who has received the remission of sins by believing in this gospel of the water and the

Spirit gives thanks, like Mary, to the Lord who saved him, and comes to preach the gospel of salvation he has received to other souls.

### Conclusion

The direct purpose of Mary's pouring of the fragrant oil was to believe in the salvation Jesus would accomplish, to give thanks, and to prepare for His burial. But Jesus caused that act of faith to be told together with the gospel wherever it is preached in the whole world.

Therefore, Mary's act became a work that testifies of the work of Jesus, who saved mankind from sin, to the whole world. Mary did not believe with words only; by pouring the fragrant oil, she expressed her heart that believed that Jesus was the Savior who would bear Mary's sin and be judged on the Cross. The fragrance of that faith and thanks is still being spread together with the gospel to this day.

## In John 12:9–11, did the raising of Lazarus from the dead by Jesus give many people the hope of eternal life?

The raising of Lazarus from the dead by Jesus showed many people that Jesus is the Lord of the resurrection and the life, and it gave them the hope that they could obtain eternal life by believing in Him.

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## 1. The purpose of raising Lazarus was to make people believe in Jesus

Before raising Lazarus, Jesus prayed as follows.

*"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" (John 11:42).*

The sign of raising Lazarus did not stop at merely resolving one family's sorrow. Its purpose was to make people believe that Jesus is the Christ sent by God the Father and the God who gives life to the dead.

## 2. Many people actually believed in Jesus

When Jesus called, *"Lazarus, come forth!"* Lazarus, who had been dead, came out of the tomb. Concerning the reaction of the people who witnessed this, the Bible says as follows.

*"Many of the Jews who had come to Mary, and had seen the things Jesus did, believed in Him" (John 11:45).*

In John chapter 12, too, Lazarus was sitting at the feast with Jesus. The very fact that a man who had been dead was alive and sitting with Jesus was living evidence that showed the authority of life and resurrection of Jesus.

As a result, it is recorded that *"on account of him many of the Jews went away and believed in Jesus" (John 12:11)*. Therefore, the sign of raising Lazarus actually led many people to Jesus.

## 3. The resurrection of Lazarus showed the eternal life that Jesus would give

Before raising Lazarus, Jesus said to Martha,

*"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).*

Jesus is not One who merely taught knowledge about the resurrection. Jesus Himself is the resurrection and the life. The raising of Lazarus is a sign that showed before their very eyes the fact that in Jesus there is the authority that overcomes death, and that He gives eternal life to those who believe in Him.

Therefore, seeing Lazarus who had been raised, people could know that death is not the end, and that for those who believe in Jesus there is the hope of resurrection and eternal life.

## 4. Eternal life does not stop at seeing a sign but is obtained when one believes in the salvation of Jesus

The resurrection of Lazarus was a sign that pointed to eternal life, but eternal life is not obtained merely by looking at Lazarus. One must believe in Jesus, of whom that sign testifies, as the Son of God and the Savior.

Jesus had all the sin of mankind transferred to Him once and for all with the baptism He received from John. And bearing that sin, He was hung on the Cross and received the judgment of sin by shedding His blood, and He completed salvation by rising again from the dead.

A person who believes in this gospel of the water and the Spirit with the heart receives the remission of all sins and obtains eternal life. The sign of raising Lazarus shows that Jesus is the

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Savior who raises not only the flesh from death but also the soul that was dead in sin.

### 5. The feast held at the house of Lazarus shows the thanks of those who have been saved

After Lazarus was raised, a feast for Jesus was held at his house. Martha served, Lazarus sat with Jesus, and Mary poured costly fragrant oil on the feet of Jesus.

This scene shows how those who had received life from Jesus gave thanks for that grace. Mary in particular believed and gave thanks that Jesus was not merely the One who had raised her brother, but the Christ who would save mankind from sin and death.

## Conclusion

The raising of Lazarus from the dead by Jesus gave many people the hope of resurrection and eternal life. The sight of Lazarus, who had been dead, alive and sitting with Jesus clearly testified that Jesus is the Lord of life and the God who raises the dead. Because of this, many of the Jews believed in Jesus.

But the hope of eternal life does not end with Lazarus. When a person believes that Jesus, who raised Lazarus, saved mankind from all sin with the baptism He received from John, the blood of the Cross, and the resurrection, that person actually obtains the remission of sins and eternal life. The resurrection of Lazarus is a sign that showed in advance the eternal life that is in Jesus, and the resurrection of Jesus is the completion of salvation that guarantees the eternal resurrection of all who believe.

## In John 12:11–18, did many people come to believe in Jesus as the Messiah because of Lazarus?

John 12:11–18 says that because of the event of Lazarus being raised, many of the Jews believed in Jesus, and a great multitude welcomed Jesus as the Messiah sent by God and the King of Israel.

### 1. Lazarus became a person who testified of the authority of life of Jesus

The Bible says clearly.

*"On account of him many of the Jews went away and believed in Jesus" (John 12:11).*

Lazarus did not testify of Jesus with words only. The very fact that he, who had been dead, appeared alive before people proved that Jesus is the Lord of the resurrection and the life. Seeing Lazarus, people came to know that Jesus is the Son of God who raises even the dead.

### 2. Those who witnessed the raising of Lazarus kept on testifying

*"The people, who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of his tomb and raised him from the dead, bore witness" (John 12:17).*

The sign that Jesus performed did not remain only among the people who were in Bethany. Those who witnessed the scene told other people, and a great multitude that heard their

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testimony went out to meet Jesus.

*"For this reason the people also met Him, because they heard that He had done this sign" (John 12:18).*

Therefore, the sign of raising Lazarus and the testimony of those who witnessed it became the channel that led many people to Jesus.

## 3. The multitude welcomed Jesus as the promised King and Messiah

The great multitude took branches of palm trees, went out to meet Jesus, and cried out.

*"Hosanna! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!' The King of Israel!" (John 12:13).*

In *"Hosanna"* is contained a plea to save them. Also, that the multitude called Jesus *"He who comes in the name of the LORD"* and *"The King of Israel"* means that they acknowledged Him as the Messiah whom God had promised.

The entry of Jesus into Jerusalem riding on a young donkey was also the fulfillment of the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9, which said, *"Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey."*

## 4. Jesus is not a political king but the King who saves from sin

Among the multitude, there were also those who expected that Jesus would be the King who would set Israel free from the rule of Rome. But that Jesus came riding on a donkey's colt shows that He came not as a military conqueror but as the

humble King who saves sinners.

Jesus had already had all the sin of mankind transferred to Him once and for all with the baptism He received from John. Now He had to bear that sin, be hung on the Cross and be judged, and rise again from the dead to become the eternal Savior of all who believe.

Therefore, to believe in Jesus as the true Messiah is not to believe in Him only as a king who solves the problems of the flesh. It is to believe that Jesus is the Christ who has saved us from sin, judgment, and death by the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

## 5. The faith that began through the sign had to lead to a faith that knows the Cross and the resurrection

Even the disciples did not fully understand at first the meaning of Jesus riding on a donkey's colt. Only after Jesus died on the Cross, rose again, and was glorified did they know that this was the fulfillment of the prophecy of the Scriptures about the Messiah.

The sign of raising Lazarus led people to Jesus. But the final truth that the sign points to is that Jesus Himself died and rose again to give eternal life to sinners. The raising of Lazarus showed that Jesus is the One who overcomes death, and the Cross and resurrection of Jesus showed in completion how a sinner obtains eternal life.

## Conclusion

That many people came to believe in Jesus because of

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Lazarus is a fact to which the Bible testifies directly. Those who witnessed the resurrection of Lazarus testified of it widely, and the great multitude that heard the news welcomed Jesus as the Messiah, calling Him *"He who comes in the name of the LORD"* and *"The King of Israel."*

But Jesus is not One who came to become a political king of this world. He came as the true King who saves sinners by having the sin of mankind transferred to Him with the baptism He received from John, receiving the judgment of that sin on the Cross, and rising again from the dead. Lazarus became a living witness who showed this authority of life and resurrection of Jesus, and through his testimony, many people came to Jesus.

## What does John 12:12–16 say?

John 12:12–16 shows Jesus entering Jerusalem as the King of Israel and the Savior of mankind. Seen from the gospel of the water and the Spirit, it is the scene in which Jesus, having borne the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John, goes to receive the judgment of the Cross bearing that sin.

### 1. He entered Jerusalem ahead of the Passover

The time when Jesus entered Jerusalem was just before the Passover. The Passover is the feast that commemorates the people of Israel being saved from the judgment of death by the blood of the lamb.

Jesus was the true sacrificial offering of atonement who would be hung on the Cross and die at this Passover. He had already had all the sin of mankind transferred to Him once and

for all with the baptism He received from John. Now, as the Lamb of God bearing the sin of the world, He entered Jerusalem in order to be hung on the Cross, shed His blood, and pay the price of sin.

*"Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29).*

## 2. *"Hosanna"* is a cry toward the Savior

The multitude took branches of palm trees, went out to meet Jesus, and cried out.

*"Hosanna! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!' The King of Israel!" (John 12:13).*

*"Hosanna"* is a cry that asks God for salvation. Hearing of the sign of raising Lazarus, the multitude thought that Jesus was the Messiah sent by God and welcomed Him as King.

That they came out holding branches of palm trees means that they welcomed Jesus as the King of victory. But the true victory that Jesus would accomplish was not a political victory that would bring down Rome, but the victory of saving mankind from sin, judgment, and death.

## 3. Jesus is the King of Israel who saves sinners

Jesus is the promised Messiah who would inherit the throne of David, and He is God, who saves all who believe from sin. His kingship does not come from military might or the power of this world.

Jesus bore all the sin of sinners in His own body with the baptism He received from John, and He received the judgment

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of that sin in their place on the Cross. And by rising again from the dead, He overcame the power of sin and death.

Therefore, to those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, Jesus is the King as follows.

— The King of salvation, who removed all sin

— The righteous King, who received the judgment of sin in our place

— The King of life, who overcame death and gives eternal life

— The eternal King, who leads those who believe into the kingdom of God

## 4. The donkey's colt signifies the King who saves in humility

Jesus entered Jerusalem riding not on a warhorse but on a young donkey. This was the fulfillment of the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9.

*"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).*

Jesus is not a king who came to conquer sinners by force, but the King who humbled Himself and came to save sinners. He who is God put on the flesh of a man, received baptism from John, and even received in their place the judgment of the Cross that sinners had to receive.

The sight of Jesus riding on a donkey's colt shows the humility and obedience of Jesus, who sacrificed Himself to save His people.

## 5. The word "*Fear not*" means that the King of salvation has come

*"Fear not, daughter of Zion; Behold, your King is coming, Sitting on a donkey's colt" (John 12:15).*

A sinner fears the judgment of God and death because of sin. But since Jesus came to bear all the sin of sinners and to be judged in their place, those who believe in His salvation no longer need to fear the judgment of sin.

Jesus did not enter Jerusalem to judge sinners, but entered to be judged in the place of sinners. Those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit come to obtain the remission of sins, peace, and eternal life in Jesus.

## 6. The disciples understood this word only after the resurrection of Jesus

The disciples, too, did not fully know at first the meaning of Jesus riding on a donkey's colt. But only after Jesus was hung on the Cross and died, rose again, and was glorified did they realize that this was the fulfillment of the prophecy written about Jesus.

This means that the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem cannot be understood apart from the Cross and the resurrection. The purpose for which Jesus entered as King was not to obtain the power of this world from people. It was to be judged on the Cross for the sin of mankind that He had borne with the baptism He received from John, and to rise again from the dead and complete eternal salvation.

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### Conclusion

John 12:12–16 is the word in which Jesus, the true King of mankind, enters Jerusalem to save sinners. The multitude cried out *"Hosanna"* and welcomed Jesus as the King of Israel, and Jesus rode on a donkey's colt as the Scriptures had prophesied.

Seen from the gospel of the water and the Spirit, Jesus is the Lamb of God who had all the sin of mankind transferred to Him with the baptism He received from John. Bearing the sin He had taken upon Himself, He was hung on the Cross and shed His blood, and by rising again from the dead, He overcame sin and death.

Therefore, the cry *"Hosanna"* must be completed as a confession of faith that Jesus is the Savior who has actually removed all our sins. Jesus is not One who came to obtain the kingship of this world, but the humble King and eternal Savior who gave up His own life to give life to sinners.

## Is John 12:17–19 a word that shows that the Lord is the Lord of the resurrection?

John 12:17–19 shows those who witnessed the sign of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead testifying of that work, and many people who heard their testimony coming to Jesus. This shows that Jesus is the Lord of the resurrection, who overcomes death and gives life, and it also shows the fact that the salvation He accomplished is spread widely through witnesses.

## 1. Those who witnessed it testified of the authority of life of Jesus

*"The people, who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of his tomb and raised him from the dead, bore witness" (John 12:17).*

These people testified of what they had witnessed with their own eyes. Lazarus had clearly died and was in the tomb, but when Jesus called, *"Lazarus, come forth!"* he came out alive. Those who witnessed this told that Jesus is the Lord of the resurrection and the life, who raises the dead.

The center of this testimony was not Lazarus but Jesus, who had raised Lazarus. Lazarus, who had been raised, was the evidence of having received life from Jesus, and the eyewitnesses testified of Jesus, who had given that life.

## 2. People heard the testimony and came to Jesus

*"For this reason the people also met Him, because they heard that He had done this sign" (John 12:18).*

Many people had not seen the raising of Lazarus directly, but they heard the testimony of the eyewitnesses and went out to meet Jesus. This is the same as the principle by which the gospel is spread.

*"So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17).*

Today, we have not seen with the eyes of the flesh the scene of Jesus receiving baptism from John, or the scene of His being hung on the Cross, dying, and rising again. But we hear the testimony of the Scriptures and of the evangelists of the gospel, believe with the heart in the salvation that Jesus accomplished,

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and receive the remission of sins.

## 3. The raising of Lazarus shows the salvation in which a soul that was dead in sin is raised

Lazarus did not come out of the tomb by his own strength. He could be raised because Jesus called him and gave him life. In the same way, a sinner cannot raise his dead soul by his own deeds and religious efforts.

Jesus had all the sin of mankind transferred to Him once and for all with the baptism He received from John. And bearing that sin, He was hung on the Cross and received the judgment of sin, and He completed salvation by rising again from the dead.

A person who believes in this gospel of the water and the Spirit with the heart receives the remission of all sins and passes from spiritual death into life. Just as Lazarus, who had been raised, revealed the authority of life of Jesus, a person who has received the remission of sins also comes to testify that Jesus is the Savior who gives life to sinners.

## 4. Even the obstruction of the Pharisees could not stop the people who were coming to Jesus

Seeing people following Jesus, the Pharisees said to one another,

*"You see that you are accomplishing nothing. Look, the world has gone after Him!" (John 12:19).*

The words *"the world has gone after Him!"* show how greatly the sign and testimony of Jesus were spreading. The Pharisees tried to block the influence of Jesus, but they could not

do away with the fact that He had raised Lazarus. This was because Lazarus, who had been raised, was there, and the witnesses who had seen it kept on testifying.

Likewise, the gospel of the water and the Spirit does not disappear because of people's opposition and obstruction. The fact that Jesus bore the sin of the world with the baptism He received from John and completed salvation by the Cross and the resurrection does not change. This is because those who believe in this truth and have actually received the remission of sins keep on testifying of the gospel.

## 5. Jesus, the grain of wheat, has borne much fruit of life

The sight of many people coming to Jesus at the news of the raising of Lazarus connects with the word of the grain of wheat that follows.

*"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).*

Like a grain of wheat, Jesus bore the sin of mankind and died on the Cross, and He rose again from the dead. As a result, countless people who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and obtain the remission of sins and eternal life have come to be borne as the fruit of life.

The sign of raising Lazarus revealed this power of salvation in advance. Just as Jesus raised the dead Lazarus, He raises from sin and death the sinners who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and makes them the people of God.

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### Conclusion

John 12:17–19 shows the authority of life of Jesus being spread through testimony. Those who witnessed the raising of Lazarus testified, and many people who heard their testimony went out to meet Jesus. The Pharisees tried to stop this, but they could not block the work of Jesus, who gives life.

It is the same today. A person who has received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit testifies that Jesus bore all the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John, was judged on the Cross, and completed salvation by rising again from the dead. A person who hears this testimony and believes with the heart obtains the remission of sins, the Holy Spirit, and eternal life.

## Is John 12:20–29 the word in which Jesus said that if a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it produces much grain?

John 12:20–29 is the word in which Jesus, taking the occasion of the Greeks coming to see Him, made known that the time for Him to be hung on the Cross had drawn near. Seen from the gospel of the water and the Spirit, it is the word in which Jesus opens the way of salvation to all the people of the whole world, Jews and Gentiles included, by being judged on the Cross for the sin of mankind that He had borne with the baptism He received from John, and by rising again from the dead.

## 1. The Greeks coming to see Jesus shows that salvation would spread to the whole world

Some Greeks who had come up to worship at the Passover came to Philip and said,

*"Sir, we wish to see Jesus" (John 12:21).*

They were not Jews but Greeks, yet they wanted to meet Jesus. This shows that the salvation Jesus would accomplish would not remain with the Jews only but would be preached to all nations.

The sin that Jesus bore with the baptism He received from John is not only the sin of the people of Israel but the sin of all the people of the world. Therefore, the salvation accomplished by the Cross and resurrection of Jesus is given to whoever believes, beyond race and nation.

## 2. *"The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified"* is the time of the Cross and the resurrection

Hearing that the Greeks were looking for Him, Jesus said, *"The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified" (John 12:23).*

The glory of Jesus was not to be acclaimed as king by the people of the world and obtain power. It was the glory of Jesus that He, having borne the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John, would receive the judgment of that sin on the Cross and rise again from the dead to save sinners.

The Cross was shame and suffering when seen with human eyes, but in the will of God, it was the glory of salvation that completely resolved the sin of mankind and revealed the righteousness and love of God.

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## 3. The grain of wheat points first of all to Jesus Himself

*"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 points to Jesus Christ. Just as a seed must fall into the ground and die to produce much grain, countless sinners could be saved only when Jesus died as the sacrificial offering of atonement and rose again.

Jesus accomplished salvation as follows.

1. As the Son of God, He put on the flesh of a man and came to this earth.

2. He had all the sin of mankind transferred to Him once and for all with the baptism He received from John.

3. Bearing that sin, He was hung on the Cross and received the judgment of sin by shedding His blood.

4. By rising again from the dead, He overcame sin and death.

5. To those who believe in this salvation, He has given the remission of sins, the Holy Spirit, and eternal life.

Because Jesus died like a grain of wheat and rose again, countless people who have been born again by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit have come to be borne as the fruit of life.

## 4. "*He who hates his life*" means one who does not put the things of the world before the Lord

Jesus said that he who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

To hate one's life does not mean to harm oneself or to treat

the life of the flesh carelessly. It means not to put one's own thoughts and desires, honor, and worldly gain before Jesus and the gospel.

The remission of sins is not received by one's own sacrifice or deeds but by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that Jesus accomplished. After receiving the remission of sins, to seek the Lord's will rather than one's own will, and to live preaching to others the gospel of life one has received, is the faith that follows the Lord.

## 5. One who serves Jesus must follow Him

*"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).*

To serve Jesus is not to exalt the Lord with the mouth only, but to believe in and follow His word and His work of salvation. Since Jesus gave Himself up for the work of giving life to sinners, those who follow Him also come to take part in the work of giving life to other souls by preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

God the Father honors those who believe in the salvation Jesus accomplished and serve that gospel.

## 6. Jesus chose that way even while knowing the suffering of the Cross

Jesus said, *"Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say?"* Jesus clearly knew the suffering, the curse, and the death He would undergo on the Cross.

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But He went on to say as follows.

*"Father, save Me from this hour? But for this purpose I came to this hour" (John 12:27).*

Jesus is not One who came to this earth to avoid the Cross. He came to give life to sinners by being judged on the Cross for all the sin of mankind that He had borne with the baptism He received from John. Even while feeling the anguish of His heart, Jesus obeyed the will of the Father and walked the way of salvation.

## 7. The voice from heaven was God's confirmation of the work of salvation of Jesus

When Jesus prayed, *"Father, glorify Your name,"* the following voice was heard from heaven.

*"I have both glorified it and will glorify it again" (John 12:28).*

God the Father said that He had been glorified through the work Jesus had done until then, and that He would be glorified again through the Cross and the resurrection that would be accomplished.

The people who were there heard the same voice, yet some said that it had thundered, and others said that an angel had spoken. Merely hearing the word of God with the ears cannot make one fully realize the will of salvation. One must know from the word what salvation Jesus accomplished and believe it with the heart.

### Conclusion

The center of John 12:20–29 is that Jesus, the grain of wheat, dies and rises again and bears much fruit of life. The Greeks coming to see Jesus showed that His salvation would spread beyond the Jews to the whole world.

Jesus had all the sin of mankind transferred to Him with the baptism He received from John, and bearing that sin, He was judged on the Cross, and He rose again from the dead. Those who believe in this gospel of the water and the Spirit receive the remission of all sins, obtain the Holy Spirit and eternal life, and become the fruit of life borne by Jesus, the grain of wheat.

## In John 12:30–36, what does this word say to us?

John 12:30–36 is the passage in which Jesus says that by being hung on the Cross, He will bear the judgment of sin, break the power of Satan, and lead all nations to salvation. It also exhorts us to believe in the light while the light of salvation shines, and to become sons of light.

### 1. The voice from heaven was the testimony of salvation for the people

Earlier, God the Father had said, *"I have both glorified it and will glorify it again."* At this, Jesus explained as follows.

*"This voice did not come because of Me, but for your sake" (John 12:30).*

Jesus already knew that He was the Son of God. The voice from heaven was a testimony given so that people would believe

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in Jesus as the Savior sent by God the Father.

When Jesus received baptism from John, too, God the Father testified that He is His beloved Son. Now, at the time just before the Cross, He confirmed once again that the work of salvation Jesus would do was the will of God.

## 2. "*The judgment of this world*" means that Jesus bears the judgment of sin

*"Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out" (John 12:31).*

The world was under the judgment of God because of sin. Satan used sin to condemn people and to hold them under the fear of death. But Jesus had all the sin of mankind transferred to Him once and for all with the baptism He received from John.

Therefore, the judgment of sin that came down on the Cross came down on the body of Jesus, who had borne sin. By Jesus shedding His blood and dying, the price of the sin of mankind was paid, and those who believe in that salvation have been delivered from the judgment of sin.

## 3. The word "*the ruler of this world will be cast out*" means that Satan's power of condemnation is broken

The ruler of this world refers to Satan, who has ruled over people with sin and lies. The ground on which Satan rules over people is sin. But since Jesus bore the sin of mankind and paid the full price of that sin on the Cross, Satan can no longer condemn as sinners those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

*"Having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it" (Colossians 2:14–15).*

The Cross of Jesus was not a defeat but a victory that broke down the power of sin and Satan.

## 4. Jesus being lifted up from the earth points to His death on the Cross

*"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).*

The word that Jesus would be lifted up from the earth means that He would be hung high on the Cross and die. But the Cross of Jesus was not a death of His alone. Because He had had all the sin of mankind transferred to Him with the baptism He received from John, that death was the death of judgment in the place of all sinners.

The order of salvation is clear.

1. Jesus had the sin of the world transferred to Him with the baptism He received from John.

2. Bearing that sin, He was hung on the Cross.

3. By shedding His blood and dying, He received the judgment of sin.

4. By rising again from the dead, He overcame sin and death.

5. To those who believe in this salvation, He has given the remission of sins, the Holy Spirit, and eternal life.

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## 5. *"All peoples"* signifies the salvation opened to all nations

The word that Jesus would draw all peoples to Himself means that the gospel of salvation is preached to all nations without distinction between Jew and Gentile. The Greeks coming to see Jesus earlier also shows that this salvation would spread to the whole world.

Jesus, who was hung on the Cross, calls all people to salvation through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Whoever believes with the heart in the word that He removed all sins with the baptism He received from John, the blood of the Cross, and the resurrection receives the remission of sins.

## 6. The people did not understand the Messiah who dies

Because the people knew that the Christ remains forever, they did not understand the word that Jesus must be lifted up on the Cross. They asked how the Messiah, the eternal King, could die.

But the way for Jesus to become the eternal King was the way that passes through the Cross and the resurrection. Only when Jesus, who had borne sin, died first would the judgment of sin be accomplished, and only when He rose again from the dead could He give eternal life to those who believe.

Jesus is not a Messiah who ends in death, but the Messiah who overcame death, rose again, and lives forever.

## 7. One must believe in the light while there is light

Jesus said,

*"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" (John 12:35–36).*

The light points to Jesus Christ and the truth of salvation He accomplished. Darkness signifies sin and unbelief, Satan's lies, and judgment. To believe in the light is to receive with the heart the gospel of the water and the Spirit that Jesus accomplished.

A person who believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit receives the remission of all sins, receives the Holy Spirit as a gift, and becomes a child of God, that is, a son of light. He no longer lives in the darkness where he does not know where to go because of his sins, but comes to live according to the word of salvation.

## Conclusion

John 12:30–36 says that the Cross of Jesus was the judgment of this world and, at the same time, the victory that saves sinners. Jesus had the sin of the world transferred to Him with the baptism He received from John, and by receiving the judgment of that sin on the Cross, He broke Satan's power of condemnation. And by rising again from the dead, He became the eternal Savior of all who believe.

Therefore, to believe in the light is not to stop at acknowledging Jesus as a great figure. It is to believe with the heart that He resolved all our sins and judgment with the baptism

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He received from John, the blood of the Cross, and the resurrection. A person who has received the remission of sins and the Holy Spirit by this faith is a son of light who has come out of the darkness.

## Is John 12:37–43 a word that shows that Jesus became the Savior of mankind?

John 12:37–43 shows that even though Jesus performed many signs and revealed that He is the Savior of mankind, people did not believe in Him. Their unbelief fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, and it also reveals the weakness of the rulers who, though they believed in Jesus, loved the glory of men more and could not confess Him openly.

### 1. Having seen many signs does not mean one is saved

*"But although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him" (John 12:37).*

Jesus turned water into wine, healed the sick and the blind, fed a great multitude with the five loaves and two fish, and even raised the dead Lazarus. These signs clearly testified that Jesus is the Son of God and the Lord of life.

Nevertheless, many people did not believe in Jesus. This was because, although they saw the signs, they did not accept Jesus, to whom those signs pointed, as their own Savior. They took an interest in the miracles, but they did not lay down their own thoughts before the word of salvation that Jesus preached.

Today, too, one cannot receive the remission of sins merely by acknowledging Jesus as a historical figure or a great teacher.

One must accept into the heart, just as the word says, what Jesus did to save sinners.

## 2. *"The arm of the LORD"* is the saving power of God revealed through Jesus

John says that the unbelief of the people fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah.

*"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?'" (John 12:38).*

Here *"the arm of the LORD"* signifies the power of God that saves sinners. God revealed that power of salvation through Jesus Christ.

Jesus put on the flesh and came to this earth, and with the baptism He received from John, He had all the sins of the world transferred to His own body once and for all. And bearing those sins, He went to the Cross, was judged by shedding His blood, and rose again from the dead. This is *"the arm of the LORD"* that God revealed to save sinners, and it is the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Therefore, not believing even after hearing the gospel is not because the power of salvation is lacking. It is because people judge the salvation God accomplished by their own thoughts and religious standards and do not accept it.

## 3. When the heart becomes hardened, one sees and yet does not see

Verses 39–40 quote the word of Isaiah chapter 6 and make

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known the reason why the people could not believe. They saw and heard the word and the signs of Jesus repeatedly, but they kept on rejecting them. As a result, their hearts became all the more hardened, and they could not recognize Jesus with spiritual eyes.

When one rejects the light again and again, darkness comes to rule the heart. Even when one hears the gospel of the water and the Spirit, if one clings to one's existing beliefs and thoughts, one cannot realize how Jesus removed all sins. One comes to believe one's own feelings and deeds more than the word that sin was transferred to Jesus, and one's own sense of guilt more than the word that the judgment of the Cross is complete.

A person who lays down his own thoughts before the word of God and turns is healed, but the heart of a person who rejects the word to the end becomes all the more hardened under judgment.

## 4. The Lord of glory whom Isaiah saw is Jesus Christ

*"These things Isaiah said when he saw His glory and spoke of Him" (John 12:41).*

This word clearly shows the divinity of Jesus. The Lord of glory whom Isaiah saw was not a mere man or a prophet, but Jesus Christ, who is God.

Jesus, as the Son of God, is one with the Father, and He is the One who has the authority to remit sins and give eternal life. Therefore, not believing in Jesus is not a matter of rejecting one man; it is rejecting God, who sent Jesus, and the salvation God accomplished.

In contrast, to believe in the salvation Jesus accomplished with the baptism He received from John, the blood of the Cross,

and the resurrection is to believe in what God did out of His love for sinners.

## 5. The rulers believed but feared what people would think of them

*"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" (John 12:42).*

Even among the rulers there were those who believed in Jesus. But they could not reveal their faith, for they feared being put out of the synagogue and losing their social position and the recognition of people.

Their problem was not that they knew nothing at all about Jesus, but that they regarded people's evaluation as more important than faith. That is why the Bible says, "*They loved the praise of men more than the praise of God" (John 12:43).*

The faith that believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit does not remain as knowledge in the heart only. It goes on to believe and confess with the mouth the fact that Jesus removed all one's sins, and to regard the word of God as more precious than the judgment of people.

## 6. True faith is a faith that accepts the word as it is

Salvation is not obtained by seeing many signs or by having a high religious position. It is obtained by believing in the work of salvation of Jesus to which God has testified through the written word.

Jesus had all our sins transferred to Him with the baptism He

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received from John. On the Cross, He paid the price of those sins with His blood and was judged in our place, and He rose again from the dead and completed eternal salvation. A person who believes this word with the heart has all his sins washed away and becomes a child of God.

Therefore, true faith is not a faith that hides or changes the gospel according to people's reactions. It is a faith that seeks the glory of God rather than the glory of men, and that believes and confesses the salvation Jesus accomplished just as the word says.

## Conclusion

John 12:37–43 reveals both the hardened heart that does not believe even after seeing signs, and the weak faith that believes yet cannot confess because of the glory of men.

The purpose of the signs Jesus performed was not to astonish people. It was to make them believe that Jesus is God, and the Christ who would save sinners with the baptism He received from John, the blood of the Cross, and the resurrection.

A person who believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit exalts the word of God above the judgment of people. He believes and confesses with the heart the fact that Jesus accomplished perfect salvation by bearing all his sins and being judged. This is the true faith that comes out of darkness and belongs to the light, and that seeks the glory of God, not the glory of men.

## In John 12:44–50, what is the purpose for which Jesus came into this world, and by what standard are a person's salvation and judgment decided?

In John 12:44–50, Jesus says that to believe in Him is to believe in God the Father, who sent Him. Jesus came as the light that saves sinners according to the will of God the Father, and the word He preached gives eternal life to those who believe, but becomes the standard of judgment on the last day for those who reject that word.

### 1. To believe in Jesus is to believe in God, who sent Him

*"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 *"believes not in Me"* does not mean that one need not believe in Jesus. It means that faith in Jesus does not end with Jesus alone, but is faith in God the Father, who sent Him.

Jesus is not a mere prophet or a great religious leader. He is one with God the Father, and He is the Son of God who put on the flesh and came to accomplish the will of God. Therefore, to believe in the word Jesus spoke and in His work of salvation is to believe in the word and the plan of salvation of God the Father.

What God is like has been clearly revealed through Jesus. When we look at how Jesus had compassion on sinners, bore all sins, and was judged for sinners, we can know how much God loves us.

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## 2. Jesus came as the light that removes the darkness of sin and condemnation

*"I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness" (John 12:46).*

Here, darkness does not refer merely to a state in which the circumstances of the world are hard or the heart is gloomy. It refers to the spiritual state of living under sin and judgment without knowing God, and without knowing one's own sin or the way of salvation.

A sinner can realize through the law the fact that he is a sinner, but he cannot remove his sin by his own deeds and efforts. That is why Jesus came as the light of life.

Jesus had all the sins of the world transferred to His own body once and for all with the baptism He received from John. And bearing those sins, He was hung on the Cross and received the judgment of sin by shedding His blood, and He rose again from the dead and completed salvation. A person who believes in this gospel of the water and the Spirit has all his sins washed away, receives the Holy Spirit, and comes out of the darkness of sin and condemnation.

To believe in Jesus, who came as the light, is to accept with the heart the work of salvation He accomplished.

## 3. The purpose for which Jesus came to this earth is to save sinners

*"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" (John 12:47).*

The purpose for which Jesus first came to this earth was not

to judge sinners at once and destroy them, but to save them from sin. That is why Jesus received in His own body, in their place, the judgment that sinners had to receive.

God did not simply overlook sin unconditionally. After Jesus had all the sin of mankind transferred to Him with the baptism He received from John, He accomplished the righteous judgment of God by shedding His blood and dying on the Cross as the price of that sin. In the salvation of Jesus, the love and the justice of God are revealed together.

Therefore, that Jesus said *"I do not judge him"* does not mean that sin and judgment have disappeared. It means that Jesus stood in the place of the sinner, received that judgment in his place, and opened the way of salvation.

## 4. If one rejects the word of salvation, that word judges him on the last day

*"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 12:48).*

To reject Jesus is to not accept the word of salvation He accomplished. Jesus bore sin and was judged so that everyone could be saved, but if a person does not believe that gospel, that salvation cannot become his own.

On the last day, the word of Jesus becomes the standard of judgment. At that time, a person is judged not by his own thoughts or religious zeal, but by whether he believed in the Savior sent by God and whether he accepted the word of salvation that He preached.

Although Jesus said, "I bore all your sin and was judged in order to save you," if a person does not accept it, that very word

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reveals that person's unbelief. The reason one is not saved is not that the work of salvation of Jesus is lacking, but that one did not believe with the heart the word of completed salvation.

## 5. The word of Jesus is the word given by God the Father

*"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" (John 12:49).*

Jesus did not speak His own thoughts or human wisdom. He preached exactly what God the Father told Him to say, and He accomplished exactly the work of salvation the Father told Him to do.

That Jesus received baptism from John, that He shed His blood on the Cross, and that He rose again from the dead were not things that happened by chance. They were accomplished according to the will and plan of God the Father to save sinners.

Therefore, the gospel of the water and the Spirit is not a religious doctrine made by man. It is the truth of salvation that God the Father planned, that Jesus Christ Himself accomplished, and that the Holy Spirit testifies of.

## 6. The command of God the Father is eternal life

*"I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak" (John 12:50).*

The command that God gave to Jesus was the word that gives eternal life to sinners. In obedience to the will of the Father,

Jesus bore all the sin of mankind, was judged on the Cross, and by rising again from the dead, gave eternal life to those who believe.

Eternal life is not obtained by a person's good deeds or religious merit. It is obtained by believing, just as the word says, in the salvation God accomplished through Jesus Christ.

A person who believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit can confess as follows.

— Jesus had all my sins transferred to Him with the baptism He received from John.

— Bearing those sins, Jesus was judged in my place on the Cross.

— Jesus rose again from the dead and became my eternal Savior.

— I have believed this word of salvation with my heart and have obtained the remission of sins and eternal life.

## Conclusion

John 12:44–50 teaches us that to believe in Jesus is to believe in God the Father, and that to accept the word of Jesus is the way to obtain eternal life.

Jesus did not come first to judge sinners but to save them. He had all the sins of the world transferred to Him with the baptism He received from John, bore the judgment of those sins on the Cross, and accomplished perfect salvation by rising again from the dead.

A person who believes in this gospel of the water and the Spirit comes out of the darkness of sin and condemnation and obtains eternal life. In contrast, a person who rejects to the end the word of salvation that Jesus accomplished will be judged

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before that word on the last day. Therefore, true faith is not believing in Jesus according to one's own thoughts, but a faith that accepts with the heart Jesus and the salvation He accomplished according to the word God has written. ✉

# Questions and Answers on John Chapter 12

## [Question] 1. Summarize briefly the main events and the central lessons recorded in John chapter 12.

John chapter 12 records the events that took place in the last period before Jesus was hung on the Cross, and His last public teaching. At the center of the whole chapter lie the fact that the death of Jesus was imminent and the will of God to save many people through that death.

First, six days before the Passover, Jesus went to Bethany, where He had raised the dead Lazarus. There a feast was held for Jesus, and Mary poured very costly oil of nard on the feet of Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair. Judas Iscariot criticized her for not selling the fragrant oil and giving the money to the poor, but Jesus said that Mary had done this for the day of His burial. Mary did not regard Jesus merely as a man worthy of respect; she believed in Him as the Savior who would save her and mankind from sin, and she offered Him what was precious.

A great multitude that heard the news that Lazarus had been raised gathered to see Jesus and Lazarus. When many people believed in Jesus because of Lazarus, the chief priests plotted to put Lazarus to death also. After that, when Jesus entered Jerusalem, the multitude took branches of palm trees, cried out *"Hosanna,"* and welcomed Him as the King of Israel. That Jesus entered riding on a young donkey showed that He was not a king who rules by the power of this world, but the King who came to

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save His people according to the word.

When the Greeks who had come to worship at the feast said that they wanted to meet Jesus, Jesus said, *"The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified."* And likening Himself to a grain of wheat, He said that the wheat must fall into the ground and die in order to produce much grain. This means that through the death of Jesus, many souls would obtain the remission of sins and eternal life. Jesus had already borne the sin of all the people of the world by receiving baptism from John the Baptist, and now He was facing the time when, bearing that sin, He would become the sacrificial offering of atonement on the Cross and receive the judgment.

Facing the suffering of the Cross, Jesus was troubled in His soul, but He said that He had come to this hour for this very purpose. He said that if He was lifted up from the earth, He would draw all people to Himself, and He made known that through this death, sin would be judged and Satan the devil, the ruler of this world, would be cast out. He also exhorted the people to believe in the light while they had the light, and so become sons of light.

But although Jesus had performed many signs, the Jews did not believe in Him. Among the rulers, too, there were those who believed in Jesus, but they could not confess Him openly for fear of being put out of the synagogue by the Pharisees. They loved the glory of men more than the glory of God.

Finally, Jesus declared that to believe in Him is to believe in God the Father, who sent Him, and that to see Him is to see God the Father. Jesus came not to judge the world but to save it. But a person who rejects Him and His word to the end is judged on the last day by that very word. The word Jesus preached was not His own thought but the word the Father commanded, and that command is the word of eternal life that gives life to people.

Therefore, John chapter 12 shows that Jesus is the sacrificial offering of atonement who would save many people by dying on the Cross bearing the sin of mankind, which He had borne with the baptism He received from John, and by rising again. At the same time, it is a chapter that contrasts faith in Him with the unbelief that does not believe even after seeing signs, and the glory of God with the glory of men, and teaches us to believe in Jesus, who is the light, and in His word.

## [Question] 2. Arrange in a table, in chronological order, the events of the last week of Jesus Christ as they appear in the Gospels.

When the last week of Jesus Christ is arranged around the chronological order that the Bible itself presents, it is as follows.

| Time sequence | Main deeds of Jesus | Scripture passages |
|---|---|---|
| Six days before the Passover | He arrives in Bethany. A feast for Jesus is held at the house of Lazarus, and Mary pours fragrant oil of nard on the feet of Jesus. Jesus says that this is for His burial | John 12:1–8 |
| The next day | He enters Jerusalem riding on a young donkey. The multitude, holding branches of palm trees, cries out *"Hosanna"* and welcomes Him as the King of Israel | John 12:12–19; Matthew 21:1–11; Mark 11:1–11; Luke 19:28–44 |

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| Time sequence | Main deeds of Jesus | Scripture passages |
|---|---|---|
| The day after the entry | On His way from Bethany to Jerusalem, He curses a fig tree. He drives out those who are buying and selling in the temple and overturns the tables of the money changers | Matthew 21:12–19; Mark 11:12–19; Luke 19:45–48 |
| The following day | He teaches about faith through the withered fig tree. He disputes with the chief priests, the scribes, and the Pharisees in the temple, and on the Mount of Olives, He speaks about the destruction of Jerusalem and the last times | Matthew 21:20–25:46; Mark 11:20–13:37; Luke 20:1–21:38 |
| Two days before the Passover | He says again that He will be delivered up to be crucified. The chief priests and the elders plot how to kill Jesus, and Judas Iscariot promises to betray Him | Matthew 26:1–16; Mark 14:1–11; Luke 22:1–6 |
| The day of preparing the Passover | He sends the disciples to prepare the Passover. In the evening, He has the last meal with the disciples, washes their feet, and foretells the betrayal of Judas Iscariot and the denial of Peter. He teaches about His body and blood with the bread and the cup | Matthew 26:17–35; Mark 14:12–31; Luke 22:7–38; John 13:1–38 |

| Time sequence | Main deeds of Jesus | Scripture passages |
|---|---|---|
| That night | He gives the disciples His last teaching and prays to the Father. He crosses the Brook Kidron to the garden and is arrested by Judas and the multitude | John 14:1–18:12; Matthew 26:36–56; Mark 14:32–52; Luke 22:39–53 |
| From night until dawn | He is interrogated before Annas and Caiaphas. Peter denies Him three times. At dawn, He is taken to the Praetorium of Pilate and tried | Matthew 26:57–27:26; Mark 14:53–15:15; Luke 22:54–23:25; John 18:12–19:16 |
| The Preparation Day of the Passover, what we now call Friday | He is scourged and mocked and is crucified at Golgotha. He says, *"It is finished!"* and dies. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus bury the body of Jesus in a new tomb | Matthew 27:27–61; Mark 15:16–47; Luke 23:26–56; John 19:16–42 |
| The Sabbath | While the body of Jesus is in the tomb, the disciples rest, and the chief priests and the Pharisees have the tomb guarded | Matthew 27:62–66; Luke 23:56 |
| The first day of the week, the Lord's Day | Early in the morning, He rises from the dead. He appears to Mary Magdalene and the disciples, and that evening He proclaims peace to the disciples | Matthew 28:1–10; Mark 16:1–14; Luke 24:1–49; John 20:1–23 |

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All the events of this week show that Jesus was not led to His death without knowing it, but that He went to the Cross according to the will of God, knowing the work He had to do. Even when He was arrested, Jesus said, *"Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?"* and let Himself be taken.

Jesus was not nailed to the Cross because there was sin in Him. When He began His public ministry, He bore all the sin of mankind by receiving baptism from John the Baptist. Bearing that sin, He was judged on the Cross and said, *"It is finished!"* and on the first day of the week, He rose again from the dead. Therefore, the last week of Jesus is the period that reveals the perfect salvation He accomplished from sin and death by being fully judged on the Cross for the sin of the world, which He had borne with the baptism He received from John, and by rising again.

## [Question] 3. Is the event of the fragrant oil in John 12:3–8 the same event as the one in Luke 7:36–50?

The two accounts have in common that a woman poured fragrant oil on Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair. But John 12:3–8 and Luke 7:36–50 are not the same event.

The event in the Gospel of John took place in Bethany six days before the Passover. The woman who poured the fragrant oil was Mary, the sister of Lazarus and Martha. Mary poured a pound of very costly pure nard on the feet of Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair. At this, Judas Iscariot criticized her for not selling the fragrant oil for three hundred denarii and giving the money to the poor. Jesus told them to let her alone and said, *"She has kept this for the day of My burial."* Mary's act was an

expression of the faith that believed in and served Jesus Christ as the Savior who bore the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John and would become the sacrificial offering of atonement on the Cross.

The event in the Gospel of Luke took place in the house of a Pharisee. The name of the woman is not recorded; it says only *"a woman in the city who was a sinner."* This woman wept and wet the feet of Jesus with her tears, wiped them with her hair, kissed His feet, and poured fragrant oil on them. Also, the one who raised an objection here was not Judas Iscariot but Simon the Pharisee, who had invited Jesus. He thought that if Jesus were a prophet, He would know that the woman touching Him was a sinner.

Jesus told Simon the parable of two debtors, one who owed five hundred denarii and one who owed fifty, and taught that the one who has received the remission of many sins loves much. And He said to the woman, *"Your sins are forgiven,"* and *"Your faith has saved you. Go in peace."* Therefore, the center of the account in Luke is the thanks and love of a woman who believed in the remission of sins, and the center of the account in John is the faith and service of Mary, who, facing the death of Jesus, believed in Him as the Savior and offered precious fragrant oil.

The parallel accounts that record the same event as John chapter 12 from different perspectives are Matthew 26:6–13 and Mark 14:3–9. These two passages also record together the pouring of costly fragrant oil in Bethany, the criticism that the fragrant oil was wasted, the words about the poor, and the explanation that this was a work that prepared for the burial of Jesus in advance. Therefore, John 12:3–8 is a separate event, in which an act similar to that of Luke 7:36–50 appears.

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## [Question] 4. In John 12:3–8, what meaning in terms of faith is contained in Mary's act of pouring costly fragrant oil on Christ?

Mary's pouring of fragrant oil on Jesus is first of all an expression of the faith that believed in Jesus as her own Savior. Mary did not regard Jesus only as an excellent teacher or a man of power. She believed that He is the Son of God and the Christ who came to save her from sin. She poured the fragrant oil with a thankful heart because she believed that Jesus had borne all the sin of mankind, including Mary's sin, by receiving baptism from John the Baptist, and that bearing that sin, He would become the sacrificial offering of atonement on the Cross.

What Mary offered was *"a pound of very costly oil of spikenard."* It was something very precious, worth three hundred denarii, but to Mary it was not more precious than Jesus, who would save her. In the act of pouring what was most precious to her on the feet of Jesus and wiping His feet with her hair, there is contained the reverence and thanks of one who humbles herself and offers to the Lord. This was not a mere expression of emotion but a confession of faith that came from believing who Jesus is.

This act was also a work that prepared for the death of Jesus in advance. Judas calculated only the value of the fragrant oil and criticized it as waste, but Jesus said, *"Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial."* Since Jesus had already borne the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John, He now had to die on the Cross to receive the judgment of that sin in their place. Mary's pouring of the fragrant oil was a work that prepared in advance for the burial of Jesus as He faced that very death that would bring salvation.

The difference between Mary and Judas also appears clearly

here. Because Mary knew the grace of salvation that Jesus had bestowed, she did not begrudge offering what was precious to her. Because Judas did not believe in Jesus as the Savior, he judged Mary's act only by the value of money. Even if it looks like waste in the eyes of people, believing in and serving the Lord who has saved one from all sin is never a waste.

In the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, it is recorded that Jesus said that wherever the gospel is preached, what this woman had done should also be told as a memorial to her. This is because Mary's act shows with what heart a person who has received the grace of salvation serves the Lord. Just as the fragrance of the oil filled the house, when those who have been saved offer their hearts, their possessions, and their lives for the gospel, the gospel of salvation accomplished by Jesus Christ is spread widely. Therefore, this event shows the faith that believes in and gives thanks for the grace of salvation received through the baptism Jesus received from John and the Cross, and that serves the Lord and the gospel with the precious things one has.

## [Question] 5. In John 12:3, what characteristics and value did the 'nard' that Mary used have as a fragrant oil?

Nard is a perfume in the form of oil, a fragrant oil with a very good and strong scent. The Gospel of John records that what Mary used was *"very costly oil of spikenard."* It was pure oil of nard, not something whose quantity had been increased by mixing in other things. It was kept sealed in a flask so that the fragrance would not escape, and the flask was opened or broken when it was used; when Mary poured a pound of it on the feet of Jesus, its fragrance filled the house.

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Nard was not a cheap perfume that anyone could easily use. Judas Iscariot said that it could be sold for three hundred denarii. Considering that a laborer at that time received one denarius for a day's work, three hundred denarii was a large sum, equal to the wages a grown man received for almost a year of work. It was also regarded as a precious asset, enough to be used in preparing for a marriage. Therefore, the pound of pure nard that Mary offered was a very precious treasure among the things she had.

In this event, nard was not used merely as a perfume to give off a good scent. Mary poured the costly oil of nard on Jesus and prepared for His burial in advance. Jesus, too, said, *"Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial."* Therefore, nard was a pure fragrant oil with a strong scent and a very high price, and at this time it was a precious perfume that Mary offered in faith in order to prepare for the death and burial of Jesus.

## [Question] 6. In John 12:13, why did the multitude, holding branches of palm trees, welcome Christ as He entered Jerusalem?

The direct reason the multitude took branches of palm trees and welcomed Jesus was that they had heard the news that Jesus had raised the dead Lazarus. The Gospel of John records, *"For this reason the people also met Him, because they heard that He had done this sign."* Those who had seen and heard of the sign of raising even a dead man thought of Jesus as the Christ sent by God and the King who would save Israel.

They took branches of palm trees, went out, and greatly welcomed Jesus, crying out, *"Hosanna! 'Blessed is He who*

*comes in the name of the LORD!' The King of Israel!"* Waving branches of palm trees and spreading their garments and branches on the road were acts of exalting and receiving Jesus as King. The Gospel of Matthew records that they called Him *"the Son of David,"* and the Gospel of Luke records that the disciples rejoiced for all the mighty works they had seen and praised Him as *"the King who comes in the name of the LORD."*

The word of Psalm 118 was contained in their shouts of joy.

*"Save now, I pray, O LORD; O LORD, I pray, send now prosperity. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD!" (Psalm 118:25–26).*

Therefore, the cry *"Hosanna"* was not a mere cheer but a plea to save them through the King sent by God. Since the people of Israel at that time were under the rule of Rome, many expected that Jesus would become a king who would restore the nation by His wonderful power and even resolve the difficulties of their earthly lives. The same fleshly expectation as when they had tried to take Him by force and make Him king after seeing the sign of the five loaves and two fish was also contained in this welcome.

But that Jesus entered riding on a donkey's colt shows that He came not as a king who conquers the kingdoms of this world by force, but as the King who humbly saves His people.

*"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).*

The salvation Jesus would accomplish was not a political liberation from the rule of Rome. Jesus bore all the sin of mankind by receiving baptism from John the Baptist, and He entered Jerusalem in order to be hung on the Cross bearing that sin and become the sacrificial offering of atonement, and to rise again from the dead and save those who believe from sin,

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judgment, and death. That Jesus said, *"My kingdom is not of this world"* also carries this meaning.

Therefore, the multitude waved branches of palm trees because, having seen the power of Jesus, who had raised the dead Lazarus, they welcomed Him in the expectation that He was the promised Christ and the King of Israel. What they cried out was a confession fitting for Jesus, but many people did not yet know in what way He would accomplish salvation. Jesus was not a king who would fulfill their fleshly expectations, but the true King who saves sinners and makes them His people by the baptism He received from John, the Cross, and the resurrection.

## [Question] 7. In John 12:27, what was the state of the heart of Christ as He faced the death of the Cross before His eyes?

Facing the death of the Cross, Jesus said, *"Now My soul is troubled."* Here, the word 'troubled' does not mean simply being perplexed; it signifies a state in which the heart is greatly distressed, sorrowful, and in pain. Jesus clearly knew how terrible the punishment and death of the Cross that He would suffer were.

Jesus was the Son of God, in whom there was no sin, but by receiving baptism from John the Baptist, He bore all the sins of the world in His own body. Now, to pay the wages of that sin, He had to suffer scourging and mockery, and be nailed to the Cross and die shedding His blood. Since the Holy One who hates sin and death had to receive the curse and the judgment bearing the sin of the world, the anguish of His heart was beyond measure.

The prayer He prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane shows

how deep that feeling was. Jesus said, *"My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death,"* and He prayed, *"Take this cup away from Me."* The Gospel of Luke records that as Jesus was in agony and prayed more earnestly, His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground. The Epistle to the Hebrews also testifies that Jesus offered up prayers and supplications with vehement cries and tears. Although Jesus was the Son of God, He had truly come in the flesh, and so He actually underwent the suffering of the Cross and the fear of death.

But the center of John 12:27 does not lie in that suffering alone.

*"Father, save Me from this hour? But for this purpose I came to this hour" (John 12:27).*

Jesus laid before the Father, just as it was, the pain of the flesh that wished to avoid the suffering, but right after that, He said that He had come into the world for this very purpose. In Gethsemane, too, He prayed, *"Nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will."* While fully knowing the pain of death, He gave Himself up to the will of the Father and accepted the way of the Cross in order to give life to sinners.

Jesus went on to pray, *"Father, glorify Your name."* He thought first of the will of the Father and the salvation of sinners rather than His own safety. Only when Jesus died like a grain of wheat could many people be saved from sin and death and become the fruit of eternal life. If Jesus had not died on the Cross bearing the sin He had borne with the baptism He received from John, all people would have had to receive death and judgment as the wages of their own sins.

Therefore, in the heart of Jesus as He faced death, there was deep sorrow and anguish as He looked at the suffering and death of the Cross, and deeper still, there was the love and resolve to obey the will of the Father to the end and save sinners. Jesus did

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not take the Cross lightly; while fully undergoing its suffering, He willingly gave up His own life to save us.

## [Question] 8. What is 'the judgment of this world' spoken of in John 12:31, and who is 'the ruler of this world'?

Speaking of His death on the Cross, Jesus said, *"Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out."* The following verses, 32 and 33, make known that Jesus being lifted up from the earth means that He would die on the Cross. Therefore, the judgment and the defeat of the ruler of this world spoken of here are directly connected with the Cross of Jesus.

'The judgment of this world' means, first of all, that all the sins of the world are judged on the Cross of Jesus. Mankind, deceived by Satan, rebelled against God and was placed under sin and death. Since the wages of sin is death, everyone had to be judged for his own sins. By receiving baptism from John the Baptist, Jesus bore all the sins of this world in His own body, and bearing those sins, He was hung on the Cross. Therefore, the One who was judged on the Cross was Jesus, but the judgment He received was in reality the judgment for the sin of all mankind.

Because Jesus received in our place the curse and the punishment for sin, the judgment of those who believe in Him has ended. The Cross is not a place where sin was dealt with lightly, but the place where the price of sin was paid in full with the life of Jesus. Jesus shed His blood and died and rose again, and thereby overcame sin and death. Those who believe in this salvation are delivered from sin and judgment, but those who do

not believe in the salvation Jesus accomplished with the baptism He received from John and the Cross remain in their sins and come to receive the judgment of God.

'The ruler of this world' refers to Satan the devil. John 16:11 also says, *"Of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged."* Satan has deceived people into sinning, condemned them on the ground of that sin, and made them slaves under the fear of death. In that sense, Satan is 'the ruler of this world,' who has ruled over people in a world fallen in sin.

But because Jesus bore the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John and received the full judgment of that sin on the Cross, the power of Satan has been broken. Satan can no longer condemn those who believe in the salvation of Jesus, saying, "You have sin, so you must be judged." This is because Jesus paid the full price of sin and rose again from the dead. This is the meaning of the word *"the ruler of this world will be cast out."*

This work is also the fulfillment of the promise given when Adam and Eve sinned.

*"He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel" (Genesis 3:15).*

Satan thought that he would win if he nailed Jesus to the Cross and killed Him, but it was on that very Cross that his own head was bruised. This is because Jesus, by being fully judged for the sin of mankind and rising again, broke the rule of Satan over people through sin and death. Therefore, the Bible says, *"The Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil."*

Therefore, 'the judgment of this world' is the event in which the sin of the world, which Jesus bore with the baptism He received from John, was judged on the Cross, and at the same time it is the word that reveals that the world which refuses that salvation is under judgment. 'The ruler of this world' is Satan

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the devil, who has ruled over people through sin and death. By removing sin and overcoming death with the baptism He received from John, the Cross, and the resurrection, Jesus judged Satan and completely saved those who believe in Him from the power of Satan.

## [Question] 9. In John 12:34, when Christ said that the Son of Man must be lifted up, what did the people fail to understand, and what did they ask?

The people raised two questions. The first was, if the Christ remains forever, why must the Son of Man be lifted up; and the second was, who on earth is this Son of Man who must be lifted up.

Through the word of the Old Testament, they knew that the Christ would be the King who reigns forever. Isaiah had prophesied that the kingdom of the Christ would be preserved *"From that time forward, even forever,"* and Daniel, too, had said that the dominion given to the Son of Man is everlasting and that His kingdom shall not be destroyed. Therefore, the people could not reconcile the Christ who remains forever with the Son of Man who must die.

The 'lifting up' that Jesus Christ spoke of did not mean only being exalted or ascending into heaven. The verse just before makes it known: *"This He said, signifying by what death He would die."* That is, it pointed to Jesus Christ being hung on the Cross and dying lifted up from the earth.

The people expected the Christ only as a King who would repel death and immediately establish an eternal kingdom. So when they heard the word that the Christ must die, they came to have the question, "How can One who dies be the Christ who remains forever? Then is the Son of Man who must now be lifted

up a different person from the Christ we have been waiting for?" They did not realize the fact that the Christ would first suffer and die to save sinners, and then rise again and reign forever.

Jesus Christ bore the sin of the world by receiving baptism from John the Baptist, and bearing that sin, He was lifted up on the Cross and received the judgment. But it did not end in death; He rose again. Therefore, the death of the Cross and the word that the Christ remains forever do not contradict each other. The Cross was not a defeat but the way that had to be passed through in order to save people from sin and death.

Rather than continuing to explain along the lines of the people's argument, Jesus told them to believe in the light while the light was still among them. What they needed was not to divide the Christ and the Son of Man in their thinking according to their own notions, but to believe in Jesus Christ, who would accomplish salvation through the death of the Cross.

## [Question] 10. In John 12:44–45, why is believing in and seeing Christ the same as believing in and seeing God?

Jesus 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."* This means that faith in Jesus Christ cannot be separated from faith in God the Father, who sent Him.

Jesus Christ did not come as one teacher or prophet. He was with God from the beginning, and He is the Word, who is God in essence, come to this earth in the flesh. Because the Father and the Son are distinct from each other yet are the same God, Jesus said, *"I and My Father are one."* Therefore, to believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is to believe in God the Father,

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who sent Him.

The word *"he who sees Me sees Him who sent Me"* also does not stop at looking at the flesh of Jesus with the eyes. It means that through the word of Jesus and the things He did, one comes to know what kind of God the invisible God is. No one had ever seen God, but the only begotten God, who is in the bosom of the Father, came in the flesh and revealed God. Jesus, too, said to Philip, *"He who has seen Me has seen the Father,"* and He said that He is in the Father and the Father is in Him.

The word Jesus spoke did not come from His own will but is the word the Father commanded, and the work of salvation He did was also the accomplishment of the will of the Father just as it was. Therefore, when one hears the word of Jesus, one hears the word of God the Father, and when one sees what Jesus did, one sees how God loves and saves sinners.

God loved the people who would be judged because of sin, and He sent His only begotten Son to this earth. In obedience to the will of the Father, Jesus bore the sin of the world by receiving baptism from John the Baptist, and bearing that sin, He was hung on the Cross and received the judgment, and He rose again from the dead. Through this work, it was revealed that God is the just God who hates sin and, at the same time, the God of love who saves sinners.

Therefore, a person who believes in the salvation that Jesus Christ accomplished with the water, the blood, and the Spirit believes the fact that God the Father sent His Son and saved him. Also, a person who looks at the baptism Christ received from John, the Cross, and the resurrection sees the love, the justice, and the salvation of God, who planned and accomplished that work. Jesus Christ is the true way, who has revealed the invisible God to us and has connected sinners to God so that they can come to Him.

## [Question] 11. In John 12:47–50, what is the core of the last teaching that Jesus Christ gave publicly?

John 12:47–50 is the last teaching that Jesus gave publicly to the people as He faced the Cross. Its content consists of the purpose for which Jesus came into this world, the judgment that a person who rejects His word will receive, the source of His word, and the eternal life that those who believe that word will obtain.

First, Jesus came to save the world. He said, *"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."* The first purpose for which Jesus came to this earth was not to condemn sinners at once and destroy them, but to save them from sin and judgment.

To accomplish this salvation, Jesus came in human flesh. By receiving baptism from John the Baptist, He bore the sin of all the people of the world, and bearing that sin, He was hung on the Cross and received the judgment, and He rose again from the dead and became the perfect Savior. Jesus let sinners hear the word, too, so that they would believe in this salvation and come out of darkness and destruction.

Second, one who rejects the word of Jesus is judged by that word on the last day. Jesus said, *"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."* The fact that Jesus came to save does not mean that there is no judgment. God gives people the opportunity to hear the word and believe, but if one does not accept Jesus and His word to the end, on the last day that word reveals one's unbelief and judges one.

Rejecting Jesus and not receiving His word are not separated

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from each other. To reject the word that Jesus saved sinners with the baptism He received from John, the Cross, and the resurrection is to reject the love and salvation that God has bestowed through His Son. In contrast, a person who accepts that word with the heart believes in the salvation God accomplished and obtains the remission of sins and eternal life.

Third, the word of Jesus is the word that came from God the Father. Jesus said, *"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."* The word of Jesus is not the opinion of one man or a teaching He made up Himself. It is the word of God, which He preached just as God the Father commanded Him to speak. Therefore, to believe in the word of Jesus is to believe in the word of God the Father, and to reject that word is to reject God.

Fourth, the command of God the Father is eternal life. Jesus said, *"I know that His command is everlasting life."* The purpose for which God sent His Son and had Him bear the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John, be judged on the Cross, and rise again is to give eternal life to those who believe that fact. The word of Jesus is not a word meant to oppress and destroy people, but the word that gives life to sinners and leads them to eternal life.

Therefore, the last teaching of Jesus is clear. Jesus came not to condemn the world but to save it. Following the command of God the Father, He preached the word of salvation and accomplished, just as that word said, the work of the baptism He received from John, the Cross, and the resurrection. Those who believe that word obtain the remission of sins and eternal life, but those who reject Jesus and His word to the end will be judged by that very word on the last day. ✉

Sermon 1 by Paul C. Jong

# The faith of Mary, who poured fragrant oil on the feet of Jesus

**< 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.'"**

## Six days before the Passover, after raising Lazarus

In chapter 11, Lazarus fell sick, and Jesus stayed two more days and then went and raised the dead Lazarus. So chapter 12 speaks of what happened *"six days before the Passover" (John*

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*12:1)*, that is, six days before Jesus was hung on the Cross. Jesus would be nailed to the Cross and die at this Passover. Six days before that, Jesus was invited to a feast in Bethany, where Lazarus lived. That house had become a house of feasting.

Lazarus was the brother of Martha and Mary, and he fell sick and died. It seems that Jesus often went to this house and was served meals there. When Lazarus fell sick, his sisters sent someone to tell Jesus that he whom the Lord loved was sick. Even after hearing that news, Jesus deliberately did not go but stayed for two days. After that, He said, *"Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up" (John 11:11)*. The disciple of Jesus named Thomas was a somewhat odd fellow. He was a man without faith, but a man with a strong sense of chivalry.

When Jesus said that Lazarus was sleeping and that they should go to wake him up, and then plainly said that Lazarus was dead, Thomas said, *"Let us also go, that we may die with Him" (John 11:16)*. He meant that if they went to the region where Lazarus lived, the Jews would seize Jesus and kill Him. Last time, too, they had tried to seize and kill Him, but He had come out well without being overpowered by them; this time, however, if He went, He would be seized and killed, so they should go and die together with Him.

But what Jesus meant was not that. He meant that they should go to wake up the dead Lazarus. In the eyes of Jesus, Lazarus was now asleep. But in the eyes of people, he was dead. When Jesus heard the disciples say that if he was sleeping he would get well, He corrected Himself and said that Lazarus was dead, and that since he was dead, they should go to him. And He took the disciples with Him, went, and raised Lazarus again from the dead. When He went there, the three siblings, Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, had been living together, but after their brother died,

only the two sisters were left.

It seems that the people of this town thought highly of these three siblings. After their brother died, the people felt sorry for them and wanted to help them. So when Jesus went there, the people wept, saying that if the One who had opened the eyes of the blind had been here, Lazarus would not have died. While Jesus was on this earth, He wept two or three times, and one of those times He wept over the city of Jerusalem. He foresaw that a Roman general would come with his army and completely lay that city and its temple waste and bring the nation completely down, and He wept. And when Lazarus died, He saw the people of the town grieving and wept with them. He groaned in His heart and said, *"Lazarus, come forth!" (John 11:43)* and raised Lazarus.

Then the Jews tried to seize and kill Jesus. Now, they said, it was a serious matter. Since Jesus had raised the dead, would not the number of people following Jesus grow even more; the people of Israel were on the way to setting Jesus up as king, they said. Caiaphas the high priest said, "You know nothing at all; is it not right that one man should die so that this nation is saved?" It meant that by the death of Jesus alone, the people of God would be saved. God caused this to be prophesied through the mouth of the high priest. Jesus had to die for the salvation of mankind. This Man had to die. As we know well, Jesus had to die on the Cross because He had received baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River and borne the sin of us, mankind.

In that situation, Jesus came under attack. The Jews, the Pharisees, and the chief priests all alike opposed Jesus, and to Rome, too, Jesus was an enemy and a foe. This was because the king of Israel was the Roman emperor, and now Israel would have a king of its own. Governor Pilate tried hard to release Jesus, but in the end, he handed Him over to the Jews, and the high

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priest, too, said that only if this Man died could our country live a little more at ease. But the people were not like that. The people said, “Why should Jesus die? He gives us food, heals our sicknesses, and even raises the dead, so we need Jesus.” So those who liked Him and those who disliked Him were divided. In the midst of this, because He had raised Lazarus, six days before the Passover, they invited Jesus to the house of Lazarus and held a feast of thanks and entertained Him. It was something that happened in the midst of a feast held with the people of the town gathered as well.

## The Passover, when death passed over by the blood of the lamb

Since it says the Passover, the Passover is the day that remembers the day when the people of Israel were saved from the plague of death in Egypt through the blood of the sacrificed lamb. Among the ten plagues, the last plague was the plague of death. Since King Pharaoh would not listen, God told Moses that this time He would put to death without exception the firstborn of every livestock and every person. Go and tell Pharaoh, He said, and if he still would not let the people of Israel go, his son, too, would die. Pharaoh thought, surely how could He kill my son; if I guard him, it will be all right; and he had his army stand guard. But that night, wherever the angel of death passed by, creeping along like fog, there was the sound of wailing. Among the animals, the firstborn animals died, and among people, the firstborn sons died. The king’s son died, too. At that time, the people of Israel, in order to be saved, slaughtered lambs as Moses had told them and put the blood on the lintel and the two doorposts of their doors. Then the firstborn of the people of

Israel would not die, it was said.

That night came, and the angel of death really passed over the land, spread over it like fog. In Egypt there was the sound of wailing, and from the people of Israel there was the sound of praise. God had protected the people of Israel. That is the very feast of the Passover, and it became a feast that could be commemorated.

Six days before the Passover, a feast was held at the house of Lazarus, and it says that Martha was busy serving, and Lazarus was among those who sat at the table. The Lord was holding a feast at the house of Lazarus, who had come back to life from death. This feast was like the feast of the saints. Lazarus was a sinner who, as a descendant of Adam, could not but die, and spiritually he was a dead man. But the Lord came to Lazarus and raised him. Here the Bible does not speak of Martha but speaks of the faith of Mary.

## The faith of Mary, who recognized Jesus as the sacrificial offering of atonement

It is verse 3. *"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."* Mary poured very costly fragrant oil on the feet of Jesus and wiped them with her hair. Through the feast for Lazarus, who had died and come back to life, the Lord is showing us the faith of Mary. Mary was thankful also that He had raised her brother. But more than that, she had seen Jesus open the eyes of the blind, make the lame walk, and raise the dead. So she believed and knew in her heart that Jesus was the Savior who had come to save mankind.

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So Mary did not merely respect Jesus. She knew that Jesus was the Messiah and the Savior who had come to this earth. In a little while, people would be in an uproar and try to seize and kill Him, but Jesus had already borne the sin of this world with the baptism He received from John. In the Old Testament, the sacrifice, the sacrificial offering of atonement, received the laying on of hands from the high priest and had sin transferred to it. And the priest offered the sacrifice according to the law of sacrifice inside the tabernacle, and it became the sacrifice. Jesus did the same. In the Old Testament, the other goat also received the laying on of hands from the high priest before the eyes of the people, had the sin of the people transferred to it, and was led away far off into the sandy desert and abandoned. This was done before the eyes of all the people. In the same way, John the Baptist, seeing Jesus walking about, testified, *"Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29)*.

Just as John the Baptist testified so, Mary knew that Jesus would die on the Cross in a little while. This One was God Himself in essence and the Son of God the Father, and yet, for my family and for mankind, He had come to this earth, received baptism from John the Baptist, and borne sin—that was it. Through the death of the sacrifice in the Old Testament, the sin of the people was judged, and the people were saved from judgment. In the same way, Mary knew that Jesus had come to this earth to become the sacrificial offering of atonement for mankind.

So Mary did one thing she could do. With about as much money as a young person would have if he worked for a year in someone else's house and saved up all his wages, she bought a flask of fragrant oil of nard. She poured it on the feet of Jesus and wiped them with her hair. So the fragrance filled the whole house. Mary did not look at Jesus as a member of the opposite

sex but looked at Him as the Savior. To save her from sin, He who is God had put on the flesh of a man, come to this earth, received baptism from John, and already borne the sin of mankind. And He had given up His own life to become the sacrificial offering of atonement on the Cross. He is the One who came to receive the judgment of sin in our place, and to pay the price of our sin by going to His death. Because Mary believed in that Jesus as her own Savior, she was so grateful and thankful that she washed His feet.

Dear fellow believers, washing someone's feet is not something just anyone can do. Who pulls another person's feet to himself and washes them with his hair, shedding tears? Who is there that does such a thing? This shows that Mary was very thankful for what Jesus had come to this earth and done. That is why the Bible singles out Mary and says that Mary knew who Jesus was. And Mary relied on Jesus like that. When her brother fell sick, too, she said that if Jesus had been here, he would not have died. This was because He is God. Mary was a person who knew His attributes well. And since her brother had come back to life, she held a feast and poured the fragrant oil. The whole house was filled with the fragrance of the oil.

## Judas, who sneered that it was a waste, and the day of My burial

Even a drop or two of perfume is overpowering when you go near the person wearing it. But she poured a whole flask on His feet and wiped them with her hair, so how strong the scent must have been! So even the disciples of Jesus were puzzled and murmured that it was a truly strange thing. That expensive fragrant oil had all been poured on the feet of Jesus, they said;

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that must be worth three hundred denarii. Calculated in the money of that time, it was a year's wages. It was a year's wages that a young person could receive only if he earned a lot of money. So Judas Iscariot sneered. Judas Iscariot sneered, saying, "That woman seems to be immature and still not to know the ways of the world. If she had sold that expensive thing and distributed the money to the poor, how grateful the people would have been!" He sneered, saying that she had poured it uselessly on His feet, so that the whole house reeked of the fragrant oil, and how could anyone eat the food?

Jesus knew this fact and told them to let her alone. Let us read verses 5 through 7 once. Here it comes out how Jesus knew Judas. *"'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.'"*

Jesus knew that Judas was a thief. Judas followed Him around as a disciple, calling Him Teacher, and behaved like that, but Jesus knew that he was a thief. When people gave offerings, Judas was in charge of the offering money, and Jesus knew that he was diverting it into his own pocket. And yet He told them to let her alone for the day of His burial. It is the word that they should let alone what Mary was doing.

This means that Jesus was saying, "In a little while, I will be hung on the Cross and die. The poor you have with you always, but I will be nailed to the Cross and become your sacrificial offering of atonement." Because He had had your sins transferred to Him, He now had to shed His blood and die for you, and rise again from the dead and go up—that was it. In a little while, He would not be with them, so they should let her alone—that was the word. The disciples of Jesus pretended to be

righteous and pretended to be good, but Jesus knew how this gospel would be spread. Mary thought of Jesus with the utmost devotion. He is the One who, for her sake, put on the flesh of a man, came to this earth, received baptism from John, and bore her sin. She knew that He is the Lord who would be nailed to the Cross and die, paying the price of death, and rise again, ascend into heaven, and come again. It was by faith in that Messiah that she did such a deed.

Mary made this confession of faith in the house of feasting, that is, in her own house. "You are the Christ, the Son of God, and the Creator who created the universe. You are the Lord of all things and the Lord of my life, and yet for my sake You came to this earth, received baptism from John, died hung on the Cross, and became the sacrificial offering of atonement. You who have done these things are truly my Savior and the Lord of my life." Such was the confession she made.

Many people attended that feast, eating the food, and they came to see Lazarus, who had died and come back to life. They must have gone and touched him to see whether he really had come back to life. They must have touched the face of Lazarus, too, and asked, "Where were you sick? It was your stomach, wasn't it? Didn't you die? Back then there was a stench of decay; are you really that Lazarus?" Lazarus must have said, "Yes, it is I." When they asked, "Who raised you?" he must have said, "That Jesus over there raised me," and when they asked, "How did He raise you?" he must have said, "He told me to come out of the tomb, and my waist was lifted, my body rose up, and I walked out."

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## Our Savior, who is the Creator and the Lord of life

Jesus came to this earth and began by bearing your sins and mine with the baptism He received from John. He became our sacrificial offering of atonement, shed His blood for us, died nailed to the Cross, and rose again from the dead. We must become those who think of that Jesus and give thanks in our hearts. Who is Jesus? He is the Creator who created the whole universe. By His word He said, “Let there be light,” and, “Let there be a great light and a lesser light in the heavens.” Let there be all the stars of heaven; let there be every living thing and fish in the waters; let there be birds that fly in the air, He said, and He made everything by His word. And He made man from the dust and breathed the breath of life into his nostrils, and so He is the God of creation who brought you and me into being.

He is the Lord of you and me. He is not merely a Savior, but the Lord of you and me. He is the Lord of life and the Lord who made you and me to exist. He is also the One who, to save you and me, humbled Himself and came to this earth as the Savior, in the same standing as His people, in order to save the people of the Lord. He is our Lord who came to this earth and received baptism from John the Baptist and had the sin of us, mankind, transferred to Him once and for all. At every footstep He took before and after coming to this earth, He loved you and me and worked to remove our sins and to give us new life. Everything He did is a beautiful and eternally precious work that cannot be bought or exchanged for anything in this world.

## Tell what this woman has done also, as a memorial

We must become those who believe in that work and give thanks before the Lord by faith. In the Gospel of John, the Lord performed seven miracles and revealed that He is equal with God and is our Savior. But in the other Gospels, Matthew and Mark, what Jesus said concerning what this woman had done is recorded. He said that what this woman had done, pouring fragrant oil on My feet and wiping My feet with her hair, should be told as a memorial wherever the gospel is preached. It is the word that they should remember that Mary did such a thing while I was alive, that is, the word that they should remember those who served the gospel.

It is the word that they should remember those who sacrificed themselves for the gospel and gave up everything they had, those who made such a precious sacrifice by believing in the Lord. The Bible says, *"Those who are wise shall shine Like the brightness of the firmament, And those who turn many to righteousness Like the stars forever and ever" (Daniel 12:3)*. That is why we call such people stars on this earth. We exalt them so, as a star that has come to us from among countless stars. There are people who know that the Lord loved us, who know that love, and who know what kind of One He is. To save us from sin, the Lord humbled Himself, received baptism from John, and bore our sins. He died on the Cross and became the sacrificial offering of atonement and the sacrifice for our sins, and He became our eternal Savior. They are the people who believe in that Lord. And they are all those who have labored to spread this gospel. The Lord says to remember them. That is why there is the Millennial Kingdom. The Lord has the saints of later generations remember them, saying, "Your predecessors in the faith did this for Me."

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## Those who deny themselves and follow the Lord

The Lord said, *"If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me" (Matthew 16:24)*. One must deny oneself. For a person, denying oneself is the hardest thing. My thinking seems more right than that person's thinking, but since the Lord has said this to me, it is hard to throw away my thinking and believe in and follow the Lord. Just as He said to remember what this woman had done, there are people of deep years who have become predecessors in the faith ahead of you and me. For those people who have followed the Lord until now, there have been many hardships, sacrifices, and sufferings. There has been self-denial. They denied themselves, gave up everything they had, and followed. Among those who follow the Lord, there is no one who is not like this. Even while following the Lord, if one cannot deny oneself, one has to give up following the Lord. One has to quit.

Dear fellow believers, I hope you remember Mary well. I am not extolling Mary because she did this one thing. Have you and I ever given everything we have to the Lord? Have you ever thrown away even your life, even your dignity, your honor, your money, or your pride for the Lord's sake? Those who follow the Lord are people like this. There are people who believe in Jesus and believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and follow Him, saying that they believe that Jesus is their Savior and that He has removed all their sins. And there are people who, even after giving up everything they have, hope for the Lord's will to be done and hope for this gospel to be spread throughout the whole world, and so follow the Lord. These two kinds are different. Those who give up everything they have and follow the Lord take on whatever role is entrusted to them, as long as the Lord's work goes well. If the Lord wants such a thing from

them, they do it.

If the Lord says, "You are nothing, so do not put yourself forward," we must answer, "That is right. I am nothing." As long as the Lord's work goes well through this work, whatever role I have taken on here, whether a high role or a low role or any role at all, I am fine with it. What else do I have to say? It is enough if the Lord's will is done. Those who follow the Lord with this heart are the workers of the Lord and those who receive the love of the Lord.

Mary knew that in six days Jesus would be hung on the Cross. Jesus was saying that for the day of His burial, Mary had poured fragrant oil on His feet and wiped them with her hair, filling the whole house with the fragrance of the oil. Mary knew that Jesus would die hung on the Cross, and Jesus, too, knew that in six days He would be hung on the Cross. Even so, He attended the feast, accepted their thanks, and blessed them as well.

I myself and you as well must become people like Mary. Jesus gave Himself up to save you and me. Though He is God, the Creator, and God equal with God the Father, He gave Himself up, put on the flesh of a man, and was born on this earth through the body of Mary. As He had promised, He took responsibility for the word and fulfilled it. Just as it said, *"He will save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21)*, He took responsibility for saving the people of the Lord from their sins and obeyed the will of the Father. One cannot know all these things at once, and even while knowing them, one may feel little in the heart. But we must keep meditating on them in our hearts, follow the Lord well by faith, and become those who are the foundation for preaching this gospel to the whole world.

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## The Lord causes you and me to be remembered

I cannot say much about whether I have lived well or badly until now. But after I met the Lord through the word, as you know and have heard, when the Lord is speaking to me like this, I cannot insist on my own stubborn way. I had majored in theology, and my fleshly future was guaranteed. But just as the Apostle Paul said, *"Woe is me if I do not preach the gospel!" (1 Corinthians 9:16)*, the Lord made me realize through the word that He would hold me responsible for the lives of the souls that had not been saved. So I agonized a great deal.

So I resolved to follow the Lord. I thought that if I gave up here, countless people would not be saved. I thought that if I denied myself and offered myself to the Lord as a tool, the Lord would use me somehow, and then the Lord's will would be done. Where on this earth is there a person who has been saved purely through the word as I have been, I thought; I am a person who majored in theology, and as far as I know, there is no such person. Although it was exactly like striking a rock with a raw egg, and though I wondered how many people would be saved by my preaching this gospel to one person, I left home resolved to obey nonetheless.

I put two pairs of socks and some underwear into a bathhouse bag, zipped it up, and left. Having nowhere to go, when I had no place to sleep while preaching the gospel, I went to a construction site where day labor was done. "Won't you hire someone? I can work, too, so if you are hiring, please hire me." That is how I started working, and the people at the site said that I worked well. So I ate the meals they provided there and slept in the sleeping quarters there. It was a bunkhouse for day laborers, so what could you expect? A board was laid down, a sheet of styrofoam was laid on it, and there was a thin blanket,

and that was all. I slept there, ate the meals they gave, and worked. During break time, while the others smoked and drank, I went off to one side, read the Bible, prayed, and wrote in my notebook. I kept doing that while looking to the Lord's guidance, and as I went on like that, I met you and preached this gospel.

And now I am preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit throughout the whole world together with you. Now the people coming to our website have reached as many as 36,000 a day. Before long, as many as 40,000 a day will come. We are doing advertising through Google and in various ways, and the number keeps growing. All the people of the whole world come in. Many missionaries all over the world will read our books and preach, and they will meet Jesus through our books. You have no idea how splendidly we are being used today.

But there are also those who have worked here and then quit. A translator who used to translate our books quit, and when he quit, the plans I had laid out to do this and that were thrown into complete disarray. Strangely enough, if he had translated just two or three more sermons, I could have done the work I wanted to do, but he stopped right there. And without a word, he changed his phone number and disappeared without a trace. So I said in my heart, "You do not believe. You do not want to serve the gospel. All right, I understand. What you are doing, you are doing not only to me but to the Lord, so you have become a person who has kicked away a great blessing. You could have done a truly precious work, and yet you are like this. Even so, I hope that God will save you." And my plan came to nothing. So I began to lay out the plans again. First, we will publish one English book, then find a new translator and publish another, and we will publish the books that are needed in the right places from now on. This is how we serve the gospel, step by step.

You are doing that work by taking on all the work assigned

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to you in your assigned positions, and I am taking on the work assigned to me. The Lord causes the work we do to be remembered by people. If Jesus were to come a thousand or two thousand years from now, you and I would be remembered forever by everyone on this earth who believes in Jesus. People of later generations will say, "At that time, the number of brothers and sisters was not large, but that small flock did this work." It is a work that will remain long in the history of Christianity.

But this age is urgent. We do not know when Jesus will come, but neither do we know when mankind will all be destroyed. The days when we can serve the gospel, eat and drink, quietly and stably like this, are only a few decades away from ending. Such a stable environment will last a hundred years at most, but mankind will try to survive longer than that. Mankind never surrenders. Even if the water rises to the mountaintops, they climb a higher mountain, launch boats, and fly helicopters to survive. This is because man is the lord of all creation. Being the lord of all creation means being the foremost of all that God has made. So man is clever and remarkable. No matter how big an elephant charges, it cannot beat a human being. Neither a tiger nor a lion can beat a human being. In a direct fight, he would lose, but it is human beings who say, "You dare to charge at me? I could kill you easily." This is because man resembles the image of God. We are living in such an age.

I believe that in these difficult times, this gospel will be spread more, faster, and more rapidly than it has been spread until now. It says that faith is the substance of things hoped for, so the gospel will be spread according to that faith. People do not expect that a person worthy of being remembered will come out of the Christians, pastors, missionaries, or people of God in our country. Then people slowly begin to recognize that such a

work is being accomplished through our website. They marvel with their own mouths that since the creation of the world, they have never met people who preached the gospel like this, spread the gospel like this, and served the gospel like this. Dear fellow believers, there are a few people on this earth worthy of being remembered. But whom does the Lord cause to be remembered? He said to remember Mary, and He says to remember you and me.

Before God, we are people like Mary. We are remarkable people. Two of our brothers are going into the army this time, and if they hold on to the word of the Lord as they live in the barracks, there will be no great difficulty. Frankly, a person who is born again and a person who is not born again are no match for each other. However big, wise, and smart a person may be, he is not even worth a single punch. I do not mean that he is not worth a single punch in a fight, but that in wisdom, in thinking, in the eyes that look ahead to the future, and in intelligence, he is no match. If you are truly born again, when you go and live there, you can live simply treating them with affection. You can pat them on the back, saying, "You are good at this, too; you are remarkable; you are really excellent," and tell them to come and look for you when they enter society. Dear fellow believers, the people in the world who are not born again are the souls to whom we are to preach the gospel. "I will have you receive the remission of sins a little later"—it is enough to do just that much.

And quietly, when our booklets come out, we can just hand them a piece of literature and tell them to read it. The literature ministry is good. Literature is not a matter of writing well. However good a book a person who is not saved puts out, it is nothing more than a piece of knowledge. It is nothing. Our books bring salvation when one reads them and closes them. One reads one book, and the sin in one's heart disappears. This is what a

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remarkable book is. It is a book in which the power of the Lord works together. How thankful we should be! Dear fellow believers, are you not thankful? Yes, we are.

From now on, the gospel will be spread tremendously more than it has been preached until now. Dear fellow believers, I hope you will not become a straggler. If I am for the Lord, the Lord is also for me. If I despise the Lord, the Lord also despises me. You must know that. It is so even if you have been saved. You must live before the Lord. Whatever the Lord says, you have only to say "Yes" and follow as the Lord is pleased. Then if the Lord wants to put me in a high place and use me, I am used there, and if He wants to use me as a laborer, I have only to become a laborer. It is enough if only the work of the gospel goes well. Since spreading the gospel and serving as the flower-calyx is not my work but the Lord's work, it is enough if only the Lord's work goes well. Let us live by such faith. ✉

Sermon 2 by Paul C. Jong

# If Jesus becomes our sacrificial offering of atonement, it will produce much grain

**< John 12:9-36 >**

**"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. 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**

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**themselves, 'You see that you are accomplishing nothing. Look, the world has gone after Him!' 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. 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**

If Jesus becomes our sacrificial offering
of atonement, it will produce much grain

**become sons of light.' These things Jesus spoke, and departed, and was hidden from them."**

Today we have read a great deal of the word. To preach all of this word, it seems it would take a month. But since we cannot preach it all, today I would like to preach on the theme that if Jesus becomes our sacrificial offering of atonement, it will produce much grain.

## Jesus came to this earth to become the sacrificial offering of atonement

It is 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."* Like this grain of wheat, the Lord was now six days before dying on the Cross; He had entered the countdown. Six, five, four, three, two, one—and then He would be hung on the Cross. Since it says six days before, it was day by day. Jesus knew this. That is why He said that if a grain of wheat dies, it produces much grain.

Jesus came to this earth to become the sacrificial offering of atonement, and He intended to take on that work. What happens when Jesus, in order to become the sacrificial offering of atonement, receives baptism from John and bears the sin of the world, dies hung on the Cross, and rises again from the dead? It is verse 31. *"Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out."* When Jesus is hung on the Cross, this world comes to be judged. Satan the devil and the Antichrist, the rulers of this world, had enticed and deceived people so that they could not believe the word of God and made them oppose

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God, and it is the word that that Satan the devil is cast out and judged.

Jesus came to this earth to save mankind. In order to come in the form of human flesh, He was born on this earth through the body of Mary. And when He was thirty years old, He received baptism from John the Baptist and bore the sin of mankind. Three years had passed since He received baptism at thirty, and now He was thirty-three, and six days remained. It was at that time that He spoke this word.

## *"The ruler of this world will be cast out"*

The Lord says that through Him, the ruler of this world has come to be cast out. It is the word that when He receives baptism from John and bears the sin of the world, dies hung on the Cross, and rises again, the ruler of this world is cast out. Before Jesus Christ came to this earth, Satan the devil had mankind at his beck and call. He entered people's hearts and made them oppose God, made them serve idols, and made all kinds of religions so that they all opposed God. When you look into it, the many religions of this world seem to benefit people, but that is Satan the devil deceiving them. He makes them have religiosity so that they believe in that religion, and as a result, he makes them oppose God.

The religions of our country were Confucianism and Buddhism. First, let us think about Buddhism for a moment. The core doctrine of Buddhism is that one becomes a god oneself. "In heaven above and on earth below, I alone am honored," that is, between heaven and earth, I am the one who exists, and I myself am god. One becomes a god oneself, and one becomes God oneself. There is no God and nothing else; only I am god, I

am the kingdom of heaven, and I become everything, it says. There is no God. It leads us with that ideology. All religions are like that.

But why are people deceived? Because man resembles the image of God, he has a heart that wants to live forever, a heart in which there is no death. He has a heart that wants to live as one who has eternal life. Because God has given him such grace, while trying to enjoy eternal life, without knowing God, he falls into religion and falls into the temptation of Satan the devil, and by believing well in that religion, he opposes God instead. Saying, "Where is God? I am God," is exactly what the religions of the world are. It is such people that the Lord says He will judge and cast out.

## The sacrifice of atonement, by which sin was made not to have dominion over people

How does He judge? Satan the devil made people unable to believe in God, made them oppose God, and made them commit sin. He enticed people and plunged them into sin. Jesus bore that sin by receiving baptism from John the Baptist, went to the Cross, was nailed to it, and received the judgment of sin for us. The wages of sin is death, and the judgment of that sin, which Satan the devil had breathed into people's hearts, the Lord Himself received for us. By the Lord receiving the judgment, the price of sin was paid. Therefore, sin can no longer reign over people.

The Bible says, *"Sin shall not have dominion over you" (Romans 6:14)*. Jesus came to this earth to save mankind and bore the sin of mankind with the baptism of John the Baptist. Bearing that sin in His own body, Jesus went to the Cross, was nailed to it, and poured out His blood, and paid the price of sin

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with His own life. Therefore, sin does not have dominion over people. Sin brings judgment. If sin is in a person, he must be judged, but since Jesus had that sin transferred to Him and received the judgment for us, sin has no dominion over people, and death has no dominion over people.

By having our sins transferred to Him and receiving the curse for sin, the Lord saves us from judgment, from sin, from destruction, and from Satan the devil. This is the very meaning of the sacrifice of atonement. So it is written like this in 1 Corinthians 15:55–57. *"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."*

The serpent came to Adam and Eve and asked whether God had really said not to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. To the devil's question, Adam and Eve answered that they might die if they ate it. But God had not said "might die" but "shall surely die." He had said that inside this Garden of Eden He had prepared countless fruit trees for you and had prepared the tree of life, too, so the only fruit you must not eat is the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and eat and enjoy all the rest. When the serpent came and asked, "Did He really say not to eat it?" Eve answered that God had said, "Lest you die." The serpent had just slipped in a question. A person without faith cannot give an exact answer.

Dear fellow believers, Jesus has saved you and me from sin, made us born again, and removed all our sins. But if someone is told to speak about his being born again, a person who knows it for certain answers that question fully. But a person who knows it only in theory speaks boldly at first, but when he is questioned and pressed further, he cannot answer. So you may take a person who cannot answer the question as, in the end, a person who

does not know it. When we hold the mission school, we tell them to ask questions. Ask anything at all. I answer what I know, but I cannot answer what I do not know. But about what I believe and know, if you ask, I can tell you everything. Because I believe it and I know it.

It says, *"O Hades, where is your victory?" (1 Corinthians 15:55)*. Why did death come? Why did the death of man come, and why did Adam and Eve have to die? Because they ate the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which God had told them not to eat. Enticed by the devil, they ate it, and so sin was established, and since sin was established, they were cut off from God. A partition was set up between them and God so that they could neither go nor come. Therefore, the formula is established that sin is separation from God, and separation from God is death. If we are sinners before God, we are spiritually dead. Since we cannot go before God, it is death.

It says, *"O Death, where is your sting?" (1 Corinthians 15:55)*. It means: you made people sin and cut them off from God, but does your attack have any effect; does mankind die because of sin? No, it says. Next, it says that the sting of death is sin. Death came because of sin. Then how is sin established? Sin is established through the law. Because God has set down the law, if one breaks that law, it becomes sin; if one does what God says not to do, sin is established and one becomes a sinner; and when one becomes a sinner, death comes before God. Then who tells us that it is sin? God says that it is sin. Because there is the word of God, because there is the law, we become sinners.

God made us and commanded us not to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. That is the very law. But that law was broken. That is why sin came into the heart. It means that God is the foremost. God exists, and His word is the law. A person who breaks that word becomes a sinner, and to a

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person who has become a sinner, death, curse, and destruction come. But the fallen angel enticed Adam and Eve and made people into cursed human beings just like himself.

## The love of God, who brought down on His Son the judgment we had to receive

So verse 57 says, *"Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."* Jesus was born through the body of a woman as our Savior, according to the word of prophecy. He was born, and when He was thirty years old, He received baptism from John the Baptist, the greatest among those born of women and the representative of mankind, and had our sins transferred to Him. Having had them transferred to Him, He washed away the sins of our hearts. He had the sins that were here transferred to His own body, gave up His own body on the Cross, and was nailed to it and put to death for us. Jesus had all the sins that Satan the devil had breathed into us and enticed us with transferred to Him, and He received the judgment of those sins for us by being nailed to the Cross and shedding His blood. Therefore, Jesus did away with the result of the attack that Satan the devil had first made, and saved us. What we had to be judged for, the Lord Himself was judged for, for us. Dear fellow believers, do you understand? The Lord received it for us.

Our ancestor sinned against God, and we inherited sin through that ancestor. Because of our sin, we were cut off from God and became sinners, and we were to be cursed, judged, and go to hell. But God the Father sent His Son to this earth, passed our sins on to the Son, and judged the Son. He made the Son the sacrificial offering of atonement for our sins, and by bringing down on the Son the judgment that you and I had to receive, He

intended to save you and me. This is the very love of God, and this is the very sacrifice of atonement. It is the sacrifice of salvation that saves us from sin.

Our death and curse all come because we have gone against the word of God. All the sins of that going against, and all the sins we commit while living on this earth, Jesus, who became our Savior, bore by receiving baptism. He was nailed to the Cross and shed His blood, received suffering and curse and every contempt, said that it is finished and died, and came back to life three days after He died, and became our Savior. We are saved by believing in our hearts in Jesus, who came to this earth as our Savior.

So we become the children of God, and our relationship with God is restored. With sin gone, we become holy righteous people and call God our Father, our God. And when we pray to Him, we receive the answer to that prayer and have fellowship with Him. This is the very word that if a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it produces much grain. Dear fellow believers, when you plow a field, sow wheat, and cover it with soil, the wheat pushes the soil aside as it comes up, and that is why it is called mil ("wheat") in our language—a play on milchida ("to push aside"). Why is mugwort called ssuk? It is called ssuk because it shoots up—ssuk is also used to describe that motion—and wheat is called mil because it pushes the soil aside as it comes up. This is all just a joke. When a grain of wheat falls into the ground, first it comes up as a sprout, then the stalk comes up, then it puts out side branches, and at the very top the wheat is borne. One grain of wheat is planted, and more than a hundred grains are borne. Jesus came to do the work in which a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies and produces much grain, and He accomplished that work. How is it? Isn't it good? Aren't you grateful to Jesus? Yes, we are.

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It says, *"God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16)*. That God so loved the world that He gave His Son, passed the sins of you and me on to the Son, and brought down the judgment through the Son, and so saved you and me, is the love of God the Father. The love of God is here. The Bible says, *"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)*. God loved you and me. This is the love of God, and this is God having saved us.

## *"I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself"*

A few days before He suffered this, some Greek people came to see Jesus. Some Greeks who had come up to worship at the feast came to Philip and asked to be allowed to see Jesus. Jesus sensed it at once. At first, Philip heard it and went and told Andrew. Philip was afraid and trembling, wondering whether Jesus might be seized and killed, but he came and reported it. He said that such and such people were looking for Jesus and asking to see Him. Jesus knew that the hour had come. Put yourselves in the position of Jesus. Is it not something that makes your flesh tremble? The word He spoke at this time was the word that if a grain of wheat dies, it produces much grain.

And He said, *"I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself" (John 12:32)*. According to the punishment of crucifixion, when the body of Jesus was laid on the cross, nails were driven through His hands and feet, and the cross was raised up, His feet were lifted up from the earth. It is the word that when He received baptism and was thus nailed to

the Cross and lifted up, He would draw many people to Himself. Jesus was now putting an end to our sins and setting the final period to them. He said, "Now there is no more sin; I have received all your judgment; now it is finished," and became our Savior. The Lord rose again three days after He died and appeared before the disciples. And He testified for forty days and ascended before their eyes, and He said that He would come again in the same form in which He ascended. That is the second coming. Jesus has become our Savior.

## The reformation of faith that we, the descendants of the Reformers, must carry out

Dear fellow believers, we must now carry out the reformation of faith. In the 1500s, many people in Europe, such as Martin Luther, Zwingli, John Knox, and Calvin, carried out the Reformation on this earth. Literally, they reformed religion a little. The descendants of those Reformers are you and I. You and I are now believing in Jesus as the descendants of the Reformers. But what are we believing on the basis of? We are believing in the creed that was made at the Council of Nicaea in A.D. 325, in the later period of the early Church. The Nicene Creed made there, the creed we call the Apostles' Creed—that is what we are believing in.

A man named Constantine, the emperor of Rome, convened a religious council, gathered together all the philosophers and religious leaders of that time, and made a creed, and its content is as follows: "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate." This was made by revising it

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thousands of times. What they made at first was a mess. If you look at the original, it was a mess, and this as it is now was made by revising it thousands of times over more than 500 years.

The 'Apostles' Creed' means the faith of the apostles. You may think of it as the faith of the apostles. "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary"—even up to here, if you dissect it in detail, it is a mess. But we must give them credit for it. Whom? Constantine, the emperor of Rome, and the religious leaders of that time. What would those people have known? They were people who until then had seized those who believed in Jesus and persecuted them so much, killed them, flayed them, and taken away all the property they had. What would they have known, those who had persecuted for nearly 300 years, from A.D. 70 to 325, suddenly gathering together? What was there that the adversaries knew?

Those people, in their own way, could say that the universe and all things were made by God, that Jesus came as the Savior, and that having come as the Savior, He was conceived and born through the body of Mary—up to there. From there on is the problem. After that, they said, "Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead," but something was left out in between. After Jesus was born of the virgin Mary, He received baptism from John the Baptist and bore the sin of mankind—this was left out. And after that it should have continued, "Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the remission of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting."

If Jesus becomes our sacrificial offering
of atonement, it will produce much grain

We are now carrying out the reformation of faith. We are the descendants of the Reformers, but because the Reformers believed on the basis of the Apostles' Creed, their descendants have believed in the Apostles' Creed until today. Since the Reformation was carried out around 1500, now in 2026, well over 500 years have passed. They are still preaching this to this day. But what do people not know? What do they know, and what do they not know? They know well that Jesus died on the Cross. They also know that Jesus rose again on the third day, ascended, and will come to this earth as the returning Lord.

Then what is it that the Reformationists do not know, that Christians today do not know? They do not know the fact that Jesus received baptism from John the Baptist and bore the sin of this world, went to the Cross and was nailed to it and suffered, and at the point of death said that it is finished and died, and rose again three days after He died, and saved us. They do not know this work of His receiving baptism and bearing our sins before going to the Cross.

## People believe in Jesus only formally, leaving out the baptism Jesus received from John

Because they do not know the work in which Jesus received baptism from John and had the sin of the world transferred to Him, they have become formal believers. Catholicism is like that, and so are the Christian believers all over the world in the churches established by the Reformers. Because the pastors and theologians who are the descendants of the Reformationists do not know the fact that Jesus bore our sins with the baptism He received from John, they cannot preach this and preach only the Cross. As a result, the believers have become nominal church

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members. These people are formal.

How can we know that this is formal? We hold the worship of the Lord's Supper. Now, let us try this. At the Lord's Supper, we break bread. In the Catholic Church, they make white bread called a wafer and hold the Lord's Supper with it. After reading the words of the Lord's Supper, the priest says, "Take, eat; this is My body which is for you." Then, if one sticks out one's tongue, he places one on it, and if one holds out one's palm, he puts one on the palm and has them eat that bread. And there is wine filled to the brim, but that wine the priest drinks. Saying, "This is My blood which is shed for you, the blood that remits your sins," he drinks that cup. The wine is not given to the church members; only the bread is given to the church members.

While doing so, they acknowledge that since you have eaten the bread and the wine by faith, you have obtained eternal life and received the remission of sins. This is a formality. In the Protestant churches of the Reformers, too, they pass around bread or sponge cake at the Lord's Supper. Only the baptized believers share a little of it and eat. And they pass around tiny cups of wine and all drink. While saying that Jesus has saved us, the baptism of Jesus does not come up at the Lord's Supper. In Catholicism, too, they do not say that this bread has anything to do with the baptism of Jesus. They do not know. Because it was left out, if one adds and preaches the baptism Jesus received from John, one is hated, so one cannot preach it. Constantine was merely an army general, a man who did not know Christianity, who suddenly became emperor and introduced Christianity as the religion of Rome in order to unite the people into one. Constantine gathered people and had them make a creed, but in the creed they made, the baptism of Jesus was left out.

So in Christianity, too, while passing around the bread at the

Lord's Supper, they do not give this sermon. They do not speak of the baptism Jesus received from John. They should say that Jesus received baptism from John the Baptist and bore the sin of this world and went to the Cross and was nailed to it, but they speak only of the Cross. They say, "This is My body, take and eat; this is My blood, take and drink," and preach that Jesus saved you and me with His precious blood. So for people, the baptism Jesus received from John is left out completely, and since they believe in Jesus as the Savior only formally, the sin in their hearts does not disappear.

Catholicism is like that, and so is Christianity all over the world. That is why we must carry out the reformation of faith. They are all formal. So no matter how much they believe in Jesus, sin still remains in their hearts. So they say that they are saved sinners. Dear fellow believers, if you have paid off all your debt, you are not a debtor, are you? And yet they say, "I am still a debtor." They say it is because they will go into debt again afterward.

But Jesus had the sin of mankind transferred to Him once and for all with the baptism He received from John and went to the Cross and was nailed to it. He paid the full price for the judgment of sin with His blood, with His death, with His suffering, and by being despised, and finished it all. The last word He spoke was the word that it is finished, and so He died. He rose again from the tomb on the third day, testified to the disciples and to people for some forty days, and ascended before the eyes of the people, saying that He would come again. And telling them to teach them to observe all that He had commanded, He said, *"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19–20)*. What would that be?

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What is it that Jesus came to this earth and did? God the Father, the Son, and God the Holy Spirit planned our salvation together. According to that plan, God the Father sent the Son to this earth and had Him be born through the body of Mary, had Him receive baptism from John the Baptist and bear our sins, had Him be nailed to the Cross and receive the judgment of sin, and had Him rise again from the dead, and so saved us. It is the word that they must preach that work, namely the baptism and the death on the Cross, so that people are saved, and make them disciples, so that those who have become disciples in turn become those who preach the baptism Jesus received from John and the Cross.

The last word Jesus spoke to the disciples was to make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Baptism is that important. This is because the work in which the Lord came to this earth to save us and had our sins transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John is important. That Jesus died hung on the Cross is the result of His having had all the sins of the world transferred to Him. Dear fellow believers, do you understand? Yes, you do.

## Without the baptism Jesus received from John, His death has nothing to do with us

We must carry out the reformation of faith. How must we do it? We do not believe in the Nicene Creed. It is printed in the hymnal, so we just have it, but we do not recite it and do not need to do anything with it. We must have a creed of faith of our own. It is the creed of faith that the apostles and saints of the early Church believed in long ago. Jesus, together with God the

Father and the Holy Spirit, created the universe and all things by His word. And mankind sinned and came to be cursed and to go to hell. Because of the death that Satan the devil had brought, mankind came to tremble before the devil and to fear its own death. To save this mankind from sin, Jesus, the Son of God the Father, came to this earth according to the Father's plan, received baptism from John the Baptist, and bore our sins. And He went to the Cross, died, and rose again, and became our Savior. And we are waiting for that Jesus, the returning Lord, who will come to judge the living and the dead when the time comes. When that time comes, we will go to the Lord's kingdom and enjoy eternal life. It must be rewritten like this.

To carry out the reformation of faith, first of all, the Apostles' Creed must be set aside. It says, "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth," but did God the Father make heaven and earth? Jesus created the universe and all things by His word. At that time, the Father was also present and the Holy Spirit was also present, so the triune God made them together. But who was the actual worker there? It was Jesus. We must know it concretely like this.

We must carry out the reformation of faith. Even if we accept all of the Nicene Creed and the Apostles' Creed that the Reformers have, we must insert the word that is not recorded there, namely this word that Jesus received baptism from John the Baptist and bore the sin of this world, and establish it anew and believe it. And we must become reformers who believe again with a corrected faith, a faith that spreads this faith to the whole world, and preach it. Because people do not know this, even though they believe in Jesus, they are all sinners, and even though they believe in Jesus, they do not know being born again of water and the Spirit. They cannot preach. They begin boldly, then stammer, and then, when it does not work out later, they

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say that Jesus saved us with His precious blood.

Did the Lord come to this earth and save us simply by dying? It is true that Jesus came to save us, but if He had saved us only by His death, His death is not a death for us but His own death alone. His resurrection is His own resurrection alone. It has nothing to do with us. For Jesus to have something to do with us, He must have come to save sinners, had our sins transferred to Him with the baptism from John, died on the Cross, and risen again. Only then does all the rest also have a connection with us. We have no interest in His sacrifice and His death on the Cross that have no connection with you and me.

If the next-door neighbor wins a 20-trillion-won lottery, that person and we have nothing to do with each other. It only makes us envious for nothing. We curse him inwardly, saying, may he be cursed because of that. It is because 20 trillion won has come in. It is said that the first thing lottery winners do is to replace their wives. And they change their cars, sell their houses, leave that neighborhood, and try to spend all the money on a new wife, a new car, and a new house, it is said. Then does that wife have anything to do with her husband having taken the 20 trillion won, or not? She has nothing to do with it. A curse has come upon her.

Jesus came to save us sinners living on this earth, received baptism from John, and bore our sins. That is why His dying on the Cross also has to do with us. His being made to suffer, shedding His blood on the Cross, saying that it is finished, and dying also have to do with us. His rising again from the dead, ascending, and coming again as the returning Lord, and His making His kingdom and giving it to us, all have to do with you and me. Jesus is our Savior and our Creator. He came to this earth through the body of Mary, bore our sins with the baptism He received from John the Baptist, and had all our sins transferred to Him. To receive the judgment for our sins, He

gave up His own body on the Cross, shed all the blood in His heart, received suffering and contempt, and came to His death. And He rose again three days after He died, became our Savior, and prepared the kingdom of heaven for us. That Lord is truly the One who has to do with us. This is because He is the One who has done everything for us. Otherwise, that Lord has nothing to do with us.

It is said that the older sister of a certain pastor attends a gathering commonly called the Salvation Sect. Gatherings led by a few people are called the Salvation Sect, and what they preach there without exception is the Cross. They are religious people. Dear fellow believers, why are those people religious people? Because a person who makes up doctrines in his own way and believes them is called a religious person. People believe in Jesus formally and are still sinners. But we believe that Jesus received baptism from John, bore our sins, had our sins transferred to Him, and went to the Cross. Therefore, in this 21st century, when the second coming of the Lord is near, we must spread a reformed faith as reformers of faith.

## The reformation of believing according to the Bible, beyond the Nicene Creed

The literature ministry we are doing these days is that very work. Long ago I put out 65 books, and I regarded that as having done enough. I had done all the essential things. For the theologians of the whole world and all people to know how Jesus saved us and how He was judged, 65 books are not lacking in the least. So I quit. Long ago, a certain deacon, when I asked him to revise the manuscripts, revised them and drew the pictures, too, and so all 65 books were made. And I said, I should finish

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about here; there is much more I could do, but this much is enough, and I finished. With the same heart as Jesus, who said that it is finished, I finished, saying that this much will do.

But as time passed, a certain foreign brother did something out of place. Perhaps he had studied theology; he asked why we had not written such and such things in our books. I had cut out all the superfluous things and had stated in great detail why Jesus came to this earth and was born to save mankind, why He received baptism from John, why He died on the Cross, and why He rose again from the dead. I had made it so that if one knows only this, there is nothing lacking in the least for receiving the remission of sins and living a life of faith. But that brother says that the things that the unregenerate people of the world talk about should also be put in here. If we put such things in, we become just like those people. So I had left them out on purpose, but that brother, perhaps out of concern, tried to put in what he knew. So I said, "You are touching the whiskers of a sleeping lion; I was going to stop now, but you are making it so that I cannot keep still," and I took up my pen again. Since I was doing it anyway, I resolved that now I would not speak only of theology, but would go beyond theology, beyond doctrine, beyond denominations, and beyond the Reformers, and carry out the reformation of faith.

First, I resolved to thoroughly shatter the Nicene Creed. I will prove this concretely and historically and record it all. Why one is saved by believing in Jesus, what relationship the baptism Jesus received from John has with those who believe in Jesus now—I am writing it all down, applying everything from beginning to end. Christian history is about 2000 years old, and since I am setting aside all that has been established until now and developing it anew just as it appears in the Bible, there is much that is slow and gets blocked. How many denominations

and theologians are there in the world? I must dig up all that they have said, compare it with the Bible, and say, you have gone wrong because of this, and the Bible says this. The Reformers, too, were people who tried to follow what the Bible intends to say.

I am now preaching to you just as the Bible says. The Bible I have has only the word in it. This notebook, too, because my memory is lacking, has only the word recorded in it. The moment you look at commentaries and the like, your faith is ruined. You are eating leaven. I have dictionaries. I have Hebrew and Greek concordances, and I have an English dictionary, a Chinese-character dictionary, and a Korean dictionary. Dictionaries are what I need, but theologians have put in far too many things besides the Bible. If you read it as they say, the meaning of the Bible vanishes completely. That is why in our fellowship we try to read purely the Korean Revised Version, this Bible with nothing else recorded in it. It is because we try to believe just as the word of the Bible says.

Catholicism held many councils, and its own theologians made doctrines, but we do away with all of that. Even just that, interpreted by the Bible and all spoken out, would be enormous. If you look at what was resolved at their councils, there is the doctrine of papal infallibility. It says that what the Pope says is the same as the word of God. The words of man are the words of man, and the word of God is the word of God. Whether Pope or pastor or evangelist or priest or anyone at all, no one can make his words equal to the word of God. When I believe the word of God as it is and preach it as it is, this is the word of God; but if a person closes this Bible and says that his own words are the word of God, that person is possessed by a demon and has become a slave of the devil.

On top of the doctrine of papal infallibility, they say that

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Mary has been elevated to a deity. In the very old days, they said only about this much: Mary, who received grace, a woman who received special love above other women and was used by Jesus. But through their own councils and papal declarations, they officially set down doctrines exalting Mary as 'the Mother of God' and 'the Queen of Heaven,' and taught the church members so. So they composed a prayer and make them pray, "Queen of Heaven, pray for us." If one is the emperor of Rome, one should just do the work of an emperor, but they inserted the formula that the emperor of Rome is the emperor of the Church, the Pope, and laid out their logic. Where are there such absurd people? It is an outrageous thing to do. Then is the president of our country the head of Christianity in our country? If the president of our country came to this place here, he would attend as one of the sinners, as one person to be saved; in this world of faith, he would be nothing more than a person in the lowest place. Only as one who holds the political power of our country and leads this nation as president, we use the honorific "Mr. President" for him and treat him as president. Just that much, and he cannot be involved in any matter within the church. Preaching the word is something that cannot be, and it makes no sense at all.

If one becomes emperor, does one become the head of the Church and the successor of Peter? That in itself makes no sense. Those who used to seize those who believed in Jesus and kill them by cutting open their bellies and cutting off their heads, and who were always doing so, now needed to live by the Christian faith. So it means: I am the emperor of Rome, but since I believe in God, I am a disciple who has inherited the faith of Peter, whom God established. They did so in order to set up the logic that since he is the head of the faith, the Pope, the emperor of the Church, and the emperor of the world, no power can drag him

down from that place.

But God does not acknowledge that. A person in the church who acknowledges that is a foolish person. You may do only one of the two, it says; become the emperor of the world if you will, but you cannot become the Pope of the Church. But those people kept on saying that the emperor of Rome is the Pope, and that is how the Pope has come down to this day. Even now, those called Popes think that they are the king and emperor of the world and conduct politics that way. We do not even want to be involved in that. We do away with the Nicene Creed. It is not that we do away with its content completely; we want to put in what was left out of its content and believe. And having put it in, we believe it and spread it. This is the reformation of faith.

## Baptize and preach this until I come

Jesus came to this earth to save you and me, and before He was hung on the Cross, He received baptism from John the Baptist and bore the sins of you and me. And He was nailed to the Cross and received on the Cross all the curse for the sins of you and me. Before He breathed His last, He said that it is finished and breathed His last. While the Lord was alive, He had said that He would come back to life on the third day. So they sealed the tomb with a stone and set guards to keep it securely. But an angel came down from heaven, and the Roman soldiers, terrified, all ran away. Jesus had risen again and was not in that place. Jesus began to show Himself to His disciples.

After rising again, He testified in this world for some forty days. He told them to put their hands into the print of the nails, having that same body. And He taught what He had to teach and told them to preach this. Ascending before their eyes, He said

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that in the same form as you see, I will come again and take you to My kingdom to live there; until I come, you must preach this. He said, *"Baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you,"* and He told them to hold the Lord's Supper. Because He told us to hold the Lord's Supper, we hold the Lord's Supper, and because He told us to baptize, we baptize. Just as I receive baptism like this when we are baptized, when Jesus received baptism from John the Baptist, He had our sins transferred to Him, went to the Cross and died shedding His blood, rose again from the dead, and became the Savior who saved you and me. He told us to believe this, and also to preach it.

We must believe like this, preach like this, and carry out the reformation of faith like this. Until when? Until the Lord comes to this earth. The time for Him to come is almost here. Now the whole world is changing tremendously. Nature, the economy, everything is changing. Even so, mankind never surrenders quickly. Going on like this for 20 or 30 years, one day destruction will suddenly come upon this earth. Whether it will come some decades from now, some centuries from now, or some millennia from now, I do not know. This is because we have not yet preached the gospel fully and have not yet carried out the reformation of faith fully. To the extent that we carry out the reformation of faith, the Lord will bring forward the time of His second coming or put it off.

If until now I have preached the gospel of the water and the Spirit to people through 65 books, what I do from now on is to write books in order to carry out the reformation of faith. I will write books from this perspective. I am not writing this as my own. I am explaining everything by bringing up history and the word of the Bible.

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I do it because God tells me to do it; I do not want to write books anymore. I do not particularly like writing books. I am a person who originally does not like writing, and I like reading books. A person who writes books must know history and must investigate this and that. One must know something to be able to do it. And then, once the writing is done, it spreads all over the world, and if a book is written poorly, one only gets criticized and there is no effect at all.

Dear fellow believers, do not be fond of writing books. When you write a book, responsibility follows. Where is it determined whether I have written the book well or badly, whether I have preached properly what the Lord did? It is determined by whether or not people have read the booklets we sent and been saved, and it is not determined anywhere else. Even now, countless people all over the world are being saved. This testifies that Jesus was truly the God of truth.

It is not that I have written the books well; it is proving that the Lord has truly saved them and us. Jesus is the living God. We give thanks through our Lord, and we want the Lord to bless the reformation of faith we are carrying out. We want Him to keep us, and especially, in the literature ministry and the flower-calyx business, to keep all this work you are doing, to keep it from the hands of the adversaries, and to bless it. I have closed the word. ✉

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Sermon 3 by Paul C. Jong

# Jesus rose again to raise us from death

**< John 12:24-26 >**

**"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."**

Yesterday was Easter, that is, Easter Sunday. What kind of day is Easter Sunday? For people, it is a day for eating eggs. Because it is Easter Sunday, they boil eggs, write "Happy Easter" on them and stick it on, and after the worship service, they crack the eggs and eat them. They do so because it is mysterious that a chick comes out of what was an egg. Resurrection is to die and come back to life, and since there is no way to express that resurrection with any material thing, I understand that they express it lightly like that. When we look at life, in sports, too, there are teams that lose. There is a rule called a losers' revival round, in which the losing teams play each other again, win, come up, and fairly contend in strength with the team that won. So we sometimes say that someone has been revived. But the resurrection of Jesus is that He died and came back to life. What does the resurrection of Jesus have to do with us? I would like

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to share a little of the word on that part and close.

Let us read verse 24 once. *"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."* The Lord said that if a grain of wheat falls into the ground, is buried in the soil, dies, and rots, it produces much grain, but if it is not buried in the ground and does not die, it remains alone. This word is a word the Lord spoke concerning Himself. He spoke of the work He does after coming to this earth. Following the will of the Father, the Lord was born on this earth through the body of Mary in order to put on human flesh. The things He did after He came were all things He did for us, and the question is what that work has to do with us.

## The work God the Father planned for us

The Lord is the Son of God the Father. He came to this earth as the Son. To save us from sin, He first borrowed the body of a woman in order to become a man. He was conceived in Mary, and when the full term of pregnancy had passed, He was born on this earth. His coming was in order to save us from sin. The second thing He did was to receive baptism from John when He was thirty years old. He received baptism from John in order to bear the sin of us, mankind, that is, the sins of you and me. His birth, His receiving baptism, His death on the Cross, and His resurrection—all of these are for us.

Why is that? Because it is the work that God the Father planned. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are the same God, and He planned to save you and me, make us the children of God, and have us live together with Him forever. The birth, the baptism received from John, the crucifixion, the death, the

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resurrection, and the ascension that God the Father accomplished by sending His Son Jesus Christ to this earth—all of these are for you and me. Do we believe up to here? Yes, we do. Up to here, we believe.

We believe that the birth of Jesus was His coming as a man in order to save you and me from sin. Second, we believe that His receiving baptism from John the Baptist was also so that He would bear the sins of you and me. We believe that God brought down the judgment for the sins of you and me on His Son, and that Jesus died hung on the Cross in order to receive that judgment. If so, His resurrection, too, was in order to raise you and me again.

In reality, the things the Lord did after coming to this earth seem to be things the Lord did one-sidedly, but in fact they were things He did according to the justice and fairness of God. It is a work He planned and accomplished in order to save you and me from sin through these stages and raise us again, so that we would live forever with God without dying. He bore our sins with the baptism He received from John, died hung on the Cross, and came back to life, and it was God the Father who raised the Son. Jesus Himself knew it so, and God the Father, too, had said that He would surely raise Him.

Then what does His coming back to life have to do with you and me? When Easter Sunday comes around, people speak much about the resurrection. They often quote the word that the Apostle Paul spoke, *"If Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins!" (1 Corinthians 15:17)*. But what this resurrection really has to do with you and me is extremely important. The Lord worked to save you and me from sin and give us life, and to raise us again from death and have us live together with the Lord Himself. It means that as a result, God the Father raised the Son.

It is a fact that God sent His Son to this earth, too, in order to remove the sins of you and me, clothing Him in flesh and sending Him as the Savior. It is a fact that His receiving baptism from John and bearing our sins was also for you and me. It is a fact that His dying hung on the Cross was also in order to receive in our place the judgment for the sins of you and me. But this resurrection, too, is a work in which God the Father raised the Son in order to raise you and me again from death. If Jesus had not risen again from the dead, our faith would be a vain faith. This is a work that God the Father planned, but ultimately, what is it for? It is a work He planned in order to save us from sin and make us the children of God, and to raise us again and resurrect us so that we would enjoy riches and glory together with God forever.

## Only when there is the resurrection is the work of salvation completed

To put it in simple words, it is like this. When we go out to do interior construction work, we make a contract with the customer. We make a contract that it is so many pyeong and we will do it for so much per pyeong, and we do all the work. But what is it that is finally exchanged in that transaction? Isn't it money? If money is not exchanged at the end, this construction is not completed. If the final payment has not been received, that work has not been completed.

From the very time God the Father made man, He made him in the image of God with the purpose of making him a child of God and living together with him forever. Because of that purpose, in order to give life to you and me, He sent His Son and raised us again through His birth, the baptism He received from

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John, the death on the Cross, and the resurrection. It was precisely for you and me that He planned and carried out that work. If it had not been a plan to give life to you and me, there would have been no need to raise the Son from death. If only sin were removed and that were the end, He could have ended it when He went into the tomb. But what is the final conclusion? It is that He rose again from the dead and came back to life, and that God seated that Son at the right hand of the Father in the kingdom of God.

Because all the things Jesus did after coming to this earth were things He did to save you and me from sin, He did them in this way in order to accomplish that work very fairly and justly. Therefore, if we now believe and live without sin and then die, we will be born once and die once, like Jesus Christ. If the Lord comes to this earth early, we can go like Enoch without tasting death. But if not, we die once and go before God. Then on what basis can we confirm that we will come back to life? We can base it precisely on the fact that God the Father raised the Son.

## He raises us again by the first resurrection

God raised the Son in order to raise you and me again from death by the first resurrection in the last days. The Son, Jesus Christ, originally had no need to suffer death and could not die; He is the One who lives forever. He did that work in order to give perfect salvation, eternal life, and resurrection to you and me, that is, to those who believe. Therefore, that you and I will come back to life is ultimately confirmed by the fact that God the Father raised the Son. The Lord could also have risen again by Himself, but the Bible says that God the Father raised Him. That God the Father raised the Son is the word that on the last

day He will raise you and me in the same way.

The Bible speaks of this work as follows. It is written, *"Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years" (Revelation 20:6)*. After the thousand years have passed, there is the second resurrection, and those who come back to life in the second resurrection are judged before the white throne. Those who come back to life by the second resurrection are resurrected in order to go into the eternal fire. Therefore, man is a being who lives forever. This is because human beings are beings who resemble the image of God.

As I greet this Easter, I think about it. When we sing an Easter hymn vigorously a couple of times, saying that the Lord has risen again, Easter passes by like that. But what does that resurrection really have to do with us? That the Lord gives us life is what we believe, but it is that just as God the Father raised the Son, He raises us in the same way. By raising the Son, He has shown very justly that He will surely raise us, too. That God sent the Son to this earth is not because there was sin in the Son. It is a work He did in order to save you and me from sin, give us eternal life, and raise us again, so that we would live well with God forever. Dear fellow believers, do you believe so? Therefore, you and I live again.

Death cannot have dominion over us forever. We will go before God someday. There are those who go before God first, and there are those who remain alive until the Lord comes. The Lord said that if a grain of wheat falls into the ground and does not die, it remains alone, but if it dies, it produces much grain. The Lord came to this earth, was born, received baptism from John, was hung on the Cross, and rose again from the dead, and how much grain has He produced, and how many souls has He

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saved? He has saved you and me and has saved the souls all over the whole world. He has not only saved us from sin; by that work He has shown that just as the Lord came back to life, He will surely raise us, too, on the last day. And He has said that He applies it to us in reality. We will rise again. There is coming back to life from death. We will have the first resurrection.

We have been born again through this word, but we must live with coming back to life from death as our final goal, both as we greet Easter Sunday and as we live our life of faith day by day. If there were no dying and coming back to life for us, if there were no raising of us by God the Father, what meaning would there be? But God clearly had our sins transferred to the Son through the baptism He received from John, had the Son be judged in our place, and raised Him again from death. All the suffering, death, and resurrection that the Son received after coming to this earth are for you and me, and He has shown that He will surely carry them out for us, too, just like a carbon copy. We know and believe that we will rise again, but we must live with it in our hearts that just as God the Father raised the Son from death, He will raise us, too, on the last day. Dear fellow believers, do you understand? Do you believe? Yes, you do.

## *"If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me"*

Let us read just one more verse and share a little of the word before closing. It is verse 26. *"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."* If one wants to serve the Lord, one must follow the Lord. Following the Lord in one's own way is not following the Lord but following oneself. Therefore, things like one's own plans, one's own temperament,

and one's own aims must be set aside. Since the Lord says, *"Follow Me,"* we must know in which direction the Lord is leading us and where the destination is, and follow. He said that if you want to serve the Lord, follow the Lord.

What would it be to follow the Lord? The Lord leads us in the direction of spreading the gospel throughout the whole world. There is one work the Lord has entrusted to us on this earth, something He commanded after saving us. He said, *"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19–20)*. That is the very spreading of the gospel. It is the word to spread the gospel of the water, the blood, and the Spirit to the whole world. The first work is that God the Father sent the Son and saved us on this earth, and the second work, after saving us, is the spreading of the gospel. He has us preach so that those who have not yet been saved may be saved. That is why He tells us to follow the Lord.

Our Lord wants the gospel to be fully spread on this earth. So He is entrusting that work to us. The true Church of God must not have any other purpose. It must set its purpose on the spreading of the gospel. We must preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit to the whole world, and to do that, we must follow the Lord. If we serve the Lord while following the Lord, God the Father loves us. If we serve and follow the Lord, even if there were no other reward at all, God loves you and me.

## God honors those who follow the Lord

When one receives the love of God, one receives protection and blessing in both spirit and body. Having many other things

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is not a blessing. Being rich in heart is a blessing, and living according to the will of God is a blessing. Can having many possessions in this world be a blessing? However many possessions one may have, if one's heart is not rich, one is not rich and is nothing at all. Those who are rich in heart are those who follow and obey the will of the Lord, and who, in obedience to that will, spread the gospel to the whole world and live for others. Those who live for those who have not yet been saved are the truly rich. God the Father has said that He loves and honors such people.

Since I met the Lord and have followed and served Him, I have been living truly receiving much love. I want to follow and serve the Lord and spread the gospel without any selfish motive. I am doing it only because it is the work the Lord wants. But I am experiencing that the Lord is with me in the things I think about and plan, keeps them and helps them, and blesses them so that they are accomplished. That is why I say that the Lord loves me. Not only I, but you, too, if you serve the Lord and serve the gospel, receive love from the Lord. This is a settled fact. Since the word of God is all truth, I truly give thanks. I do not know how to give thanks.

The way I have lived has been like this from long ago. After meeting the Lord, I have no need to be greedy. What is the Lord's is mine, and what is mine is the Lord's, so there is no need for it. Long ago, the person I respected most was General Choe Yeong. The reason I respected him was that he said, "Regard gold as you would a stone." The thought came to me at a young age that if one truly regards gold as a stone, selfish motives disappear, and if greed disappears from the heart, would one not do everything justly and fairly? I thought it would be very good to do so.

After meeting the Lord, when we are to get a place of

worship, we pray. We pray even up to the date on which we have to move the next day. We never hurry. It is enough if we pray until then and God gives it. Even now, I tell the ministers not to hurry when getting a place of worship. I tell them never to hurry, because God has prepared a building at a very appropriate and fitting time and is waiting for us.

When I pray, God gives. The Apostle John says as follows: *"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)*. It means that if there are no qualms in the heart, if we pray, "I need this, please give it," He gives. I believe that word just as it is. So I pray, and God gives. He said that if we follow the Lord and serve the Lord, He will honor us. God honors us. How much He honors us, the righteous! Isn't that so? We are truly living honored. I truly give thanks. I will close the word here. ✉

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Sermon 4 by Paul C. Jong

# To believe in Jesus is to believe in the love of God

**< John 12:35-46 >**

**"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. 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.'"**

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## *"While you have the light, believe in the light"*

I will continue from the word I preached this afternoon. Jesus said, *"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."* It is the word that he who walks in darkness does not know that he is going to hell. In verse 36, He said, *"While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light."* Our Lord planned to die hung on the Cross in a few days and ascend into heaven. That is why He spoke this word.

Then how is it now? Now the people of God who have received the remission of sins are on this earth and in the Church. There are the righteous and the workers of God, menservants and maidservants, and so there is light. Having no sin is light, and working for what is right is light, the opposite of darkness. In this world, there is a counterpart to everything. Where there is good, there is evil; where there is light, there is darkness; and where there is the true God, there is a false god. In the same way, the Lord told them to believe while the light was among them.

In the old days, too, there were many who believed, and it says that even among the rulers there were many who believed. Rulers, to put it in today's terms, are those in high office among public officials. They did believe in Jesus as the Savior, but they could not speak of it openly. The reason, it says, was that they regarded the glory of men more highly than the glory of God. Among the political forces of Israel at that time, the Pharisees had the most power. The Sadducees were not believers in the word but politicians, and the Pharisees were people who believed in the law, the word of God, literally, and these people did not believe in Jesus as the Savior but opposed Him. Therefore, if one said that one believed in Jesus, one was hated

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by that mainstream society, by those who, in vulgar terms, were doing well. So it says that even though they believed, they could not speak of what they believed.

## Those who loved the glory of men more than the glory of God

Dear fellow believers, how should we be? Should we reveal the glory of God, or should we like the glory of men? Should we like glory before men, or should we like being acknowledged before God? We should of course like being acknowledged before God. But those who walk in darkness, even though there is still light, do not recognize that light and do not receive it. The glory of God means wanting God to be exalted. Should not God be exalted more? Should we not fear the word of God more, respect God more, and regard the authority of God more highly? But they did not do so.

They were conscious of people's eyes. They worried, "If I say that I believe in Jesus as the Savior, what will people think of me?" When Jesus came to this earth and did the work of salvation, those who followed Jesus were very few, and those who opposed Jesus were enormously many. Therefore, at that time, even a person with human wisdom was mocked if he said that he believed in Jesus. It was an age in which one had to listen to the people of Judaism, who did not believe in Jesus and acknowledged only the law of God, and act with the same faith as theirs in order to be acknowledged. That is why, even though people believed, they could not say that they believed, and some people did not believe, thinking that they might suffer loss if they believed.

## Believing in God and believing in Jesus are the same

Dear fellow believers, is believing in Jesus as the Savior, as you and I do, different from believing in God, or is it exactly the same? Is believing in that God whom everyone thinks of, the Creator God who made the universe, the same as the faith by which we believe in Jesus today, or is it not the same? Are you thinking, "If I try to answer, is this the right answer or not? If I speak wrongly I will be disgraced, and if I keep quiet I will at least be in the middle, so I had better keep quiet"? The right answer is that they are the same.

We believe that there is the invisible God, and that that Creator made this universe and all things, nature, and the world of the Milky Way, and made everything. Dear fellow believers, does God exist, or does He not? He exists. God exists, and you and I believe in Him. Do you believe in God? Yes, you do. First of all, whether one believes or does not believe, that is what is important first. A person who says that he does not believe in God has no God in his heart. But God exists. Even if that person does not believe, God exists. If one believes, God is in one's heart. This is the law of faith. In the heart of a person who believes, God is present, but in the heart of a person who does not believe, God is not present.

But today's word is the word to believe in Jesus while there is the light. Jesus is the light. The Lord said, *"I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness."* Also, because He is life and the Savior, He says that he who believes in the Lord obtains new life and salvation. He also said, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6)*. He said that Jesus Himself is the way to the kingdom of heaven, that His words are the truth

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and true words, and that if one believes His words, one obtains life and eternal life and goes before God the Father and lives forever. Jesus says that He is the Savior and God. He says everything. So if we express Jesus in a word, He is light. Not darkness, but light.

## Does your inner man like the light?

Dear fellow believers, do you like the light, or do you like the darkness? Surely no one would say that he likes the darkness, but the children of darkness would like the darkness. I, too, in the very old days before I was born again, sometimes liked a slightly cloudy day better than a day with a clear sky. Because my heart was dark, I thought that if the weather was too bright, my heart would be completely exposed, and so there were times when I thought like that. Of course, after meeting the Lord, I like it when the weather is clear. When the weather is cloudy, first of all, I do not feel good, and also there is more work to do. When it snows a lot, there is more work, and when it rains, there are many things to clear away before the rain. It is inconvenient to go about getting rained on. So I like clear weather. I do not like it too hot; it should be warm.

Jesus is the light. Then, as to whether we like the light or like the darkness, most of us say that we like the light. But not your outer man—does your inner man like the light? Does it like God? Does it like Jesus? Does it like that Jesus Christ has removed your sins? Does it like the salvation given to you? Whether it likes that or does not like it is the question. A person who likes the light believes in the light. Therefore, we must clearly divide light and darkness. And we must decide what it is that we like, and even if it does not suit our hearts, we must hold on to that

light and believe. Only then can we deny ourselves and overcome.

So is believing in Jesus as the Savior, as you and I do today, exactly the same as believing in that God whom everyone conventionally calls God? It is exactly the same. In fact, God exists, and that God is good and is light. He is beautiful, gives us salvation, loves us, and wants to give us good things and does give them. But there is no way to meet that God. How do we meet Him? Can we see Him with our eyes? Can we hear Him with our ears? We cannot meet Him.

So it says, *"God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16)*. God made all the people living on this earth in His own image and sent them out into the world, and He loved all those people and gave His only begotten Son. Through Jesus, that is, the Son of God the Father, we come to know what kind of One God is: that He is the God of love, the God of salvation, and the God of mercy, and the One who hates sin. And through that Son, we come to know that God has saved you and me from sin.

## To believe in Jesus is to believe in the love of God

So Jesus spoke as follows. Let us read verses 44 and 45 once. *"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.'"* A person who receives Jesus as the Savior and believes that He has saved you and me with the water, the blood, and the Spirit believes that God has saved me from sin and loved me through His Son. God loves you and me, but in that love there was no medium in between. There was no bridge

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connecting God and us. Heaven and earth are too far apart, and the One who built a bridge in between and connected them is Jesus. And the One who sent that bridge is God the Father, that is, the Father of Jesus.

Our believing in Jesus is believing that God loved me so much that He wanted to remove my sins, and that He sent His Son and loved me like this. That is, it is believing in the love of God. Believing in the love of God is precisely believing in Jesus. To believe in Jesus is to believe in the love of God, and he who sees Jesus sees God. Since we cannot see God, there was no way to know what kind of One God is.

But Jesus came to this earth and gave His own body for us. He received baptism from John and bore our sins in His own body, died on the Cross in our place, and did all that work. Through that work, Jesus let us know what kind of One God is and how much He loves you and me. Therefore, through Jesus, the word that God is love becomes understandable to us. We come to know that God is like this, and that God is a just One.

There is a saying that one hates the sin but does not hate the person. It is something the judges of this world say. God is also like that. He hates sin. But He does not hate you and me, who were born on this earth resembling the image of God. Therefore, because those people whom He does not hate, the people who resemble the image of God, go to hell, He sent His Son to save them. God passed our sins on to His Son Jesus Christ with the baptism He received from John, judged that Son in our place, and raised Him again from death, and so gave life to you and me again. This is the love of God, and this is the salvation that God gives us.

So our believing in God is coming to know God and believe in Him through Jesus, the Son of God the Father. It is coming to be able to believe that God is love. Dear fellow believers, do you

understand? He who sees Jesus sees God, and he who believes in Jesus believes in God. The word 'Jesus' means Savior, and the word 'Christ' means the Anointed One, that is, the King whom God has established. Therefore, through Jesus, we come to know fully what kind of One God the Father is. Dear fellow believers, do you understand what I am saying? It is very simple.

## A person who acknowledges God finds it easy to believe in Jesus

Then are you and I today those who believe in God, or not? We are those who believe. Though He is invisible to the eyes, a person who fundamentally does not acknowledge God and says that there is no God cannot be saved. One must have the faith that acknowledges God and believes that He is a good One, the God of love, the God of truth, and the good God. One must acknowledge God and believe in God. Does God exist, or does He not? He exists. Though invisible to the eyes, God exists, and you and I must believe in that God. Only then can we know and believe the love by which He saved you and me from sin through His only Son, and so come to salvation. So that faith is extremely important.

But on this earth there are many people who do not believe in God. In Buddhism in particular, they say, "In heaven above and on earth below, I alone am honored," that is, that between heaven and earth there is no one but oneself. That is what Siddhartha, that is, the Buddha, says. The word Buddha means a god. It means that one is God oneself. So they say that all people are gods and little Buddhas. They say that all people are gods, creators, and makers of the universe. That is pride, and that is opposing God.

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We must acknowledge God in our hearts. A person who does not acknowledge God cannot believe even when the Son of God comes, and even if He has saved us, it has nothing to do with that person. Because he does not acknowledge God, salvation does not come into his heart. So those who have received the remission of sins today are those who acknowledge God.

Dear fellow believers, do you acknowledge God? Yes, you do. Only when we acknowledge God do we come to be saved. Through faith in the right thing that Jesus did to save you and me, that is, the righteousness of Jesus, you and I come to salvation. So I hope you will first examine whether you believe in God or not, whether you acknowledge God or not. A person who acknowledges God finds it extremely easy to believe in Jesus. God the Father sent His Son, and that Son, Jesus, in order to save you and me from sin, received baptism from John, died on the Cross, rose again, and saved us. How easy is that? It is very easy. Isn't that so? But what if one does not believe in God? Even if the Son of God came to this earth and saved us from sin, since one does not believe in God, that the Son saved one has nothing to do with one. This is because only God can save you and me, and He has saved us.

Dear fellow believers, a human being cannot save a human being. Can a person serving a sentence in prison rescue another person who is in prison? He cannot. Can a sinner save a sinner? He cannot. So in receiving salvation, too, one must stand in the right line. In the world, too, to get ahead, one must stand in the right line. Do you know that? In the world, too, one must stand in the right line.

A sinner cannot save a sinner. When a person who believes in God, that is, a person who believes in God the Father and the gospel of Jesus Christ and has the Holy Spirit in his heart, preaches the gospel, if only you acknowledge God, salvation

comes into you. But if a person who does not believe in God believes and preaches only the gospel, salvation does not come. There are two cases in which salvation does not come. The first is that salvation does not come because the hearer does not acknowledge God, and the second is that the preacher is a sinner, and a sinner cannot save a sinner. This is absolute.

From overseas, news comes every day that people have been saved through our booklets. We have now translated the books into more than 120 languages and posted them on our website. They are saved just by reading the books, and they say that they will do the work of spreading the gospel of the water and the Spirit. In places like Britain, they make a small cart, load it with books, and go around handing them out. Europeans have very strong pride. The people of our country have strong pride, too, but those people have stronger pride, and the people of advanced countries like Japan also have very strong pride. If they did not believe, it would be something they could not do for shame. If I bought you a cart and told you to write "Free Books" on it, load it with books, and go somewhere and hand them out, would you be bold, or would you be ashamed? Even we who have been saved are ashamed. But because we believe, we can do it. Because we acknowledge God, we can do it, and if one does not acknowledge God, it is hard to do.

Though invisible to the eyes, God exists and is present everywhere. Some people, in what is called pantheism, say that everything is god. That is a wrong way of speaking. Since God exists, one should say that God is present in all places; the pantheism that says that everything is God is very wrong. Jesus said, *"I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness" (John 12:46)*. Jesus came to this earth so that we would not become sinners. God exists, and He sent His Son to this earth. And He came and saved

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us with the water, the blood, and the Spirit. He came to this earth to make us children of light and children of God, to have us live forever in the kingdom of God, and to keep us from going to hell.

He said that he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going. A person who is going to hell, a person who does not believe in God, a person who does not acknowledge God, a person who does not acknowledge the gospel of the water and the Spirit, does not know where he is going. He does not know where he is going now. I have seen a traffic sign posted on the road that said, "Where are you going right now? What is so urgent that you are trying to go so fast?" It means, are you going so fast because you want to die? Even among those who are born into this world and claim to know God, there are many who have not heard this gospel, are not saved, and go to hell. Even though they know full well that they are going to hell, because they do not know, they have no certainty. Even as they go to hell, they go without the certainty that they are going to hell. As for salvation, one goes to heaven only if there is certainty, only if there is faith, but as for hell, one goes there automatically even without certainty.

## A person who has a desire is saved

Dear fellow believers, Jesus said to believe in the light while there is still light. What you are doing in the Church while you are in this Church is light. It is all good, and it is the work of God. Isn't that so? It is the work of God. That people overseas are saved through the booklets, that we send the booklets, and that these few members do this work and serve the gospel—is it not all a miracle? It is a miracle. Doing a great work from a small place is a miracle, but doing much work from a big place is not

a miracle but ordinary. Are we not now doing the work of handing out books to countless people? We are not doing work in which we earn money and only we ourselves eat well and live well. Are we not light? We are the light of the world.

When Jesus came to this earth, Jesus Himself was the light of the world. While He was here, if one believed in Him, one could be saved. After He went, He sent the Holy Spirit, who is light, to the disciples. The disciples were saved, and the Holy Spirit who was in the heart of Jesus is in the hearts of you and me today. Our working now is the light of the world, and you and I are now the light of the world. If people hear the gospel that you and I preach and believe, they receive salvation and blessing. So while you are in the Church now, you must be able to see that those in the Church who have first received the remission of sins are truly light and are those who do what is right. And you must also think about where you yourself want to belong.

At the very least, one must have the desire, "My deeds are lacking, but I want to belong to the light. I cannot belong to the light by myself, but I want to belong to the light by believing in the salvation God has given through His Son." One must have a desire for oneself. I want to become like that. I want to become a child of God. I want to go to the kingdom of heaven. One must have a desire; if there is no desire, how can there be salvation? A certain woman called the Syro-Phoenician woman followed after Jesus and desired that He heal her daughter, who was demon-possessed and sick. It means that when she came before Jesus, she had a heart that desired her daughter to be healed. That is why it is written that Jesus said, *"O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire. And her daughter was healed from that very hour" (Matthew 15:28)*.

What if there is no desire? God came to this world, but the

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world, though it was made through Him, did not receive Him and was not saved. Concerning those among them who receive Him, who accept Him, who truly desire to become children of God, desire to receive the remission of their sins, and desire to go to the kingdom of heaven, He said, *"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)*. A person who has such a desire is saved, and a person who has no desire, however much you follow him around and tell him to believe, believe, is not saved, because he has no desiring heart. It is so no matter how much God wants to give the gift.

A person who is not saved, a person who does not desire to become righteous, a person who does not desire to do what is right, a person who does not desire to be blessed by God, does not fail to receive because God does not give salvation and blessing. It is not because God does not give, but because you yourselves do not desire it that you do not receive it. If only there is a desire, anyone can receive. Since it says, *"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household" (Acts 16:31)*, one has only to believe. If one desires to be saved by believing, one believes and is saved. This salvation is the salvation of the water, the blood, and the Spirit, and it is the truth that cannot be compared with anything else. One has only to believe it as it is. It is because you did not have a desiring heart when you heard the gospel that salvation did not come. Even when one hears the same gospel, if one has no desiring heart, salvation does not come. That is an amazing thing.

Dear fellow believers, do you want to become right workers? You must have a desiring heart. If you have the heart, "God, I want to become a right worker," God helps you as much as you like. Then when you pray, God says, "I will give you strength and blessing so that you can take on that work." Without a

desiring heart, it does not work. There is a saying that even the position of a minister of state cannot be held if one does not want it oneself. However high a position, like that of a minister of state, one cannot hold it if one does not desire it oneself.

Do we desire to go to the kingdom of heaven? If there is a desiring heart, so that you can go by all means, God the Father sent His Son and saved you from sin. Dear fellow believers, do you believe in God? If you believe in God, you can believe in Jesus by all means. Since He is the Son of God and God sent that Son, what reason is there to refuse the Son of God while believing in God? Since the Son of God has done the work of saving you and me, what is there to refuse? Isn't that so? Yes, it is.

## Faith is believing what is not seen as though seeing it

Dear fellow believers, this is not my own story. Apart from the word of God, I tell other stories very poorly. Even when our ministers come and teach me things like gags, when I try to tell one, I am too embarrassed to tell it, and when I do tell it, the other person does not laugh. But because this word is the word of God, because fundamentally I believe in God, I can believe the word of God. Because I can believe it, I can preach it boldly and assert it. If I did not believe in God, how could I acknowledge the word of God and how could I preach it with conviction? So it is done by faith. By faith, one becomes righteous.

It says, *"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1)*, and *"faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17)*. First, one must believe in God. And through the word of God,

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we can be certain of what we believe, and then salvation comes.

It says, *"The just shall live by faith" (Romans 1:17)*. Though God is invisible to the eyes, we believe in God, believe that God exists, and believe that if we pray, He hears us. Also, because God has promised by His word, we pray according to that word. By believing what this word says, we receive the remission of sins, go to the kingdom of heaven, become the workers of God, and are blessed. It is all faith. Dear fellow believers, the world of faith is a very good thing. If all the worlds of this world are a three-dimensional world, what is a hundred-dimensional world? It is the world of faith. It is believing what is invisible to the eyes as though seeing it with the eyes.

My doing overseas missions like this is also faith. It is invisible to the eyes, but it is visible to the eyes of my heart. I want to preach the gospel to the whole world, but how do I preach it? Would it work if I went out and told people to believe in Jesus? If I put on a sash and shouted, "Believe in Jesus, go to heaven!" would people not say that I was a madman? I saw that Amazon was making and selling e-books. The thought came to me that it would work if I used those e-books. That is faith. We have the sermons translated, install an e-book program, make a website and sell e-books, advertise so that people come to our website, and send books to those who request them. That person reads our booklet, receives the remission of sins, and comes. This is faith. It is believing what is invisible to the eyes as though it were visible.

God, too, is invisible to the eyes, but it is believing that there is the Creator who made the universe. And it is believing that there is His law. There are two laws. God has given the law that leads to death and the law that leads to salvation. First, He gave the law, which leads to death. How does one keep it? One cannot keep it. So God gave the law of salvation, and through that law

of salvation, the Son of God saves us.

He saved us with the water, the blood, and the Spirit; making His Son Jesus Christ the sacrifice, He passed our sins on to that Son with the baptism He received from John, judged that Son on the Cross, and raised Him again from death, and so saved us. One has only to believe that. The way we are saved is to believe what God and the Son of God have done. Isn't it very easy? It is very easy. Because you hear it from me, it is very easy. If you tried to hear this word from the many people in the world who have studied theology, even if you packed a lunch and lived in their house until you grew old and died, you would not hear it. They cannot give you this word.

Dear fellow believers, when you read the Bible, do you come to realize it? When you read the law, you resolve that you must live like this, and yet you cannot keep it. And still you say, I must live like this. When one was born fundamentally as a lump of sin, how can one live like that? One cannot live like that. When the seed itself is a seed that cannot but do evil, how can one do it? At any rate, as the saying goes that one must know something to be able to do it, you must know. Dear fellow believers, you must know to be thankful. I, too, am thankful that I have met you, and you, too, must know to be thankful that you have met me. I hope you will be thankful at this time, too.

A characteristic of our Church is that we do not pass around the offering basket. We have placed an offering box over there, but we do not tell people to give money. Dear fellow believers, you must know to be grateful. In ordinary churches, one cannot even come to worship without money. I once took our mission school students to a meeting at a certain church. I took them so that they would experience it rather than my just telling them in words. We went to the meeting of an ordinary church and sat down as we were told, and all were seated, and before the word

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was even preached, they thrust the offering basket at us. What money do they collect at a meeting? When we hold a meeting, we do not collect money. But that basket did not pass by but was thrust in front of me and poked my belly. That person looked at me and did not move on, but poked my belly with the long basket, telling me to give. So I thought that our Church is really good. When we hold a meeting, we do not thrust a basket at people telling them to give money, we do not tell them to pay tithes, and we do not tell them to bring rice, so it is truly something to be thankful for. Dear fellow believers, one must know something to be able to do it. Only those who have been around say that this place is good; those who have not been around cannot even know. Churches without salvation say to live good lives, to live virtuously, to do good deeds, and to help your neighbors. When you yourselves have a hard time making a living, how can you help your neighbors? Isn't that so? Whenever I open my mouth, I say only what is right, but this kind of talk goes over well. A person who believes in God is a person who believes in Jesus, and a person who has seen Jesus is a person who has seen God.

## The Bible is the measuring rod of salvation

Dear fellow believers, do you believe in God? Yes, you do. Then you can believe automatically what Jesus has done for you. Dear fellow believers, have you seen Jesus? Do you believe? Then it is exactly the same as having seen God. You can believe. Can you not believe, even after seeing Jesus, that He is our God and the Savior of you and me? You can believe. Believing in a religious way must be pulled out. One must believe based squarely on the word.

A little while ago, before the worship service, I watched on

TV, with an evangelist, some people who had fallen into the rapture theory. They said that the rapture would come in 2012, and they are still holding on to it now. As for where that person gets confirmation of the 2012 rapture theory, it is that some people wrote books and wrote so there, and so he, too, is certain of it. They got off on the wrong foot from the very first step.

The Bible is called the canon. The word canon means a measuring rod. The Bible is the measuring rod, that is, the measuring rod of salvation. God has spoken of what God is, what man is, how the heart of man is formed, whether a man is a sinner or a righteous person, and what one must believe to become righteous, and the word that records this is the Bible. That is why it is called the word of God. If we apply this Bible as the measuring rod and know what the Bible is saying, we can know exactly.

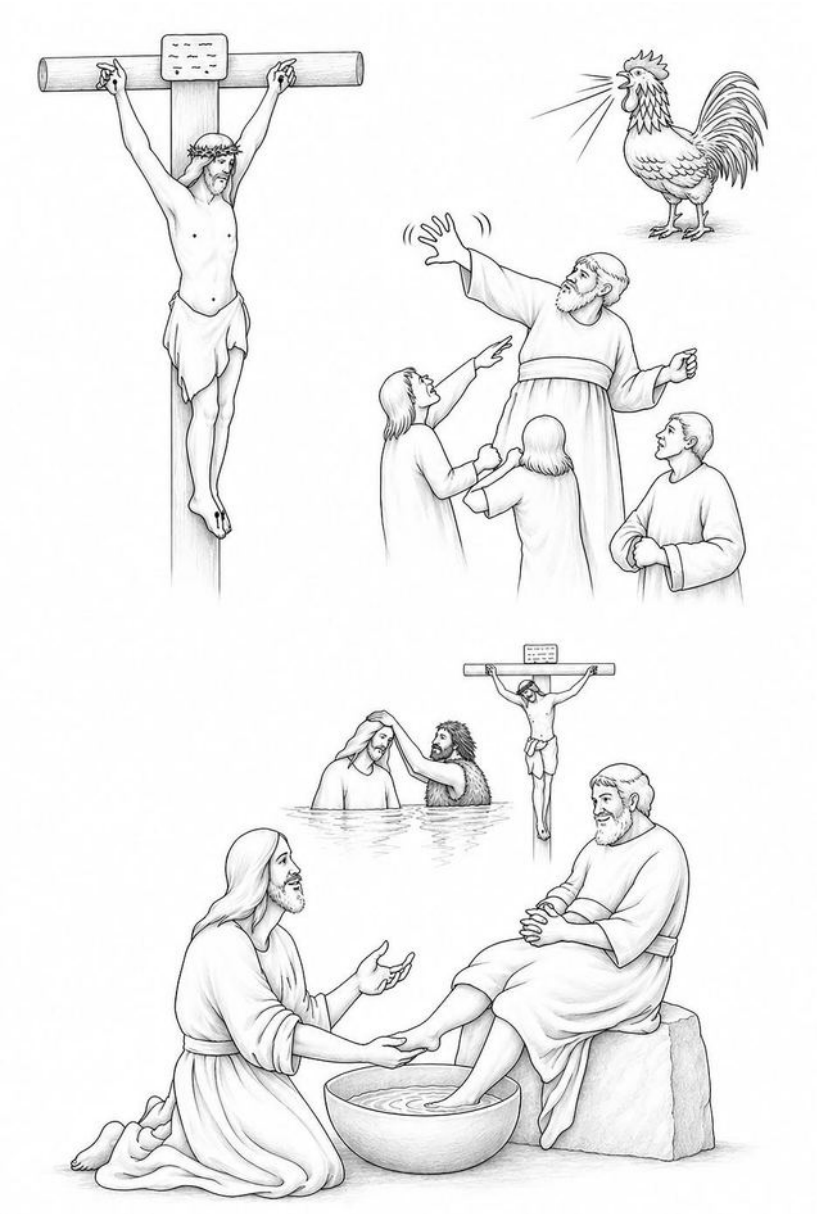
Dear fellow believers, believe well. Long ago a certain comedian said, “Does believing benefit someone else?” and that person has died, but those words remain. Does believing benefit someone else? It is you who get it. I will close here. ✉

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# CHAPTER

# 13

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# John Chapter 13 seen from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit

## In John 13:1–11, why did Jesus wash the feet of His disciples?

John 13:1–11 is the event in which Jesus washed the feet of His disciples on the night before He carried the cross. This foot-washing was not an act meant to teach an attitude of humility and service. The Lord knew all the weaknesses of His disciples and even the sins they would commit in the future, and He taught them the fact that, with the baptism He received from John, He had borne all the sins that the disciples and all people would commit throughout their lives, and that by receiving the punishment for those sins on the Cross, He had washed away all sins. This passage also teaches that even a person who has received the remission of sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit must acknowledge before the word the wrongs he commits while living, and must wash away the darkness of his heart by believing once again that Jesus removed even those sins with the baptism He received from John and with the Cross.

### 1. Before the Passover, He loved His disciples to the end

*"Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the*

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*Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end" (John 13:1).*

This event took place before the Passover. At the Passover of the Old Testament, a lamb died and its blood was put on the doorposts and the lintel, and when God saw that blood, He spared the people of Israel the judgment that was to fall on them. The Passover lamb represents Jesus Christ, who would be sacrificed for sinners in the future.

Jesus knew that the time was now near when He would be nailed to the Cross and die, rise again from the dead, and return to God the Father. Nevertheless, the concern of Jesus was not with His own sufferings but with the disciples who would be left in the world.

The disciples did not yet know their own weaknesses. Peter would deny Jesus three times, and the other disciples would also forsake Jesus and be scattered. Jesus knew even the sins and failures they would commit in the future, but He did not forsake them. By washing their feet, He taught them the fact that He had already borne all their sins. This is the love of the Lord, who loved His own to the end.

## 2. Judas Iscariot was beside Jesus, but he was not clean

*"The devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him" (John 13:2).*

Judas Iscariot had been called as a disciple of Jesus and had heard the words of Jesus together with the other disciples. He had seen the signs of Jesus, too, and he was also present at the foot-washing. But he did not believe in his heart in Jesus and in the salvation Jesus would accomplish.

The devil put into the heart of Judas the thought of betraying

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Jesus. Judas did not drive that thought away but accepted it, and in the end he betrayed Jesus. This shows the fact that being physically close to Jesus does not mean that one is automatically saved.

Even if one goes to church, takes part in the rite of baptism, and hears the words of the gospel, one cannot have one's sins washed away unless one believes in one's heart in the salvation Jesus accomplished. Salvation is not received through outward affiliation or religious rites, but by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit with one's heart.

## 3. Jesus knew the work of salvation that God had entrusted to 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" (John 13:3).*

Jesus knew exactly who He was and for what purpose He had come to this earth. God the Father had entrusted the work of saving mankind from sin and judgment to His Son Jesus.

Jesus had already had all the sins of the world transferred onto His body once and for all with the baptism He received from John at the Jordan River. Therefore, at the time of the foot-washing, Jesus was heading toward the Cross bearing the sin of the world.

Now the only thing that remained was for Him to be nailed to the Cross, shed His blood, and die as the price of that sin, and then rise again. Jesus, who washed the feet of His disciples, was not merely a teacher looking after His disciples; He was the Savior who would bear all their sins and be judged in their place.

## 4. The meaning of Jesus washing their feet with water

*"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" (John 13:5).*

The feet are the part of a person that is constantly in contact with the ground as he lives in the world. Even after believing in Jesus, the disciples would come to commit wrongs in thought, word, and deed as they lived in the world. That Peter denied Jesus three times also shows this weakness.

That Jesus washed the feet of His disciples with the water in the basin shows the fact that, with the baptism He received, He had borne even all the sins they would commit throughout their lives. The sins that the baptism of Jesus bore do not include only the sins a person commits before being saved. All the sins one commits from birth to death—that is, the sins of the past, the present, and the future—are all included.

The towel shows that our wrongs are revealed through the word of God. The law and the word make us realize what is right and what is wrong. And the gospel of the water and the Spirit makes us confirm once again the fact that Jesus has already borne and washed away even the sins revealed in this way.

Therefore, the foot-washing does not mean that we should take sin lightly. It means that we should acknowledge before the word the wrongs we have committed, and wash away the darkness of our hearts by believing once again in the baptism of Jesus and the Cross, by which He bore even those sins.

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## 5. Unless Jesus washes us, we have no part with the Lord

Peter could not accept that his Lord would wash his feet. So he said, *"You shall never wash my feet!"* Then Jesus answered him.

*"If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me" (John 13:8).*

A person cannot wash away his own sins by himself. Neither Peter's loyalty nor his humility could remove his sins. Jesus had to wash him without fail.

This word means that a person who does not accept the washing away of sins that Jesus accomplished cannot become a person who has a part with the Lord. If one tries to wash away one's sins with one's own prayers, repentance, and good deeds, one is not fully accepting the salvation Jesus accomplished.

To become a person who has a part with Jesus, one must believe the fact that Jesus had all one's sins transferred to Him with the baptism He received from John, and that He received the judgment for those sins on the Cross in one's place. The One who washes away sins is not man but Jesus.

## 6. The difference between "*He who is bathed*" and "washing the feet"

Thinking that he could not become a person who had no part with the Lord, Peter asked Him to wash not only his feet but also his hands and his head. Then Jesus said to him as follows.

*"He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you" (John 13:10).*

Here the difference between two kinds of washing away of sins appears.

| Expression in the text | Meaning within the gospel of the water and the Spirit | Result of faith |
|---|---|---|
| He who is bathed | A person who has received the remission of sins by believing the fact that Jesus removed all sins once and for all with the baptism He received from John, the Cross, and the resurrection | Is washed from all sins, just as the whole body is clean, and is born again |
| Washing the feet | Acknowledging the wrongs one has committed while living after being born again, and confirming through the gospel that Jesus has already borne even those sins | Escapes from the darkness of his heart and from guilt, and continues in bright fellowship with the Lord |
| He who is not clean | Judas Iscariot, who was beside Jesus but did not believe in His salvation with his heart | Does not have his sins washed away even though he leads an outward life of faith |

'Having already bathed' means that one has been washed from all sins once and for all by believing in the work of salvation of Jesus. Because Jesus received baptism once and was judged on the Cross once, a sinner receives the eternal remission of sins by believing in that completed salvation. Jesus does not need to keep receiving baptism or to die on the Cross repeatedly

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in order to remove sins.

'Washing the feet' does not mean receiving the remission of sins again. It means that a person who has already received the remission of sins acknowledges his own wrongs that are revealed day by day, and believes once again the gospel of the water and the Spirit, which says that Jesus bore even those sins, reflecting on it in his heart.

## 7. The sins we commit day by day must be acknowledged, not hidden

Even a person who has received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit has not become perfect in the flesh. While living, he may hate others, lose his temper, tell lies, or act selfishly.

Just because Jesus bore even those sins, one must not say that the wrongs one has committed are not sins. That one's sins have been removed and that one does not commit wrongs are two different matters. When a born-again person commits a sin, he realizes through the word that it is wrong and acknowledges it.

*"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).*

Here, confessing does not mean bringing one's sins to Jesus again and asking Him to make atonement anew. It means honestly acknowledging before God the wrongs one has committed, and believing once again the fact that Jesus bore even those sins with the baptism He received from John and was judged on the Cross.

When we do this, the guilt and darkness that had weighed down our hearts disappear, and the righteousness the Lord

accomplished brightens our hearts again. If there is someone we have wronged, it is also necessary to apologize to that person and to obey the word so as not to repeat the same wrong. This is not licentiousness that ignores sin, but a life of faith that believes in the gospel and lives in the light.

## 8. He had already washed away even the future sins of Peter

When Jesus washed the feet of Peter, Peter did not know that he would soon deny Jesus three times. But Jesus knew. So He said, *"What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this."*

After denying Jesus, Peter was greatly disappointed in himself. But Jesus, who had risen from the dead, did not forsake Peter but came to him again. This was because Jesus had already borne even the sins Peter would commit.

The ground on which Peter could be restored was not his own loyalty or his tears. It was the perfect salvation of Jesus, who had borne Peter's sins with the baptism He received from John and had been judged on the Cross. By believing in that love, Peter could rise again and become a servant who fed the sheep of the Lord.

## 9. The words *"not all of you"* refer to the unbelief of Judas Iscariot

Jesus said to His disciples, *"You are clean, but not all of you."* This was because He knew who would betray Him.

The eleven disciples were lacking and weak, but they

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believed in Jesus as the Christ. Even if they failed in the future, they could be restored within the salvation Jesus accomplished. But Judas Iscariot, though he was with Jesus, did not believe in Him as his own Savior.

Judas Iscariot, too, had his physical feet washed, but the sins of his heart were not washed away. This shows that the water of the foot-washing itself does not remove a person's sins. One becomes clean only when one believes with one's heart in the gospel that Jesus accomplished with the baptism He received from John, the Cross, and the resurrection.

## 10. The love of the Lord, who washed their feet, continues in the lives of the saints

By washing the feet of His disciples, Jesus showed the love of salvation by which He bore their sins, and at the same time He set an example of serving one another. A person who believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit must not be a person who condemns and tramples on the weaknesses of others, but a person who restores their hearts by preaching the gospel of Jesus, who bore even their sins.

Washing one another's feet does not consist merely in repeating a rite of washing physical feet. It is to confirm once again to the other person, when he is discouraged because of his weaknesses and sins, the gospel that Jesus bore even those sins and was judged on the Cross. It is also to acknowledge one's own wrongs, and to forgive and serve one another.

## Conclusion

The foot-washing in John 13:1–11 is a sign of the salvation by which Jesus loved His own to the end. Jesus had all the sins that mankind would commit throughout their lives transferred onto His body once and for all with the baptism He received from John. And He completed salvation by bearing those sins, being hung on the Cross and judged, and rising again from the dead.

'He who is bathed' is a person who has been washed from all sins by believing in this gospel of the water and the Spirit. 'Washing the feet' is for a born-again person to acknowledge before the word the wrongs he has committed day by day, and to wash away the darkness of his heart by believing once again in the gospel that has already removed even those sins.

Unless Jesus washes a person, no one can wash away his own sins. But a person who believes in his heart in the salvation Jesus accomplished is made clean from all sins, becomes a person who has a part with the Lord, and can live a life that embraces and serves even the weaknesses of others with the gospel.

## In John 13:12–21, what kind of life should those who have been born again by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit live?

John 13:12–21 shows how those who have received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit should lead their lives of faith within the church. Jesus said that, following the example He set by washing the feet of His disciples, they should serve one another, and embrace one another's weaknesses with the words of the gospel and set one

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another right. He also taught that receiving a servant whom the Lord has sent is the same as receiving the Lord and God the Father.

This does not mean that we should cover up one another's wrongs unconditionally or condemn one another. Rather, it means that we should help one another realize each other's faults with love, and restore one another with the gospel that Jesus bore even those sins.

## 1. *"Do you know what I have done to you?"*

*"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?'" (John 13:12).*

The disciples saw the fact that Jesus had washed their feet, but they did not yet fully know the meaning of salvation contained in that act. If they had thought only that Jesus had shown them an appearance of humility and service, they had not fully understood the meaning of the foot-washing.

That Jesus washed the feet of His disciples with water was a word showing that, with the baptism He received from John, He had borne even all the sins they would commit as they lived in the world. Jesus already knew and had borne even the sin of Peter, who would deny Him three times in the future.

A person who has received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit must know the fact that Jesus did not remove only his past sins, but bore once and for all every sin he would commit throughout his life. This is the starting point of the faith with which we treat one another within the church.

## 2. Jesus, the Lord and Teacher, lowered Himself first

*"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" (John 13:13–14).*

Jesus is the Master and Teacher of the disciples. Nevertheless, He went down to the lowest place and washed the feet of His disciples. The authority of Jesus was not an authority that oppresses or dominates people, but an authority that saves sinners and gives them life.

Jesus is God, but He came in the flesh to save sinners. He had all the sins of the world transferred onto His body once and for all with the baptism He received from John, and bearing those sins, He was judged on the Cross in our place. This is the most perfect form of the Lord's service to us.

Therefore, within the Church of God, a person who leads others must not be a person who puts forward his own position and authority, but a person who serves so that other souls may realize the word and stand firm in the gospel. Pastors and church leaders, too, are not higher than the Lord; together with all the saints, they are servants under the word of Christ.

## 3. Washing one another's feet is restoring one another with the gospel

*"For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you" (John 13:15).*

Washing one another's feet does not stop at repeating a rite of washing physical feet. When a brother or sister who has received the remission of sins goes the wrong way out of weakness, it is to make him realize that wrong with the word and

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to restore his heart with the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

For example, if someone has lost his temper, hurt others, and acted according to the desires of the flesh, we must not say, "We have already received the remission of sins, so it does not matter at all." We must tell him with love the fact that his conduct was contrary to the will of God.

At the same time, we must not stop at pointing out the wrong. So that the person does not fall into condemnation and despair, we must wash his feet with the gospel as follows.

"What you did was clearly wrong. But Jesus bore even that sin with the baptism He received from John and was judged on the Cross. Believe that gospel, acknowledge your wrong, and turn back."

Only when we do this can a person acknowledge sin as sin and yet not be bound by that sin, and rise again within the salvation Jesus accomplished.

## 4. Neither covering up unconditionally nor condemning is true love

In the faith of washing one another's feet within the church, truth and love must go together.

| Wrong attitude | How it appears | Result |
|---|---|---|
| The attitude of covering up unconditionally | Says, "Everyone is lacking, so it is all right," and does not speak of the wrong | Becomes insensitive to sin and repeats the same wrong |

| Wrong attitude | How it appears | Result |
|---|---|---|
| The attitude of condemning | Only points out the wrong and does not preach the gospel or the way of restoration | Falls into guilt and despair or drifts away from the church |
| The attitude of washing feet with the gospel | Makes the person realize the wrong with love and preaches Jesus, who bore even that sin | Acknowledges the sin, is restored within the gospel, and returns to the right way |

The Bible says that if there is someone who has sinned, we should *"restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness"* and bear one another's burdens. The purpose of pointing out a wrong must not be to subdue the other person or to put him to shame, but to bring him back to life.

Love is not leaving sin alone, and rebuke is not condemning the other person. A right exhortation given within the gospel is love that helps the other person not to be bound by sin but to follow the Lord again.

## 5. We must first wash our own feet before the word

Before washing the feet of others, we must also examine our own wrongs before the word. Just because we have received the remission of all sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, it does not mean that even our flesh has become perfect.

Even a born-again person can misunderstand others, hurt

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them, and act arrogantly or selfishly. If at such a time one does not acknowledge one's wrong and only says, "Jesus removed all those sins, too," one is using the gospel as a basis for licentiousness.

A right life of faith takes place as follows.

1. We realize our wrongs through the word of God.

2. We honestly acknowledge before God the sins we have committed.

3. We believe that Jesus bore even those sins with the baptism He received from John.

4. We confirm once again that the judgment for those sins was finished on the Cross.

5. We apologize to the person we have wronged and turn from our conduct.

6. We follow the will of the Lord again, led by the Holy Spirit.

This is not a process of receiving the remission of sins again. It is a life of faith in which, while believing in the eternal remission of sins we have already received, we acknowledge our wrongs and wash away the darkness of our hearts with the gospel.

## 6. A servant is not greater than his master

*"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" (John 13:16).*

If Jesus washed the feet of His disciples, His servants, too, must serve one another. Just because one has received an office within the church, one must not lord it over others or make them follow one's words unconditionally.

The Master of the church is Jesus Christ. Pastors, teachers, and workers are people who have been sent to preach the gospel

of Christ and to serve so that the saints may grow in the word. Therefore, they must not exalt their own authority, but must accomplish the will of the Lord who sent them.

Ordinary saints, too, must not insist only on what they themselves think is right. All the members must humble themselves before the word of God and first examine what the Lord wants. Unity within the church is not formed around people's personalities or human relationships, but around the gospel of the water and the Spirit and the will of God.

## 7. Blessed are those who know and do

*"If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them" (John 13:17).*

Knowing the truth of the gospel as knowledge and actually doing it are two different things. Even if one knows the gospel of the water and the Spirit exactly, if one does not forgive others within the church, does not acknowledge one's own wrongs, and turns away from members who are having a hard time, one is not living the life of foot-washing that the Lord taught.

A person who knows and does bears the following fruit.

— He honestly acknowledges his own shortcomings.

— He does not rashly condemn the wrongs of others.

— He exhorts with love a member who is going the wrong way.

— He preaches the gospel of the water and the Spirit again to a person who is discouraged.

— He thinks first of the benefit of the church and the gospel rather than his own position.

— He bears the burdens of others and serves the gospel together with them.

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Through such a life, the saints enjoy brightness of heart, and the church becomes even more firmly united in the gospel.

## 8. Not everyone in the church has been born again

*"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'" (John 13:18).*

Judas Iscariot went about with Jesus and ate the same bread, but he did not receive Jesus into his heart as his own Savior. He was in the place of a disciple, but he was not a person who had been made clean by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

This word shows the fact that not everyone in the church has automatically been born again. One is not saved just because one holds an office, has gone to church for a long time, and has outwardly taken part in the work of spreading the gospel.

Each person must believe in his heart the fact that Jesus bore all his sins with the baptism He received from John, received the judgment for those sins on the Cross, and rose again from the dead. The foundation of church life must not be outward affiliation but the remission of sins received by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

## 9. The foretelling of the betrayal was a word meant to keep the faith of the disciples

*"Now I tell you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe that I am He" (John 13:19).*

The betrayal of Judas Iscariot was not a failure that Jesus had

never expected. Jesus knew that Judas would betray Him, and He also knew that it would take place according to the prophecy of the Scriptures.

Jesus spoke of it in advance so that when the betrayal took place, the disciples would not fall into confusion but would believe that Jesus was God, who knows all things and accomplishes the work of salvation.

Within the church, too, unexpected betrayals or divisions can take place. Such things do not bring down the gospel itself. People can change and betray, but the salvation Jesus accomplished and the written word do not change. The saints must not put the foundation of their faith in people, but in Jesus Christ and the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

## 10. Receiving a person whom the Lord has sent is receiving the gospel he preaches

*"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).*

Jesus sent His disciples to preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit to the world. Accepting the gospel they preach is accepting Jesus, and accepting Jesus is accepting God the Father, who sent Him.

The authority of a person who has been sent does not come from his personality or position. It comes from preaching the gospel Jesus Christ accomplished according to the written word. Therefore, the church must not exalt the person himself, but must believe and accept the word of God that is preached through him.

A person who has been sent, too, must not make his own

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thoughts absolute. He must rightly preach the word of the Lord who sent him, wash the feet of the saints with the gospel, and do the work of delivering them from sin and condemnation.

## 11. The betrayal grieved the heart of Jesus

*"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 knew of the betrayal of Judas, but it is not that He felt no pain at all. Because He knew that a disciple who had lived with Him for three years and been taught the word by Him would betray Him, He felt great anguish in His spirit.

This word shows the fact that betrayal and unbelief within the church grieve the heart of the Lord. When a person who has heard the gospel together with others and served together with them abandons the gospel to follow his own desires, he deeply wounds the church and its members.

Therefore, the saints must not put their own thoughts and desires first, but must examine their hearts within the gospel day by day. This does not mean that we should suspect and watch one another, but that we should set ourselves before the word so as not to follow the way of Judas Iscariot, and hold one another up with the gospel.

## Conclusion

John 13:12–21 shows the form of faith in which those who have received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit live within the church.

Just as Jesus washed the feet of His disciples, the saints, too, must wash one another's feet. Rather than unconditionally covering up faults or condemning one another, we must help each other realize these faults with love, and restore one another with the gospel that Jesus bore even those sins through the baptism He received from John and was judged on the Cross.

We must also acknowledge our own wrongs, forgive one another, and serve from a lowly place. All the offices and authority of the church exist not to dominate people, but to give life to souls and to serve the gospel.

Merely remaining outwardly in the church is not enough. Each person must receive the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit with his heart, and must make the written word the foundation of his faith. Only when we wash and hold one another up with the gospel in this way can the Church of God overcome condemnation and licentiousness and become one in truth and love.

## In John 13:21–30, who is Jesus, who fulfilled the words of prophecy concerning the betrayal of Judas Iscariot?

John 13:21–30 shows that the betrayal of Judas Iscariot was not an accident that happened suddenly, but an event in which what had already been prophesied in the Old Testament was fulfilled in the New Testament. Jesus knew of the betrayal of Judas in advance, and He also knew that through that betrayal He would be arrested and hung on the Cross.

But the prophecy did not force Judas to commit sin. Judas did not believe the words of Jesus but followed money and his own desires, and so he became a tool of Satan by his own doing.

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God used even the evil choice of a man to accomplish the plan of salvation of Jesus Christ.

## 1. It was prophesied that He would be betrayed by a close friend

In John 13:18, Jesus connected the betrayal of Judas with the words of the Psalms.

*"Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up his heel against me" (Psalm 41:9).*

David experienced the pain of being betrayed by a person who had been close to him and had eaten bread with him. But this word did not stay only in the personal experience of David; it became a prophecy showing that the Messiah would in the future be betrayed by a close disciple.

Judas Iscariot went about with Jesus for about three years. He heard the word in the same place, ate food together with Jesus, and was active as one of the twelve disciples. Yet that very person sold Jesus to the chief priests.

John 13:21–26 is the scene in which the prophecy of Psalm 41 was concretely fulfilled.

*"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 13:26).*

The 'familiar friend who ate my bread' prophesied in the Psalms appeared through none other than Judas Iscariot, who ate bread together with Jesus.

## 2. Psalm 55 also shows the betrayal of a close companion

Psalm 55 also records the pain of being betrayed not by an enemy but by a close companion.

*"But it was you, a man my equal, My companion and my acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, And walked to the house of God in the throng" (Psalm 55:13–14).*

This word shows, as a prophetic type, the pain of the betrayal one suffers from a person close to oneself. The person who betrayed Jesus was not an enemy who had been on the outside from the beginning. He was a person who went about with Jesus, ate with Him, and ministered together with the other disciples.

That is why, when Jesus spoke of the betrayal of Judas, He was *"troubled in spirit."* Contained here was not only the fear of the arrest that lay ahead, but also the deep sorrow of being betrayed by a disciple He had loved and taught.

Jesus knew the heart of Judas, but He gave him the opportunity to hear the word and also gave him a place to be with Him as a disciple. Yet in the end, Judas chose money and his own desires over the love of Jesus and the words of salvation.

## 3. That He would be sold for thirty pieces of silver was also prophesied in the Old Testament

The prophet Zechariah prophesied that the price of the shepherd would be set at thirty pieces of silver.

*"Then I said to them, 'If it is agreeable to you, give me my wages; and if not, refrain.' So they weighed out for my wages thirty pieces of silver" (Zechariah 11:12).*

This prophecy was fulfilled when Judas Iscariot agreed to

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deliver Jesus to the chief priests and received thirty pieces of silver.

*"And said, 'What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?' And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver. So from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him" (Matthew 26:15–16).*

Thirty pieces of silver was a sum connected with the price of a slave at that time. Jesus, the King of kings and the Creator, was valued by people at the price of a slave. Because Judas did not know the true worth of Jesus, he could take money and deliver up the Lord.

Although Jesus had borne all the sins of the world, including even the sins of Judas, with the baptism He received from John, Judas did not accept that grace of salvation with his heart. Rather than believing in Jesus as the Savior God, he looked on Him as an object for satisfying his own desires.

## 4. It was also fulfilled that the thirty pieces of silver were thrown into the temple and used to buy the potter's field

Zechariah also prophesied that the thirty pieces of silver would be thrown to the potter in the house of the LORD.

*"And the LORD said to me, 'Throw it to the potter'—that princely price they set on me. So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them into the house of the LORD for the potter" (Zechariah 11:13).*

When Judas Iscariot saw that Jesus had been condemned, he tried to return the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests. When they would not take them, Judas threw the money into the temple and took his own life. The chief priests bought the potter's field

with that money.

*"Then he threw down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed, and went and hanged himself. But the chief priests took the silver pieces and said, 'It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, because they are the price of blood.' And they consulted together and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in" (Matthew 27:5–7).*

The contents of the Old Testament—thirty pieces of silver, money thrown into the temple, and the potter's field—appeared exactly as they were in the New Testament. This testifies that the death of Jesus was not an event that happened by chance, but something that took place within the plan of salvation that God had spoken of in advance in the Scriptures.

## 5. It was also prophesied that another would take the office of Judas

It is also written in the Psalms that another would take the office of the betrayer in his place.

*"Let his days be few, And let another take his office" (Psalm 109:8).*

After Jesus rose from the dead and ascended to heaven, Peter applied this word to Judas Iscariot.

*"For it is written in the Book of Psalms: 'Let his dwelling place be desolate, And let no one live in it'; and, 'Let another take his office'" (Acts 1:20).*

Judas Iscariot had been given a part in the office of the twelve apostles, but he abandoned that office and betrayed Jesus. Afterward, the disciples appointed Matthias to take the place of the office of apostle that Judas had abandoned.

This shows the fact that an office itself does not save a person.

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Even if one is entrusted with an important task within the church and outwardly takes part in spreading the gospel, unless one believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit with one's heart, that office cannot be evidence of salvation.

## 6. *"After the piece of bread, Satan entered him"*

*"Now after the piece of bread, Satan entered him. Then Jesus said to him, 'What you do, do quickly'" (John 13:27).*

Judas was not suddenly seized by Satan for no reason. He already loved money more than the words of Jesus, he stole from the money box, and he was looking for an opportunity to deliver up Jesus. The devil took hold of such unbelief and greed of Judas and used him as a tool of betrayal.

The words *"What you do, do quickly"* do not mean that Jesus commanded Judas to commit the sin of betrayal. Judas had already chosen to sell Jesus and had already conferred with the chief priests. Jesus knew all of Judas's heart and conduct, and now He let him go the way he had chosen, so that the time of salvation appointed by God might proceed.

The prophecy of God does not make the sin of Judas legitimate. Judas is responsible for betraying Jesus according to his own desires. But God used even that evil betrayal as part of the process of accomplishing the work by which Jesus would be hung on the Cross and save mankind.

## 7. The other disciples did not know the intention of Judas

When Jesus said to Judas, *"What you do, do quickly,"* the other disciples did not know what it meant. Because Judas had the money box, they thought that Jesus was telling him to buy the things needed for the feast or to give something to the poor.

This shows the fact that outwardly Judas lived in much the same way as the other disciples. The other disciples did not immediately recognize the fact that Judas was the one who would sell Jesus.

But Jesus knew the heart of Judas from the beginning. Jesus is not One who looks only at the outward appearance, but God, who knows the heart of a person. He also knows who truly believes in Him and who only follows Him outwardly.

Therefore, a person must not think that he has been saved merely on the basis of the office and conduct visible within the church. He must examine whether he actually believes in his heart the fact that Jesus removed all his sins with the baptism He received from John, the Cross, and the resurrection.

## 8. The words *"he then went out immediately. And it was night"* show the spiritual state of Judas

*"Having received the piece of bread, he then went out immediately. And it was night" (John 13:30).*

When Judas went outside, it was actually night. At the same time, this word also shows the spiritual state of Judas, who had left Jesus, the Light.

Judas was with Jesus, the Light of life, but he did not receive that Light into his heart. In the end, he went out from the place

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where Jesus was and went into the darkness, and he went to the chief priests and delivered up Jesus.

If one hears the gospel of the water and the Spirit and yet loves one's own desires and thoughts more, one comes to turn one's back on the Light and go out into the darkness, like Judas. On the other hand, a person who believes the words of Jesus with his heart does not leave the Lord even when his own wrongs are revealed. He believes in Jesus, who bore even those sins, and returns into the light.

## 9. The betrayal of Judas moved the work of salvation of Jesus forward to the Cross

Judas Iscariot led the people who wanted to arrest Jesus to the place where Jesus was praying. John chapter 18 records that Judas came with a detachment of troops and officers from the chief priests to arrest Jesus.

But Jesus did not flee. Knowing everything He would suffer, He went forward. This was because Jesus had already had all the sins of the world transferred onto His body once and for all with the baptism He received from John. Now He had to complete salvation by bearing those sins and being judged on the Cross, shedding His blood.

Judas delivered up Jesus for money, but Jesus gave up His own body to save sinners. In the betrayal of Judas appeared the greed of man and the work of Satan, but on the Cross appeared the love and justice of God.

## 10. Summary of the prophecies of the Old Testament and their fulfillment in the New Testament

| Prophecy of the Old Testament | Content of the prophecy | Fulfillment in the New Testament |
|---|---|---|
| Psalm 41:9 | The betrayal of a close friend who ate bread with him | John 13:18 and 21–26 |
| Psalm 55:12–14 | The pain of betrayal at the hands of a close companion | The prophetic type that appeared in the betrayal of Judas, who lived together with Jesus |
| Zechariah 11:12 | Thirty pieces of silver set as the price of the shepherd | Matthew 26:14–16 |
| Zechariah 11:13 | The thirty pieces of silver thrown into the temple and connected with the potter | Matthew 27:3–10 |
| Psalm 109:8 | The office of the betrayer taken by another | Acts 1:16–20 |

## Conclusion

John 13:21–30 shows, through the betrayal of Judas Iscariot, an event in which the prophecies of the Old Testament were fulfilled in the New Testament. That a close person who ate bread with Him would betray Him, that the Messiah would be

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sold for thirty pieces of silver, that the money would be thrown into the temple and used to buy the potter's field, and that another would take the office of the betrayer were all written in advance.

Jesus knew all these things. He knew even of the betrayal of Judas, His own arrest, and His death on the Cross, but, in order to save sinners, He did not avoid that way.

Jesus had all the sins of the world transferred onto His body once and for all with the baptism He received from John. After being arrested through the betrayal of Judas, He bore those sins and was judged on the Cross, shedding His blood, and by rising again from the dead, He completed salvation.

Therefore, the betrayal of Judas Iscariot shows how fearful the greed and unbelief of man are, and at the same time it testifies of the fact that God accomplished, according to His word, the salvation He had promised in the Old Testament. Those who see the prophecy and fulfillment of the Scriptures must believe that Jesus is truly the Messiah to whom the Old Testament testified and the Savior of mankind.

## Is John 13:31–38 a word in which Jesus tells those who believe in the word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit to live the life of a disciple?

John 13:31–38 is a passage in which Jesus calls 'glory' the completion of salvation He would accomplish through the Cross and the resurrection, and gives the disciples who have received that salvation the new commandment to love one another. The confident assertion of Peter that follows, and the foretelling of his failure, show the fact that the life of a disciple is made

possible not by the firm resolution of a man, but by faith in the perfect salvation Jesus accomplished.

## 1. The glory Jesus spoke of is the completion of the work of salvation

*"So, when he had gone out, Jesus said, 'Now the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in Him'" (John 13:31).*

After Judas Iscariot went out to sell Jesus, Jesus said, *"Now the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in Him."* Seen with human eyes, the time had begun when Jesus would be betrayed, arrested, and put to death on the Cross. But Jesus called that glory.

Jesus had already had all the sins of the world transferred onto His body once and for all with the baptism He received from John. Now, bearing those sins, He would be hung on the Cross and shed His blood, thereby bearing the judgment of sin, and He would rise again from the dead and complete salvation.

For Jesus to die on the Cross was not a defeat, but the completion of the work of salvation that God the Father had entrusted to Him. Because it was the work of giving up His own body to save sinners, it became glory to Jesus, and it also became glory to God the Father, who saves sinners through His Son.

## 2. The life of a disciple begins first with believing in the salvation Jesus accomplished

Becoming a disciple of Jesus is not simply practicing the ethical teachings of Jesus. One must first believe who Jesus is and what He accomplished for oneself.

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Jesus is the Son of God and the Savior of mankind. He had all our sins transferred to Him with the baptism He received from John, paid the price of those sins with His blood on the Cross, and rose again from the dead. A person who believes in this gospel of the water and the Spirit with his heart receives the remission of sins and the Holy Spirit and becomes a child of God.

The life of a disciple is not a condition for obtaining salvation. It is the life of a person who has already received perfect salvation and, out of thanks for that grace, lives according to the will of the Lord. A person who believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit follows the words of Jesus because he loves Jesus, who saved him.

## 3. Jesus called His disciples 'little children'

*"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" (John 13:33).*

Jesus would soon die on the Cross, rise again, and return to God the Father. So He lovingly called the disciples who would remain in the world 'little children.'

Contained in this word is also the meaning that the disciples were still weak and spiritually young. They did not understand all the words of Jesus, and a little later they would forsake Jesus out of fear and be scattered. But Jesus did not forsake them.

Jesus gave the new commandment so that even after He left, the disciples would live holding one another up in the word and in the Holy Spirit. The church is not an organization of people who have no relationship with one another, but the people of God who have become one family through the salvation of Jesus.

## 4. The new commandment is to love one another as Jesus loved us

*"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another" (John 13:34).*

In the Old Testament, too, there was the word *"love your neighbor as yourself."* But Jesus showed the standard of love even more clearly, changing it from *"as yourself"* to *"as I have loved you."*

The love with which Jesus loved His disciples is as follows.

— He loved them even though He knew all their weaknesses and shortcomings.

— He bore the sins of Peter even though He knew that Peter would deny Him.

— He loved them to the end even though He knew that they would forsake Him and flee.

— With the baptism He received from John, He bore all the sins they would commit throughout their lives.

— On the Cross, He received in their place the judgment for their sins.

— After rising again from the dead, He went again to the disciples who had failed and restored them.

— He sent the Holy Spirit and made them live the life of a disciple preaching the gospel.

Therefore, the new commandment is not a love that comes from human liking or compatibility of personalities. It is the love of the gospel that shares with others the remission of sins and the mercy one has received from Jesus.

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## 5. What does it mean to love one another within the church?

The love of those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit appears in concrete forms.

| Love received from the Lord | Fruit that appears in the life of a disciple |
|---|---|
| The love of the Lord, who bore all sins | Does not condemn the weaknesses of other members but restores those members with the gospel |
| The love of the Lord, who gave Himself up on the Cross | Thinks first of the benefit of the gospel and of other souls rather than his own benefit |
| The love of the Lord, who raised up Peter again after he had failed | Holds up a fallen member with the word so that he can rise again |
| The love of the Lord, who loved to the end | Does not easily abandon relationships according to circumstances and feelings |
| The love of the Lord, who taught the truth | Does not cover up wrongs unconditionally but preaches the right word with love |
| The love of the Lord, who gave the Holy Spirit | Lives according to the word that the Holy Spirit brings to remembrance rather than his own will |

Loving one another does not mean acknowledging every act as unconditionally acceptable. It is to say that wrong conduct is wrong, yet not to condemn and cast off the person, but to raise him up again by preaching the salvation of Jesus, who bore even that sin.

It is also love, when one's own wrong is revealed, not to make excuses or shift the responsibility to others, but to acknowledge it before the word, apologize, and turn back. When there is such love, the church can overcome condemnation and division and be united in the gospel.

## 6. Loving one another is the evidence that shows we are disciples

*"By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35).*

The evidence that shows one is a disciple of Jesus is not only an office or knowledge of the Bible. It lies in loving one another with the love received from Jesus.

A person who truly believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit knows how great a sinner he was and how perfectly Jesus saved him. Therefore, when he sees the shortcomings of others, it is hard for him to act as if he alone were righteous.

Those who believe in the gospel become one because they believe in the same salvation Jesus accomplished, even though their personalities and living circumstances differ. Through the way they bear one another's burdens, hold up those who are discouraged, and serve the gospel together, the people of the world come to know that they are disciples of Jesus.

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## 7. Peter tried to follow the Lord with his own zeal

*"Peter said to Him, 'Lord, why can I not follow You now? I will lay down my life for Your sake'" (John 13:37).*

Peter sincerely loved Jesus. He thought that he could even lay down his life for the Lord. But Peter did not know his own weakness and fear.

Peter's problem was not that he did not love the Lord, but that he trusted his own will too much. Rather than believing the fact that he could follow the Lord only if the Lord held him up, he thought that if he made up his mind, he could follow to the end.

The life of a disciple is not a life lived on the boast, "I will never fail." It is a life that relies on the grace of the Lord, believing the fact that, although one can fall at any time, Jesus bore all one's sins and weaknesses.

## 8. Jesus already knew of the failure of Peter

*"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 13:38).*

Peter said that he would die for the Lord, but that night he would come to deny Jesus three times. Jesus knew that in advance.

So, earlier, when He washed the feet of Peter, He showed him the fact that He had borne even the sins Peter would commit in the future. The failure of Peter was not something unexpected to Jesus. The sin of the world that Jesus bore with the baptism He received from John included even the sin of Peter denying the Lord.

Peter was greatly discouraged when he saw his own failure, but Jesus, who had risen from the dead, did not forsake him. He went to him again, asked him, *"Do you love Me?"* and entrusted him with feeding His sheep. What raised Peter up again was not Peter's strong will, but the love of Jesus, who removed all his sins.

## 9. *"You cannot follow Me now, but you shall follow Me afterward"*

Jesus said to Peter, *"Where I am going you cannot follow Me now, but you shall follow Me afterward."*

At that time, Peter tried to follow the Lord by his own strength, so he could not go the way of the Cross to the end. But things changed after Jesus completed salvation through the Cross and the resurrection and sent the Holy Spirit.

Peter came to know his own weakness and came to rely on the perfect salvation of Jesus. He preached the gospel and served the church by the power of the Holy Spirit, and finally he became a person who glorified God by his own death. In John 21:19, Jesus spoke of by what death Peter would glorify God, and said, *"Follow Me."*

At first he boasted that he would follow with his own zeal and failed, but afterward he became a disciple who actually followed the Lord, relying on the gospel and the Holy Spirit.

## 10. The life of a disciple comes from the assurance of salvation

Even a person who believes in the gospel of the water and

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the Spirit can do wrong and fall while living. But one must not give up one's life of faith because of one's shortcomings, saying, "I cannot live the life of a disciple."

Jesus saved us even though He knew all the sins we would commit and all the weaknesses that would be revealed in the future. He bore all those sins with the baptism He received from John, and He received all the judgment for those sins on the Cross. After rising again from the dead, He gave the Holy Spirit to those who believe, making them realize and follow the word.

Therefore, a disciple is not a person who believes in his own ability, but a person who believes the following facts.

1. Jesus has completely removed all my sins.
2. The Lord already knows even my weaknesses and failures.
3. When I have done wrong, I can acknowledge that wrong and rise again with the gospel.
4. The Holy Spirit reminds me of the written word and makes me follow the will of the Lord.
5. The Lord has placed me in the church and uses me for the gospel.

When we have this faith, we do not give up, making our shortcomings an excuse, but can serve the gospel in unity with the other members within the church.

## Conclusion

In John 13:31–38, Jesus called glory the salvation He would accomplish through His baptism, the Cross, and the resurrection. And He gave the disciples who received that salvation the new commandment to love one another as He had loved them.

The life of a disciple is not a life of piling up works in order to receive salvation. It is the life of a person who has received

the remission of sins by believing the fact that Jesus had all his sins transferred to Him with the baptism He received from John, was judged in his place on the Cross, and rose again from the dead, and who lives out of thanks for that love.

If we believe only in our own will and zeal, like Peter, we can fall. But if we believe in Jesus, who loved us to the end even though He knew all our sins and weaknesses, we can rise again even from the place where we failed. Those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit come to live a life befitting a disciple of Jesus by loving one another, serving the church, and preaching the gospel to other souls with the help of the Holy Spirit. ✉

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# Questions and Answers on John Chapter 13

## [Question] 1. Summarize briefly the main events and the central teachings recorded in John chapter 13.

John chapter 13 is the chapter in which Jesus, on the night before He carried the cross, taught His disciples the meaning of salvation and the way of faith they should live from then on. Knowing that His hour had come to return to the Father, Jesus loved His own to the end.

First, Jesus rose from the supper and washed the feet of His disciples. When Peter refused this, He said, *"If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me."* He also said that he who is bathed needs only to wash his feet. This foot-washing teaches that with the baptism He received from John the Baptist, Jesus bore and washed away all the sins that the disciples and all mankind would commit throughout their lives. Bearing those sins, Jesus was judged on the Cross and thereby saved His own completely.

Having washed the feet of His disciples, Jesus said, *"You also ought to wash one another's feet."* Together with the teaching to serve one another humbly, this means that they should make a brother realize his wrong and deliver him from sin and condemnation by preaching the gospel that Jesus washed away even that sin with the baptism He received from John and with the Cross. Just as the Lord served sinners with the gospel, the disciples, too, must serve one another with the gospel.

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Next, Jesus revealed that one of His disciples would betray Him. When Jesus gave a piece of bread to Judas Iscariot, Satan entered him, and Judas went out to sell Jesus. Jesus knew all about the betrayal of Judas and the death on the Cross that would come upon Him, but He did not avoid that way, in order to accomplish the work of salvation that the Father had entrusted to Him.

After Judas had gone out, Jesus said that the Son of Man was glorified and that God was glorified through the Son of Man. The glory Jesus spoke of is not the glory of being exalted in the world, but the glory of completing salvation by obeying the will of the Father, bearing all the sin of sinners, and dying on the Cross as the sacrificial offering of atonement. As Jesus died and rose again and saved people from sin and judgment, the Father, too, is glorified.

Jesus gave His disciples the new commandment, *"Love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another."* Just as the Lord loved sinners to the end and saved them completely, the disciples, too, must embrace one another's weaknesses and love one another, serving one another with the gospel. Through such love, people come to know the fact that they are the disciples of Jesus.

Finally, Peter boasted that he would even lay down his life for Jesus, but Jesus said that before the rooster crowed, he would deny Him three times. Peter did not know his own weakness, but Jesus knew even the sins he would commit, and He had already borne those sins, too, with the baptism He received from John the Baptist. As He said that Peter could not follow the Lord now but would follow afterward, Jesus did not forsake the weak Peter but raised him up as a man of faith.

Therefore, the center of John chapter 13 is the perfect salvation of Jesus, who loved His own to the end. Through the

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foot-washing, Jesus taught that He had washed away all sins with the baptism He received from John the Baptist; He went forward on the way of the Cross; and He commanded His disciples to serve and love one another with the gospel. Through the betrayal of Judas and the denial of Peter, He also showed that we must believe not in the resolution of a man, but in Jesus Christ, who bore all sins and weaknesses.

## [Question] 2. How does John 13:1 show that Jesus loved His disciples?

John 13:1 says, *"Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end."* Jesus clearly knew the fact that His death on the Cross had drawn near, but He thought first of the disciples who would remain on this earth rather than of His own sufferings.

That Jesus "loved them to the end" means not only that He loved them until the last moment, but also that He took responsibility for their salvation to the end and completed it. Jesus knew how much weakness the disciples would show in the future. He knew even that Peter would deny Him three times and, discouraged, would go back to catching fish. Yet He did not forsake them, but bore and washed away even all the sins they would commit throughout their lives.

That love appeared in the form of washing the feet of His disciples. Jesus laid aside His garments, girded Himself with a towel, poured water into a basin, and washed the feet of His disciples with His own hands. This was not simply an act of making their physical feet clean; it was teaching them the fact

that He had already washed away even all the sins they would commit out of weakness as they lived in the world.

Jesus had already borne all the sin of mankind, including the disciples, with the baptism He received from John the Baptist. Now the only thing that remained was for Him to bear those sins, be hung on the Cross and judged, and rise again from the dead to complete salvation. Therefore, the foot-washing ceremony is a teaching of love that shows that Jesus bore the sins of His disciples with the baptism He received from John, and that He would receive even the punishment for those sins with the blood of the Cross.

The love of Jesus was not a love He showed because the disciples were excellent and perfect. It is a love that loves first, washes completely, and looks after and takes responsibility to the end, even while knowing all their weaknesses and the sins they would commit in the future. The disciples did not follow Jesus to the end by their own resolution and will; rather, because they believed in Jesus, who had first loved and saved them to the end, they could rise again and follow Him.

Therefore, the love of Jesus shown in verse 1 is not a love that stays in words or feelings. It is a perfect and responsible love that bears all the sins of the disciples, pays the price for them on the Cross, and does not forsake them even in their weakness but holds them up until they reach the kingdom of God.

## [Question] 3. In John 13:1, what does it mean that Jesus knew that His hour had come to depart from this world to the Father?

This word does not stop at meaning simply that Jesus knew that His death had drawn near. To “depart from this world”

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refers to His being nailed to the Cross and dying at the Passover, and to "return to the Father" means that He would rise again on the third day after His death, ascend, and return to God the Father, from whom He had originally come.

Jesus came to this earth, sent by God the Father. And with the baptism He received from John, He bore all the sin of mankind on His body. Now what remained was for Him to bear those sins, be hung on the Cross and receive the punishment for sin in our place, rise again from the dead, become the eternal Savior of those who believe, and then return to the Father. Therefore, this word presents the death of Jesus on the Cross, His resurrection, and His ascension as one flow.

The words *"when Jesus knew that His hour had come"* mean that Jesus knew all that would soon come upon Him. Jesus already knew of the betrayal of Judas and the sufferings of the Cross, and He intended to complete to the end the work of salvation that God the Father had entrusted to Him and then return. The death of Jesus was not an unexpected failure or misfortune, but something He had to accomplish without fail in order to save sinners.

Because Jesus knew that His hour to depart had drawn near, He did what He had to teach His disciples last of all. By washing their feet, He showed them the fact that He had borne all their sins and washed them clean, and He also showed that He loved His own who were in the world to the end.

Therefore, the words *"His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father"* mean that the time had come for Jesus to bear the sin of the world, which He had borne with the baptism He received from John, and be judged on the Cross, to complete the work of salvation through His resurrection and ascension, and to return to God the Father.

## [Question] 4. In John 13:4–30, why did the Lord, facing the Cross, wash the feet of His disciples at that very time?

The time when Jesus washed the feet of His disciples was at the Last Supper, just before He was hung on the Cross. Jesus knew both that He would soon depart from this world to the Father and that His disciples, being weak, would go on committing sins in the future. So before He departed, He wanted to show them before their eyes the fact that He had washed all their sins clean, and to plant that faith in their hearts.

Jesus had already borne on His body, with the baptism He received from John at the Jordan River, not only the sins of the disciples but all the sins that mankind would commit throughout their lives. Now what remained was for Him to bear those sins, be hung on the Cross and receive all the punishment, and complete salvation. Washing the feet of His disciples was not a rite for accomplishing this salvation anew, but an object lesson showing the fact that He had completely washed away all their sins with the baptism He received from John and with the Cross.

Because Peter believed in Jesus as the Son of God and his own Savior, he found it hard to accept the Lord washing his feet. But Jesus said, *"What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this."* Peter was a man who, a little later, would deny Jesus three times and be greatly discouraged. Jesus washed his feet in order to let him know that He had already borne even such weakness of Peter and the sins he would commit in the future.

The words *"He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean"* also have the same meaning. Having already bathed means having had all one's sins washed away by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and the feet

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refer to the sins one commits while living in the world because of the weakness of the flesh even after receiving the remission of sins. Through the washing of feet, Jesus confirmed to His disciples that He had borne even the sins they would commit in the future with the baptism He received from John, and that He would be judged on the Cross and remove them. Thus He enabled Peter, when he saw his own sins and weakness, not to go back to being a sinner or fall into the condemnation of Satan, but to keep following the Lord, believing in perfect salvation.

The words *"you are clean, but not all of you"* do not mean that there were some sins Jesus could not wash away. This was a word spoken concerning Judas Iscariot, who would sell Jesus. Judas was beside Jesus and had his feet washed, too, but he did not believe in the salvation Jesus would accomplish. It is not the act of washing feet with water itself that saves a person; one becomes clean only by believing with one's heart in the work of Jesus, who removed all sins with the baptism He received from John and with the Cross.

There is also the meaning of service in Jesus washing their feet. Just as Jesus, the Lord and Teacher, served His disciples, the disciples, too, had to wash one another's feet. This does not mean merely that they should repeat a rite of washing physical feet. When another person is discouraged because of his own shortcomings and sins, we must remind him of the gospel that Jesus washed away even those sins completely with the baptism He received from John and with the Cross, so that he may rise again by faith. Jesus set an example, telling those who believed first to serve those who believe later with this gospel.

Therefore, by washing the feet of His disciples at that very time, when the Cross lay before Him, Jesus taught them the fact that He had loved them to the end and had completely washed away even the sins they would commit in the future. He also

enabled the disciples to believe in that perfect salvation, overcome the condemnation of Satan, and live a life of preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit to one another and serving one another.

## [Question] 5. In John 13:6–10, what spiritual truth does the act of Jesus washing the feet of His disciples show?

Jesus washing the feet of His disciples was a visible teaching of the salvation by which He washed away all the sin of sinners with the gospel of the water and the Spirit. With the baptism He received from John at the Jordan River, Jesus bore on His body all the sins that mankind would commit throughout their lives, and bearing those sins, He was hung on the Cross and received all the punishment. The act of washing the feet of His disciples shows the fact that Jesus thus bore all sins completely and washed them clean.

When Jesus tried to wash his feet, Peter refused. But Jesus said, *"If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me."* This does not mean that the rite of washing physical feet with water itself saves a person. It means that unless one accepts the fact that Jesus bore all sins with the baptism He received from John and received the judgment for those sins on the Cross, no one can become a person who has a part with Jesus. Salvation does not lie in a person washing away his own sins by himself, but in believing in what Jesus did in washing them away.

Jesus said, *"He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean." "He who is bathed"* refers to a person who has had all his sins washed away once and for all by believing in the baptism Jesus received from John and in the

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Cross. That the whole body is clean does not mean that only one's past sins have been forgiven, but that one has completely received the remission of all the sins one would commit from birth to death.

Here the *"feet"* represent the sins a person commits while living in the world because of the weakness of the flesh, even after receiving the remission of sins. Peter believed in Jesus and followed Him, but he was a man who, a little later, would deny Jesus three times. Jesus knew in advance that Peter would commit such a sin, and through the washing of feet He showed him the fact that He had already borne and washed away even that sin. Thus He enabled Peter not to be discouraged because of his weakness or to fall into the condemnation of Satan and leave the Lord, but to follow the Lord again, believing in the complete washing away of sins.

Therefore, washing the feet does not mean that one must receive a new atonement every time one commits a sin. It means confirming once again the word of the gospel that Jesus bore even that sin with the baptism He received from John and was judged on the Cross. When one commits a sin, if one acknowledges one's wrong and yet believes the fact that the sin has already passed on to Jesus and that even the judgment has been finished, one's darkened heart becomes bright again and one can continue in fellowship with the Lord.

The words *"you are clean, but not all of you"* refer to Judas Iscariot. Judas was beside Jesus in the flesh, but he did not believe in the salvation Jesus would accomplish. This fact shows that it is not the outward washing of feet that makes a person clean, but that one must believe with one's heart in the washing away of sins that Jesus accomplished with the baptism He received from John and with the Cross.

Therefore, the spiritual meaning of the act of washing the

feet of His disciples lies in the fact that Jesus bore completely and washed away all the sins of those who believe—past, present, and future—that is, even the actual sins they would commit through the weakness of the flesh. A person who believes in this perfect salvation does not go back to being a sinner, looking only at his own shortcomings, but can follow the Lord by faith, reflecting again on the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

## [Question] 6. In John 13:7, when Peter asked why He was washing his feet, how did Jesus answer?

Jesus answered Peter, *"What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this."* Even as Peter watched Jesus, the Lord and Teacher, washing his feet, he did not know the meaning of salvation contained in that act. He saw only the fact that Jesus was lowering Himself and serving him like a servant; he did not understand the fact that the washing of feet represented the work by which all his sins had been washed away.

The words *"What I am doing"* refer to the washing of feet being done before their eyes, and ultimately mean the perfect salvation Jesus would accomplish. With the baptism He received from John, Jesus had borne all the sins Peter would commit throughout his life, and bearing those sins, He would be hung on the Cross and judged. Washing the feet of Peter showed him the fact that Jesus had already borne and washed away even the sins he would commit in the future through the weakness of the flesh.

At that time, Peter did not even know how weak a man he himself was. He thought that he would never forsake Jesus whatever happened, but not long afterward he would deny Jesus three times and be greatly discouraged. Because Jesus knew

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even this in advance, He said that even though Peter did not understand the meaning of the washing of feet now, he would come to realize it later.

The words *"you will know after this"* refer to the time after Jesus died on the Cross and rose again. Even after Peter had denied Jesus three times, he experienced the risen Lord coming to him. Then he came to realize the fact that Jesus had borne and washed away even his weakness and the sins he would commit in the future with the baptism He received from John and with the Cross. So he could come before the Lord again, confess, *"You know that I love You,"* and carry out the mission of tending the sheep of the Lord.

Therefore, the answer of Jesus does not mean simply that He would explain the reason for the washing of feet later. It means that after Peter experienced his own failure and saw the Cross and the resurrection of Jesus, he would come to believe in the complete washing away of sins accomplished through the gospel of the water and the Spirit and in the love that does not change to the end.

## [Question] 7. In John 13:8, what did Jesus mean when He said to Peter that unless he received the washing, he would have no part with the Lord?

That Jesus said, *"If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me,"* means that Peter could have a relationship with the Lord only if he had his sins completely washed away by Jesus. A person with even a little sin remaining cannot stand before the holy Lord, nor can he become His disciple and be with Him. Therefore, the relationship between Peter and Jesus had to be based not on Peter's loyalty or will, but on the salvation by

which Jesus washed all his sins clean.

Here, 'washing' does not stop at the act of washing physical feet with water. With the baptism He received from John at the Jordan River, Jesus bore all the sins Peter would commit from birth to death. And bearing those sins, He was hung on the Cross and received all the punishment. If Jesus had not accomplished this salvation, Peter would have had no choice but to remain a sinner and become a person who had no part with the Lord.

Peter believed in Jesus as the Son of God and his own Savior, but he did not know what sins he would commit in the future. He thought that he would not deny Jesus even if he had to lay down his life, but not long afterward he would deny Jesus three times. Jesus already knew the weakness of Peter and his future sins, and through the washing of feet He showed him the fact that He had borne and washed away even those sins.

Therefore, the words *"you have no part with Me"* do not mean that one is saved by accepting the outward rite of washing the feet with water. They mean that one becomes a person who has a part with the Lord only by believing the fact that Jesus washed away all one's sins with the baptism He received from John and with the Cross. If a person does not accept this complete washing away of sins, he cannot truly become a person united with the Lord, even if he stays beside Jesus and follows Him.

This word is also an assurance of salvation given so that Peter would not leave the Lord later because of his own failure. That Peter could come to the Lord again even after denying Jesus was because Jesus had already borne and washed away even that sin. When one's weakness is revealed, one must not think that one has become a sinner again, but must look by faith to the baptism that the Lord, who bore even that sin, received from John, and to the Cross.

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Therefore, ‘a person who has a part with Jesus’ is not a person who has become clean by his own works, but a person who believes the fact that Jesus bore all his sins with the baptism He received from John and was judged on the Cross. Only a person who has been completely washed by Jesus can stand before the Lord without sin, have fellowship with Him, and live as a disciple who follows Him.

## [Question] 8. In John 13:13, by what two titles did the disciples call Jesus Christ?

The disciples called Jesus Christ *“Teacher”* and *“Lord.”* Jesus, too, acknowledged that these two titles were right, saying, *“You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am.”*

The title *“Teacher”* contains the meaning that Jesus is the One who teaches the truth of God and leads His disciples on the right way. The title *“Lord”* expresses the faith that Jesus is the Master of the disciples and God, who saves them from sin. The disciples called Jesus not an ordinary teacher, but the Lord whom they had to believe in, follow, and serve.

The titles the disciples used were right, but at that time they did not fully know the meaning of Jesus, the Lord and Teacher, washing their feet. Although Jesus was the Lord and Teacher, higher than His disciples, He lowered Himself and served them in order to wash away all their sins and save them with the baptism He received from John and with the Cross. Therefore, these two titles reveal even more clearly, in the words that follow, how great and amazing the service of Jesus was.

## [Question] 9. In John 13:19, what was the purpose for which Jesus revealed to His disciples in advance that He would be betrayed?

Jesus said, *"Now I tell you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe that I am He."* The direct purpose for which He told them in advance that He would be sold was so that when it actually happened, the disciples would believe that Jesus was the Christ sent by God and the Savior.

Jesus knew all about the fact that Judas Iscariot would sell Him and that, because of it, He would be arrested and hung on the Cross. He also knew that the word of the Old Testament, *"He who eats bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me,"* would be fulfilled through the betrayal of Judas. By speaking in advance before it happened and letting it come to pass just as He had said, Jesus revealed to His disciples that He was the Son of God, who knows the hearts of people and everything that will happen in the future.

That a disciple who had eaten and lived closely with Him would sell his Teacher, and that Jesus would be arrested by His enemies and put to death, could greatly shake the faith of the disciples. But because Jesus had told them in advance, the disciples could know that it was not a failure or defeat that had come upon Him unexpectedly. Jesus knew all things, and He went the way of the Cross to fulfill the words written in the Old Testament and the will of God the Father.

With the baptism He received from John, Jesus was already bearing all the sin of mankind on His body. Now He had to save sinners by bearing those sins, being hung on the Cross, and receiving all the punishment. The betrayal of Judas became the occasion for Jesus to be arrested and go to the Cross, but Jesus knew even that in advance and accomplished the work of

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salvation. Therefore, the disciples had to see the Cross not as the helpless defeat of Jesus, but had to believe it to be the work by which He accomplished the will of God the Father to save sinners.

Indeed, after Jesus rose again and ascended, Peter testified concerning the betrayal of Judas, *"This Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus."* After the event had taken place just as Jesus had foretold, the disciples came to realize that even the betrayal of Judas had been written in the Scriptures in advance.

Therefore, Jesus foretold that He would be sold not to frighten His disciples, but so that they would not lose their faith when it happened. The disciples had to believe that Jesus knows all things in advance and that He is the Christ, who completes salvation according to the words of the Scriptures through the baptism He received from John, the Cross, and the resurrection.

## [Question] 10. In John 13:20, Jesus said that receiving the one He sends is the same as receiving whom?

Jesus said, *"He who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me."* Here, the evangelist whom Jesus sends, Jesus, and God the Father who sent Jesus are connected in one relationship.

The one whom Jesus sends is not a person who delivers his own thoughts or knowledge, but a person who preaches the words of Jesus and the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Jesus first sent His disciples to the places He Himself intended to go, and He met people through the gospel they preached. Therefore,

accepting with one's heart the gospel preached by one who has been sent becomes accepting the words of Jesus and receiving Jesus.

Receiving Jesus does not stop at acknowledging Him as a great person or a teacher; it is accepting Him as one's own Savior. It is believing the gospel that God the Father sent Jesus to this earth, that Jesus bore all the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John, and that He received the judgment for those sins on the Cross and rose again. A person who accepts this gospel is a person who has received Jesus, and he becomes a person who has also received God the Father, who sent Jesus and accomplished salvation.

On the contrary, if one rejects the word of the gospel preached by the one whom Jesus sends, one rejects Jesus, and if one rejects Jesus, one rejects God the Father, who sent Him. In the Gospel of Luke, too, Jesus said, *"He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me."*

What is important in this relationship is not the appearance or human ability of the evangelist, but by whom he has been sent and what he preaches. When the one whom Jesus sends preaches the gospel of the water and the Spirit written in the Scriptures, a person who believes that word does not stop at accepting the words of a man, but comes to receive Jesus and God the Father.

Therefore, Jesus said that receiving the one who has been sent and receiving Jesus, and receiving Jesus and receiving God the Father, are not separated from each other. A person who believes and accepts the word of the gospel that God has sent enters into a relationship with Jesus and into the salvation of God the Father, who sent Jesus.

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## [Question] 11. In John 13:21–30, by what action did Christ reveal that the one who would betray Him was Judas Iscariot?

Jesus knew all about the fact that one of the twelve disciples who had lived together with Him would betray Him. Because He knew that He would be betrayed by a disciple with whom He had shared teaching and love, living and eating together for about three years, He was troubled in spirit. And He testified, *"Most assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me."*

The disciples did not know who that person was, and they looked at one another, perplexed. When Peter motioned to John, who was leaning on the bosom of Jesus, John asked, *"Lord, who is it?"* Jesus answered, *"It is he to whom I shall give a piece of bread when I have dipped it."* Then He gave the piece of bread to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. With word and action, He pointed out exactly who would betray Him.

After Judas had received the piece of bread, Satan entered him. Jesus knew all this and said, *"What you do, do quickly."* The time had come for Judas to carry out the betrayal he had already been harboring, and through that betrayal, the events of Jesus being arrested and hung on the Cross began to unfold.

But the disciples sitting with Him did not know the meaning of that word. Because Judas had the money box, they thought that Jesus was telling him to buy the things needed for the feast or to give something to the poor. As soon as Judas had received the piece of bread, he went out, and the Bible records that *"it was night."* That night, he went to the chief priests and set about the work of delivering up Jesus.

It is not that Jesus came to know of the betrayal of Judas belatedly. He knew all about who would betray Him and what would happen afterward. Nevertheless, He did not avoid it but

went forward on the way of salvation appointed by the Father. Because Jesus had already borne all the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John the Baptist, He now had to receive the punishment for all those sins on the Cross. Therefore, the action of pointing out Judas Iscariot was at once the revealing of the betrayer and a demonstration that Jesus, knowing all things, was voluntarily going forward on the way of the Cross to save mankind.

## [Question] 12. In John 13:23, to whom does 'the disciple whom Jesus loved' refer?

'The disciple whom Jesus loved' refers to the Apostle John. He is the disciple who wrote the Gospel of John, and instead of putting forward his own name, he described himself as 'the disciple whom Jesus loved.'

At the Last Supper, John was leaning on the bosom of Jesus. Peter motioned to John to ask who it was that would betray Jesus, and John, leaning back on the breast of Jesus just as he was, asked, *"Lord, who is it?"* This scene shows that John was close to Jesus and was in a relationship intimate enough to ask a question without hesitation.

The expression 'the disciple whom Jesus loved' continues to appear in many places in the Gospel of John. Beside the Cross, Jesus entrusted His mother Mary to this disciple, and from that time he took Mary into his own home. When he heard the news of the resurrection of Jesus, he ran to the tomb together with Peter, and at the Sea of Tiberias, he was the first to recognize the risen Jesus and said to Peter, *"It is the Lord!"*

John chapter 21 reveals that this person is the same disciple who leaned on the bosom of Jesus at the supper and asked who

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it was that would betray the Lord. Since it goes on to record, *"This is the disciple who testifies of these things, and wrote these things,"* we can know that he is the Apostle John, the author of the Gospel of John.

Therefore, the title 'the disciple whom Jesus loved' shows that the Apostle John was a witness who, having received the love of Jesus, directly witnessed His words and works, His death on the Cross, and His resurrection from close beside Him.

## [Question] 13. In John 13:34–35, what are the content and the purpose of the new commandment Jesus gave His disciples?

The new commandment Jesus gave His disciples is *"love one another."* Jesus also clearly stated the standard of that love.

*"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another" (John 13:34).*

The most important words in this commandment are *"as I have loved you."* The ground and the example of the disciples loving one another lie in the love Jesus first bestowed on them. Jesus, though He is God, came to this earth clothed in human flesh; He bore all the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John the Baptist; and bearing those sins, He received all the punishment on the Cross. By rising again from the dead, He saved those who believe from sin and judgment and gave them eternal life. This is the love with which Jesus loved us.

Therefore, loving one another does not stop at simply harboring warm feelings or saying with words only that we love. Just as Jesus gave Himself up and gave us life, it is to cherish

our brothers and sisters, to look after their difficulties together, and to serve one another. Preaching the gospel to a person who does not yet know the love of God and helping him also obtain the remission of sins and eternal life belongs to this love, too. A person who has first been loved by God shows that love to others.

Jesus said that such love becomes the mark by which His disciples are recognized.

*"By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35).*

A disciple of Jesus is not a person who merely claims with words that he follows the Lord. He is a person who believes in his heart in the love of salvation he has received from Jesus and, with that love, cares for his brothers and sisters and other souls. When they look after and serve one another and join their hearts for the gospel, the people of the world also come to know through that appearance that they are the disciples of Jesus. Therefore, the new commandment tells us to believe in the love with which Jesus loved and saved us, and to live loving one another, following the example of that love. ✉

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Sermon 1 by Paul C. Jong

# What Jesus tells us through the foot-washing ceremony

**< 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.'"**

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The purpose for which Jesus came to this world was to save mankind from all sins and make them the children of God. So verse 3 says, *"Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God."* There is a work that God the Father entrusted to His Son when He sent Him to this earth. What is that work? The work of receiving baptism from John the Baptist to have our sins transferred to Him, being hung on the Cross, and rising again to save us—that very work is the work that God the Father entrusted to His Son. Because Jesus did that work for us, by believing in what Jesus did, we have our sins washed away, are delivered from the judgment of sin, and obtain salvation.

Just as we take on a task and carry out our responsibility, Jesus, too, came to this earth to carry out His responsibility. And at the age of thirty, when He began His public ministry, Jesus received baptism from John the Baptist and was in the state of having borne the sin of mankind. Because Jesus bore the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John the Baptist, though it is invisible to our eyes, He is now bearing the sin of the world on His body. Now one thing remains for Jesus to do on this earth. That is, to go to the Cross, be nailed to it, and receive the punishment for sin Himself. The Bible says that the wages of sin is death, so the punishment that falls on sinners is death and eternal destruction. Because Jesus had borne the sin of this world with the baptism He received from John, He knew that He would now bear the sin of the world, go to the Cross, and in a little while be nailed to it and die. Now it is one day before the Passover, and Jesus would keep the Passover, be nailed to the Cross, die, and rise again on the third day. In other words, Jesus was facing His being hung on the Cross the next day. That is why the words He is speaking now are so serious. Jesus had no time to joke and take it easy.

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That the Father had given all things into His hands means that God the Father had entrusted the work of saving mankind from sin to His Son Jesus. Jesus is the Son of God, but because He came to this earth and received baptism from John the Baptist, one thing now remained for Him to do. That one remaining thing was for Jesus, who had our sins transferred to Him, to be nailed to the Cross, suffer humiliation, and be put to death, and thereby to put an end to the punishment for our sins. Jesus had to bear it with His own body. And knowing that He would return to God the Father after that, He held the Lord's Supper before the Passover. In the other Gospels come the words He spoke while keeping the Passover rite: "This is My body," and "This is My blood." But what comes in today's passage? John, the disciple of Jesus, records the foot-washing ceremony of Jesus, that is, His washing the feet of His disciples. I want to tell you what He is saying to us through this foot-washing ceremony.

## *"Having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end"*

Because Jesus had to be nailed to the Cross and die the next day, He had to say everything He wanted to say today. Facing death tomorrow, there was something He absolutely had to tell them today. That thing He absolutely had to tell them was the foot-washing ceremony, that is, His washing the feet of His disciples. What on earth is this? Verse 1 says, "*Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.*" Jesus knew that He would take responsibility for the work of saving mankind that the Father had entrusted to Him, do it, and

return to the Father. So Jesus loved His own who were in the world, that is, the people of God, to the end. This means that the Lord wanted to show how He loves them to the end. Because Jesus would be hung on the Cross and die the next day, He is speaking today through the foot-washing ceremony.

And Jesus laid aside His garments. The clothes of the Jews were something like a blanket. They were wide and large, so one wrapped it once around the whole body and either turned the remainder around behind the neck or brought it to the side and tied it with a cord. It was like our pajamas. It is verses 4 through 7. *"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.'"*

## *"What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this"*

As Jesus was washing the feet of His disciples, He came to Peter and tried to wash his feet, and Peter flatly refused. Peter thought, "Are You going to wash my feet? You are my Lord and my God; I should wash Your feet, so how can You wash my feet?" The other disciples, since Jesus wanted to do it, were dumbfounded and kept still. Peter was hot-tempered. He was hot-tempered like me. Even while holding back, he says what absolutely has to be said. But when the other person is too young, there are times when he does not speak.

When Peter asked whether He was going to wash his feet,

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Jesus said, *"What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this" (John 13:7)*. Peter said, "Lord, You can never wash my feet. I would rather die than allow You to wash my feet." Jesus said, *"If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me" (John 13:8)*. So Peter asked Him to wash not only his feet but also his hands and his head, and Jesus said that he who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, and that they were clean, but not all of them. Today we want to share the word, taking this part as our theme.

To wash feet, first there has to be a vessel. In the old days, we called it a washbasin. We poured water into a washbasin and washed our faces and our hair in it. Because it was translated by people of old, it was called a basin. Jesus would have filled a large vessel with plenty of water and washed them one by one, again and again. Jesus poured water into a basin and washed the feet of His disciples. It was not that He merely wiped them with His hand; He washed them with the towel with which He was girded. There is nothing without meaning in what Jesus did.

## The towel speaks of the law

Dear fellow believers, what does the towel symbolize? What Moses brought down from God after going up Mount Sinai and staying there forty days without eating anything was the two tablets of stone of the Ten Commandments. But the people could not come near Moses. His face shone so brightly that they were afraid and could not come near. So because the people of Israel were so afraid of his face, after Moses had finished speaking to the people, he covered his face with a towel. The towel speaks of the law, that is, the commandments of God. By what do we know sin? What we judge with our own conscience as having

done well or done wrong is a law of conscience of our own, not the true law. The law of God is the law. The law says that you shall have no other gods before Me, that you shall not serve or bow down to anything other than God as a god, that you shall regard God as the most honorable, believe only the word of God, and serve God alone. If we look at the Ten Commandments, there are ten, and those up to the fourth commandment are the commands God gave us mankind concerning what to do and what not to do with regard to God. From the fifth commandment to the tenth, they concern relationships with people. There are six of them: honor your parents, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, and so on.

God told us to serve only God, who created us, but there are many times when we have failed to serve God alone. When we offer rites to our ancestors, we are serving our ancestors as gods. To serve them as gods means that our ancestors help us. It means that while their descendants live, the ancestors watch over and protect them. The idea that ancestors protect their descendants is wrong. How can a dead corpse help us and bless us? It makes no sense. God said to acknowledge and serve only God, who made the universe, created heaven and earth, and gave us life, and that a person who does not serve God alone commits sin—yet as we live, we commit many sins. We commit many repeated sins, too. Why did Jesus not wash the whole body, but wash the feet? We sleep, wake up, open our eyes, and go around all the time, and we go to a certain place on our feet and commit sin there. All the sins we commit in this world are connected with our feet. We commit sin because we went to that place. Jesus says through the law that all the sins we commit are sin, and He Himself washed those sins away with water. This washing of feet speaks of Jesus coming to this earth, receiving baptism from John, having our sins transferred to Him, and washing them away.

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## *"You do not understand now, but you will know after this"*

When Jesus tried to wash the feet of Peter, Peter said that He could not, and Jesus said, *"You do not understand now, but you will know after this" (John 13:7)*. When Jesus was arrested and tried, Peter followed Him all the way to that place and was watching from a distance. But when other people said, "Aren't you one of Jesus's group, too?" he said, "No, I do not know such a man." Earlier, Jesus had said to Peter, *"This night, before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times" (Matthew 26:34)* and Peter had said that even if a sword were at his throat, he would not deny Jesus, that he would say at any time that he knew Jesus, and that if Jesus were in danger, he himself would jump in and fight together with Him.

But Jesus said that even so, tonight he would deny Him three times, and Peter really did deny Him three times. When Jesus was being interrogated in the courtyard of the high priest's house, Peter stood a little way off, and that night he denied Him three times. When people said, "Aren't you one of that Jesus's group, too?" he said, "No." When they said, "Weren't you with Him, too?" he said, "No." The third time, when they said, "Aren't you one of them, too?" he said, "I do not know such a man. I absolutely do not know Him. I have nothing to do with Him." Then the rooster crowed. Jesus had said that before the rooster crowed, he would deny Him three times, and when he denied Him the third time, the rooster crowed.

Peter remembered the words Jesus had spoken, and he fled from that place. He ran away and wept, thinking, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God, so why did I deny my Lord? Jesus knew all along that I would deny Him," and he was terribly disappointed. So even if Jesus had risen, he said, "I am a man

who denied Jesus three times, so would Jesus accept me? Let me not even hope for it. Even I would not accept someone like me," and he said, let us go back to our old job.

So at the shore of the Sea of Galilee, he got into a boat with the disciples who followed him and went out to catch fish at night. They fished all night but caught nothing, and as dawn came, thinking it was over now, they steered the boat in to the shore to have some breakfast. But Jesus was there on the shore, having made a fire of coals. And Jesus called the disciples and told them to come out quickly and eat, since He had prepared breakfast. At that moment, none of the disciples recognized Jesus. It was the early dawn, and the day was breaking in the darkness; the other disciples did not know that it was Jesus, but when Peter heard the voice, it was the voice of Jesus. In the darkness, the voice was the voice of Jesus, and when he looked closely in the light of the breaking dawn, it was Jesus. Peter plunged into the sea with his clothes on.

When he came out, Jesus really had made a fire of coals and prepared breakfast. He told them to bring the fish they had caught, and while eating the meal He had prepared together with them, in that place Jesus asked Peter, *"Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?" (John 21:15)*. Peter, pricked in his conscience and in great distress, answered, *"You know that I love You."*

Jesus asked a second time, *"Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" (John 21:16)* and Peter said that the Lord knew that he loved Him. He meant, "Did You not know that I would sin? Did You not know in advance that I would deny You three times that night and tell me so? I am a man who committed the sin of denying You, so do not ask me whether I love You. My heart does love You, but I am in such distress because of the sin I committed." The Lord said twice, "Feed My lambs," "Tend My

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sheep." Finally, *"Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" (John 21:17)* and Peter said that the Lord knew that he loved Him, and the Lord said, "Feed My sheep." This is what happened between the risen Lord and Peter at the shore of the Sea of Galilee.

Peter was in great distress because he had denied Him three times. The risen Jesus came to Peter and the disciples, who had been catching fish at night, and the first thing He said to Peter was, "Do you love Me more than these?" and then, a second and a third time, He asked, "Do you love Me?" Peter said the same thing three times, and the Lord said, "Feed My lambs," "Tend My sheep," "Feed My sheep." Because the Lord had risen and would go up, He was telling him to nurture those who believe in the gospel, which is the work Jesus came to this earth to do. When Peter heard that question and answered it, he realized that Jesus had washed his feet knowing that he, Peter, would commit the sin of denying the Lord three times. But when Jesus washed his feet, he did not know it. When Jesus said, "I will wash your feet," he said that He could not, that He could never wash his feet, that the Lord was his God, so how could He wash his feet. When Jesus said, "If I do not wash your feet, you have no part with Me," Peter said that that would not do, so that he might become a person who had a part with the Lord, Jesus should wash not only his feet but also his hands and his head, and the Lord said that he who is bathed needs only to wash his feet. Here Jesus is reminding His disciples that when He was thirty years old, He went to the Jordan River, received baptism from John the Baptist, and bore the sin of mankind.

## Jesus washing the feet of His disciples is a reminder of the baptism Jesus received from John

The disciples of Jesus did not know this meaning at that time. But when Jesus was hung on the Cross and died, rose again, came to them, and asked Peter, "Do you love Me?" they came to know it. Jesus washed the feet of His disciples knowing all the sins we would commit throughout our lives, and through that work He is speaking to us today as well. This foot-washing ceremony speaks of that baptism Jesus received from John the Baptist. Jesus came to this earth and received baptism from John the Baptist and bore our sins. But from the moment we come out of our mother's womb until we enter the grave, until we go to the crematorium, we walk around on these two feet, and we do good things and make mistakes, but we also do things that are sin. All those sins are the sin of the world, and our Lord is now reminding us that He received baptism and bore all our sins on His body. Because He would be nailed to the Cross and die the next day, that day was the only time He had to tell His disciples this.

Dear fellow believers, the words one speaks facing death are called last words, and one says only what is absolutely necessary. Jesus is now speaking words like last words. Because people did not understand, by holding the foot-washing ceremony on the day before the Passover, He showed them that work by which He bore the sins of His disciples and the sins of all the people of this world. It means that He had every person's sins transferred to Him without leaving out a single one, and would die on the Cross tomorrow. This means that the Lord delivers His disciples from judgment and washes away even the sins in their hearts, saving them completely with the water and the Spirit.

The Lord is God. It means that God came to this earth in

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human flesh, received baptism from John, had your sins and mine—all the sin of mankind, without leaving out a single one—transferred to Him once and for all, eternally, and by shedding His blood and dying on the Cross tomorrow, saves us completely once and for all. The Lord is telling us the meaning, "I came for this work, and I will complete this work tomorrow, so I am telling you this today."

Dear fellow believers, in believing in Jesus, there are three things we must remember without fail. First, we must believe that Jesus is God, who created the universe by His word, and the Son of God the Father. We must believe that Jesus is the Creator God, yet He came as the Savior. Another thing is that we must believe that Jesus came to this earth and received baptism from John at the age of thirty. We must know and believe that He thereby had all the sin of mankind, all the sins of this world, transferred onto His body without leaving out a single one. And we must believe that by being nailed to the Cross, shedding His blood, and dying, He received all the punishment and judgment for the sins of us human beings and bore even our death. We must believe these three things. And when we believe in our hearts in that Lord who rose from the dead and is alive now, that Lord who came to this earth and did this work, we receive the true remission of sins. Dear fellow believers, a person who knows only in theory, only in his head, is not saved. We are saved when we believe that Jesus actually did this work for you and me.

Of the twelve disciples, eleven all believed, but Judas did not believe. Judas went to the chief priests and said that Jesus would be on the Mount of Olives with His disciples, so if they came there, they could meet Him. When the chief priests said, "We do not know this person called Jesus, so what shall we do?" Judas said, "When you come to arrest Him, I will embrace Jesus and kiss Him

on the cheek, and then you will know that man is Jesus and can arrest Him." After the foot-washing ceremony, Jesus went to the Mount of Olives and prayed at night, and the soldiers came and arrested Him. Jesus was nailed to the Cross the next day.

## Because Jesus received baptism from John, He could go to the Cross

Dear fellow believers, when we believe in Jesus as our Savior, we believe in Him as God. But we must also know and believe that in order to save us from sin, He came to this earth in human flesh and bore our sins with the baptism He received from John. Baptism has the meaning of sins passing on, being transferred, being buried. When Jesus received baptism from John the Baptist, our sins passed on to Him.

It is not that you pass your sins on to Jesus; God appointed one person as the representative of mankind. That John the Baptist, the greatest among those born of women, gave baptism to Jesus, and by receiving that baptism, Jesus fulfilled all righteousness. Making all people sinless is the purpose for which Jesus received baptism. And because He received baptism, He could bear the sin of the world and go to the Cross, He could be nailed to it and shed His blood, and He could suffer death for us. The Bible says, *"He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities" (Isaiah 53:5)*.

Jesus died on the Cross because He had our sins transferred to Him. He suffered because He had our sins transferred to Him, and so He was despised and disregarded by people and was nailed to the Cross and died for us. The death of Jesus on the Cross was the event in which He received the punishment for sin in our place, and the work in which Jesus became the sacrificial

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offering of atonement for us. It means that He is our Savior, who saved us by having all our sins transferred to Him in our place and receiving all the judgment in our place, for our sake.

We must be saved by believing in that Jesus. We must believe with our hearts. The Bible says, *"For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Romans 10:10)*. Dear fellow believers, do you believe? Yes, you do. We believe by knowing with our heads, feeling with our emotions, and deciding with our hearts. This faith that knows, feels, and acts is faith with the whole person. By believing in the Lord as whole persons, we can have fellowship with the Lord.

The Lord held the foot-washing ceremony before He was hung on the Cross and died in order to remind them once again that He had come and received baptism from John. He did not hold the foot-washing ceremony to show humility. Before Jesus was hung on the Cross and died, Mary, the sister of Lazarus, poured fragrant oil on the feet of Jesus and wiped them with her hair, and there is nothing without value in what Jesus did after coming to this earth. The Lord spoke only of what is absolutely necessary for us, the things necessary for removing our sins. That is why Jesus held the foot-washing ceremony.

But today the religious people who believe in the Nicene Creed hold foot-washing ceremonies. The foot-washing ceremony in which pastors wash the feet of their own church members has no meaning at all. As for a foot-washing ceremony that shows humility, if you go to Buddhism, they do it even better. Every other religion does it, too. Jesus is not One who came to show humility. He is not a moral teacher, nor an ethical teacher. Jesus came as the Savior. Jesus received baptism from John in order to save us.

The Lord said, *"You shall know the truth, and the truth shall*

*make you free" (John 8:32)*. Is this gospel of the water and the Spirit not the truth? That Jesus received baptism from John and had our sins transferred to Him is the truth for washing away the sins of our hearts. That which does not change is the truth. The Lord is truly the Savior who came to save us. He is not a religious leader. He is not Siddhartha, nor Muhammad. Jesus came not as a religious leader but as the Savior of mankind, the Savior of you and me. He did this work because only if Jesus received baptism from John and had our sins transferred to Him would the remission of sins come upon the hearts of those who believe in that baptism and the Cross when He was nailed to the Cross and died, and would the sins of their hearts be washed away and they be saved from judgment.

We must know and believe in the baptism Jesus received from John and in the Cross together. In the Nicene Creed is written the content that Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, and was crucified and died. And people recite it like a scripture and say that He saved us on the Cross. But it is not that He saved us only on the Cross. The Bible says that He saved us by receiving baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River and having our sins transferred to Him, and by going to the Cross and receiving the punishment for sin and thereby paying the price of our sins.

That is why we must be born again of water and the Spirit. Only when we believe that God came to this earth in human flesh, received baptism from John, and had our sins transferred to Him, and therefore received the punishment for sin on the Cross and saved us from sin, are we born again. We are born anew and become the children of God. Having received the remission of sins, our souls have already been changed, and at the moment our bodies are suddenly changed, we go to the kingdom of the Lord and live together with the Lord. Only those who are born

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again become the children of God and go to the kingdom of heaven.

## The countdown to the destruction of the world has begun

Dear fellow believers, the time for the world to be destroyed has drawn near. The countdown has begun. Yesterday a pastor conveyed a mission report to me. A sister in England had seen the passage in a book I wrote where I spoke about Gorbachev, and as it happened, former General Secretary Gorbachev had died a few days before. So that sister asked whether the person mentioned in the book was President Gorbachev, and when told that it was, she asked how I had known Gorbachev's future.

At that time, Gorbachev became the supreme leader of the Soviet Union and then became the president of the Soviet Union. What he did after becoming the president of a country formed by the union of fifteen nations was to push forward reform and openness, and in the end this created the occasion for those nations to separate and become independent. And he declared the end of the Cold War. The Soviet Union proclaimed to the whole world that it would not wage war. The president who thus promised not to wage war was Gorbachev, and it was thirty years ago from now that he took the presidential oath and put forward his pledges.

At that time, I thought as I watched the television news, "That man is the president of the Soviet Union, and he is putting forward a political pledge to make it a country that does not wage war and to become a president who lets the nations become independent. He will let them become independent, but will it really become a country that does not wage war?" So I said this

to the people who worked with me: “That President Gorbachev has put forward his pledges and taken his oath, but those pledges will never last long. Before long, a new president will appear and tear up those pledges.” The people who worked with me said, “Who are you to say that the pledges that president put forward will be torn up before long?” I said, “Whether what I say is wrong or not, you will know if you wait just a little. Do you not know how world history turns? I am a servant of God.” The people who were with me were so dumbfounded that they laughed hollowly.

It was summer when I said that, and around the winter of the following year, Yeltsin appeared and tore up all those pledges. President Gorbachev was finished with that. Then the people who had worked with me were floored once again. They said that everything had turned out exactly as that man had said, and asked who that man was that he knew such things—was he not someone who worked with them and took home five 10,000-won bills a day? In fact, thirty years ago I received 50,000 won a day. Then those people said that for someone who could see the future, five bills a day was too trivial, and should he not get at least 500 bills; that if that man set out to make money, he would become one of the world’s wealthiest men, yet now he was not doing work to make money but doing other work—and they found it hard to understand.

That sister in England asked the pastor by email yesterday whether what had been written in a book several decades ago had been said about President Gorbachev, who recently passed away. When told that it was, that sister seemed to see me differently. It means she regards me as a person who knows everything that will happen in the future, too. Even now I know how the world is turning. Because I know, I do everything in advance, whatever it is. I do not do much work when something

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is upon me. I do it all before it comes, and when it comes, I take it easy. But I am not saying that I am great.

Look at what happened after Jesus rose from the dead. Peter, being in a position where he would have to live with a guilty conscience from then on, could not hold his head up, so he went to catch fish, and he was having a hard time. But Jesus appeared on the shore, told them to come and eat breakfast, and asked, "Do you love Me more than these?" Peter answered that the Lord knew that he loved Him. Jesus asked three times, and Peter answered the same way three times, and each time Jesus said, "Feed My lambs," "Tend My sheep," "Feed My sheep," entrusting His flock to Peter. And a little later, the Lord went up to heaven.

## Now is the time of the last harvest, when we must preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit

While believing in Jesus, we must know and believe without fail that Jesus came to this earth and bore your sins and mine by receiving baptism from John. And we must also believe that He received the punishment for our sins on the Cross. When we have the faith that believes in the baptism of Jesus and the Cross, in the future the Antichrist will appear, and his subordinates will seize us and beat us to break our faith, and they will tell us to believe in the Antichrist as God and abandon Jesus. At that time, you and I will confess in our hearts as follows: "Jesus received baptism from John and bore our sins, went to the Cross, received the judgment for our sins, and saved us, so how could we deny that salvation? We can never deny it."

If it were the case that Jesus died only on the Cross and saved us only from judgment, we could turn our coats at any time. But

could we betray that Lord who, by receiving baptism from John, took the sins that were on us onto Himself and made us clean, and who did not stop there but went to the Cross and suffered even the punishment and death for sin and saved us? We cannot. It is because we are in a personal relationship with Him. You and I, who know the fact that Jesus received baptism from John for you and me and had all my sins transferred to Him, and bore even the punishment and death for sin on the Cross and saved us, cannot betray Him, even if we want to avoid it so as not to suffer, and want to deny Him, and want to betray Him. It is because the Holy Spirit, who is in our hearts, gives us a strong faith so that we can never betray Him. In that age, when the Antichrist runs rampant, killing us and subduing people, those who believe only in the blood of the Cross will all deny Him.

But those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit have their names written in the Book of Life. So they cannot deny the Lord. Through whom is this so? It is so through the Holy Spirit. After Jesus went up, God poured out the Holy Spirit into the hearts of those who believe in this word. Therefore, we are martyred by faith. When all those who are to be martyred have been martyred, there is no longer any need to keep this world going. The Antichrist, martyrdom, the rapture, and the resurrection all take place one after another within three and a half years. At this time our Lord comes and raptures us. Because He comes again, it is called the second coming. The Lord comes again and reaps the last harvest with a sharp sickle. The dead are changed in a moment and go up to Jesus, who has come again in the air. This going up into the air is the rapture. And after the Lord judges this world, puts the devil into the place where he is to be put, and completely settles everything, we go and live in the new heaven and the new earth. There are the Millennial Kingdom and the eternal kingdom of God, and I, too, know only

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that far. The Bible tells us only that far.

You and I are those who have been saved and whose names are written in the Book of Life. Jesus spoke these words to His disciples, but we want to testify of this gospel to those who believe only in the blood of the Cross. Why did Jesus wash the feet of His disciples? He reminded them through the foot-washing ceremony in order to tell them that when Jesus received baptism from John the Baptist, He bore all the sins these disciples would commit throughout their lives until they died, and the sin of mankind, and removed those sins—that is, that their sins had already been transferred to Jesus before He went to the Cross.

Dear fellow believers, now is the time of the last harvest, when we must preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit to all the Catholics and all the Christians who believe only in the blood of the Cross and only in the Nicene Creed. We do it through literature. I am a gentleman. I am very much a gentleman. I give the other person freedom and entrust the work to him. And if there is something lacking, I help and support him; I do not go and watch over him in every detail. As a believer, I work in the way of entrusting and helping. Jesus, too, works in the way of entrusting and helping. Jesus has entrusted the work of preaching the gospel to us and makes us preach it all. Through the literature ministry, we will preach it all. Let us all pray, labor, and serve together for this work. ✉

Sermon 2 by Paul C. Jong

# The Lord loves us to the end

**< 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.'"**

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## *"Having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end"*

Verse 1 says, *"Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end."* This word is spoken in order to give those who believe in Him and have received the remission of sins the faith that He keeps them until the end of this world. Jesus loves those who have received the remission of sins, and He loves them to the end. Today I want to share the word on the basis of this passage. Why do those who believe in Jesus today fail in their lives of faith? I will first tell you the reason Christians fail, and second, I also want to tell you the reason they succeed.

Jesus received baptism from John the Baptist and bore the sin of this world, and bearing the sin of the world, He was nailed to the Cross for us and died, and rose again and became our Savior. It has been 2,000 years since Jesus came to this earth.

## How was the Apostles' Creed made and spread?

In the days of the early Church, people believed in Jesus as their Savior, but with what content did they believe? As we well know, they believed that Jesus bore the sin of the world by receiving baptism from John the Baptist, was hung on the Cross and died, rose again, and saved us from sin, and so became our Savior. But after the days of the early Church, around A.D. 300, Constantine became the emperor of Rome. For the sake of his own politics, Constantine had to unify the religions. He officially recognized Christianity, and he wanted to unify into one all those

among the Roman people who believed in other religions.

The policy Constantine put forward to achieve that unification was as follows: "Believe the faith you believe as it is, only Rome is a Christian nation, and we will make Christianity the state religion of this nation, so you may bring in the religion you believe and believe it together with Christianity." There was no need even to abandon the faith they believed; they could bring it in as it was, and since the state had carried out a policy of unifying the religions, they should accept it as it was. With the intention of unifying religions, Emperor Constantine convened the Council of Nicaea in 325, and at this council, the doctrine concerning the divinity of Christ was formulated mainly around the Arian controversy, and the Nicene Creed was adopted. The Apostles' Creed was not created at the Council of Nicaea, but was gradually formed from the earlier tradition of baptismal confessions of faith in the Roman Church.

What they made, saying that this is the faith of the apostles, is the Apostles' Creed, which says, "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the remission of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen."

When they made the doctrine of the Apostles' Creed, gave it to the Roman people, and asked whether they would believe it this way, the people said that they would. Since it did not reject their own religions, they said they acknowledged it. Then, when the state adopted welfare policies, saying it would reduce their

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taxes and give them money, too, they all believed. They believed without any hesitation. Of course, abandoning the religion one originally believed and taking up a new faith was by no means an easy thing. Afterward, religious councils were held throughout the empire and established orthodox doctrines, beginning with the doctrine of the Trinity, and it is said that they devoted themselves to making doctrines as if they were people who believed in and followed Jesus well.

## The Christian doctrines that spread after the Reformation

Then, in the early 1500s, the Reformers arose. They protested, saying that if they stayed as they were, doing as the Catholic Church did, they too would be branded as heretics and someday be seized and killed, so let us escape. So the protesters arose, that is, the protesters called Protestants. Beginning with Martin Luther, many leaders such as Zwingli, Calvin, and John Knox arose in the various countries of Europe and led the Reformation. But even after the Reformation, persecution by the Catholic powers and by persecuting governments continued, and there arose those who left for the New World, the American continent, in search of freedom of faith.

In September 1620, 102 Puritans who sought freedom of faith, fleeing persecution, set out on the Mayflower and arrived on the American continent that winter. They went through wretched trials—nearly half of them lost their lives to the cold and disease in the first winter—but with the help of the nearby native people, they learned how to grow corn and skills for survival and were able to endure the hard times. In the autumn of the following year, having gathered their first harvest, they

invited the native people, held a thanksgiving service to God, and held a feast. Afterward, as news of them became known in their home country, more immigrants of faith came over to the New World.

Among those who came to the New World were not only Puritans from England but also a mixture of various Protestants who had come over from the various countries of Europe, fleeing persecution or seeking new opportunities. When the news that they had settled and established themselves in the New World reached their home countries through letters and reports, more immigrants began to come over from the various countries of Europe. Meanwhile, some of the European powers, such as Spain, mobilized their armies to conquer the continent, suppressing or enslaving the native people by force and expanding their territory. Through this history of colonization and immigration, the United States of America was later born.

As time passed, the system of black slavery became deeply rooted, centered on the plantation regions, and this became a great social and moral problem. Later, when Abraham Lincoln was elected president and pushed forward the policy of emancipating the slaves, the Civil War broke out over the conflict surrounding it. Meanwhile, the early seminaries established in America trained pastors and taught orthodox Christian theology.

What did they teach in that Christian theology? It is said that they taught some of the doctrines of the Catholic Church, too, and taught the Apostles' Creed. They taught that since the Apostles' Creed is the faith of the apostles, we, too, must believe according to the Apostles' Creed. And so today they have sent missionaries to our country, too, and sent them here and there and spread Christianity throughout the whole world, and among the doctrines they spread, the most central is the Apostles' Creed.

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After that come a few things such as prayers of repentance and sanctification.

And the Methodist Church arose in England. It was not only Rome that ruled the world; the country called England also ruled the world, captured people of other countries and brought them as slaves, and brought back wealth, and lived well. The English, too, were living ethically ruined lives. At that time, a young man named Wesley believed in Jesus, and saying that they must not live like this, he started the sanctification movement. He started a movement to live godly lives, without drinking or dissipation. Wesley even went to the taverns and preached, and the young people of England heard that preaching and said, we must not live like this, let us come to our senses, and carried on that movement, and Wesley succeeded. So what the young people gathered together and made is today's Methodist Church. The founder of the Methodist Church is Wesley. The founder of the Presbyterian Church is Calvin. There is also a founder of the Full Gospel Church. The center that leads the Presbyterian Church is the elders.

So what has spread in common today is Christian doctrine, and although the doctrines differ from denomination to denomination, the most central thing among them, the thing they believe alike, is the Apostles' Creed. The Roman Catholic Church left out that work, that truth, that Jesus received baptism from John the Baptist, bore the sin of the world, and washed away our sins. Therefore, Christians today, even though they believe in Jesus well, have become sinners and have failed in their lives of faith. No matter how well they believe according to the doctrines of their denomination, and even if they believe with their very lives, they have failed because there is sin in their hearts.

## Why do Christians fail in their lives of faith?

Why do Christians today fail in their lives of faith? The reason they have come to fail is that from the truth that appears in the Bible—that Jesus received baptism from John the Baptist and washed away our sins, and received the judgment for sin and became our Savior—they left out half and believed only half. That is why they failed. Verse 1 says that Jesus, knowing that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, loved His own who were in the world to the end. This was after Jesus had received baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River, borne the sin of the world, and washed away our sins. The day after tomorrow is the Passover. The sacrificial lamb of the Passover is Jesus Himself.

Jesus was hated by people, accused, and taken to the court of Pilate. The people accused Jesus to the governor, saying, "That man rebelled against Rome and called Himself the King of Israel." So a trial was held. After Pilate asked, *"Are You the King of the Jews?"* even though the chief priests and elders accused Him in many ways, Jesus gave no answer at all. Even when Pilate asked, "Speak to me. Did You stir up the people?" Jesus said nothing at all. Pilate said again, "If You speak, I will release You. It does not seem to me that You have committed a crime, but since the people are accusing You, I cannot help but interrogate You." So he told Him to know that he was the one with the authority to release Him and speak to him quickly, and to be released quickly and become free. Though Pilate urged Him like that, Jesus said nothing at all, like a sheep silent before its shearers.

Because Jesus had already borne the sin of the world with the baptism He received from John the Baptist, it was fitting for Him to be hung on the Cross and die. And it was fitting for Him

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to die, rise again, and save those who believe. That is why Jesus loved His own who were in the world to the end.

## The reason Jesus washed the feet of His disciples

To let them know this, Jesus does something like a baptism ceremony, that is, the work of washing their feet. Jesus had His disciples sit down, took a towel and girded Himself, poured water into a washbasin, and began to wash the feet of His disciples. Jesus washed them squeaky clean, washed away even the dirt between their toes, and wiped off the water with the towel.

Now Peter's turn came. Peter was startled. Peter thought, "Jesus is my Teacher, and the Christ, the Son of the living God, so how can He wash my feet? I should wash the feet of the Lord. The Lord can never wash my feet." When Peter refused, Jesus spoke in verses 7 through 11. *"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.'"*

Here, when Peter asked Him to wash his hands and his head, too, Jesus said, "He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet. But not all are clean," and He said that among the disciples there was one who did not believe in Jesus. It was a word spoken concerning Judas. It means that that person is not clean, but a person who believes in Me has had his sins washed away. What

Jesus wants to say now is that even the sins we commit while living in this world, He bore completely with the baptism He received from John the Baptist and washed away again, and that He received even all the judgment for sin and became your Savior. We must know that Jesus is washing their feet in order to say this.

When we open the word and have read from one point to another, you must know this word exactly, and so must I. If I do not know this word and talk nonsense, you must raise your hands and tell me at once to stop talking nonsense and come down, asking what word a person who does not even know the word thinks he is preaching, talking nonsense. Those who do not know the baptism Jesus received from John say that Jesus washed the feet of His disciples because He was humble. They are now teaching that He washed their feet to tell us to serve one another, for those above to serve those below, and that He showed the virtue of humility. Teaching the virtue of humility is religion. Where in the Bible does it say that He showed the virtue of humility? After this passage, He said something similar to that, but if you look closely at that word, it does not have only the meaning that He showed the virtue of humility.

## Why do those who believe in Jesus fail in their lives of faith?

The reason those who believe in Jesus today fail in their lives of faith is that there is sin in their hearts. They believe only in the blood Jesus shed on the Cross. It means that by believing in the Cross and the blood Jesus shed, they believe in Jesus as their Savior. Jesus certainly was hung on the Cross and died for them. When people first believe in the death on the Cross, they are so

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thankful that they shed tears of emotion and feel the emotion of love, and they confess that they will love only Jesus, and praise and serve Him. But after some time, that first love grows cold.

Dear fellow believers, at first they are thankful that the Lord was hung on the Cross and died, but because they are people who, as they live in the world, cannot live as Jesus wants and break the law, sin piles up in their hearts and they are sorrowful. Their lives have become sorrowful. Dear fellow believers, when a person has a worry and that worry is not resolved, even if someone in front of him tells jokes and makes him laugh, he may laugh for a moment, but if the problem of his heart is not resolved, he is in anguish.

You and I have received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, but in our lives we run up against many things day by day. Our personalities are all different, and we each have our own individuality and our own desires, so we are all different. As we live, we commit sins, run up against things, do bad things, sometimes unintentionally trap people, and commit tremendous sins. Then, when we commit a sin that Jesus does not want, we feel sorry. At first we can say, "Lord, thank You for having removed even this sin." But because a person is weak, he keeps sinning this way and that, and then later, if it is not resolved in his heart, he becomes a failure in his life of faith.

## We must look to Jesus, who makes us perfect

Dear fellow believers, just as the writer of Hebrews said that we should look to Jesus Christ, who has made us perfect, at such times we must look to what Jesus did for you and me. Jesus came to this earth and received baptism from John the Baptist for you

and me, and bore our sins and washed away our sins. And Jesus bore those sins and went to the Cross, was judged in our place, died, rose from the dead, and became our eternal Savior. It means that we must look to that Jesus.

By looking to that Jesus and believing, we must restore our hearts. When we confirm the word again and ruminate on it, our hearts are restored, the anxiety in our hearts disappears, and we become people who can again love, follow, and serve the Lord in the bright light. We obtain the qualification to serve the Lord. Through the restoration of our hearts, we become people who succeed in our lives of faith. But for those who neither know nor believe in that work by which Jesus bore the sin of the world with the baptism He received from John the Baptist, sin piles up in their hearts and a living hell is formed. Because of this, they become those who fail in their lives of faith.

Dear fellow believers, who is the one who fails in the life of faith? If one does not know the truth that Jesus bore the sin of the world and washed away our sins by receiving baptism from John the Baptist, then no matter how much one loves the Lord, one becomes a failure. Therefore, present-day Christianity, although it has been 2,000 years since Jesus came to this earth, has become a failure even while believing until now. Now they are carrying on the ecumenical movement for Christian unity, which says that there is salvation elsewhere besides Jesus, and they are now falling into it.

## There is no name under heaven by which we can be saved except Jesus

Right now, Christians all over the world are falling into an enormous sin, the sin of betraying Jesus. That sin is saying that

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there is salvation in other religions, too. Long ago, a doctor of theology of the Methodist Church called reporters and announced that there is salvation in other religions, too. That means there are many saviors in this world besides Jesus. If that is not betraying Jesus, what is it? That is the betrayal of betrayals. It is a sin a hundred million times greater than the sin of Judas, who sold Jesus for thirty pieces of silver.

Dear fellow believers, Jesus came to this earth to become our Savior, received baptism from John and bore our sins and washed away our sins, was hung on the Cross, rose from the dead, and is the Lord who has become our Savior. Yet if we say that someone else besides that Jesus can also become our Savior, that very statement is an act of opposing Jesus, betraying Jesus, and betraying the truth.

Dear fellow believers, a person who says that there is another savior will end up going to hell. He commits a sin a hundred million times greater than a person who believes in another religion, and he is doing the work of grabbing Jesus by the collar and betraying Him. He is a failure in the life of faith. Christian believers today have become failures of faith. Dear fellow believers, do you understand?

The Bible says that there is no name under heaven by which we can be saved except Jesus, so does it make sense to say that someone else can also become our Savior? Dear fellow believers, even if one betrays, is it all right to betray that severely? When you switch television channels, pastors said to be great come on and preach, and that many people have joined in it. The Catholic Church was like that from the beginning. Emperor Constantine made a syncretic religion from the beginning. It is a syncretic religion that says you may believe in Christianity but also believe in other religions together with it. It produced the result of dishonoring Jesus. Dear fellow believers, at the very least, we

must know the truth. The Bible says, *"You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).*

## Who is the one who succeeds in the life of faith?

Dear fellow believers, who is the one who succeeds in the life of faith? Jesus came to this earth to do the work of saving sinners from sin, and when He turned thirty, He went to the Jordan River and gave a command to John the Baptist. When He said, "You baptize Me," John tried to prevent Him, but later he baptized Him. Jesus said that it was fitting for John to give Him baptism and for Him to receive baptism from John to fulfill all the righteousness of God, that it was fitting for saving all people from sin.

Before He died on the Cross, Jesus loved His own to the end. The Lord knew all the sins His disciples would commit in the future, and He washed the feet of His disciples in order to teach them the truth that He had borne even those sins. When He tried to wash the feet of Peter, Peter said no. When Jesus said that if He did not wash his feet, he would have no part with Him, Peter said that then He should wash his hands and his head, too, and Jesus said that he who is bathed needs only to wash his feet. So Jesus washed the feet of Peter. After that happened, Jesus was dragged to the court of Pilate and sentenced to death.

Jesus carried the cross and went up the hill of Golgotha to suffer death. Before that, Peter, seeing Jesus being dragged away, followed Him as far as the courtyard of the high priest's house, and when a servant girl came out and asked Peter, "Aren't you one of the group that was with that man, too?" Peter answered, "No. I do not know that man." Out of fear, he denied Him three times. When he denied Him the third time, the rooster crowed.

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Peter had said that even if everyone forsook Jesus, he would not forsake Jesus. What Jesus said at that time was that tonight, before the rooster crowed, he would deny Him three times. That night, Peter denied Him three times, saying with a curse that he did not know that man, that he was not of the same party, that he did not know Him. And after that, the rooster crowed.

Then Peter remembered the words of Jesus. When he remembered the words that tonight, before the rooster crowed, he would deny Him three times, he beat his breast and wept bitterly, saying, "I am the one who denied Jesus," and that he had done wrong. But the fact that he had denied Him did not go away. Because he had opposed Him so severely, because he had said that he did not know that man, Peter was so discouraged in his heart. "I love the Lord. The Lord is my Savior. But at the words of a mere servant girl, I began to deny the Lord and in the end denied the Lord three times. The Lord knew all about me. Yet I am a man who did such a thing. I am a man who cannot become a disciple of the Lord. I will go back to my old job and go catch fish." When Peter said that he was going to catch fish, the Apostle John and James, and a few of the impatient disciples, caught fish together with him.

As they were coming back toward dawn, someone said, "Children, have you caught many fish?" and told them to cast the net on the right side of the boat. The disciples said, "We are the experts, but we have not caught a single one that night, so let us cast it once," and when they cast the net on the right side of the boat just as Jesus had said, 153 large fish were caught all at once. Dear fellow believers, catching 153 with a cast net is a great thing. And that person was none other than Jesus. John said that it was the Lord, and after that, when Jesus told them to come and eat breakfast, the disciples already knew that it was the Lord. Jesus, who had risen from the dead, had come to His disciples.

Peter, being impatient, put on his outer garment, plunged into the sea, swam, and went before Jesus. At that time, Jesus had made a fire of coals at the water's edge at dawn, and He told them to bring the fish, so they brought the fish and roasted them, and He prepared breakfast and told them to eat. Then Jesus asked, *"Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?" (John 21:15)*. He hit the nail on the head. When his heart was aching because of his betrayal and Jesus asked whether he loved Him more than these, Peter answered, "Yes, You know that I love You more than these."

Peter could not say the words, "I love You more." To say that the Lord knew that he loved the Lord more than these meant, did the Lord not know that he would sin, and wash his feet, and tell him so? The Lord had said that tonight, before the rooster crowed, he would deny Him three times. So Peter could not say the words, "I love You." Instead, he said those words: "Because You loved me, I cannot help but love You, too. I love You more than these. It is because You loved me more."

That very faith is the faith that makes us victorious in the life of faith. The Lord loved you and me more and removed your sins and mine. Though we are still lacking, the Lord loves us and loves us to the end; He loves us, embraces us, and looks after us until we go to the kingdom of the Lord. When we do wrong, the Lord does rebuke us, but He teaches us that that thing is wrong, and He tells us that He has removed even that sin.

When the Lord makes us realize again that He loved us to the end, only then do we become those who love the Lord more. It is because we have come to love the Lord more than our shortcomings, more than the sins we commit, and more than our desires. Even if we have become sinners who do what we want to do, because we have become those who love the Lord more than all the things of this world, we become those who are

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victorious in the life of faith.

With what ability could we love the Lord to the end? We are people who would betray the Lord at once if there were even the slightest thing that went against us. Yet the Lord is now holding the foot-washing ceremony in order to teach those who have become His own, His family, that He loves them and loves them to the end. If we are to lead a successful life of faith, we must know the baptism Jesus received from John the Baptist. By the faith that believes in the Lord who, by receiving baptism, had our sins transferred to Him and washed away the sins of our hearts, and who bore the sin of the world and went to the Cross, was nailed to it for us, died, rose again, and became our Savior, we were able to be saved. Because the Lord loved us, we have become those who cannot help but love the Lord, and as a result we become those who are victorious in the life of faith.

In the future, when the time of tribulation comes, those into whose hearts the devil has entered will say to us, “If you believe like that, we will kill you.” They will make a great statue of the Antichrist, call him God, and tell us to bow down to it and praise him. At that time, we will say this: “I will not. You madmen, what kind of God is this? Things not worth even the dirt on my feet.” If they say they will kill us, we will say this, too: “If you want to kill me, kill me. Will you not die? Now the whole world has been ruined, and hail about the weight of a talent and balls of fire will fall from heaven, and this earth will burn up and disappear, so will you survive? Go ahead and try. Even if I die, I have a place to go. I have a place to go, but do you have a place to go? Hell is where you are going. Repent quickly and believe in Jesus.” At that time, we become victors. We do not become victors by our own strength; the Holy Spirit is in our hearts and the Lord works, and so we become victors. How thankful we are! We are truly thankful.

## Jesus is the One who loves us to the end

Dear fellow believers, did the Lord actually bear our sins for us by receiving baptism from John the Baptist, or did He not? The Lord bore them. The Bible says that He bore the sin of the world. From your birth to your death is the world. It says that He bore those sins, too. People who know nothing say, "Even if I believe today, I will sin again tomorrow," but the sins you will commit tomorrow are also included in the sin of the world. Dear fellow believers, if you love, you have to love that much before you can say that you have loved. If you love someone when he pleases you and then kick him out and say you do not love him when he does wrong, what kind of love is that? A love that kicks someone out when he does wrong is not love.

If you love, you love to the end. Dear fellow believers, love is not something just anyone can do. A certain singer sang that love is not something just anyone can do, and who ever said it was easy? Dear fellow believers, it is the person who can love to the end who loves. Who is the person who can love to the end? There is no such person. A person can stop even while loving, and can get divorced. The love with which God loved us is a love that loved to the end. Because He loved us, He bore our sins to the end and bore our problems Himself and solved them, and so He is the One who truly loved us.

Jesus is the One who loved you and me to the end. Therefore, we can be saved by believing in Him. We can believe in Him. It is because He is the One who loves us to the end, because He loved us to the end. So love is something only a person who believes can do. Dear fellow believers, if a person does not believe, then even a husband and wife who have been getting along well will get divorced when the other party hinders what he is doing and puts up obstacles. The wife of the prophet Hosea

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went out, bore another man's child, and lived that way, but God said to go and bring her back and take her as your wife again and live with her. That love is the love of God. Even if we were weak, even if we sinned, He is not One who forsakes us.

God is the One who loves eternally. So God is the One who bore our eternal sins with the baptism He received from John, received the judgment for our eternal sins Himself, and saved us eternally. We believe in the One who loves eternally, so how could we fail in our lives of faith? Even though at times you think that by doing this you will be hated and it will all be over, when you know the fact that Jesus loved you eternally, you come out of that conduct again by faith and, by loving Jesus, do the things Jesus is pleased with. You become a person who can love and follow Jesus, saying, "If the Lord wants it, I can do anything."

Love has the power to turn a person around. Love is stronger than death. Dear fellow believers, do you know love? A person who has not been born again does not know love. He absolutely does not know it. He is selfish. But a person who has met Jesus loves. That is why we are doing the work of testifying of the love of Jesus to all the people of the world, are we not? Just as Jesus loved us, we, too, love those people, and so we are preaching the gospel to them. We are waiting for them. We are those who have received that love that loves to the end. Jesus is the One who loved us, and loved us to the end. Dear fellow believers, do you believe? Yes, you do.

It is because the Lord loved us and saved us that we have become those who are saved by faith; as for us, we may believe well and then, when things go against us, stop believing, and we may even betray Him. Being able to betray is the weakness of man. Nevertheless, because the Lord loved us, He came to this earth, and in order to save us, He went to the Jordan River, received baptism from John the Baptist, and bore our sins. We

must believe in that love of the Lord. And we must be saved by believing in our hearts in that love by which the Lord bore our sins and went to the Cross, was nailed to the Cross, shed His blood, and died in order to receive the judgment for sin in our place, and rose again and became our Savior. Dear fellow believers, how grateful we are to our God, and how dear He is to us! Dear fellow believers, are you thankful, or are you not? We are truly thankful.

Dear fellow believers, even though I look the way I do, at first I believed in Jesus for about ten years without being born again. Sin piled up in my heart, but I could not stop believing in Jesus, so I lived on as I was. I am by nature single-minded. If I say I believe, I believe with my whole life. But because I had shortcomings, I was truly sorry, and I always lived as a sinner. I should always have rejoiced, but I always lived wringing my heart. Then, as I was reading the word of the Lord, there was the passage that says, *"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).*

Wondering what this word was, I could say nothing as I looked at the word. The words that thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness meant that Jesus washes away our sins by receiving baptism from John the Baptist and bearing our sins. And that He dies on the Cross in our place. And it meant that He rises from the dead and becomes our Savior. I just read the word and could say nothing for thirty minutes. The Lord bore the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John, died on the Cross, rose again, and became our Savior—so why do people

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not preach this truth? In ten years of believing in Jesus, I had not heard it even once, and whatever book I looked at, I had never once seen this truth. But it was in the Bible. So I looked up the original text and looked through all the books of those said to be famous. I also looked through the materials of sermons on this passage and the commentaries, but they were all in vain. They called this passage a difficult passage and left it out.

I met the Lord. At that time, just as ripples spread when a small stone is thrown into a lake, peace settled in my heart, which was like a lake. Until then, because there was sin in my heart, I had been in anguish and distress and had felt sorry, but peace came to me. "So the Lord has become my Savior like this! Lord, thank You. I will preach this gospel to all the ends of the earth. But no one knows this truth. Theologians do not know it, pastors do not know it, no one knows it. They will call me a heretic and call me a madman. But Lord, as long as Your word is in this Bible, You are my Savior."

From that time on, the sufferings began. The people who knew me and my seminary classmates persecuted me. I accepted all their persecution. I said that since they did it because they did not know, they should talk with me a little. I asked whether they would discuss theology or discuss the word of the Bible, and whether, if one of them was not enough, they would gather all those said to be famous and have a public debate with me. I tried talking with my classmates. As people who had studied Calvinist theology, they talked about Calvinism.

I said to my classmates, "As you know me, am I not the master of Calvinism in this seminary? The one among us whose grades in Calvinism were the best is me. Is that right, or is it not?" My classmates said that it was right. "As you know, I am a person who can lecture for hours on theological thought and the like without even picking up a book. Have you not seen it? Yet

you come at me with Calvinism? Calvinism has never once told the story that Jesus received baptism from John and bore and washed away our sins. Look it up in the commentaries. Calvin was saying repeatedly every day, 'I am a sinner, I am a sinner.' That remains in the documents. But the Bible says that Jesus bore our sins with the baptism He received from John the Baptist, was nailed to the Cross and died, and rose again, and thereby saved us from sin. If this word is not the truth, what is the truth?" My classmates said, "What you say is right. But if you say that in this denomination, you will be marked. And you will be expelled." When I said, "You believe it first," they said that they could not, because if they believed this truth, they would be expelled from this denomination.

In the end, I had no choice but to turn my back on them. I said, "You live like that; I will spread this gospel to the whole world." So I left home right then and went around construction sites, working at the workers' canteens there. In the evening I ate and slept there, and in the daytime I worked and got paid, and going from one canteen to another, I preached the gospel of the water and the Spirit to the people I met. If I were to tell the whole process of how I met the Lord and came this far, even several books would not be enough.

The Lord trained me a great deal. The Lord let me meet countless pastors, theologians, and religious leaders. When I met them and spoke with the faith I believe, I never once lost. Even speaking just politely, I won every time. The Lord makes me, lacking as I am, preach the gospel to the whole world together with you. I cannot tell you how thankful I am. But what I want to say is not about me. The Lord loved me to the end and loved you to the end. Hallelujah! ✉

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Sermon 3 by Paul C. Jong

# He is the Lord who loves me to the end

**< 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.'"**

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## The meaning of the words that not all are clean

In John chapter 13 comes the event of Jesus washing the feet of His disciples. As you and I well know, when Peter's turn came and Jesus tried to wash the feet of Peter, Peter declined, saying, "Are You going to wash my feet? That can never be." Jesus said, *"If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me" (John 13:8)* and washed his feet. And while Jesus said that he who is bathed is completely clean and needs only to wash his feet, He also said that not all were clean. One of the twelve disciples of Jesus was not clean. Judas was not a believer.

But concerning His saying that not all were clean, it is easy to misunderstand that perhaps our Lord washes away our sins but did not wash them all away. But if we look at the words of verse 11, it says, *"For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, 'You are not all clean.'"* So Jesus was speaking of Judas. The reason Jesus tried to wash the feet of His disciples is that the Lord came to this earth to bear once and for all, with the baptism He received from John, the sins not only of the disciples but of all the people of the whole world, and so to wash away all sins and to save all of them. And the Bible says that in order to complete that work, before Jesus was hung on the Cross and died, He loved His own and loved them to the end.

## He bore even all the sins we commit

In the same flow as this afternoon's message, our Lord came to this earth to wash away all our sins, and He actually washed them all away. However, although the disciples of Jesus knew to some extent that Jesus was the Savior, after Jesus departed, the disciples would commit sins again as they lived. Jesus was

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concerned that His disciples would commit sins in the future, suffer because of those sins, and be led away by Satan the devil. So in order to let them know that His work of salvation was perfect, before He was hung on the Cross and died, He washed the feet of His disciples and spoke to them. So in fact, this word means that even the actual sins we commit after receiving the remission of all sins, even all the sins we commit, the Lord bore completely with the baptism He received from John, washed them all away, saved us completely, and completed it. The Lord is saying this. Dear fellow believers, you know this well, don't you?

When Jesus received baptism from John the Baptist, He bore the sin of the world, and bearing the sin of the world, He went and was nailed to the Cross, said, "It is finished," died, and rose again. After rising again, Jesus testified for forty days that He had come back to life, and He ascended before the eyes of His disciples. He also said that He would come again in the same way as the disciples had seen Him. All these things actually took place. The Lord actually came to this earth in human flesh to save mankind from sin, received baptism from John the Baptist, the representative of mankind, and Himself bore our sins once and for all. And He was hung on the Cross once and for all, received the judgment for sin, died, came back to life, and became our eternal Savior. We clearly believe this fact. So just as I said in this afternoon's message that even small sins must be settled day by day, must be washed and put behind us day by day, must be washed by faith, must be confessed and acknowledged, this evening, too, I want to speak on the part about washing away sin.

## The Lord, who three times asked Peter, who had denied Him three times

You and I all know that Jesus came to this earth, received baptism from John the Baptist and bore our sins, and was hung on the Cross and saved us. And we all believe it. Dear fellow believers, do you believe? Then now, although we have clearly received the remission of sins, do we commit sins again, or do we not? Peter, on the very night this event took place, when Jesus was arrested before He was hung on the Cross and died, went as far as the courtyard of the high priest's house because Jesus was his teacher. And there he denies Jesus three times. Dear fellow believers, you know this well, don't you? And Jesus knew all about how Peter would deny Him. When Jesus said, "I will be arrested and put to death," Peter said, "Even if everyone betrays You and leaves, I will not leave." When Jesus said to Peter that tonight, before the rooster crowed, he would deny Him three times, Peter said that there would never be any denying. Peter was a man of the sea, a very simple and honest man, and a very loyal man. So he said not to worry, since there would be no denying.

But when that event actually happened, Peter was warming himself by the fire at night in the courtyard of the high priest's house, and there he was pressed first by a servant girl who ran errands there. When she said, "Aren't you one of that group, too? Aren't you one of Jesus's group? Weren't you with that man called Jesus? Aren't you His disciple?" Peter said no, no, and the third time, later, he said no with a curse. But when he denied Him the third time, just then the rooster crowed. The words Jesus had spoken, that tonight he would deny Him three times, came right to his mind. When the rooster crowed, he remembered those words, wept bitterly, and slipped out of that place, and

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thinking, “So I really am such a man,” he lamented and wept, so ashamed of himself. So he fell into great disappointment.

And now he went to catch fish. At that time, Peter took the lead. So, when Peter said, “Now that Jesus is gone, I will go to catch fish as in the old days; whoever wants to go with me, let us go,” a few of them went together and caught fish. But Jesus appeared on the shore and asked, “Children, have you any fish?” and the disciples said no. They had cast the net all night long but caught no fish, and when Jesus told them to cast the net on the right side of the boat, there were so many fish that they could not lift the net. At that time, that disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter that it was the Lord. Peter, being an impatient man, thought, “When will the boat ever get there?” and plunged straight into the sea and swam out, and when he looked, it really was Jesus. When he came up onto the land, there was fish laid on a fire of coals, and bread, too, and Jesus told them to come and eat breakfast.

Peter had nothing to say and had no face to show, so he came before Jesus and stayed quiet, and when Jesus said, *“Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?” (John 21:15)*, Peter said, *“Yes, Lord; You know that I love You” (John 21:15)*. How ashamed he must have been! And Jesus said, “Feed My lambs,” and asked again, *“Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?”* Peter said, in something like a protest, that the Lord knew that he loved Him, so why did He keep asking, when He knew all about the words that kept piercing his heart and piercing his conscience? Jesus said, “*Tend My sheep,”* and asked the same question three times, “*Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?”* Peter answered three times in a row, “You know that I love You; You know that I love You; You know that I love You.”

What does this event speak of? The Lord is confirming it to him, and He is speaking about the sin Peter committed. When

the Lord asked three times, only then did Peter remember that he had denied Him three times, and he also remembered what the Lord had told him in advance. It means, did the Lord not come to him even though He knew everything? So Peter had nothing to say. That, I understand, is why the Lord asked three times and Peter answered three times.

## The Lord does not forsake us because of our weaknesses

Truly, the Lord speaks to us. The word is this: "I came to save you, and I have saved you, and I love you; since I love you, I will not forsake you just because you do wrong a little and are lacking." Of course, He said that if you betray Me and completely take the side of the devil, if you deny Me on this earth, I too will say before the angels that I do not know you; but if it was not like that, and you did so because of your weakness, He said that He would not forsake you for that. We know that we all commit sins, whether great or small. As we live on this earth, even after meeting the Lord, living day by day continuously, we come to realize, feel, and acknowledge all the more keenly that we ourselves are those who commit sins every day.

We, who commit sins every day, live thinking that since the Lord has saved us, we are saved as a matter of course. As I also said this afternoon, our hearts keep growing dull, and we ask and answer ourselves, saying, "The Lord has already removed all the small sins and the wrongs, so what confession, what acknowledgment; there is no sin, so what sin is there to wash away?" There is a tendency to finish everything off in one stroke, all together, with the faith one believes. Therefore, sin piles up

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in the heart, the heart is dark, and even in dealing with people, I understand, one becomes dark and full of secrets. Of course, there are things we cannot tell in full before people, and we must not tell them all. We must not cause the other person to stumble, either. But confessing everything in detail before God is the way for oneself to live. Only then does one's heart become bright. But if, with sin piled up, we know only that we have received the remission of sins and just go on as we are, we are still lacking.

## The reason He washed their feet with the towel

So I hope you will know the fact that when the Lord washed the feet of Peter, what He washed them with was the towel. Do we not usually wash with our hands? There is no word that He took hold of the feet with His hands, put them into the washbasin, and washed them with soap because the feet were dirty and smelled. There is no word that He washed them with a scrubber, either. Washing the feet with the ordinary towel He was wearing and then wiping them with the towel would be the finish, but it says that in washing the feet, He washed them with the towel. What verse is it? It is verse 5. Let us read it together once. *"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."* Jesus is truly God.

Dear fellow believers, the Bible is truly the truth. If Jesus had not washed the feet of His disciples with the towel, you and I would know it just once and be done with it. And we would not know sin exactly. A person who has received the remission of sins does not know exactly what sins he commits. He knows a sin he has committed greatly as sin, but he does not feel most sins as sin. He does not know what sins he commits. That is why

Jesus washed them with the towel. The towel speaks of the words of the law, that is, the law. God gave us the law and said, you shall have no other gods before Me; you shall not make an idol, nor bow down to it; you shall not take My name in vain; keep the Sabbath day. And He said, honor your father and your mother; you shall not murder; you shall not commit adultery; you shall not steal; you shall not covet—"you shall not," "you shall not."

So that Jesus washed the feet of His disciples with the towel means that the Lord gave us the law, established the law of God, and although God has washed away our sins, He shines the law of God on our sins and makes us know our sins. And what is wrong when seen in the light of the law is sin. Dear fellow believers, we usually commit sins and so on, and being human, we cannot help but commit sins. Everyone commits sins, and some popular song comes to mind that says one cannot know whether this is a sin or not, whether it is right or not. I do not know what song it is. In any case, we think, "I am doing this, but what is sin?"

## Everything we love more than God is sin

But God said, you shall have no other gods before Me. If we apply the law, everything we love more than God is sin. Dear fellow believers, we may love human beings, but if we love even a human being more than God, loving that human being is also sin. If we love something more than God, many things become sin. All the law, all sins, are entirely contained in the first commandment. They are all included in the words, you shall have no other gods before Me. So there may be cases where we love people and commit sins with people, but because we love

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them more than God, our hearts go to them more than to God, and we cherish them more, it becomes a great sin and, as a result, makes us leave God. We must know that loving something more than God is sin, but because people do not know this fact, they no longer apply the law, since they have received the remission of sins. They assert the theory that the law God established is useless. They say that the law is of no use at all, that a saved person does not need the law, that the law is unnecessary and the Old Testament is unnecessary. But the law of God is absolutely necessary even for the saved, and for the unsaved, too, God is necessary and the law is necessary.

The word that the law is for making us know sin applies equally to those born again and to those not born again. So if we apply the law, when we love people, even if we cherish them, we must love and cherish them and live within a certain range. Because we are human, if we are not careful, we go completely over to that side. But if we become a people without law, we are ruined. Dear fellow believers, because we do not know sin, as a result we love people or the material things God has given us more than God, and so we betray God, and as a result we go far, far away. Therefore, we must look at what we are doing wrong in the light of the law, know the fact that all the things we love more than God are great sins, and acknowledge that we have committed the sin of loving something more than God.

## We must stand before the law and acknowledge our sins

Before God washes away our sins, He always applies the law. If we want to know our sins before God, we must stand before the law. Because God is merciful, and because He has removed

all our sins unconditionally, if we only stand before God, we do not really know what we have done wrong. But if we stand before the law, it means that if there is something we love more than God, cherish more, and pursue more, it is a great sin. So there we must acknowledge our wrong and turn back. It means that, at the very least, there must be nothing we love more than God. So we must know our sins, confess those sins, and wash the filth of our hearts clean by the faith that believes that Jesus Christ, who washed away our sins, the living One, has washed away our sins. It was to have us do this work that Jesus came to His disciples before He was hung on the Cross and washed the feet of His disciples with the towel.

In human thinking, one wears a towel, washes the feet, and then wipes them with the towel, and then washes the next person's feet again and wipes them with the towel, but with the Lord it is the opposite. It means that He washes the feet through the towel, exposes what is wrong before the law, that sin, and confirms to us that God has already removed all sin. Therefore, we receive the remission of sins by the faith that believes the fact that Jesus loved you and me, received baptism from John, was hung on the Cross, and removed all your sins and mine once and for all. And not only have we received the remission of sins, but we also come to wash our defiled hearts clean by faith. Therefore, we can also love people. Do you understand? Otherwise, He said, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," but how could we love people and cherish our brothers and sisters? There must be nothing we love more than God. Even though we are saved, there must be nothing we love more than God.

If we engrave this word on our hearts and believe it, dear fellow believers, we can love, but love in a very orderly way, love without great difficulty, lead our lives of faith without great difficulty, and follow the Lord without great difficulty. We come

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to receive the blessing of being able to live the life of a worker of God, receiving the blessing of God, without great difficulty. I understand that is why the Lord spoke this word today. I spoke this word this afternoon, too, and the reason I am speaking it in the evening as well is that a person does not get it right all at once. So I say it again and again. In the old days, I often preached the word telling people to wash away their sins. Now that I have considered it too safe and stopped preaching it, there are many among our family who have gone wrong. With the one great assurance that they have received the remission of sins, they live their very lives in a mess. There are many who live with many things they love more than God, while living without knowing the fact that loving those things more is their sin.

So in order to give realization again, in order to awaken people again, I preach this word before God. I, too, must be awakened, and you, too, must be awakened. Dear fellow believers, do you agree? Yes, you do. Is that not the fact? Because we are human, does a young person have nothing he loves more than God? Do young people not go crazy over this thing called K-pop or whatever, more than over God? When those people dance, twisting and turning, people are fascinated by it, and it is said that even foreigners come to our country, drooling, and pay tuition fees of ten million won, even fifteen million won, to learn K-pop dancing. What is that? It could be so. But if the righteous were to fall into K-pop, would that be loving it more than God, or not? It is loving it more.

If I said that I would set up an entertainment company, so let everyone who wants to become a K-pop singer gather, I could make one right away. Then even among our cell leaders, there are several people who ought to go into K-pop. There is a pastor who is good at shrieking and imitates every singer, and if his daughter came out and were told to dance, how well she would

dance! If the father shrieked and his daughter danced, it would truly be the ultimate. How well the children of our ministers would do! If we told them all to do it, if we cleared away the pulpit right now, brought in the drums, and told them to go "dada-dada," they would go crazy. And you, too, would fall into K-pop, throw away worship and everything else, and just go crazy. Going crazy is what we human beings are. We may love people or the things of the world, but we must not love them more than God. When that is so, we can live without trouble. Even so, we sin often. We sin.

## The sins committed with the heart are the greatest

When I look at what sins I have committed, while God is working, even as we work hard at the work of God, there are many times when, before we know it, we are engaged in the act of loving something more than God. Among sins, those committed with the heart are the greatest. Those committed with thoughts are the next greatest, and those committed with actions are third. If one says in one's heart that one will do as one pleases, unless one yields that heart, as a result one leaves God. One commits the sin of loving something more than God. The thought that says, "I will do as I stubbornly please; I have my own goal; I will live for that," the thought that one will do as one stubbornly pleases, has already gone beyond the bounds of loving God. It is committing a great sin, and as a result, one can completely turn one's back on God and become an adversary of God. One can even become an antichrist. Opposing God and leaving Him in one's thoughts is fearful. Rather, a small wrong done in action can be acknowledged at once and turned from.

There are sins committed with thoughts, sins committed with

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the heart, sins committed with actions, sins committed knowingly, and sins committed unknowingly; would a young person commit more sins, or would an old person commit more sins? Old people by no means commit fewer sins. Young people by no means commit fewer sins either; it is about the same. That is why Jesus said to Peter, *"What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this" (John 13:7)*. When Peter said that He could never wash his feet, Jesus said that if He did not wash his feet, he would have no part with Him. Peter said that that would not do, that it would not do to have no part with Him, and asked Him to wash not only his feet but also his hands and his head. Jesus would have put those feet right into the water, wiped and rubbed them with His hands, too, and scrubbed them hard with the towel.

## We must become those who have a part with the Lord

We must not become those who have no part with the Lord. So the Lord washed their feet with the towel in order to make you and me those who have a part with the Lord. It is because we are those who can go wrong, knowingly or unknowingly. And because the Lord is the living One and the perfect One, the Lord loved us and removed our sins. It is not that we accomplish salvation by our own will; it is believing the fact that the Lord removed our sins. Sometimes the situation is very bad, and there are times when we wonder whether the time has really come for us to die. When we think of the Lord, we are people who do not love anything else more than the Lord, and who can do anything if the Lord wants it.

Why is that? It is because we love the Lord. Because the Lord

loves us, just as the Lord loves us, when we, too, know the love of the Lord, we can love the Lord more than anything in this world, and we do love Him. Is that so, or is it not? We love God, but moment by moment, we can keep going wrong without even knowing it ourselves. That is why the Lord washed the feet of Peter, why He had this event recorded in the Bible, and why He speaks of this event to us today.

## The reason the early Church was ruined

Why was the early Church ruined? The early Church was not ruined while the twelve disciples of Jesus were alive. It kept flourishing. The twelve disciples of Jesus made disciples in turn, and they lived and then all passed away. I understand that Paul passed away last, but whether Paul passed away last, or where the disciples of Jesus were, I do not know, since I have not looked into it historically. But those who learned from the disciples loved and followed Jesus, and yet following Jesus did not go well. It was because there was something they loved more than Jesus.

In A.D. 313, Emperor Constantine issued the Edict of Milan and officially recognized Christianity. Afterward, on the basis of his political power, he intervened deeply in Christianity and exercised a powerful influence. He tried to strengthen the unity of the empire and his own power through religion. As a result, Christians were freed from persecution and could live comfortably. Having received the official recognition of the state, unlike before, they were not persecuted, and at times they even came to live being treated well for the reason that they were Christians.

With this as the occasion, for Christians, power, wealth,

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honor, pleasure, and love came to be placed above Jesus. Those who loved the things of the world more than Jesus grew more numerous. So the early Church collapsed completely. It was ruined without a trace. The Pope completely took control of Christianity, and today's Catholic Church came into being. If I talk about the Catholic Church, people will think that man must have made an enemy of the Catholic Church. So I will not single out the Catholic Church. But what they do in secret is truly fearful. They do it with a plan. Even now, those called Popes proclaim to the church that what they have said is equal to the word of God. They say that what they have said is equal to the word of God. Is that really so? Then would what Peter said be equal to the word of God? If one preaches as it is what God has said and what Jesus Christ has said, it is indeed the word of God, but what one preaches according to one's own thoughts is not the word of God but the words of a man.

## If there is something we love more than God, joy disappears

If we now want to lead our lives of faith until the day the Lord comes, we must acknowledge it. We must stand before the law of God and consider whether or not there has been something we ourselves love more than God. As a result, even the fleshly desires of man come from loving material things more than God, loving honor more, and loving power more. If we do not love material things, power, honor, or human beings more than God, we can follow God as much as we like in the position God allows, and we can be satisfied and content. If we have something to eat, something to drink, and work to do in serving the Lord, it is enough. But if we love material things,

power, honor, or human beings more than God, we come to leave God. This is what the Book of Revelation says: they say they believe, they say they are rich and have need of nothing, but in fact they do not know that they are blind.

If you and I have had something we love more than God, we must acknowledge that sin and receive the remission of sins. Of course, we have received the remission even of that sin, but we must confirm it once again. I believe that only when we confirm that the Lord bore even this sin with the baptism He received from John and that the Lord removed even this sin can you and I follow the Lord with bright hearts and bright faith. Otherwise, our hearts are pitch-black, and we no longer know whether we have really received the remission of sins or not. When the church works for souls, souls are saved, and the work of the Lord goes well, many people rejoice, but the person himself does not rejoice. He cannot rejoice. It is because his heart is dark. Do we not rejoice more when the work of God goes well than when our own work goes well? We rejoice because the Holy Spirit is in our hearts. When the work of the Lord goes well, we rejoice, and when someone hears the gospel and is saved, we rejoice and are satisfied, and our self-esteem comes alive.

Those who love God are like that. But a person who does not love God, those who love what is on this earth more than God, whether the work of God goes well or not, are sorrowful if they are now sunk in worry because of their own affairs. All joy disappears. Then can God work through that person? He cannot work. Dear fellow believers, the Bible says, *"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks" (1 Thessalonians 5:16–18)*. We have only to follow the Lord, meet the Lord, do what the Lord wants, and go when the Lord tells us to come. If He comes again and takes us, we are thankful, and if not, when the time comes and He tells us to come, we go. Is what

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is on this earth our God? Does it satisfy us? It is nothing. Dear fellow believers, it is nothing.

That is why the Lord washed the feet of His disciples with the towel. I hope that you and I, too, will examine our hearts before the law of God, which says, "You shall have no other gods before Me," and if something is wrong, acknowledge that wrong, look to the Lord by faith, and wash our hearts. I hope you will confirm it cleanly. I hope you will acknowledge it, too. Do you understand? Only then do we follow the Lord. Being wishy-washy and slyly harboring one's own desires, thinking about how to live well while lording it over those below in the church, is truly loving honor and power more than God. Dear fellow believers, would God entrust His sheep to a person who loves honor and power? His saying, "Feed My sheep," "Tend My sheep," means to lead them rightly and well; when He says, "Feed My sheep," we must feed, clothe, look after, and keep them, and guide them when they go wrong—but would a person who is for his own desires feed and keep the sheep? Would it not become a ministry for his own desires? Then who would preach the gospel in the Church of God? Would such a person not begrudge both serving the gospel and earning and spending money for God? That must not be.

## Material things exist to be used for lost souls

I want to use all the material things the Lord allows, without leaving out a single penny, entirely for the Lord. And if, as I live, the Lord really says that He is coming soon, I will mortgage everything. I will have it all provisionally seized. I will have it provisionally seized and spend all that money on the gospel. Then, even if something is in someone's name, no one can claim

it. It is because it has been provisionally seized. If the Lord really comes the day after tomorrow, we should spend all we have on this earth for the Lord and go. That does not mean, however, that you should sell everything now, offer it all before the church, and wait. Telling people to sell everything now and offer it is the method of the Dami Mission, which said it would be October 28. I say this in case someone misunderstands and says, "I knew it, that man is finally revealing his ulterior motive." Take a look at my face. I am not as handsome and fine-looking as a certain pastor, and my temper is bad, so when I show what is inside me, I show it all at once.

Setting aside handsome or ugly, what is not so is not so. If I had wanted money, would I not have siphoned off a lot of material things? Then I could not have worked together with you, and I would have run off once with the money. I would probably have fled. Then you would have put it in the newspapers and reported it to the police, telling them to catch that man, and when caught, I would have said that I was sorry and asked for forgiveness. Then you would have said, what kind of pastor are you, what kind of servant of God are you, how shameful, and that a man who runs off with money should be caught and given a good beating.

The material things of the world, too, are nothing, and this thing called money exists to be spent. Dear fellow believers, money exists to be spent in the right place, that is, for lost souls. Power, too, exists so that through that power you may protect the people of God and benefit the gospel. So it is with love, so it is with people, so it is with everything. So it is with material things and with everything.

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## Let us wash by faith and follow the Lord with a light heart

When I say I will live to see the day the Lord comes, if the Lord comes quickly, there is no problem. But if the Lord does not come soon, and the body is worn out and the weather is too hot on top of that, I am in a daze. So I do not even know whether I love the Lord or not. At such times, I spend my days doing nothing but looking for somewhere cool, and when my heart grows dull and is not transparent, I think once, "Ah, there is a problem; I am getting caught here." I examine myself, asking, "Has there been something I loved more than God?" It is a fact that a person, being lacking anyway, commits this sin and that sin. But if we stand squarely before the law of God, before the word, before the law, asking whether there has been something we loved more than God, it shows up at once. So we solve this problem by faith. Then we can follow the Lord with a very light heart, with a very cheerful heart.

So how good it is! How lacking Peter was, too! Yet Jesus washed the feet of Peter. When Jesus said that if He did not wash his feet, he would have no part with Him, Peter said, "Then that will not do; please wash my feet; then rather than washing only my feet, please wash my whole body, too." That Jesus said that he who is bathed needs only to wash his feet was speaking about the sins we commit after receiving the remission of sins. We have only to wash away those sins. It means that we have only to look once in the light of the law and wash away what is wrong again by faith. We have only to acknowledge it. If we all acknowledge again our shortcomings and all the sins we have committed, we must clearly believe the fact that the Lord has removed those sins. The Lord has removed them. Because the Lord has removed them, we can follow the Lord. Because He

has removed our sins, we can maintain our lives of faith. If the Lord had not removed our sins, we would be finished.

The Lord loves us, and He loves us to the end and takes responsibility to the end. So I believe that the Lord has become our true Savior. The Bible says, *"Having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end" (John 13:1)*. The Lord loved you and me to the end. The Lord is still loving us to the end even now. You and I may perhaps go wrong and betray Him, but the Lord never betrays us. The Lord is faithful and true. The Lord always keeps what He has promised. Did the Lord not fulfill in the age of the New Testament what He had promised several thousand years before? He said that if we believe what He spoke in the age of the New Testament, He gives us the remission of sins, and when we believed, what happened? Did our sins disappear, or did they not? They disappeared. So we are different. We must lead our lives of faith on the basis of the word.

In any case, I want all of us not to be truly held captive by darkness, but to bring our filthy things, the things we loved more than God, before the Lord by faith, and to solve the problem of sin and solve the darkness by the faith that believes the fact that He has already removed even our sins. I want us to become those who follow the Lord with bright hearts by faith, truly please God and love people, truly save many souls, and receive many blessings from God and share them. I want God to give that blessing and that faith to me and to you forever. This concludes the message. ✉

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Sermon 4 by Paul C. Jong

# The life of those who believe in Jesus Christ, who bore all sins and weaknesses

**< John 13:36-38 >**

**"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.'"**

As autumn comes, the season changes, and as the season changes, the body feels cool, the air is cool, and the heart is cool, too. We should pray that the Lord will give us faith and the fullness of the Holy Spirit so that we can follow the word of the Lord well in autumn and in winter, in the midst of the change of seasons. Today we have looked as far as the last verse of chapter 13. Earlier, Judas sold Jesus, and after Jesus had said everything, He said, love one another; if you love one another, all will know that you are My disciples.

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## *"Lord, where are You going?"*

Verse 36 says, *"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.'"* Even though Jesus had said that He would be sold by people and depart, Peter is asking where He is going. They had been thinking that since Jesus said He was going, He must be going, but now Peter felt the seriousness of it. So when he asked, "Lord, where are You going?" Jesus answered, *"Where I am going you cannot follow Me now, but you shall follow Me afterward."* In chapter 13, speaking of His being hung on the Cross, Jesus said in 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."* He had spoken of it in the preceding verses as well.

Peter seems to be the most honest person. Peter asked, "Lord, where are You going?" Even though Jesus had said that He would be sold by people and depart, he asks again. When Jesus said, "Where I am going you cannot follow Me now, but you shall follow Me later," He was speaking of going to the Cross. Even the disciples of Jesus came to have faith only after Jesus rose again; looking at them now, they seem to understand far too little of what is said. It is verses 37 and 38. *"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.'"*

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## The disciples, who did not know themselves

Not only Peter but the disciples of Jesus had no faith and did not understand what Jesus was saying. Peter said that he would lay down his life for the Lord, but Jesus said the exact opposite. He said, will you lay down your life for My sake? Tonight, before dawn comes, before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times. Peter is giving an answer beside the point, saying that he would lay down his life for the Lord. Still, what we can know here is that Peter and the disciples of Jesus could not know themselves. They could not know in the least what their faith was like and what state they were in. Peter, too, thought that he was following the Lord to the point of laying down his life and playing the role of the Lord's bodyguard, but Jesus said that before the rooster crowed, he would deny Him three times—that far from offering up his life, he was a man who would deny Him three times.

Jesus knew all about the state of His disciples. When Jesus washed the feet of His disciples and tried to wash the feet of Peter, and Peter refused, He said, *"If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me" (John 13:8)* and since it would not do to have no part with Him, Peter consented to having his feet washed. Peter does not know his own state. He does not know that he will deny Jesus three times. But Jesus knew everything. After Jesus was hung on the Cross, died, and rose again, He came to His disciples. At that time, He asked Peter, "*Do you love Me more than these?" (John 21:15)* and the second and third times He asked, "Do you love Me?" and He spoke to him of the ministry, that is, of feeding, tending, and again feeding the sheep.

What we should know here is that you and I do not know ourselves well, either. And we are weak. Even when we look at what Jesus said, there is much we do not know. But even though

we are like this, the Lord supplies the word according to the season and, through certain events, firmly grows our faith so that later we become people of faith. The words *"you cannot follow Me now, but you shall follow Me afterward" (John 13:36)* mean that now your faith is not whole, but later faith will arise and you will lay down your life for Me. According to a story handed down by oral tradition, Jesus was nailed to the Cross upright and died, but Peter said that since his Savior had been nailed to the Cross and died, how could he be the same as the Lord? So it is said to have been handed down that he asked to be nailed to the cross upside down, and died nailed upside down, with his head at the bottom and his feet at the top.

## He bore even the sins we would commit in the future with the baptism He received from John

You and I do not know ourselves well, either. But there is one thing we clearly know. We know the fact that Jesus is our Savior, that Jesus bore your sins and mine by receiving baptism from John the Baptist, was hung on the Cross, rose from the dead, and saved us. Here Jesus said to Peter that before the rooster crowed, he would deny Him three times, but Peter was a man who had made the confession of faith, *"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16)*. Even so, Jesus said that Peter would deny Him. So it means that even after believing, one commits the wrong of denying the Lord. But Jesus knew everything, and through the work of washing the feet of His disciples, He taught them that fact. That is, it means that by receiving baptism from John, the Lord bore even all the sins we would commit in the future. In other words, it is, "In case you do wrong at some time and are in anguish because of your sin

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and turn your back on Me and go out into the world, I have settled even that sin." So He enabled Peter to live following the Lord, to follow Him by faith.

Dear fellow believers, we believe in what the Lord did after coming to this earth, and what we must know most properly is who Jesus is. He is God, who created the universe. Who is Jesus? He is the Son of God and our Savior, who came to save you and me from sin in obedience to the will of God the Father. What did Jesus do for us? It means that for you and me, He received baptism from John the Baptist at the age of thirty and had all your sins and mine, all the sin of mankind, transferred to Him once and for all without leaving out a single one. So the Bible says that because He had all the sin of the world transferred to Him, because He had all the sins we commit in the world transferred to Him, He could wash away all our sins. And three years after receiving baptism, Jesus was nailed to the Cross, shed His blood, and came to death, and by dying in our place, He saved you and me.

When we consider the words Jesus spoke to Peter, *"The rooster shall not crow till you have denied Me three times,"* we do not know well what sins we will commit in the future, but since the Lord has removed even all those sins, He was saying, "Follow Me by the faith that believes in Me. You can follow Me." We must know the Lord who gave us that faith, that salvation. Only then can we follow the Lord. It means that we can follow Him by faith. If there is no faith, I cannot say, but if there is faith, even though we are lacking, we can follow the Lord. So we must not become those who give up their own lives of faith by themselves, looking at their own weakness and shortcomings and thinking that leading a life of faith does not seem to suit them. A person who gives up by himself is a person like Judas. Judas, too, set out to sell Jesus, but if, when he did wrong, he had known

that Jesus was the Savior and that Jesus was the Savior who had received baptism and borne his sins, Judas, too, could have received the remission of sins. But Judas took the side of the devil. He had another purpose. But you and I are not like that.

## God knows us in detail

In the old days, I, too, had times when I thought that the life of faith did not seem to suit me well. I should have held back my anger, but being hot-tempered, I could not stand seeing injustice and got angry. Even after being born again, if someone provoked me, I could not stand it. When anger welled up, I let loose. But the Lord did not forsake me. Once I preached the gospel, and when I preached the gospel to a certain sister, she received the remission of sins and came to our church. But the senior pastor of the church that sister had been attending came to our church. He said that he could not let a sister of his church go, and told me to come to his church. So I could not help going, and I went. I went and sat down with that pastor, the two of us, with the sister seated there, and talked calmly, as in a counseling session. When I asked, "Pastor, you are doing ministry; how many elders do you have?" he said about five. It was a big church. When I asked, "Then do you know whether or not there is sin in the hearts of the elders?" he said that there was sin. When I asked, "They believe in Jesus, so how can they have sin?" he said, where is there a person without sin? When I asked, "Then, Pastor, is there sin in your heart, too?" he said that there was.

So I said, "Then how can a person who has sin save other people? Let me give you one example. Can a person who has fallen into the water, and is himself flailing about, save another person who has fallen into the water? Does this analogy not

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apply now? Pastor, you are spiritually blind, too, so if your church members are sitting there spiritually blind, how can you lead them? You are blind yourself." That was how we talked. That pastor said that I had called him spiritually blind, and asked me, "Where is there a person without sin? Then are you without sin?" When I said that I had no sin, he said that I was a heretic. Then I asked what a heretic is. When the other person says something, I take that word and ask it back. When I said, "Then tell me what a heretic is. Do not talk theological nonsense; talk biblically. Look here, I studied theology at a better place than you did. What is a heretic?" he could not speak. As we talked, voices rose, and I cornered him completely, like a cat cornering a mouse. I did not let him budge an inch. But the conclusion was that that sister did not follow me but stayed there.

So when I came out of there and walked home alone, I felt bitter. I had won the battle, but as a result the sister did not follow me, so in fact, though it seemed I had won, had I not really failed to win? Trudging home, I looked back at myself. It would have been fine if I had spoken gently and step by step from the beginning, but because the other person was so hopeless, at the end I raised my voice and disciplined him. I wondered whether it was because I had been rough that the sister, seeing my conduct, had not come to our church but stayed in that church, which is not born again—whether it was because of me. On the way home I blamed myself a great deal. A real minister ought to have a gentle side, too, and I do have a gentle side, but when the other person is too absurd, I discipline him when he needs to be disciplined. So I had thoughts such as, with such a hot temper, should I continue in ministry? If I set my mind to it, I could make a lot of money, so should I make a lot of money and bring it to serve the gospel?

Ah, I wondered whether my very character was unsuited, but

the Lord made me. The Lord kept making me. So I have never once grabbed anyone by the collar and fought, nor have I ever swung my fist. I did speak a bit roughly, but these days my rough words have been much refined. Still, at times I curse even while preaching. It is because I cannot say vulgar things politely in a roundabout way, but say them directly, just as they are. Because I speak directly, those sitting here feel a bit uncomfortable. It has been much refined now, but it is still like that even now. So I have also wondered whether I am lacking and so of no benefit to the gospel. But the Lord knows everything about me. In what areas I have strengths, in what areas I have weaknesses, what my character is like—He knows in detail not only about me but about you as well.

## He set up the hot-blooded Peter as the leader of the early Church

Jesus washed the feet of Peter, too, because of the sins he had not yet committed. When Peter, being so full of hot blood, said that he would follow the Lord even at the cost of offering up his life for Him, Jesus knew everything, saying that before the rooster crowed, he would deny Him three times. Even so, Jesus asked Peter three times, first, "Do you love Me more than these?" and then, "Do you love Me?" Each time, Peter was pricked in his heart, but Jesus said, "Feed My lambs," "Tend My sheep," "Feed My sheep," and as a result He set up Peter as the leader, the head, of the early Church. Jesus set him up even though Peter was a man full of hot blood. If so, you and I, too, have rough edges that remain no matter how much we polish them, though we do not deliberately show them. Even so, the Lord does not forsake us but loves us, and polishes our rough edges, trains us,

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makes us properly, and uses us as people who please God. So how thankful we are!

Peter did not know that he would deny Jesus three times that night. A little later, Judas came bursting in with the Roman soldiers and the men of the high priest and arrested Jesus. That night, at the house of the high priest, while people were interrogating Jesus as to whether He was guilty or not, Peter had followed and was standing a good way off, warming himself by the fire. When people said, "Aren't you a companion of that man, too? We saw you together with Him," Peter said that he absolutely did not know such a man. As things turned against him, Peter spoke more strongly, more forcefully, and more harshly than when he had denied Him before. But Jesus knew that Peter would deny Him strongly, and knowing that although he could not follow now, later he, too, would follow Him, He gave him faith, gave him grace, and gave him power, and made him follow. Jesus is telling us of that work.

Dear fellow believers, what about you and me? Are we not like that, too? As we follow the Lord, we wonder whether we can follow the Lord to the end when our character is so poor. People have what is called character. A hot temper shows plainly on the face. Such a person may talk back when he talks back, but a little later he thinks, "Ah, I was wrong," and repents right away. There are also people who are not like that. There are people in whom pent-up anger boils up inside, though it does not show. There are also people who pour out curses inside, thinking, "I did this because my situation left me no choice, and yet without understanding those circumstances he makes a huge fuss. When he does not even know anything." That person, too, gets angry inside and later turns back, thinking, "I was wrong." It is because he has only not spoken the words outwardly; he has vented all the anger he had. Whether we follow this way or that way, the Lord

refines us. He touches us. The Lord says, “I bore that sin, too.”

## With retribution, one cannot have the assurance of salvation

Dear fellow believers, among those who say they have received the remission of sins, there are religious people. Those who say that Jesus was nailed to the Cross, shed His precious blood, and died in our place, thereby being cursed and receiving our judgment, and saved us and removed all our sins, and that they have been saved by the Cross alone, are religious people. They make it up themselves and believe it themselves. A person who does not believe according to the Bible but believes according to his own thoughts is called a religious person. A religious person hears the words of Jesus and thinks, “So He bore all my sins and received all the curses, and He saved me; I believe; then I have been saved.” But if he commits sins after that, he has no way to solve it.

So what do they take as an alternative? In Christianity, they say that one receives retribution. They say that for the sins one commits on this earth after believing in Jesus, one pays the price while living on this earth, and after paying the price in full, one goes to the kingdom of heaven. In the Catholic Church, they teach what they call penance, telling people to make amends for the sins they have committed by doing good works. Retribution and penance are both religious. They are things made up by their own thoughts. They are teachings made up by human beings.

All our sins, whatever sins they may be, are what Jesus bore when He received baptism. Whether the sins of a believer or the sins of an unbeliever, from the cradle to the grave—from being born from the mother’s womb and rocking in the cradle until

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entering the grave—Jesus bore all sins when He received baptism, and so there is no sin. He washed away our sins. Every time our wrongs are revealed, by the faith that believes the fact of the gospel that Jesus bore and washed away even this sin, and that He received the judgment even for this sin, we come to have the assurance of salvation. There is no other way to have the assurance of salvation.

Those within present-day Christianity who say they believe according to the word say that one receives retribution. The church a certain pastor's elder sister attends is one gathering of the so-called Salvation Sect. There, as to what to do about the sins one commits after receiving the remission of sins, they say that for those sins one is sure to receive retribution, that one comes to pay a corresponding price. So when things do not go well in life, they think, "Ah, I am now receiving retribution because of what I did wrong back then." Dear fellow believers, if we had to receive retribution, you and I could not be saved. If Jesus had not borne even the sins we would commit in the future when He received baptism from John the Baptist, we would have no way to be saved. We are saved by believing the fact that He bore them, embraced all our sins, went to the Cross, received all the curses, and by shedding His blood bore our curses; if we do not believe, there is no way to be saved.

Let us talk about it concretely once. Suppose that after we have received the remission of sins, somehow the other person comes at us with a knife, and while trying to avoid it and take the knife away, we unknowingly stab and kill him. Then must I, too, be stabbed with a knife and killed? That is retribution, and it makes no sense. Even all those sins the Lord bore by receiving baptism from John, and He washed away our sins and took our sins away. And for us He shed His blood and came to death, paying the curse, the price, and the cost for our sins, and He rose

again on the third day after His death. That is why we obtain salvation by believing in that Jesus; there is no way to be saved by paying compensation with our own works. It is impossible. Isn't that so? Yes, it is.

Because people know nothing and believe a religion, because they believe according to their own thoughts, they say that they have only to receive retribution. But if we received retribution exactly as we do wrong, we would have no choice but to live a life of curses while we live on this earth. Isn't that so? Yes, it is. We commit sins every day as we live, so if we had to receive retribution every day, you, too, would have to live suffering every day. The Lord did not save us through retribution. The Lord did not demand that we bring a price. The Lord took full responsibility and made us fully righteous. Because He has strength and power, He said, "Pass sin on to Me; I will receive baptism," and told John the Baptist to baptize Him. Did John the Baptist not decline? But when Jesus said, "Was it not so that you would pass the sin of mankind on to Me that I sent you to this earth? Do as you are told," John the Baptist gave Him baptism. With that baptism, Jesus had sin transferred to Him. It is the sin of all mankind, that is, the sins from Adam until the day this earth ends. Suppose that at the end, when Jesus comes again, a baby was born on this earth one minute before. It means that even that baby's sins all passed on to Jesus when He received baptism. Jesus bore them. That is why, if we believe, our sins are washed away.

## We must believe in both the water and the Spirit

If we are to believe, we must believe in two things, the water and the Spirit. We must believe that Jesus came to this earth and

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bore our sins by receiving baptism, and that He thereby washed the sins of our hearts clean. The other thing is that we must believe that the Lord, who received all the curses in our place, shed His blood and came to death, and received the curse and judgment for all our sins, is the Son of God and also God, our Savior. It is not that God died. God, in order to save us human beings, put on human flesh and Himself received the judgment for our sins. We obtain salvation by believing in that Jesus; without the baptism of Jesus, there is no washing away of our sins either. If Jesus had not shed His blood and suffered death on the Cross, you and I would have to receive the judgment for everything we do wrong on this earth as retribution. But Jesus received all the retribution in our place. By receiving baptism from John, Jesus bore the sin of the world, and by being hung on the Cross, He paid in full the price of our sins and the cost of our judgment. That is why Jesus said, "It is finished." That is how He saved us. Dear fellow believers, do you understand? Yes, you do.

## The Holy Spirit is in the hearts of those who have received the remission of sins

What about it, then, if one says that since one has received the remission of sins, one may commit sins as one pleases? If one has truly received the remission of sins, when one deliberately commits sin, the Holy Spirit, who is in one's heart, dislikes it. God gives the Holy Spirit as a gift into the heart of a person who has received the remission of sins, as a token that says, "I have saved you, and you have believed in what I did."

When we believe in the baptism Jesus received from John and in His death on the Cross, that is, that He had our sins

transferred to Him for us and received the judgment for sin for us, we are saved, and when the Lord sees and says, "This person surely believes," He sends the Holy Spirit to dwell in that heart. So the Holy Spirit is in a person who has received the remission of sins, and it is because the Holy Spirit is in him that he can understand this sermon I am preaching. For a person who has not received the remission of sins, this sermon is extremely difficult. It is difficult because it is not an ethical sermon.

A person who has received the remission of sins understands the sermon, and because the Holy Spirit is in the heart of a person who has received the remission of sins, if he commits sin and deliberately does wicked things, the Holy Spirit dislikes it. In the old days, in our hearts, we ourselves—that is, our egos—were king. You yourselves were the head. We said, "My life is my own." After receiving the remission of sins, after the Holy Spirit has come upon our hearts, Jesus is our Head. He is our God. So if we say, think, or do something to our brothers and sisters that goes against the will of God, against the purpose of God, the Holy Spirit is uncomfortable. The Holy Spirit says, "Go only so far." Since Jesus Christ came to this earth and saved us, and we did believe and have been saved, nothing can be done about that, but He dislikes it. Because He dislikes it, if we keep committing sin even though we know it is sin, the Holy Spirit groans. If our hearts are not glad, we, too, are in anguish.

It is because the Holy Spirit is our Master. When we do not understand the words of those who go ahead of us, we oppose them, but once we receive fellowship, we come to think, "The words of those who go ahead were right; I was wrong; I must understand well and follow by faith," and then the Holy Spirit rejoices. When our hearts accept the fellowship and obey by faith, the Holy Spirit rejoices, and so our hearts are glad, too, and our faces brighten. But if we do not accept the fellowship, our

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hearts are uncomfortable. It is hard. We feel irritated for no reason. Those who have received the remission of sins are like this. But there are those who have not received the remission of sins, those who believe a religion. To believe a religion is to make up a Jesus in my own thoughts and believe in him, and a Buddha, too, is made up in one's own thoughts and believed in. What human beings make up in their thoughts and believe in is called religion.

## The Holy Spirit is the One who brings the word to mind

A person who, even after coming into Christianity in that religious way, believes in Jesus not according to the word but according to his own thoughts is called a religious person, and those who believe that way say that they have fellowship with the Holy Spirit. A certain pastor came on a broadcasting station and said that he converses with the Holy Spirit. So I listened to how he converses. When he asks, "Holy Spirit, I have to meet a bad friend; should I meet him or should I not?" the Spirit does not make a sound in his ear, but causes a response in his heart, he said. The response of the heart, too, is believing according to one's own thoughts. The Holy Spirit is One who rejoices when we believe the word, hold on to the word, and follow it, and who is uncomfortable when we do not follow according to the word; He is not One who tells us to do this or do that. There is one thing the Holy Spirit does: He makes us realize and brings to mind the word we have heard or the written word. The Holy Spirit is One whose role is to bring the word to mind and lead us to go according to that word; He is not One who speaks apart from the word.

The Bible says, not by water only, nor by blood only, nor by the Spirit only; the water, the blood, and the Spirit are one. They are our God and our salvation. It is the salvation by which God saved us. That is why they are one. What those who say they converse with the Holy Spirit say and believe may seem fresh, but those people have fallen into religion. Later they even become fortune-tellers. Saying that the Holy Spirit has spoken to you, they pray with the laying on of hands and say that you will become a great minister, but to become a minister while there is sin in one's heart is a fraud. A person in whom the Holy Spirit dwells speaks both to the other person and to himself through the words of the Bible.

It is not that the Holy Spirit speaks separately, nor that Jesus speaks separately, nor that God the Father speaks separately. God the Father speaks to His Son, and the Son comes to this earth, bears our sins with His baptism, receives the judgment for our sins on the Cross and suffers death for us, rises again, saves us, and after going up, sends the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit only plays the role of reminding us of this word, according to what God the Father said and what the Son said after coming to this earth, so that we believe it, and then of rebuking what we do wrong. He does not speak separately; He speaks to us taking this word as the standard.

## What happened when we rented a church building in Changwon

Long ago, I went out to rent a church building in a certain area. We had been using a church building of about 40 pyeong when the owner told us to vacate it, so I went out to rent a church building, and as I was going around, there was a large building,

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so I went in and asked the owner whether he could let us have it, since we wanted to use it as a church building. The owner said that he was a Buddhist, so he could not let us have it; even if he let someone have it, he would let a Buddhist have it, not a Christian. So I said to him, "You may say that you were born on this earth and built this house by your own strength, but in reality, if God, who created the universe, gave you the material means, and God had you build this house because He intended to use this building, what would you do?" I asked. That man said, "Ah, when you put it that way, I have nothing to say." When I said, "Then does that not mean that God knew that I would come and told you to build this house and wait?" he said that then he would have to discuss it with his family. I said, "Discuss it. God gave you the material means and had you build the house, and God says that He will use it, so if you go against that will, you are going against the will of God."

When I said that, he said that many pastors had come and asked to rent the house, but he had turned them all down. He said that he did not rent to anyone who would hold church there. But I did not back down, and I said, "Just because it is your building, it does not mean you can do as you like with it. Do you think you can do as you please? That is your miscalculation." Because I said that, that man surrendered. Later he telephoned and told me to use it. But I did not have the money ready. Yet while I was talking with that man, the Holy Spirit spoke to me the words He spoke to Joshua. "Be strong and very courageous." They are words written in the Bible, but He spoke them to my heart as if speaking through a loudspeaker. While I was talking with the owner, I was thinking of giving up, since the owner was a Buddhist and did not seem likely to let us have the building, but inside me came, be strong and very courageous—and the Holy Spirit did it not just once but three times in a row. As I talked

with the other person, the word of God was heard in my heart. So I said, is this not God telling me to use this building?

So I said, "Do you think that because you built this building, you can use it as you please? If God wants to use this building, what will you do? If God wants to use this building you have built, and you do not obey, you are not obeying the will of God. Do as you see fit." That man said that it really seemed to make sense, that he would discuss it anyway and decide, so I told him to do so and gave him my telephone number and left, and then he contacted me. He told me to come, put down the lump-sum deposit, and use it. I did not have the deposit, either. I prayed. "God, I have gotten the house, but as You know, I have no money. Please give the money, too." It was a newly planted church, and there were not many people, but I said, let us pray. We prayed, and the day before I was to go to sign the contract, when I opened the offering box, a check had come in, just like that. So I signed the contract with that check. If I were to talk about the Holy Spirit and the work of the Holy Spirit, there would be a great deal to tell.

Because I am a person who has received the remission of sins and the Holy Spirit is in my heart, when I open the word, I can say everything within the word. The Holy Spirit is One who works within the word. The Holy Spirit did not speak to me separately. After Moses died, Joshua inherited all the authority of the leader. Because Joshua stood in the position of leader for the first time, it was hard for him to lead the people of Israel into the land of Canaan. But just as God had called Moses long before and spoken to him, He called Joshua and said, listen to Me; be strong and very courageous; as I was with Moses, so I am with you. So Joshua gained courage and led the people of Israel.

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## The church is not something just anyone can do

Dear fellow believers, church ministry is not something just anyone can undertake. It seems as if it would work just because one has received the remission of sins and preaches the gospel, does it not? Without the work of the Holy Spirit, it absolutely does not work. So people say this and that, claiming that they, too, can do it, but tell them to go ahead and try. God is the One who sees all the center of our hearts and knows everything about us. Unless God sets a person up, no one can do it. The church is not something just anyone can do. Not just anyone becomes a leader. One does not become one just because one wants to. People think one becomes one just by wanting to, but that is not so.

After receiving the remission of sins, I intended not to do it. I intended not to preach. Why? Before I was born again, preparing one sermon was too hard. Looking at this book and copying, looking at that book and copying, copying and copying and underlining and trying once more—just thinking of it is dreadful. I cannot tell you how hard it is to preach once. So I intended not to do it. So I intended to do business, make money, and bring it to the church, and to live simply as a brother who makes a lot of money and brings it in.

But the idea of just making money and bringing it in was my own thought, and the Lord made this word work inside me. So whenever I saw anyone, my mouth could not keep still. I would grab people, sit them down, and talk about the word and talk again, and if I said, let us talk for just five minutes, five minutes would go on to two hours, even five hours. The listeners were not bored either, and liked it very, very much. There were even people who said they were hungry, so let us eat and then continue. As people kept receiving the remission of sins, did

they not have to be nurtured? As people kept asking questions, to nurture them I had to look at the word and tell them, and as that went on, I became a person who preaches today.

Because long ago, before I was born again, I had already been a minister as a religious person, I intended not to do this work. But after meeting the Lord, I intended not to do it, yet the Lord made me do it. I, too, like you, work all day long, and at this hour I am doing this only because I am preaching now; otherwise I feel as if I am completely crawling into the ground. When the weather is like this, the body goes into rest mode. I do not want to do anything or even think, and in the evening, no matter how much I try to work, I cannot work. Somehow or other I toss and turn, and then I get up at dawn and do a little then. Because I have to preach the word, I preach it.

In today's passage, that the Lord said to Peter that before the rooster crowed, he would deny Him three times means that He knew all about Peter. Jesus knew all about me, too. The Lord knows all about me, to the point of saying, you are stubborn and do not back down an inch on what you think is right; where in this world is there a person as stubborn as you? I do not back down on the part I think is right. Even if I were to die, no matter how strong the other person is, if I have done nothing wrong and what I say is right, I push through. So the Lord wants to use me, stubborn as I am, hot-tempered as I am. But when I think of myself, I wonder whether it will do with a character like this. When I meet swindlers, I say without hesitation that what is not so is not so. I say it just as it is: "Are you not a swindler? Are you not, rather than a moksa ('pastor'), a meoksa—a play on meokda ('to eat') in our language—who does ministry just to make a living?" So when that sister did not follow me, I blamed myself, thinking that if I had spoken gently, she might have followed.

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But looking back, it is not that speaking gently makes people follow; that sister was saved, but it ended with salvation. She received one talent and gave up. Being saved is not the end of it. If one does not follow the Lord after being saved, one is a person who received one talent. When the Lord comes again and a person who received one talent stands before the Lord, he brings out that talent, saying, "Here it is." The Lord says, "You wicked and lazy servant, you knew it only for yourself and did not teach it to others, so how wicked and lazy you are!" And saying that He will sentence him under the rule for one who received one talent and treat him just like an unbeliever, He orders that this person be bound tightly and cast into the darkness out there. Such is the end of the one who received one talent.

## The Lord, who uses the lacking as His instruments

Dear fellow believers, even though we are saved, we are lacking, and there are many times when our character is poor. But the Lord knows everything about us, and He has removed all our sins, washed them away, and received all the judgment, and thereby saved us. Believing that fact, though we are lacking, we follow the will the Lord wants. Then the will of the Lord is accomplished, and we become instruments of the righteousness of the Lord and live a life that gives glory to the Lord. I hope that you and I will live a life of faith that follows the will of the Lord. God has called you and me to follow the will of the Lord. He has chosen us and called us. He has called impatient and hot-tempered people, and He has called people lacking in wisdom; it does not matter at all. God places them in the right places within the church and uses them. And He receives glory. He accomplishes His own will. We are the instruments of God, used

by God. We are the vessels of God. After we have been used, on the last day the Lord praises us, saying, “Well done, good and faithful servant; you obeyed My will and My word with your little strength, so you are faithful and blessed.” He is the Lord who, along with praise, bestows a reward on us for that part, that with little strength we obeyed and followed the will of the Lord. We should know and believe in the Lord as the One who bestows rewards. This concludes the message. ✉

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# CHAPTER

# 14

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

# John Chapter 14 seen from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit

## In John 14:1–7, what is the exhortation that the Lord gave to His disciples, who believe in the word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit?

John 14:1–7 is the word of comfort and faith that Jesus, facing the Cross, gave to His troubled disciples. The Lord did not speak only of His departure; He also promised that after completing the salvation of His disciples, He would come again and make them live together with Him forever.

### 1. *"Let not your heart be troubled"*

Jesus said:

*"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me" (John 14:1).*

The disciples were troubled when they heard the word that Jesus would depart and the word that Peter would deny the Lord. They did not know what would happen to them in the future, either.

But Jesus did not tell His disciples that their trouble would disappear only if they understood everything about the future. He told them to believe in God and in Him. What the disciples had to rely on was not their own resolution or ability, but Jesus, who knows all things and accomplishes salvation.

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The words *"you believe in God, believe also in Me"* reveal that Jesus is God, equal to God the Father. Jesus is not merely a teacher who tells us the way to God; He is God, who Himself saves sinners and leads them to the kingdom of heaven.

## 2. Jesus promised the place where His disciples would dwell

*"In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also" (John 14:2–3).*

That Jesus would depart did not mean that He would forsake His disciples. The Lord had all the sins of the world transferred onto His body once and for all with the baptism He received from John, and bearing those sins, He would go forward to the Cross, be judged, and rise again from the dead to complete salvation. And He promised that after returning to the Father, He would come again and receive His disciples.

For a person who has received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, there is an eternal place in the kingdom of God. Therefore, the saints do not lose hope even when the circumstances of the world are hard and the future is uncertain. It is because the Lord has completed salvation and has promised that where He is, we will be also.

## 3. Jesus Himself is the only way to God

Thomas asked how they could know the way when they did

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not know where Jesus was going. Jesus did not teach them the direction of a road or a religious method; He spoke pointing to Himself.

*"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).*

A sinner cannot come to God by his own good deeds or by the works of the law. It is because sin stands between God and man. To remove that barrier of sin, Jesus had all the sins of the world transferred onto His body once and for all with the baptism He received from John. And He received the judgment for those sins in our place on the Cross and rose again from the dead.

Therefore, the word that Jesus is 'the way' means that only by believing in the work of salvation He accomplished can we come to God the Father. Jesus is not only the way that leads sinners to God; He is the Savior who Himself completed that way.

## 4. Jesus is the truth of salvation

Jesus is 'the truth' because the work of salvation He did completely fulfilled the promise and the righteousness of God.

Jesus bore all the sins of the world with the baptism He received from John, paid the price of all those sins with the blood of the Cross, and rose again from the dead. This is not something that changes according to human feelings or religious claims; it is the truth of salvation that God actually accomplished.

Believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit is not merely acknowledging the name of Jesus. It is knowing according to the word and believing with one's heart by what method Jesus bore one's sins, was judged, and removed them.

## 5. Jesus gives new life and eternal life to those who believe

Jesus is 'the life.' It is because, though the wages of sin is death, Jesus has solved both the problem of sin and the problem of death.

A person who believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit receives the remission of all sins, receives the Holy Spirit as a gift, and becomes a child of God. He also obtains the life of rising again even after the death of the flesh and being with the Lord forever. That Jesus promised, *"That where I am, there you may be also,"* shows the completion of this eternal life.

| Text | The word of Jesus | Meaning within the gospel of the water and the Spirit |
|---|---|---|
| Verse 1 | Do not be troubled, but believe in Me | The word telling us to rely on Jesus, who is God and completed salvation |
| Verses 2–3 | I will prepare a place for you | The promise of the kingdom of God, where the saints who have received the remission of sins will live with the Lord forever |
| Verse 6 | I am the way, the truth, and the life | Jesus, who accomplished salvation with the baptism He received from John, the Cross, and the resurrection |
| Verse 7 | If you know Me, you know the Father also | Jesus, the Son of God, who revealed the Father and who is God |

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## 6. Those who know Jesus come to know God the Father

*"If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him" (John 14:7).*

Jesus saved sinners in obedience to the will of God the Father. When we look at what Jesus did, we can know the love, the justice, and the will of salvation of God the Father.

Because God the Father loved sinners, He sent His own Son, and Jesus accomplished salvation through the water and the Spirit according to the will of the Father. Therefore, believing in the divinity of Jesus and in the work of salvation He did is the same as believing in God the Father.

## Conclusion

The exhortation that Jesus gave His disciples in John 14:1–7 is as follows.

It is not to be troubled, but to believe in Jesus, who is God. Jesus had all the sins of the world transferred onto His body once and for all with the baptism He received from John, was judged on the Cross bearing those sins, and rose again from the dead to complete salvation. Therefore, Jesus is the way to God, the truth that has removed sin, and God, who gives eternal life to those who believe.

A disciple who believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit is not troubled, looking only at the circumstances of the world or at his own weakness. He relies on Jesus, who completed salvation, hopes for the kingdom of God that the Lord has prepared, and lives a life of believing and following His word until the Lord comes again.

## In John 14:8–12, why did Jesus say that he who has seen Him has seen God the Father, and that he who believes in Him will do greater works?

John 14:8–12 shows who Jesus is, what work of salvation God the Father did through Jesus, and what work the disciples who believe in Him come to do.

### 1. Philip wanted to see God the Father directly

*"Philip said to Him, 'Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us'" (John 14:8).*

Jesus had said earlier, *"If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also."* But Philip, even while already seeing the word, the power, and the love of God the Father through Jesus, asked Him to show them the Father separately.

Philip had been with Jesus for a long time, but he had not fully realized the fact that Jesus was not merely a prophet or a teacher, but God, who had come to this earth in the flesh. Although knowing Jesus rightly is the way to know God the Father, Philip sought yet another visible sign.

### 2. He who has seen Jesus has seen the Father

*"Jesus said to him, 'Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, "Show us the Father"?'" (John 14:9).*

Jesus is the Son of God, who revealed the invisible God to us. Through the words, the character, the power, and the work

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of salvation of Jesus, we can know what God the Father is like.

When we look at how Jesus had compassion on sinners, healed the sick, and raised the dead, we can know the love and the power of God the Father. Above all, through the work in which Jesus gave Himself up to save sinners, we come to discover the love and the justice of God the Father.

Because God the Father loved sinners, He sent His own Son to this earth. In obedience to the will of the Father, Jesus had all the sins of the world transferred onto His body once and for all with the baptism He received from John, was judged on the Cross bearing those sins, and rose again from the dead to become the Savior of those who believe. In this work of salvation that Jesus did, the love and the will of God the Father were fully revealed.

## 3. The Father and the Son are one in the work of salvation

*"Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works" (John 14:10).*

Jesus was not One who worked according to His own will, separated from the Father. God the Father and Jesus are one in essence, in will, and in the work of salvation.

In the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the work of salvation of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit appears together.

| Agent of salvation | What He did |
|---|---|
| God the Father | He planned to save sinners and sent His Son into the world. |
| Jesus Christ | He bore all the sins of the world with the baptism He received from John and completed salvation with the Cross and the resurrection. |
| The Holy Spirit | He testifies that this word of salvation is the truth, and He comes upon the hearts of those who believe. |

Therefore, the work of salvation that Jesus did is the work that God the Father did through the Son. Believing in Jesus is believing in God the Father, and accepting the gospel of the water and the Spirit is accepting the salvation that God planned and accomplished.

## 4. We must see what Jesus did and believe in Him

*"Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves" (John 14:11).*

The signs Jesus performed testified that He is the Son of God and the Savior. Turning water into wine, healing the sick, walking on the sea, opening the eyes of a man blind from birth, and raising the dead Lazarus revealed the divinity of Jesus.

But the most important work Jesus did was saving sinners from all sins. Jesus bore all the sins of the world with the baptism He received from John, paid the price of those sins with His death on the Cross, and overcame sin and death by rising again

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from the dead.

We must not believe in Jesus vaguely; we must know through the word what He did and believe it. When we believe the fact that Jesus bore all our sins, was judged, and removed them, we receive the remission of sins and become people who belong to God.

## 5. The word *"the works that I do he will do also"*

*"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father" (John 14:12).*

The work of salvation that Jesus did is itself perfect, and no one can do it again. Jesus alone is the Savior who bore all the sins of the world, was judged on the Cross, and rose again from the dead.

The disciples who believe in Jesus come to do the work of preaching to others the gospel of the water and the Spirit that the Lord completed. The power to save sinners lies not in the disciples themselves, but in the gospel the disciples preach. The Holy Spirit works through that word and makes those who hear it believe in the work of salvation of Jesus and receive the remission of sins.

## 6. The word *"greater works than these he will do"*

The center of the 'greater works' lies in the disciples of Jesus receiving the power of the Holy Spirit and preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit to wider regions and to more people.

During His public ministry, Jesus worked mainly in the land

of Israel, but after His resurrection and ascension, the gospel spread through the disciples to Jerusalem, all Judea, Samaria, and the end of the earth. At Pentecost, about three thousand people received the word after hearing the preaching of Peter, and afterward the number of those who believed kept increasing.

This does not mean that the disciples became greater saviors than Jesus; it means that the ascended Jesus is with His disciples through the Holy Spirit and extends the gospel to every part of the world. Because Jesus sends the Helper, the Holy Spirit, after going to the Father, the disciples have become able to do this work.

## 7. What those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit must do

A person who has received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit believes in Jesus as his own Savior and God. He also takes part in the work of preaching to other souls the gospel that saved him.

This person does not try to save souls by his own ability. He preaches the gospel that Jesus completed as it is, and gives himself so that the Holy Spirit may work through that word. Testifying to the gospel with the mouth, helping the work of the gospel with prayer, and serving the Church of God with material means, time, and labor are all included in the work the Lord entrusted to His disciples.

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### Conclusion

John 14:8–12 testifies that Jesus is the Son of God, who fully revealed God the Father, and God, who is one with the Father. God the Father spoke in Jesus and did the work of saving sinners through Jesus.

Jesus had all the sins of the world transferred onto His body once and for all with the baptism He received from John, was judged on the Cross bearing those sins, and rose again from the dead to complete salvation. A person who believes this work with his heart obtains the remission of sins and new life.

And a disciple who has believed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit preaches the gospel the Lord completed to more souls with the help of the Holy Spirit. This is the way in which a person who believes in Jesus does the work of the Lord and takes part in the greater works the Lord promised.

## In John 14:13–17, what does the word of Jesus mean, that those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit should live praying and being led by the Holy Spirit?

John 14:13–17 is the promise that Jesus, facing the Cross, gave His disciples. The Lord told His disciples to pray in His name, said that whoever loves Him will keep His word, and promised to send the Helper, the Holy Spirit, to be with them forever.

## 1. The meaning of praying in the name of Jesus

*"And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it" (John 14:13–14).*

To pray in the name of Jesus is to believe that Jesus is one's own God and Savior and to ask Him for help. Jesus is not One who is dead; He rose again and is alive, and He is God, who even now hears the prayers of those who believe.

A sinner cannot come before God by his own righteousness or merit. But Jesus had all the sins of the world transferred onto His body once and for all with the baptism He received from John, was judged on the Cross bearing those sins, and then rose again from the dead. Because of this salvation, a person who believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit can pray to God boldly.

Therefore, when we pray, we must have the faith that Jesus completely removed our sins and made us the children of God. We ask not with the heart of a servant standing far off, weighed down by sin, but with the heart of a child loved by God.

## 2. We must ask for help concretely

Jesus said, *"If you ask anything in My name, I will do it."* A person who believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit can tell the Lord his circumstances and needs honestly and concretely.

— When our faith is weak, we pray for our faith to be made firm.

— When we do not understand the word, we pray to be given understanding.

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— When we meet temptations and trials, we pray to be kept.

— We pray for the way and the power to preach the gospel to be opened.

— We pray for the Church of God and the workers of the gospel.

— We entrust to Him the salvation of our family and neighbors, our health and livelihood, the material things we need, and the problems of life.

— We ask that the will of God be done rather than our own will.

Prayer is an expression of faith that lays down the desire to solve everything by one's own ability and relies on Jesus. A person who first tells the Lord and asks for help, whether in small matters or great, is a person who lives by faith.

## 3. The purpose of prayer is to give glory to God

Jesus said that the purpose of answering prayer is *"that the Father may be glorified in the Son."*

At the center of prayer must be the will of God and the gospel. We must ask that, through our receiving what we have asked for, the gospel may be spread, souls may be saved, the Church of God may be built up, and the name of Jesus may be exalted through our lives.

God also knows our fleshly needs. But a saved person does not pray only to fulfill his own desires; he prays also thinking about how he will use what is given to him for the righteousness of God and for the gospel. When we pray like this, glory goes to God the Father and to Jesus Christ through the answer.

## 4. A person who loves Jesus keeps His word

*"If you love Me, keep My commandments" (John 14:15).*

A person who has received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit is first a person who has received great love from Jesus. Jesus saved us by bearing all our sins and receiving the judgment for those sins in our place. A person who has believed this love with his heart and received it naturally loves the Lord and wants to follow His word.

Keeping the word is not a condition for obtaining salvation; it is the life in which a person who has already been saved responds by faith to the love of the Lord. To keep the commandments of the Lord is to love God, to love our brothers and sisters, to serve the gospel in unity with one another, and to preach the word of life to other souls.

Prayer and obedience are also connected with each other. When we lack the ability to do the will of the Lord, we pray, and when the Lord gives us strength and wisdom, we act according to the word by faith.

## 5. Jesus sent the Helper, the Holy Spirit

*"And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—" (John 14:16).*

'Helper' means One who helps, comforts, and pleads for us at our side. Jesus did not leave His disciples alone; He sent the Holy Spirit to be with them forever.

The Holy Spirit comes upon a person who has heard the gospel of the water and the Spirit, believed it with his heart, and received the remission of sins. The Holy Spirit makes us believe even more clearly in the salvation Jesus accomplished, makes us

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understand the word of the Bible, and also helps us know how to pray to God. And when a believer is about to go the wrong way, He awakens his heart and makes him turn back, and He leads him to choose the will of God.

The Holy Spirit is not One who helps a saved person for a while and then leaves. Jesus promised, *"That He may abide with you forever."* Because of this promise, the saints can keep their faith and continue their lives of faith even in their weakness.

## 6. The Holy Spirit is *"the Spirit of truth"*

*"The Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you" (John 14:17).*

Because the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth, He testifies of the gospel of the water and the Spirit that Jesus accomplished. The One who makes us believe the word that Jesus bore all the sins of the world with the baptism He received from John, received the judgment for those sins on the Cross, and rose again from the dead to complete salvation is the Holy Spirit.

The world cannot see the Holy Spirit with the eyes of the flesh, and it does not accept the truth of the gospel either, so it does not know the Holy Spirit. But a person who has received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit knows through the word that the Holy Spirit is in his heart.

To be led by the Holy Spirit is not to follow only one's own feelings, but to believe and follow the written word. The Holy Spirit brings the word to mind, makes us discern the will of God, and helps believers bear the fruit of love, peace, longsuffering, and faithfulness.

## 7. The faith that those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit must have

| Area of faith | Faith and attitude to have |
|---|---|
| Salvation | We believe that Jesus removed all sins with the baptism He received from John, the Cross, and the resurrection. |
| Prayer | We ask with the faith that Jesus is the living God and hears our prayers. |
| Purpose | We pray for the will of God, the spreading of the gospel, and the salvation of souls. |
| Obedience | We follow the word not in order to be saved, but because we love the Lord, who saved us. |
| Guidance of the Holy Spirit | We do not insist only on our own thoughts, but are led by the Holy Spirit, who enlightens us through the word. |
| Church life | We are united with our brothers and sisters, love one another, and serve the work of the gospel together. |

## Conclusion

John 14:13–17 shows the way of prayer and the life of faith to those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Jesus saved us from all sins with the baptism He received from John, the Cross, and the resurrection. Therefore, we must believe in Jesus as our own God and Savior and ask for concrete

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help in His name. We must pray not only for our own needs but for the will of God, the spreading of the gospel, and the salvation of souls.

We must also love the Lord, who first loved us, follow His word, and receive the help of the Helper, the Holy Spirit, who is in our hearts. The life of faith of a person who believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit is not a life lived by his own strength, but a life of relying on Jesus through prayer and being led by the Holy Spirit within the word.

## In John 14:18–21, what does it mean that Jesus said He would not leave those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit as orphans, but would be with them forever?

John 14:18–21 is the promise that Jesus gave His disciples before the Cross and the resurrection. Jesus said that He would not leave alone those who have received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, but would dwell in them through the Holy Spirit and make them live by the life of the resurrection.

### 1. *"I will not leave you orphans"*

*"I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you" (John 14:18).*

If Jesus died on the Cross, the disciples could think that the One who would keep and lead them would be gone. But the Lord promised that He would not leave His disciples like orphans.

Jesus had all the sins of the world transferred onto His body

once and for all with the baptism He received from John, was judged on the Cross bearing those sins, and then rose again from the dead. Thus Jesus is not One who leaves sinners alone after saving them; He is the shepherd who looks after the saved to the end so that they may keep their faith and live.

A person who believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit is not a spiritual orphan living alone without God. He is a child of God who has God as his Father, believes in Jesus as his Savior and shepherd, and has the Holy Spirit in his heart.

## 2. The promise *"I will come to you"*

The words of Jesus, *"I will come to you,"* contain the promise that the Lord will be with His disciples.

First, Jesus rose again from the dead and appeared to His disciples again. He came among the disciples, who were afraid and had shut the doors, and showed them His hands and His side, and the disciples rejoiced when they saw the risen Lord.

Second, Jesus sent the Helper, the Holy Spirit, to dwell in His disciples. In the flesh He goes to the Father, but through the Holy Spirit He is with those who believe forever.

Third, at the last He will come again and take the saved to the eternal kingdom of God.

Therefore, a person who believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit is not alone just because the Lord is not visible. The Lord is with him through the Holy Spirit and the word, and He leads him to keep his faith and serve the gospel within the Church of God.

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### 3. *"Because I live, you will live also"*

*"A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also" (John 14:19).*

Jesus would die on the Cross, but He was not One who would remain in death. He was the God of life, who would bear all the sins of the world, receive the judgment for those sins, and then rise again from the dead.

The words *"Because I live, you will live also"* show that the resurrection of Jesus and the life of those who believe are connected with each other.

— Because Jesus rose again from the dead, it was proved that He is the Son of God, who completed salvation.

— A person who believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit escapes from sin and condemnation and obtains new life.

— Even if the flesh dies, he will rise again on the last day and live with the Lord forever.

— On this earth, too, he lives a new life, led by the Holy Spirit.

A person who was under sin and death in Adam has obtained the remission of sins and the life of the resurrection in Jesus Christ. Therefore, the eternal life of a saved person does not depend on his own will or good deeds; it depends on the living Jesus Christ.

### 4. *"You in Me, and I in you"*

*"At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you" (John 14:20).*

This word shows the relationship in which God the Father, Jesus, and the saved person are united in the Holy Spirit.

Jesus is in the Father and accomplished salvation according to the will of the Father. A person who believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit enters into Christ by faith, and Jesus dwells in that person through the Holy Spirit.

This union appears as follows.

| Content of the union | Meaning |
|---|---|
| We are in Christ | Having come to belong to the remission of sins, life, and the kingdom of God that Jesus accomplished |
| Christ is in us | The Holy Spirit dwelling in our hearts and keeping our faith in the gospel |
| The union of the Father and the Son | Jesus having accomplished salvation as one with the will of the Father |
| The new life of the saints | Living not by following only one's own thoughts, but by being led by the word and the Holy Spirit |

The Holy Spirit continually brings to mind the gospel of salvation that Jesus accomplished, and makes us use the word to resist Satan, who attacks us with sin and condemnation. When we are about to go the wrong way, He makes us look back at ourselves before the word and helps us turn back to the will of the Lord.

## 5. Keeping the commandments of the Lord is loving the Lord

"*He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who*

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*loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him" (John 14:21).*

Keeping the commandments of Jesus is not a matter of piling up merit in order to obtain salvation. Because Jesus first saved us with the water and the Spirit and loved us, a person who has received that love follows the word of the Lord with thanks.

The important commandment that Jesus gave His disciples is the word *"as I have loved you, that you also love one another."* Therefore, the faith that loves the Lord appears in a life like the following.

— We put God and His word at the center of our hearts.

— We embrace the weaknesses of our brothers and sisters and help one another.

— When someone goes the wrong way, we set him right with the word of the gospel.

— We serve the work of saving souls in unity with the church.

— We preach to others the gospel of the water and the Spirit that we have received.

— Even in difficulties, we pray, seeking the will of the Lord.

The Holy Spirit helps the saved to love God, to love their brothers and sisters, and to serve the gospel. This is the fruit of faith that appears in a person who has the Holy Spirit in his heart.

## 6. *"I will love him and manifest Myself to him"*

Jesus said that He would manifest Himself to the person who loves Him and keeps His word. This means that the Lord makes us know even more clearly that He is alive, through the word and the work of the Holy Spirit.

When a saved person serves the gospel according to the will of the Lord, he comes to experience the Lord giving him the

wisdom and strength he needs and opening the way. When he prays in difficulties, he obtains help; when he hears the word, he obtains understanding; and as he sees the gospel spread and souls saved, he comes to know even more deeply that the Lord is alive.

Thus the life of faith is not a life of following the Lord by one's own strength. It is a life in which the Lord, who first saved us, is with us through the Holy Spirit, makes us understand the word, and gives us strength to love and serve.

## Conclusion

John 14:18–21 tells us the fact that a person who believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit is never a person who has been left alone.

Jesus removed all our sins and gave us new life with the baptism He received from John, the Cross, and the resurrection. He also sent the Helper, the Holy Spirit, to dwell in us, thereby keeping our faith, making us understand the word, and leading us to live according to the will of God.

Therefore, a person who believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit must live by the following faith.

He must believe that the Lord has not left him like an orphan, rely on the life of the resurrection of Jesus, and follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit, who is in his heart. And remembering the love of the Lord, who first loved him, he must love his brothers and sisters and serve the gospel in unity with the Church of God. This is the life of a person who is in Christ and in whom Christ dwells.

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## In John 14:21–24, what does it mean that Jesus said He would be with a person who believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit when that person loves Him and keeps His word by faith?

John 14:21–24 tells us what it means to love Jesus, and to whom the Lord manifests Himself and with whom He dwells. Seen within the gospel of the water and the Spirit, this word shows the process in which the love of salvation received from Jesus appears in a life of faith, obedience, and preaching the gospel.

### 1. A person who loves Jesus keeps His word

Jesus said:

*"He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him" (John 14:21).*

Loving Jesus does not stop at confessing with words only, "I love the Lord." Believing in the salvation Jesus accomplished, keeping His word in one's heart, and living according to that word is loving the Lord.

But it is not that a person comes to love Jesus first by his own strength. Because Jesus first loved sinners, the person who has received that love comes to love the Lord.

Jesus came to this earth in the flesh to save sinners. And He had all the sins of the world transferred onto His body once and for all with the baptism He received from John, went forward to the Cross bearing those sins, shed His blood and was judged, and rose again from the dead. A person who believes in this gospel of the water and the Spirit receives the remission of all sins and

comes to know the love of God.

Therefore, a life of keeping the word is not something done in order to obtain salvation, but the fruit of faith borne by a person who has already received the love of salvation from the Lord.

## 2. The commandment of the Lord is to love God and people

The center of the commandment Jesus spoke of is love. It is to love God, to love the brothers and sisters whom the Lord has saved, and to preach the gospel of life to souls who have not yet been saved.

Because a person who believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit knows the love by which Jesus removed all his sins, he wants the souls of others to be saved, too. Therefore, keeping the word of the Lord appears in a life like the following.

1. We believe without change in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that Jesus accomplished.

2. We keep the word of the gospel in our hearts and do not change it into false teaching.

3. We embrace the weaknesses of our brothers and sisters and care for one another.

4. We preach the gospel of the remission of sins to those who are still in sin.

5. We think first of the will of the Lord and the salvation of souls rather than our own benefit.

A believer, too, can fall through the weakness of the flesh. But he does not abandon or deny the word of Jesus. Led by the Holy Spirit, he stands before the word again, reflects on the love of the Lord, who saved him, and returns by faith.

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## 3. Why does Jesus manifest Himself to His disciples?

Judas (not Iscariot) asked Jesus:

*"Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?" (John 14:22).*

Judas may have thought that Jesus, as the Messiah, would openly manifest His power and glory before the whole world. But Jesus does not manifest Himself with worldly power or political glory; He manifests Himself in the hearts of those who believe and accept His word.

That Jesus manifests Himself means that He makes believers realize the following facts.

— He makes them know that Jesus is the Son of God and the true God.

— He makes them believe in the salvation He accomplished with the baptism He received from John, the Cross, and the resurrection.

— Through the Holy Spirit, He makes them understand the meaning of the word and follow the will of the Lord.

— By leading and helping the lives of believers, He makes them experience the living Lord.

— Through the saved, He manifests the gospel and love to other souls.

The world judges Jesus with the eyes of the flesh, but a person who believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit comes to know through the word and the Holy Spirit that Jesus is his own God and Savior.

## 4. The Father and the Son dwell with the one who believes

Jesus said in verse 23:

*"If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him."*

Here, 'home' refers to the state in which God comes upon the heart of a believer through the Holy Spirit and lives together with him. If we believe with our hearts in the salvation that Jesus accomplished with the baptism He received from John, the blood of the Cross, and the resurrection, we receive the remission of all sins. God gives the Holy Spirit as a gift to the person who has received the remission of sins and is with him.

Therefore, a person who believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit is not alone. God the Father and Jesus Christ dwell in that person's heart through the Holy Spirit and lead him with the word. The Holy Spirit brings the word of God to mind, makes him discern what the will of the Lord is, and gives him strength to love his brothers and sisters and serve the gospel.

The fact that the Lord dwells with us is not a mere feeling or a momentary experience. It is a real grace in which the Holy Spirit dwells in the heart that has received the remission of sins and continually leads that person within the word and the church.

## 5. The word of Jesus is the word of God the Father

In verse 24, Jesus revealed that the word He preaches is not His own word only, but the word of God the Father, who sent Him.

Therefore, accepting the word of Jesus is accepting the word

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of God the Father, and rejecting the word of Jesus is rejecting the word of God the Father. One cannot say that one loves Jesus and yet believe the salvation He accomplished after changing it to suit one's own thoughts.

Jesus bore our sins with the baptism He received from John, received the judgment for those sins on the Cross, and rose again from the dead. To believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit is to accept this word of salvation as it is and keep it to the end.

## Conclusion

The core of John 14:21–24 is that the Lord first loved us, and that a person who has received the remission of sins by believing in that love loves the Lord and keeps His word.

The faith that loves Jesus does not remain only as a feeling in the heart. It appears in a life of firmly believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, loving our brothers and sisters, and serving the gospel in unity with the church. God dwells in the heart of such a person through the Holy Spirit, makes him understand the word, and manifests the salvation and love of Jesus Christ to the world through his life.

Therefore, the flow of this word is as follows.

Jesus first saves us with the water and the Spirit → We believe in that salvation and receive the remission of sins and the Holy Spirit → We love the Lord and keep His word → We love our brothers and sisters and serve the gospel → God dwells with that person and manifests Himself through him

## In John 14:25–31, Jesus promised to send the Helper, the Holy Spirit, and said, *"My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you."* How would this word be explained with the word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit?

John 14:25–31 is the farewell word that Jesus, facing the Cross, left with His disciples. Jesus promised that after His departure, the Holy Spirit would teach the disciples, and that He would give them a peace the world cannot give. He also revealed in advance that the events of the Cross and the resurrection that lay ahead were not an accidental tragedy, but the work of salvation that fulfills the will of God the Father.

### 1. The Holy Spirit brings the word of Jesus to mind

Jesus said:

*"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).*

While Jesus was with His disciples in the flesh, He taught them the word directly. After Jesus died on the Cross, rose again, and returned to the Father, the Holy Spirit dwells in the disciples and makes them understand the word of Jesus.

That the Holy Spirit teaches does not mean that He speaks of a new salvation separated from the word of Jesus. The Holy Spirit brings to mind the salvation that Jesus spoke of and accomplished, and confirms in our hearts that it is the truth that saves sinners.

Jesus had all the sins of the world transferred onto His body

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once and for all with the baptism He received from John, went forward to the Cross bearing those sins, shed His blood and was judged, and rose again from the dead. The Holy Spirit comes upon the heart of a person who believes in this gospel of the water and the Spirit and works as follows.

1. He makes us realize that the baptism of Jesus and the Cross are the work of salvation for our sins.

2. He makes us believe the word that all our sins have been washed away.

3. When condemnation and fear come, He brings to mind the word of completed salvation.

4. He leads us to discern what the will of God is in our lives.

5. He helps us to live hearing the word and serving the gospel within the church.

Therefore, the guidance of the Holy Spirit is not a vague feeling; it is the work that makes us remember, believe, and follow the word Jesus spoke.

## 2. The peace Jesus gives is a peace in which the problem of sin has been solved

Jesus said to His disciples:

*"Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27).*

The peace the world gives changes according to circumstances. When we are healthy, have plenty of material things, and things go well, we seem to be at peace, but when circumstances change, anxiety and fear come again.

The peace Jesus gives has a different foundation. It is the peace we obtain because Jesus has completely solved the

problem of sin and judgment.

The fundamental reason a person is afraid before God is that there is sin in his heart and the judgment for that sin awaits him. Jesus bore all our sins with the baptism He received from John and received the punishment for those sins in our place on the Cross. A person who believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit with his heart has received the remission of all sins and is no longer a person who will receive the judgment of sin.

Therefore, the peace of the Lord is not merely a feeling that comforts the heart. It is a peace that comes from the following sure salvation.

— All my sins have been transferred to Jesus.

— Jesus received the judgment for my sins on the Cross.

— Jesus rose again from the dead and became my eternal Savior.

— I have received the remission of sins by faith and become a child of God.

— The Holy Spirit is in me and keeps and leads me.

Because we have this faith, even in difficulties we can enjoy the peace of knowing that our relationship with God has not been cut off.

### 3. Jesus going to the Father is not the failure of salvation but its completion

The disciples were troubled when they heard the word that Jesus would depart. But Jesus said that if they loved Him, they should rejoice that He was going to the Father.

For Jesus to go to the Father, He first had to pass through the way of the Cross and the resurrection. Jesus had already borne the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John.

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Now He had to be judged on the Cross bearing that sin, rise again from the dead to complete salvation, and then return to the Father.

Therefore, the departure of Jesus was not a matter of forsaking His disciples, but the way to accomplish the next work.

He bore sin with the baptism He received from John → He received the judgment of sin on the Cross → He rose again from the dead → He returned to the Father → He sent the Holy Spirit to those who believe

Only when Jesus went to the Father could the Helper, the Holy Spirit, come to the disciples. The Holy Spirit dwells in the hearts of those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit in every age and every region, and He testifies of the salvation of Jesus.

## 4. The meaning of the word *"My Father is greater than I"*

Jesus said, *"My Father is greater than I."* Jesus came to this earth in the flesh, sent by God the Father, and He was obeying the will of the Father in the position of a servant. This word shows the relationship between the Father, who sent, and the Son, who was sent and obeyed, in the work of saving sinners.

God the Father and God the Son are distinct, but They are God, having the same divinity. Jesus Himself said earlier, *"He who has seen Me has seen the Father,"* and revealed that He is in the Father and the Father is in Him.

Jesus, who is God, humbled Himself, put on the flesh, and obeyed the Father. That He received baptism from John and bore the sin of mankind, and obeyed even to death on the Cross was not because He lacked power, but in order to accomplish the will of salvation that God the Father had established. After

completing the work of salvation, He rose again from the dead and returned to the Father to enjoy His original glory.

## 5. Jesus spoke in advance, before it came to pass

In verse 29, Jesus said that the reason He spoke in advance, before it came to pass, was so that the disciples would believe when it did come to pass.

In the eyes of the disciples, the arrest of Jesus and the Cross could look like failure. But Jesus said in advance that He would die, that He would rise again, and that He would return to the Father. When these words were fulfilled just as He had said, the disciples came to believe even more clearly that Jesus is the Son of God and the promised Savior.

The gospel of the water and the Spirit is not a method of salvation that people made up. It is the salvation that Jesus Himself accomplished just as God had planned and spoken of in advance. The baptism of Jesus, the Cross, and the resurrection are events in which the promise of God was fulfilled in history.

## 6. The ruler of this world cannot rule over Jesus

*"The ruler of this world"* in verse 30 refers to Satan. Satan stirred up the hearts of people to arrest Jesus and nail Him to the Cross. But Satan could find no sin or unrighteousness in Jesus, nor did he have any right to rule over Jesus.

Jesus was the sinless Son of God. That He was hung on the Cross was not because of His own sin, but because of the sin of mankind, which He had borne with the baptism He received from John. Jesus did not have His life taken from Him by force;

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He gave up His body as the sacrificial offering in obedience to the will of the Father.

Satan thought he would win if he killed Jesus, but the Cross of Jesus became, on the contrary, the victory of salvation that put an end to the judgment for all the sin of mankind. By rising again from the dead, Jesus overcame the power of sin, death, and Satan.

## 7. The Cross is the obedience of Jesus, who loved the Father

In verse 31, Jesus said that He intended to let the world know the fact that He loves the Father and does as the Father commanded.

The obedience of Jesus was an obedience that completely fulfilled the will of God the Father to save sinners. The Father sent the Son to save mankind, and the Son acted according to that will as follows.

— He came to this earth in the flesh.

— He bore all the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John.

— He was judged on the Cross bearing that sin.

— He said, *"It is finished!"* and died.

— He rose again from the dead and became the Savior of those who believe.

This is the work of salvation that Jesus did according to the command of the Father, because He loved the Father. Through the love of the Father and the obedience of the Son, the gospel of the water and the Spirit was completed.

## Conclusion

John 14:25–31 gives three assurances to those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

First, the Holy Spirit dwells in those who believe, brings the word of Jesus to mind, and leads them into the truth.

Second, because Jesus has solved both sin and judgment with the baptism He received from John, the Cross, and the resurrection, those who believe enjoy the true peace that the world cannot give.

Third, the Cross of Jesus is not a defeat, but the victory of salvation in which He obeyed the will of the Father and overcame the power of sin, death, and Satan.

Therefore, a person who believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit does not look only at his own feelings or circumstances; he looks at the salvation that Jesus completed. He holds on to the word the Holy Spirit brings to mind, overcomes trouble and fear by the faith of having received the remission of sins, and lives a life of serving the will of the Lord and the gospel within the church. ✉

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# Questions and Answers on John Chapter 14

## [Question] 1. Summarize briefly the main content and the flow of John chapter 14 as a whole.

John chapter 14 is the word of comfort and promise that Jesus, facing the Cross, gave His anxious disciples. Jesus said, *"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me."* And He promised that He would go to prepare a place for His disciples to dwell in His Father's house and would come again and receive them.

Jesus revealed that He is the only way to the Father. He said, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."* Jesus bore all the sins of the world on His body with the baptism He received from John the Baptist, received the judgment for those sins on the Cross, and rose again from the dead, thereby completing the way for sinners to come to God the Father. He also said that he who has seen Him has seen the Father, and taught that He and the Father are one.

Jesus promised that if His disciples asked in His name, He Himself would do it. Those who believe in Jesus continue to proclaim the gospel of salvation that He accomplished, and through this, God the Father is glorified.

Jesus said that after He departed, He would not leave His disciples as orphans, but would send the Holy Spirit, another Helper. In a person who has received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the Holy Spirit dwells forever; He teaches and brings to remembrance the words

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Jesus spoke, and helps that person live according to the will of God. A person who loves Jesus shows his faith by keeping His word, loving his brothers and sisters, and serving the spread of the gospel.

Finally, Jesus gave true peace, which the world cannot give. This peace comes from the perfect salvation of Jesus, who bore sin with the baptism He received from John the Baptist and received all that judgment on the Cross. Therefore, John chapter 14 is the chapter that testifies that Jesus is the only way to the Father, and that He is God, who gives those who believe a place in the kingdom of heaven, the Holy Spirit, who is the Helper, eternal life, and true peace.

## [Question] 2. What is the central message contained in John 14:1?

The central message of John chapter 14 is contained in the word of verse 1, *"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me."* Jesus knew that He would soon be crucified and die and leave the side of His disciples. Because He also knew the fear and the tribulation the disciples would go through in the future, He told them not to be troubled while looking at their circumstances, but to believe in Him just as they believed in God.

This word contains the meaning that Jesus is God, equal to God the Father. A person cannot tell another person to entrust every problem to him and believe in him, but Jesus can say, *"Believe also in Me"* because He is almighty God and the One who rules over life, judgment, and the kingdom of heaven. To believe in Jesus is the same as to believe in God the Father, and to rely on Him and pray in His name is to rely on God.

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Jesus bore and washed away all the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John the Baptist, received the punishment for those sins on the Cross, and then rose again from the dead. Therefore, Jesus is not only the One who saved us from sin; He is God, who keeps and leads those who believe and finally takes them to the kingdom of God.

All the promises that follow in chapter 14 are also built on this faith. Jesus said that He would prepare a place to dwell in His Father's house and would come again and receive those who believe. He revealed that He is the way, the truth, and the life, and He promised that He would send the Helper, the Holy Spirit, to be with them forever and would give them the peace the world cannot give.

Therefore, the message of this chapter is that no matter how unstable the world is and however unknowable the future may be, we should not be seized by anxiety and fear, but should believe in and rely on Jesus as God, who solved the problem of sin and judgment and even prepared an eternal place for us.

## [Question] 3. What do *"My Father's house"* in John 14:2 and the 'many mansions' in it refer to?

*"My Father's house"* refers to the kingdom where God the Father is, that is, the kingdom of heaven. The *"mansions"* mean the actual place where the saved people of God will live with the Lord forever. Jesus was saying that the kingdom of heaven is not a vague idea, but a definite place where those who believe will enter and enjoy eternal life.

He said that there are *"many mansions"* there. This means that enough places have been prepared to receive the saved people of God. Jesus was not leaving His disciples behind; He

was going to the Father to prepare the place where they would live with Him in the future.

A sinner cannot enter the house of God the Father while he still has sin. So Jesus bore and washed away all the sin of mankind on His body with the baptism He received from John the Baptist, received the judgment for those sins on the Cross, and then rose again. To a person who has received the remission of sins by believing in this salvation, Jesus becomes the way to the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus promised that after preparing the place, He would come again and receive those who believe to Himself, *"That where I am, there you may be also."* Therefore, this word is the promise that the saved have an eternal home to return to, and that Jesus will surely come again and take His people there. A person who believes this promise can have the hope that, no matter how unstable the world is, he has not been forsaken and will live with the Lord in the future.

## [Question] 4. In John 14:3, what did the Lord promise to accomplish before coming again?

Jesus said, *"If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again."* Therefore, the order that John 14:3 makes clear is that Jesus goes to the Father, prepares the place where the saved people will dwell, and then comes again.

The purpose of Jesus' coming again is to receive His people and have them be with Him where He is. Those who have received the remission of sins by believing in Jesus, who bore all the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John the Baptist, was judged on the Cross, and then rose again, will enter the kingdom of God, where He is.

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Jesus did not tell them the exact date and hour of the second coming. That time and season are set by God the Father, and the end comes after the gospel of the kingdom has spread to all nations. Because there are still people who must be saved, the Lord is waiting for the gospel to spread.

Therefore, a believer should not have his heart taken up with calculating the date of the second coming, but should preach the gospel, believing the promise that the Lord will surely come again. Jesus, who has prepared the place, will come again at the appointed time, receive His people, and make them live with Him forever.

## [Question] 5. In John 14:6, what is the meaning of the word of Jesus declaring that He is the only way to the Father?

Jesus said, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."* Through this word, Jesus revealed that He is the only Savior, who leads sinners to God the Father, and that He is God, equal to God the Father.

Jesus is not One who merely taught the way; He Himself is the way to God. A sinner cannot go to God by his own good deeds or righteousness. Because Jesus bore and washed away all the sin of mankind on His body with the baptism He received from John the Baptist, received the punishment for those sins on the Cross, and then rose again from the dead, the way for sinners to come to God was opened.

Jesus is also the truth. Everything He did—coming to this earth, bearing the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John, dying on the Cross, and rising again to accomplish salvation—is the true work of salvation that God promised and

actually completed. Jesus is the life as well. A person who believes in His salvation receives the remission of sins, his dead soul comes alive, and he obtains eternal life.

Therefore, no one can come to God the Father by other religions, human righteousness, philosophy, or good deeds. Without believing in the righteousness, the love, and the work of salvation of Jesus, no one can obtain the remission of sins, new life, or the kingdom of heaven. Only a person who believes in the salvation Jesus accomplished with the baptism He received from John, the Cross, and the resurrection can come to God the Father.

In this way, Jesus revealed that He is not one of many ways of salvation, but God, who is the one and only way, the truth, and the life, giving the remission of sins and eternal life and leading us to the kingdom of heaven.

## [Question] 6. In John 14:7, what does the word mean that if we know Jesus, we come to know God the Father also?

Here, to 'know' Jesus is not to recognize Him as a man from Nazareth or as an excellent teacher. It means to know and believe that Jesus is God, equal to God the Father, and the Savior who came to save mankind from sin.

Jesus went on to say, *"He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"* This does not mean that Jesus and God the Father are separate gods with different wills. Jesus is in the Father and the Father is in Jesus, and the words Jesus spoke and the works He did revealed the word and the will of God the Father just as they are. Therefore, if we know Jesus rightly, we come to know what God the Father

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is like as well.

If we look at how Jesus bore the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John the Baptist, received the judgment for those sins on the Cross, and rose again from the dead, we can know God the Father. God the Father loved sinners and sent His Son, and Jesus obeyed the will of the Father and completed salvation. Through Jesus it was revealed that God the Father is the God of love, who saves sinners, and at the same time the God of justice, who surely judges sin.

The disciples had lived with Jesus for a long time, but they had not fully known Him as God. That is why Philip asked Him to show them the Father. Jesus told them to look at His words and the work of salvation He did, and to believe that He is God, one with the Father.

Therefore, this word means that a person who knows and believes in Jesus as God the Savior knows God the Father as well, and that no one can know God the Father rightly while rejecting Jesus. It is because the love, the will, and the power of God the Father were revealed just as they are through the love, the salvation, and the words of Jesus.

## [Question] 7. In John 14:7, what point in time does *"from now on,"* which Jesus spoke of, refer to?

Jesus said, *"If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him."* Here, *"From now on"* means from the time when Jesus clearly revealed to His disciples the fact that He is the way, the truth, and the life, and the One who is one with God the Father.

Until then, the disciples had lived with Jesus, heard His words, and seen the works He did, but they had not fully known

who Jesus was. Now Jesus taught them directly that to know Him is to know the Father, and that to have seen Him is to have seen the Father. Therefore, the disciples were no longer to seek God the Father separately from Jesus, but were to know and believe in the Father through Jesus.

The words *"from now on"* do not mean that the disciples realized everything perfectly at that moment. Seeing that Philip asked right afterward, *"Lord, show us the Father,"* the understanding of the disciples was still lacking. Jesus spoke this word to mean that sufficient grounds for knowing God the Father had already been given through His words and the works He did.

This fact is revealed even more clearly through the work in which Jesus bore the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John the Baptist, received the judgment for those sins on the Cross, and rose again from the dead. After that work of salvation was accomplished, the disciples came to believe firmly that Jesus is God and the Savior, and to preach the gospel.

Therefore, *"From now on"* refers to a new point in time: from the moment Jesus clearly revealed His divinity and His oneness with the Father, and through the Cross and the resurrection He would soon accomplish, the disciples would come to know God the Father clearly in Jesus.

## [Question] 8. According to John 14:10–11, from whom did the words Jesus spoke and the works He did come?

The words Jesus spoke and the works He did are the works of God the Father. Jesus said, *"The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in*

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*Me does the works."*

This means that Jesus did not speak or work according to His own will, apart from God the Father. Because God the Father is in Jesus and Jesus is in the Father, the words of Jesus are the words of the Father, and the works Jesus did are the works the Father did in Him. Therefore, if we look at how Jesus taught, healed the sick, and raised the dead, we can know the will and the power of God the Father.

This does not mean, however, that Jesus was merely an instrument or a creature conveying the will of God. The words "I am in the Father, and the Father in Me" show the fact that Jesus is one with God the Father and is God, equal to Him. God the Father and Jesus Christ were not separated, each doing His own work; with one will, They accomplished the work of saving mankind.

That Jesus bore all the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John the Baptist, received the judgment for those sins on the Cross, and rose again from the dead was also the work of fulfilling the saving will of God the Father. This was the work God the Father did in Jesus, and at the same time the work of salvation that Jesus, who is God, accomplished Himself.

Therefore, Jesus told them to believe the fact that the Father and He are one, and, if they could not fully understand it, to look at the works He did and believe. The words and the works of Jesus clearly testify that He is the Savior who came from God the Father, and God, one with the Father.

## [Question] 9. Who is the One called *"the Spirit of truth"* in John 14:17?

The Spirit of truth refers to the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom God the Father sends. 'Helper' means One who helps, protects, and guides believers at their side. The Holy Spirit is not a mere force or feeling; He is a personal God, who is together with God the Father and Jesus Christ.

Concerning the Holy Spirit, Jesus said, *"The Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you."* The Holy Spirit is not One who is with believers for a while and then leaves; He dwells in them and is with them forever. Therefore, even after Jesus ascended to heaven, believers are not beings left behind like orphans.

The Holy Spirit is called *"the Spirit of truth"* because He testifies of the truth of salvation that Jesus Christ accomplished. The Holy Spirit does not speak on His own; He makes us believe the words Jesus spoke and the works He did, and guides us into all truth. In particular, He makes us realize and believe the fact that Jesus bore the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John the Baptist, received the judgment for those sins on the Cross, and rose again from the dead to complete salvation.

To a person who has received the remission of sins by believing in this gospel of the water and the Spirit, God gives the Holy Spirit as a gift and seals the fact that he is a child of God. Because the world does not believe in the work of salvation of Jesus, it can neither know nor receive the Holy Spirit; but a person who has received the remission of sins knows that the Holy Spirit is in him and is led by Him.

The Holy Spirit makes believers understand the word of God and helps them discern what the will of God is. When they go

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the wrong way, He awakens their hearts and makes them turn back; and in difficulties, He brings the word to mind and gives them faith and strength. He also leads them to testify of the salvation of Jesus, to serve the gospel, and to love God and their brothers and sisters.

Therefore, the Spirit of truth is the Holy Spirit, whom Jesus sent as the Helper to dwell in believers, testify to the truth of the salvation Jesus accomplished, and guide them forever according to the Word of God.

## [Question] 10. In John 14:17, why can the world neither receive nor know the Spirit of truth, and what relationship does He form with those who believe?

Jesus spoke of the relationship between the Spirit of truth and the world like this.

*"The Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you" (John 14:17).*

Here, *"The world"* refers to the people who do not believe the truth of salvation that Jesus Christ accomplished. Jesus bore the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John the Baptist, received the judgment for those sins on the Cross, and rose again from the dead to complete salvation, but the world does not accept this word. As a result, it has not received the remission of sins and still retains sin in its heart, so it cannot receive the Holy Spirit, who is holy, as a gift.

That the world neither sees nor knows the Spirit of truth means that it can neither understand nor accept the work the Holy Spirit does. People of the world sometimes say that they

have received the Holy Spirit and put outward phenomena or emotional experiences first, but without believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that Jesus accomplished, no one can know the Spirit of truth. It is because the Spirit of truth is not One whom a person obtains by his senses or efforts, but the gift God gives to a person who has received the remission of sins by believing the word of salvation with his heart.

On the other hand, the disciples of Jesus and those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit know the Spirit of truth. It is because He dwells with believers and is in them. The Holy Spirit seals in the hearts of believers the fact that they are children of God and gives them the assurance that the salvation Jesus accomplished is perfect. He also makes them understand the word of God and helps them discern the will of God and live according to that will.

Therefore, because the world does not believe in the work of salvation of Jesus, it can neither receive nor know the Spirit of truth; but upon a person who has received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the Spirit of truth comes and dwells with him forever. This word shows the separation between the world and the Spirit of truth, and the union between believers and the Spirit of truth.

## [Question] 11. What kind of person does John 14:21 teach receives the love of Jesus and God the Father?

Jesus said that the person who has His commandments and keeps them—that is, the person who loves Jesus not with words only but with his life—receives the love of God the Father.

*"He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who*

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*loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him" (John 14:21).*

To 'have His commandments and keep them' means not to stop at knowing the words of Jesus, but to accept them with one's heart and live according to them. The center of the commandments Jesus spoke of is love. It is to love God, to love others as well, and to want their souls and lives to be well. Preaching and serving the gospel the Lord entrusted to us also comes from this love.

This love is not something a person produces first. Jesus first loved sinners, bore the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John the Baptist, received the judgment for those sins on the Cross, and rose again from the dead to accomplish perfect salvation. A person who has received the remission of sins by believing this love comes to have the Holy Spirit in his heart, loves the Lord who saved him, and follows His word.

Therefore, to keep the commandments of Jesus is not to earn the love of God by keeping all the law without blemish. It is that a person who has first received the saving love of the Lord loves the Lord out of gratitude for that love, and obeys the will of God, led by the Holy Spirit. He seeks the good of others, embraces the weak, and preaches the gospel so that souls may receive the remission of sins.

God the Father shows His love to a person who loves Jesus and follows His word in this way. He is with him in his life, helps him when he is in difficulty, gives him faith and peace, and leads him to accomplish the things that please God. Jesus, too, loves him and manifests Himself to him, and through him reveals the gospel of salvation and the will of God.

Therefore, the person who is loved by God is the person who believes in the saving love of Jesus, loves the Lord and others with that love, and obeys the word of Jesus and puts it into practice.

## [Question] 12. In John 14:26, what work does the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom Jesus promised, do for the disciples?

Jesus spoke of the work the Helper does as follows.

*"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 first work the Helper does is to teach believers the word of God. The Holy Spirit makes us understand the written word and know what the words Jesus spoke and His work of salvation mean. A person cannot rightly know the deep will of God by his own thoughts and judgment alone, but the Holy Spirit teaches him through the word what is right and wrong and how he should believe and live.

The second work is to bring to remembrance all the things Jesus said. When a believer meets a hard problem or has to choose a way, the Holy Spirit brings to his heart the word of God he heard and learned before. With that word, He corrects wrong thoughts, keeps him from being deceived by false teachings, and helps him judge and act according to the will of God. When he preaches the gospel or goes through difficulties because of his faith, too, He gives him the word and the faith he needs so that he may follow the Lord boldly.

At the center of what the Holy Spirit teaches and brings to remembrance is the salvation of Jesus Christ. He testifies of the fact that Jesus bore the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John the Baptist, received the judgment for those sins on the Cross, and rose again from the dead to accomplish perfect salvation. He also makes us believe that this gospel of the water and the Spirit is true, and guides us into the truth so that we do not depart from the grace of salvation that Jesus

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accomplished.

The Helper dwells in the heart of a person who has received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. In him, He makes him understand the word, turns him back from the wrong way, and gives him a heart to obey the will of the Lord. He does not leave the believer alone but protects him, and He also gives him the strength and wisdom to carry out the work of the gospel that the Lord has entrusted to him.

Therefore, the work the Helper does is to teach and bring to remembrance the words of Jesus, to testify of the work of salvation of Jesus, and to guide believers into all truth according to the word.

## [Question] 13. In John 14:27, what is the peace Jesus left with His disciples, and how does it differ from the peace the world gives?

Jesus said to His disciples as follows.

*"Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27).*

The peace Jesus gives is the peace that comes from the problem of sin and judgment having been completely solved. What fundamentally torments the heart of a person is the sin he has before God and the judgment he must receive because of that sin. Jesus bore all the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John the Baptist, received the punishment for those sins on the Cross, and rose again from the dead, thereby completely solving the problem of sin and death. A person who has received the remission of sins by believing in this salvation has escaped from being an enemy of God and has become a child

of God, and so he obtains true peace in his heart.

This peace differs from the peace the world gives. The peace of the world is a peace enjoyed for a while when outward conditions such as money, health, position, and a safe environment are in place. When those conditions disappear or something hard happens, that peace easily collapses. But the peace Jesus gives is not something a person produces by his own efforts; it is a gift received by faith in the salvation the Lord completed. Because its basis lies not in a person's circumstances or feelings but in the unchanging word of salvation, it does not disappear as the circumstances of the world change.

Jesus also sent the Helper, the Holy Spirit, to those who have received the remission of sins. The Holy Spirit dwells in the hearts of believers, brings to remembrance the words Jesus spoke and His salvation, and gives them the faith that God is with them. Even when they meet hard things and anxiety and fear arise, He makes them understand the word and helps them entrust their problems to the Lord, pray, and wait for the guidance of God.

The peace the Lord gives does not mean that no suffering or problems arise in the world. It is the peace we enjoy even in difficulties because we believe the fact that we have received the remission of all our sins, that we are the children of God, and that almighty God is with us and keeps us. Even when death comes, we need not fear the future, because the resurrection and the eternal kingdom of God are promised to us.

Therefore, the word *"Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid"* is not a command to suppress anxious feelings by our own strength. It means that we should look to the salvation Jesus accomplished with the baptism He received from John, the Cross, and the resurrection, believe that the Holy Spirit is with us, and entrust all our worries and problems to the Lord.

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The peace Jesus promised is the peace of heaven, which begins with the remission of sins and continues through our present life to the eternal future after death.

## [Question] 14. In John 14:29, what was the purpose for which Jesus told His disciples about the things to come before they were fulfilled?

Jesus said, *"And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe."* His purpose was that when the events to come had taken place according to His word, the disciples would remember that word and believe in Him even more firmly.

Included in the things Jesus spoke of in advance were His leaving the disciples to be crucified and die, His rising again from the dead, and His returning to God the Father. He also promised that He would not leave the disciples as orphans but would send the Helper, the Holy Spirit, and that He would come again when the time came.

At the time Jesus spoke, the disciples did not fully understand what He meant. When Jesus was arrested and crucified, they could have thought that everything had ended in failure, and been afraid or stumbled. But when Jesus died and rose again just as He had said, the disciples came to realize that those events had not happened by chance, but were the work Jesus had known beforehand and accomplished according to the will of the Father.

Jesus had already borne the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John the Baptist. Therefore, His death on the Cross was not a defeat suffered because He was powerless and was arrested; it was the work of completing salvation by

receiving Himself the judgment for the sins He had borne. His rising again from the dead also showed the fact that Jesus is the Savior, who overcame the power of sin, death, and the devil. As all these things were fulfilled just as He had foretold, the disciples were able to believe that Jesus is the Christ, sent by God.

Jesus also spoke in advance, with the same intent, about the betrayal of Judas Iscariot. It was so that when the betrayal actually happened, the disciples would not be bewildered and doubt Jesus, but would believe the fact that Jesus had known everything and was fulfilling the Scriptures and the will of God.

Therefore, the purpose for which Jesus spoke in advance about the things to come was not to satisfy the curiosity of the disciples. It was so that, seeing that word actually fulfilled, they would firmly believe that the word of Jesus is true and that He is the Savior, sent by the Father.

## [Question] 15. In John 14:30, why did Jesus say that the ruler of this world has nothing in Him?

Here, *"The ruler of this world"* refers to Satan the devil. The devil was ruling over the hearts of people with lies and was acting as king in this world for a while. He tried to incite people to arrest Jesus and crucify Him. But Jesus said, *"He has nothing in Me."*

This word means that Jesus was not One who would die bound by the rule or the plan of the devil. Outwardly it looked as though the people incited by the devil arrested and killed Jesus, but Jesus did not yield to them because He was powerless. He went the way of the Cross of His own accord, because He loved the Father and in order to fulfill the saving will the Father had

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commanded.

The devil thought that if he killed Jesus, he himself would win. But Jesus had already had all the sin of mankind transferred onto His own body with the baptism He received from John the Baptist. Therefore, the death of Jesus on the Cross was His receiving, in the place of sinners, the punishment and the judgment for sin that they had to receive. On the very Cross onto which the devil drove Jesus to death, the judgment for the sin of mankind was carried out, and Jesus declared, *"It is finished!"*

By rising again from the dead, Jesus broke the power by which the devil had ruled over people with sin and death. The Cross, on which the devil seemed to have won, became instead the defeat and the judgment of the devil. The words in John 12:31, *"The ruler of this world will be cast out,"* and in John 16:11, *"The ruler of this world is judged,"* have the same meaning.

Therefore, the words *"he has nothing in Me"* mean that the devil could neither rule over Jesus as he pleased nor destroy His work of salvation. The death of Jesus was not a death suffered in defeat by the devil; it was the death of salvation, in which He obeyed the command of the Father and bore the sin and the judgment of sinners. With the baptism He received from John, the Cross, and the resurrection, Jesus saved mankind from sin and death, and He is the Victor, who judged the devil, the ruler of this world. ✉

Sermon 1 by Paul C. Jong

# Believe in Jesus Christ, who is God

**< John 14:1-3 >**

**"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also."**

## *"You believe in God, believe also in Me"*

Do you and I believe in God? That is what the word is asking. If we believe in God, then the question is whether you and I, who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, also believe that Jesus Christ is our God. We believe that God the Father is God, and that Jesus Christ, too, is God to us. Because we believe this fact, which is our foundation and our rock, we are living in this world without fear, and we are also facing the future without fear. If we did not have this faith, we would be truly miserable.

Jesus said, *"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me" (John 14:1)*. He was saying, "Do you believe in God My Father? Then believe in Me also, for I am your God." The world is chaotic and complicated. People collide over their interests, the world turns in complicated ways, and no one knows what will happen or when, or whether a war will

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break out. Nevertheless, because we believe in God, we are living in peace and quiet.

I believe that Jesus Christ is our God. Since the Lord told us to believe in Him, I believe in Him just as much as I believe in His Father. He created the universe, and He did the work of salvation for you and me. Jesus is God, who received baptism from John and thereby had the sin of the world transferred to Him, bore that sin and died shedding His blood on the Cross, and rose again from the dead, thereby completing the salvation of you and me. And because that God is also the God of judgment, who will judge all people, we believe in Him. Because we believe in that God, we set our direction well and live without our hearts being shaken.

Living in times like these, who has a heart that is not shaken, who has no anxiety? Everyone is anxious. Politics is unstable, the economy is unstable, and the great powers are holding military exercises at sea, with things moving urgently. But whether a war breaks out also depends on God. A war can break out only if God allows it, and because we have not yet preached the gospel to the whole world, such things do not go as people please. The Lord said, *"And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come" (Matthew 24:14)*. We still have so many days in which we must work for the spread of the gospel.

## The principle of life: we reap what we sow

As I have said again and again, to try to reap without sowing seed is no different from stealing. If a farmer does not sow seed in spring and yet goes out into the fields with a sickle in summer or autumn to reap a harvest, then since he has sown nothing of

his own, he can only lay his hands on someone else's grain.

It is the same with business. In doing business, trust is absolutely necessary. No one should ever think of succeeding in business without benefiting others. Only when we give benefit to others can our business succeed. If a customer buys a product and gets no benefit from it but suffers a loss instead, that business goes under right away.

Therefore, that one must sow seed and wait for the season is a fact that even a child knows. But if we rush in recklessly without thinking this fact through, we end up as beggars. A person who tries to reap without sowing is a person with the mindset of a thief. The word also says, *"Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap" (Galatians 6:7)*.

It is an ironclad rule that a merchant sows and reaps, a farmer sows and reaps, and a person who raises livestock invests a lot and then reaps. To ignore this and just think, "It will work out somehow," is like a superstition that hopes for a windfall. This world is not so easy. It is because we have sown seed that we expect to reap. If we have not sown, we should not expect anything. If I have not given benefit to others, I should not think of receiving benefit from others. This is so obvious, and yet people aim for and expect a fortune overnight. A person who has not sown since childhood does not know how to reap, either. A person who knows how to reap always sows and invests.

Why would I be telling you these things? It is because these are hard times to live in. No matter how hard the world is, we must live well, and we must choose the way to live well. We can live well by faith, and also by sowing seed. We must set our direction well and live. That is why the Lord says, *"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me" (John 14:1)*. Would He have said this as a joke? Would Jesus, the

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Savior of you and me, be joking with us now? The Lord tells us to believe because He has the power to back it up. Does Jesus not know the fact that this world is fading and heading for ruin?

## The place the Lord is preparing

Then what happens if we believe in the Lord? The Lord said, *"In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you" (John 14:2)*. He was saying that when He has gone and prepared a place, He will come again and take us to be with Him where He is. Where is there a more certain promise than this? Where is the place that you and I, who now believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, will go in the future? It is the kingdom of God, what people call the kingdom of heaven.

There are many mansions in the Father's house, but the Lord was saying that He would go to prepare for us the place where we would be—a home, a location, and the means to live. How many people are there? To take us there and feed us forever and make us live well forever, how many things would He have to prepare? We have seen a small blueprint of that kingdom in the words of the Book of Revelation. It is a place where there are fruit trees, where there is no sickness, where Jesus Christ is the light, where there is nothing evil and no devil, where angels attend to us, and where food is abundant beyond measure. So is what we have seen all there is?

What is a place to dwell in? A place where we go and stay and eat and drink and rest and sleep and work—that is what we call a dwelling place. We, too, prepare in various locations on this earth places where the saints can go and stay and rest. If even we prepare like that, then God, our Savior, said that He was

going to prepare the place where you and I would be.

## The Lord, who will come again and receive us

*"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also" (John 14:3).* This means that the Lord will come again. God, our Savior, is the God who comes again. What happens at that time is the rapture, in which He lifts up His people. After that, the Lord does away with this world completely. And though we will now go on living and then leave this earth at any time, when that time comes, we have a place to go. How good it is to have a place to go!

When a person dies, people send off the dead with mournful cries. But a person who does not believe has nowhere to go even when he dies. He does not want to go to hell, but since he has nowhere else to go, he wanders. He has nowhere to go for all eternity. But we have a place that God, who saved us, has prepared for us. How fortunate and how good this is!

So although I now live in this unstable world, my heart is at ease. However the world turns, I do what I can do, I do what I can do together with you, and I put many things in order as I live. If I live like this and the Lord comes, I need only follow Him; and if the Lord calls me, I need only go. I am a person who has a place to go. Those who believe in God, who saved us—those who now believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit—are people who have a place to go. Even when they leave this earth, they have a place to go; they have a place where they will go and stay and eat delicious things and sleep and rest, enjoying eternal life. I believe this. Do you believe it, too?

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## Not luck, but a faith that prepares

How much at ease we are when we believe this! We are not anxious. And whatever we need, we need only ask for it. Do not think as though you were going to live on this earth for thousands of years. This is a world where we cannot go on living even if we want to.

No matter how hard things are, no one suddenly becomes rich. I do not hope for a windfall. I never buy anything like lottery tickets, either. It is because if I had such things, my heart would come to hope for good fortune without working, and I would be ruined. We must prepare step by step. For you and me to live well and happily, we must prepare this and prepare that, step by step. We put up with what must be put up with, wait for what must be waited for, keep on preparing, and carry it out when everything is ready.

It is not only that I should live well; my family should live well, and your families should live well, and we must also prepare a place for those who have not yet come in among us. When the time comes, the day will come when they, too, will say, “I will believe as well, so let me in.” We will prepare for such a day, too. That is our hope for the future. The Lord said that He would come. He said that He would come to this earth again and receive you and me.

## The second life is the real life

Those who believe in God, our Savior, have no need to be afraid. When the time comes, the Lord will come to take us, and when the time comes, we will meet Him, and from then on a new life begins. Just as our souls are born twice, so with our lives,

too, the second life is the real life. Living once on this earth is living once in a preliminary way, tasting good and bad, joy, anger, sorrow, and pleasure; and the second life is the true life for a human being. That life is a life lived forever.

That is why I am truly happy. When I look at how the world is turning, my heart is troubled, but we have Jesus, who saved us, and that Jesus told us to believe in Him. I believe, and you believe, too. So there is no need to grieve along with the world like that. When the time comes, we will go, and we will go and live well. This is what is different about those who believe in God. So I am truly thankful. I hope that we will all live giving thanks to God with this faith. ✉

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Sermon 2 by Paul C. Jong

# The Lord has prepared the kingdom of heaven for us

**< John 14:1-4 >**

**"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know."**

## Do not be troubled even in an age of disasters

Our Lord said, *"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me" (John 14:1)*. These days are truly an age of disasters. Fires break out and floods strike in every place, and some countries are crushed under national debt and are in a position where they must close the doors of the nation.

Whether we look at the world economy or at security, or at the economy of ordinary people, everything is truly dark. Living through such times, we cannot help feeling anxious. Even so, because we believe in God, because we believe in our Lord, our hearts are truly thankful, and because we will ultimately go to the kingdom of God, our hearts are at ease.

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## A word that only the Lord can say

Truly, only our Lord can say this word. Because the Lord is God, He says that if we believe in God the Father, we should believe in Him also. Can you say such a thing? When worrying things arise and problems come up, can you say, "Do not worry about anything. Just believe in me"? No human being can say that.

If we go back to that time, how many worries the disciples of Jesus must have had! At that time Israel was a vassal state under the rule of Rome, having lost its nation. A Roman governor had come and was ruling, and though there was King Herod, he was a puppet set up by Rome. There was no national sovereignty; even if they farmed a great deal, it was all taken away in taxes, so there was no future for the economy and no future for the nation. There was much anxiety in the hearts of the disciples who followed Jesus. That is why Jesus said, *"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me" (John 14:1)*.

How good it would be if there really were such a leader! Someone like this would be worth believing in, serving, and following as our eternal King. He is the One who says, when there is a problem, "Do not worry. I will solve it all for you." There is no one in the world so trustworthy, but our Lord told us to believe in Him.

We, too, have many worries that press upon our hearts. As the world becomes an age of disasters and grows dark, we feel we ought to prepare; we ought at least to attend to our families' food, clothing, and shelter, to our lives of faith, and to the work of preaching the gospel—and such problems make us anxious at times. But because we have our Lord, He is truly worthy of our trust, and we have no worries.

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## The Lord, who went to prepare a place

The Lord said, *"In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you" (John 14:2)*. After saving us from sin, our Lord went to prepare a place for us. He said that when He had prepared the place where we would be—a place where we could live perfectly well—He would come again and receive us, so that we, too, might be where He Himself is. If we are where our Lord is, there is no worry. How could there be any worry?

We might think that the Lord went to prepare the place but has not yet come because it was hard and He has not finished preparing. But that is not so. When we build even a small house, we cannot move in until we have put up the whole frame; but our Lord is not like that. He has already completed everything, but because there are people around us who have not yet been saved, He is waiting until they, too, are saved and come in.

## *"And where I go you know, and the way you know"*

The Lord said, *"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also" (John 14:3)*, and went on to say, *"And where I go you know, and the way you know" (John 14:4)*. What does this mean? It means the remission of sins. Receiving baptism from John and having our sins transferred to Him, dying on the Cross shedding His blood, and rising again—this is the gospel of the water and the Spirit that Jesus accomplished, and to have our sins washed away by believing in it is the way to the kingdom of heaven, where the Lord is. When we receive the remission of sins, we go to where the Lord is. The disciples of

Jesus knew this way, and I know it, and you know it, too.

What is that way? To receive the remission of sins by believing in the Lord according to the word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit—that is the way to the kingdom of heaven. However gloomy this world may be, there is no worry in our hearts. He said, *"That where I am, there you may be also" (John 14:3)*, and I believe that He will truly do so. When we go to where the Lord is, there is no worry at all.

That is why, even when we hold a funeral, we sing that we will meet again there in a few days, do we not? However hard and difficult the world may be, once we have finished serving this gospel on this earth, we will go to the place we truly want to go, the kingdom of heaven, where the Lord is. We will go before long. The complete ruin of this world and the spread of the gospel to the whole world are interlocked and come about together.

These days we hear many testimonies and much good news of people being saved overseas. Why is that? It is because life is hard overseas, too. When people have problems in the flesh, they come to reflect on the problems of their souls, faith springs up, and they take hold of the word of God again. When the gospel has fully spread, the Lord comes, and the world is getting harder and harder.

## Even in a downhill age, we give thanks because of the Lord

This world has already developed as far as it can develop. People lived by oil lamps and then electricity came in; thatched houses became cement houses; and cars and every kind of culture have all developed. Now, going beyond the basic

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benefits God has given, people are heading in the direction of finding satisfaction in filling their own selfishness. I mean that we are heading toward an age in which people kill others so that they alone may prosper. So there is no better world to come. It has risen as far as it can rise, and now it is downhill, with nothing left but ruin.

Even when people see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and even when they think about the future, there is nothing to be gained, so their hearts grow dark. Having no hope, they cannot bear even small things and cause incidents, acting out whatever is in their hearts just as it is. That is the kind of age we are in now. But the reason we have no worry is that before long the Lord will come to take us, and we, too, will go before the Lord. Even when my head is complicated with many thoughts, when I think that in the end we will go to where the Lord is, I become at ease. I am very much at ease.

These days I really like the sound of insects in autumn. When I listen to the crickets chirping, I feel as though I have come into the depth of autumn, into nature, into the providence of God, and my heart grows calm and truly glad. And when I hear you singing praises, I feel, "I am now living inside the kingdom of God." Since the Lord said that He would make us be where He Himself is, my heart is truly thankful. I am thankful because He is the God of power, thankful because His word never fails, thankful because that word will be fulfilled, and truly thankful because our future is secure.

## Let us live preparing well for the last days

While we live on this earth, we must live well. There is a story that a former president of our country once said, "I do not

know anything about the economy," and whenever I hear those words, I get angry. If a person has been entrusted with a nation, should he not think of the economy and the safety of the people? In fact, after that, our country met a great economic crisis, the whole nation barely came back from the brink, and even our native seeds passed into the hands of foreign companies, so that we are still paying royalties for them today.

I lived in great poverty when I was young. People outside could see right into the house through the cracks of our shack, and since we had no paper to put on the walls, we pasted up the paper from cement sacks and lived that way. I grew up eating dough-flake soup and coarse barley cakes made from ground barley husks, mugwort porridge, and wild-greens porridge, and as a child I never once tasted even a single spoonful of rice-cake soup. When I went to a shoe shop to buy rubber shoes for a holiday, I saw the shopkeeper's daughter eating steaming white rice-cake soup, and that scene has never faded from my memory even now. Because I went through such poverty, I truly hate poverty. To live well and with dignity, to enjoy life without worrying about food, clothing, and shelter, and to live for the gospel is not a sin. It is a good thing.

While we live on this earth, we must at least have enough to eat, be treated as human beings, have food, clothing, and shelter, enjoy a proper cultural life, and live for the spread of the gospel. For that, we must prepare. Those who have not been born again secretly dislike those who have been born again. Even though we do nothing bad, the devil is inside them, so they secretly hate and dislike us. So if we did not even have anything of our own, how much would we suffer as we live? That is why we prepare all these things. Even in business, we must not steal but do it honorably, giving benefit to others and living well ourselves, too. Our ancestors of faith of old, such as Abraham and Isaac, also

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became rich by raising livestock. Should we not also work diligently and live well, as our ancestors of faith did?

How many people all over the world are being saved because of us? Even though the world is this hard, many people obtain salvation because of the printed books and e-books of this gospel that we give them, and those people in turn do many things. That we are preaching the gospel even while living in an age like this is truly amazing, and I am thankful for it.

The Lord has prepared the kingdom of heaven for us. We must prepare to live well in the last days. Rather than going around borrowing because we are in want, it is better to be abundant and live well, sharing even with those who do not believe. I hope for that. We must know the economy, look after our own families, know and believe in God, receive the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and go to a good place to live in the future. That is our true purpose and blessing. I hope that God will bless the things we do. ✉

Sermon 3 by Paul C. Jong

# I am the way, the truth, and the life

**< John 14:1-7 >**

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

## Let not your heart be troubled; believe in Me

This is the word the Lord spoke after He had come to this earth and had done all the preparatory work of delivering us, mankind, from sin, from judgment, from destruction, and from the devil, leaving only one thing remaining: to reveal that He is our true Savior by finally being crucified and dying, rising again, and ascending. The Lord said, *"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to*

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*prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also" (John 14:1–3)*. Here, by God the Father, He means His own Father. He was saying, "You believe in God; believe also in Me"—believe in Jesus Christ, the King of kings, who came as the Savior of mankind, and in His righteousness, His love, and His salvation.

If there were no place in the house of God the Father where those who have received the remission of sins by believing in Jesus Christ would go and live in the future, He would have told us to prepare one. His saying, *"If it were not so, I would have told you" (John 14:2)*, is a word spoken in an ironic way, meaning that there are many places in the house of God the Father for the people of God to dwell. The Lord goes to prepare for us the place where we will be, and when He has prepared everything, He comes to take us. Then the rapture takes place, we meet the Lord, we go to the kingdom of the Lord and reign for a thousand years, and then we will live reigning forever in the eternal kingdom.

## People who have no hope in the face of death

A person lives seventy or eighty years and dies. He dies and returns to the dust, and every life has death in it. After death, the Lord raises people again: to those who will live forever, He gives new life through the resurrection of life so that they live forever, and those who are to be judged He raises again through the resurrection of judgment to receive eternal judgment. And since the Lord gives us new life, gives us the remission of sins, and goes to prepare the place where we will be, I have a truly thankful heart about this.

When a person dies, the living wail and weep. They weep because of the fact that they can no longer see the one they grew attached to while he was alive, and because of the emptiness that he lived such a hard and struggling life and now has died without being able to leave a will or do anything. Why is this? It is because there is no hope. Those who have not received the remission of sins weep and wail because they have no hope at all in the face of death.

Not long ago I saw on the news that a young singer had passed away from a heart attack. He was said to be a man whose father had died of that illness, who had inherited it and undergone two major operations, and who had still succeeded as a singer; but he died in his sleep. I saw the mourners coming to the funeral parlor and weeping. You and I, too, will die once. Young people do not think about dying, but as we grow older and our bodies grow weak, we come to think about such things. Yet what rises up as the most important thing is not that dying is frightening, but that while we are alive, we should preach this gospel to the full together with our coworkers and workers before we go.

However much a person enjoys wealth and honor while alive, and however much money and power he stores up, what happens when death comes? It is all in vain. There are many things he only labored over without yet seeing the fruit, many things he only prepared without finishing, and many things he should do for his children and descendants and for the kingdom of God—but when death comes, it is all over. Death means the end of everything. But for us who have been born again, there is no death. It is because the Lord has given us new life. Our bodies will be raised again before the Lord, and our souls are already alive. So we have hope in the life to come. People tremble in the face of death, but a born-again person, when he actually faces

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death, has hope instead. The thought comes to him, “The time has come for me to go to the kingdom of the Lord. I must finish well the work I have been doing on this earth.”

## The Lord, who gave us the greatest blessing

Our Lord gave us the remission of sins. The Lord came to this earth, received baptism from John and thereby had the sins of you and me transferred to Him, was crucified and died, and rose again from the dead, thereby removing the sins of you and me and giving new life to our dead souls and bodies. Because He gave us that new life, we are people who have eternal life. Those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit have already been saved from sin, and those who have received the remission of sins have obtained new life. Our souls have come alive, and our bodies die once and then, when the Lord comes, come alive again to enjoy eternal life forever.

That a person lives forever, that he never dies through the new life the Lord has given—this is the truth, and this is the blessing. There is no greater blessing than this. The word says, *“Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day” (2 Corinthians 4:16)*, and also, *“A living dog is better than a dead lion” (Ecclesiastes 9:4)*. When we die, we are nothing. It is because we are alive that there are joy, anger, sorrow, and pleasure, and life is the most precious and most beautiful thing. And yet we fail to be greatly thankful for this very fact that we are alive, and while we are alive we hold on to all kinds of worries and anxieties, our hearts are captivated by useless desires, and we spend countless hours in vain, tormented. That we have life is a great blessing. We must know that we are alive before God, that we are those who will

live forever and enjoy the wealth and honor God gives, and that this very fact of being alive is the greatest blessing.

## The place the Lord is preparing

The Lord was born in a stable on this earth, and when He was thirty years old, He received baptism from John the Baptist and thereby had all the sin of mankind transferred to Him. Then, bearing the sin of the world, He was nailed to the Cross, said, *"It is finished!" (John 19:30)*, and died. Then He rose again, ascended to the kingdom of heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. While doing this work, the Lord was saying, "I go to prepare a place for you."

Let us think concretely about that place. In the Book of Revelation, a city wall comes down from heaven, with twelve gates on the east, west, north, and south, and the foundations of that wall are built with twelve precious stones. Long ago we once calculated the height and width of that wall according to the measurements given in the Bible, and it was enormous. The Lord is the God of power, who created the whole universe with a single word. It is not that He cannot come because preparing the place takes a long time; it also means that He is waiting until then because there are still many people who do not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, have not received the remission of sins, and have sin in their hearts, and so cannot enter the kingdom He has prepared.

These days I am rebuilding the chapel. I have designed it so that the ceiling is removed and natural light comes in as it is, and I am trying to build a chapel where, if we look up at the sky while worshiping at night, we can see the stars. But that is something the size of a grain of millet—no, smaller than a speck

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of dust. The Lord has prepared that great city and is waiting for us. Before long, we will all go before the Lord. This world cannot last long. Within a short time, disasters will strike and you and I will see with our own eyes the world being ruined, and we will see things being fulfilled just as they are written in the Bible. But for you and me, who have received the remission of sins, the Lord will come to take us, just as He said that He went to prepare the place where we would be and would come to take us when it was prepared. So how good this is for us!

## *"I am the way, the truth, and the life"*

There are people who say that when we die, we are reborn in a better form. When that young singer died, I saw a fellow singer say, "If you are reborn, you will be reborn as an even better singer." But without receiving the remission of sins, no one is resurrected in a better form. Why do we believe in Jesus? Why did Jesus say that if we believe in God, we should believe in Him also? Why did He say, *"If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him" (John 14:7)*? It is because Jesus Himself is God, because He is our Savior and the One who gives us new life. Without believing in Jesus and His righteousness and His love and the salvation He has given, no one obtains eternal life, and no one obtains new life.

When the Lord said that He was going to prepare a place, Thomas asked how they could know the way. Jesus said, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6)*. Who is the way to God the Father, the way to the kingdom of heaven? It is Jesus. How does Jesus make us go before God the Father? He came to this earth,

received baptism from John and thereby had our sins transferred to Him, was crucified and died, and rose again from the dead, and thus He saved us. That is why Jesus is the way for us. He is the way to be saved, the way to be blessed, the way to escape from Satan the devil, and the way to escape from every curse and disease. And everything He did after coming to this earth is the truth. It is all true. That He removed the sins of you and me is true, that He gave us new life is true, and that He gave us eternal life is true.

We have already received many things. We become unhappy because we do not give thanks for what we have received and pursue only new things. By believing in the Lord and believing what the Lord has given us, we come to receive and enjoy all the blessings of heaven and all the blessings of the earth, and to enjoy true joy.

The Lord is the life. The Lord gave you and me new life. So we have now received the remission of sins and are living, in a state of having no sin, for the righteousness of God and for the spread of the gospel. 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).* A person who believes in the righteousness of the Lord never dies for all eternity. Who is the One who gave us life? It is Jesus Christ. As we live on this earth, we should not try to fill our hearts with satisfaction from other things; we should enjoy satisfaction and give thanks for the fact that the Lord gave life to you and me, live together with the Lord and do the things that please Him, and live enjoying forever, in this new life, all the blessings the Lord has given.

That human beings have death is a sad thing. When the only son of the widow of Nain died, his mother was weeping. Jesus saw this, touched the coffin, and said, *"Young man, I say to you,*

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*arise" (Luke 7:14)*, and the young man arose. The Lord brought him back to life. The Lord is the Master of life. The Lord of life has given life to you and me as well. There is no one as blessed as we are, and no one who has as little to worry about concerning the life to come as we do. We are the happiest people of all.

## The most blessed people

All people were born sinners. They are a brood of evildoers. I have an adoptive mother. She never married in her whole life; she established a prayer house and has run it to this day, and she raised me, put me through school, and poured all her devotion into me. She gathered offerings to put seminary students through school and even helped them get married, and those who received her kindness must number in the thousands. But now that she has grown old and her eyes have grown dim, I hear that the very people who received her help are trying to send her to a nursing home and act as the owners of that place. Those who call themselves pastors, without even knowing the gospel of the water and the Spirit, receive a stipend, wield power, and treat a person like that. When a person falls on hard times, everyone leaves. That is how heartless the world is.

But the Lord gave us life. A person who has obtained life has hope. We live in this present world only for a while and then go, but the Lord receives our souls and raises our bodies again and lives with us forever. Because people are so fleshly, so worldly, and so bound to the present, they live thinking only of what is visible; but I am saying that we should think about who the Lord is to us and what the life He has given us is. How good it is that the Lord has given us life!

When we believe in the baptism the Lord received from John

after coming to this earth and in the blood of the Cross, we obtain eternal life and the remission of sins. Because Jesus received baptism from John the Baptist in order to remove our sins, the sins of you and me were transferred to Jesus Christ at that time; because He received the judgment for our sins on the Cross; and because He rose again from the dead and gave us new life—we are people who never die. In heaven above or on earth below, there is no one as blessed as the children of God. As such people we are living on this earth and now doing the work of the Lord. Every day countless people come to our website and encounter the gospel. Even in the days of the early Church, the gospel never spread like this. In the days of the early Church, the most was three thousand people turning to God at a single sermon, but now people are coming in enormous numbers. It is because the Lord has given us life.

That we have obtained new life is not a mere doctrine. The Lord is the One who saves us, what the Lord has said is the truth, and the Lord is the One who has given us true life. It is a truth that never fades and never disappears for all eternity. This world will perish, but the Lord has given us life—how good this is! I hope that we will not look too much at the things of the earth and be disappointed, but will look to the Lord, count the blessings we have received from Him and give thanks, and also, while preaching this gospel, live giving thanks before the Lord, who has given us life. ✉

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Sermon 4 by Paul C. Jong

# That where I am, there you may be also

**< John 14:1-10 >**

**"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know. Thomas said to Him, 'Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?' Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him.' Philip said to Him, 'Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.' Jesus said to him, 'Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, "Show us the Father"? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works.'"**

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## The eyes of faith look ahead

In fact, a person who has not been born again has no opportunity to serve the Lord. But for us saints, there are often things by which we serve the Lord. Last week I held revival meetings for a whole week, and I preached the word with devotion, using my faith. Yet few souls appeared to be turning to God right away. I had certainly done it by faith and had believed the word of God with the assurance that many people would turn to Him, but since nothing was visible right away, it felt as though all I had gotten was a sore throat and no strength. I even had the feeling that the person who had not held the meetings had done well and the one who had held them had done wrong. But that is only a feeling; it is not actually right.

When we preach this truth to many people and testify of the word using our faith, things happen such as springs bursting forth in the desert and the highway of Zion opening up in the vast open land. Because *"faith is the substance of things hoped for" (Hebrews 11:1),* we work with the faith that, even if it has not appeared right away, thousands, tens of thousands, and hundreds of millions of souls will feed on that word and come alive. A person without faith is frustrated and disappointed when nothing is visible to his eyes. But a person with faith believes the fact that even if not a single person is saved in his lifetime, hundreds of millions will rise up after he dies. He works because he looks ahead with the eyes of faith. This word does not disappear but keeps on working. It is written, *"The word of the LORD endures forever" (1 Peter 1:25).*

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## The life of a person who serves the Lord

People who have faith use their faith, and they also offer their bodies before the Lord. They do not merely talk about faith; they take hold of the word and believe it, and then they offer their thoughts, their bodies, and what they have before the Lord. They offer themselves in order to obtain the fruit of what they believe and to confirm their faith—just as, when the Lord said He would do it and someone brought out five barley loaves and two fish, no more than a single lunch, that great work took place.

The wages we receive are easy to calculate. Even just living on them is not ample, and yet we are told to serve the Lord out of them, so it may seem an overwhelming thing. But people of faith make a resolution by faith before the Lord, and they do not just sit there praying. They pray to the Lord for material means, and for what is lacking, they go out and do day labor at construction sites with their own bodies if they must, in order to obtain those means and offer them before the Lord. That is the life of a person who serves the Lord. Just as a student takes a part-time job during vacation to earn tuition, we do this and that for that purpose, for the will of the Lord. Even in doing day labor, if we think that we are doing it for this gospel, there will be pride and a sense of reward in it.

In building the church, not only our faith but our bodies, our hearts, our thoughts, our material means, and everything else goes in. In the early days of gospel preaching in our country, there were forerunners of faith who carried Bibles on their backs from village to village, selling them, giving them away, and exchanging them for rice, sowing the seed of the gospel. Now the word says, *"And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42)*. To receive teaching, there must be a house. Like the

taverns of old where travelers rested on their way, there must be a house where people can come and eat and drink and hear the gospel and be healed in both spirit and body, and there must be all kinds of workers there—someone to cook the rice, someone to prepare the side dishes, even someone to sweep the yard. That is what the church is. Just as we have built a church in one place, churches must be built in other regions, and they will be built all over the world. All the material means that went into this were provided by the service the workers offered before the Lord. The comfort of the Lord is truly great, His grace is truly great, and the Lord has repaid us very much.

In fact, no one serves the Lord because he has a lot of material means. A person who has much loves the world, and so he actually does not serve well; and as I have served this gospel, I have seen that those who truly serve the Lord were those who served Him for His sake even while poor and having nothing. I believe that this gospel belongs to the poor, and that it is those who truly hunger and thirst for righteousness who serve this gospel. After the revival meetings I lay sick with no strength, and then news came that souls had turned to God, heard the word, and were rejoicing. Just as when Elijah fought alone against eight hundred and fifty false prophets on Mount Carmel and won, then fled and asked to die under a broom tree, God sent an angel to touch his body and feed him bread and water and restore him again, I, too, was fed with the word through that news, was comforted, and got up again. I give thanks, knowing that all this is the work of God. If only three or four people rise up receiving the remission of sins, they bear fruit sixtyfold, a hundredfold, and a thousandfold, so that countless souls come to receive the remission of sins.

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## The place where a person without sin goes is the kingdom of heaven

To open one's heart means to bring out into the open what one holds in one's heart and share it together. Because of the Lord, there is no sin in our hearts. Just as the word says, *"Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool" (Isaiah 1:18)*, our hearts have become white. That our sins have truly disappeared is something that seems like a dream. How can we say such a thing? We can say it by believing in the Lord and by knowing the word of the Lord. By the grace of the Lord we have no sin, and since we have no sin, there is nowhere to go but the kingdom of heaven. In the hearts of the saints is the knowledge that whenever I go, the kingdom of heaven is exactly the place where I will go, my own place.

## The testimony of a certain mother among the saints

We know a certain mother among the saints. This mother had once attended another church in the past. Meanwhile her eldest son heard the gospel on his way back from a business trip and received the remission of sins. Once the sin in his heart was gone and he had become a true child of God, the desire arose in him that his mother, his younger brother, his children, and his relatives should all receive the remission of sins just as he had. Among them, he began to preach the gospel especially to his mother. It was because at that time his mother had cancer. He asked her, "Mother, I have now truly been born again by the word of God. There is not a single sin in my heart. Do you have

sin in your heart? Can you go to the kingdom of heaven, where only those who have no sin at all can go?" His mother answered weakly, "I want to go to the kingdom of heaven, but I cannot, because I have sin." Having confirmed the state of his mother's heart, the eldest son invited the pastor who had preached the gospel to him, and had him preach the word of God to his mother.

While listening to the word, that mother came to know the word in the Old Testament about sins being transferred to a lamb by the laying on of hands, and that in the New Testament the sin of the world was transferred to Jesus when He received baptism from John at the Jordan River. And she came to know the meaning of the word "*Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more" (Hebrews 10:17)*. She came to know the fact that because Jesus does not even remember her sins, but took her sins away, suffered the judgment on the Cross, and rose again from the dead, the Lord is her Savior.

After hearing this gospel of the water and the Spirit, there was always an indescribable joy, fullness, and peace in the heart of that mother, and she lived giving thanks. Hoping for the kingdom of heaven, she testified that she wanted to go as soon as possible to where the Lord is, and that she wished those who had not heard this gospel would hear it. Her body was in pain because of the cancer, but after she received the remission of sins, there was in her heart the assurance that the kingdom of heaven was her very own. Her illness was not healed, but her soul had been changed into a soul that could put on clean, fine white linen and go to the kingdom of heaven. Her body was sick, but her soul had been completely healed. That mother said, "When I had sin, I could not have peace, but after the Lord came into my heart, I do not know how I can be so at peace."

Since the hospital had already pronounced her sentence of death and she was in the position of waiting at home for the day

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of her death, she could only have died worrying about her eldest son, her younger son, and her grandchildren. But after the Lord entered her heart, she entrusted everything to God. Following the eldest son, the younger son, the daughter-in-law, and the grandchildren—the whole family—received the remission of sins and began attending the church where born-again saints gather, and that mother believed that since God had saved them, He would feed them, clothe them, keep them, and protect them. So she spent her days praising and giving thanks before the Lord without any worry in her heart. When her children gave her pocket money to buy something good to eat, she took it and saved it up, folded and crumpled, and when the pastor came on a pastoral visit, she brought out that money, saying, "Here it is. Please use this for preaching this gospel. I am sick and cannot go to preach, so please preach the gospel in my place." To those who came to visit her in her illness she said, "My friends, do not worry about me. Worry about yourselves. There is not a single sin in my heart, and I could not be more at peace. Go and attend that church my eldest son attends. If you hear the word, you will know." Even from her sickbed she preached like that.

As that mother was nearing death, she gathered her family together and said, "I am going first, so you preach the gospel while you live on this earth, and then come. I am going to the Lord. Now I am not afraid to go before the Lord." And singing hymns, she passed away smiling. I went to that funeral, too, and it was not a house of mourning but a house of feasting. The eldest son said, with a smile on his face, "Our mother has gone. She has gone to the kingdom of heaven. She has gone into the bosom of the Lord. Now she has gone to a place where there is no more death or pain." The mourners who had come to wail were so bewildered that they drew back. The word says, *"Precious in the sight of the LORD Is the death of His saints" (Psalm 116:15)*.

The death of a person who has received the remission of sins is that beautiful.

But death before receiving the remission of sins is miserable. When I was young, when a person died, people carried the funeral bier, and though no one had taught them, they wailed, "Now that you go, when will you come back?" Since the only place to go is hell, there is no coming back, either. But when a born-again person leaves this earth, there is praise, there is hope, and there is joy. If you actually go through it, you will know. So there is a need to preach the gospel to our families and to the people of this earth. Because this gospel of the water and the Spirit is precious and saves souls, we use our faith even in difficulties, step over adversity, and live serving the Lord. We, too, have received the remission of sins like that mother. The storms of the world are severe, but that peace is in our hearts. We, too, have been born again, and the same Holy Spirit is in our hearts.

## *"In My Father's house are many mansions"*

When a born-again person goes, where does he go? When he goes, it is to the kingdom of heaven. The Lord said, *"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you" (John 14:1–2)*. I believe that in our Father's house He has prepared many places where we can go and live as much as we want. Is there a kingdom of heaven? There is. Once we have been born again, we come to believe that the kingdom of heaven exists. Because we have no sin, the kingdom of heaven is not somewhere else but in my heart, hidden in my heart. I want us

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to bring out what is in our hearts and share together the grace, the peace, and the blessing of God.

First, we have been born again of water and the Spirit. Second, we have no sin. It is written, *"He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself" (1 John 5:10),* and having no sin is the evidence in our hearts that we have been born again. The difference between believing and not believing is the difference between having sin in one's heart and having none. Third, the kingdom of heaven is in our hearts; fourth, we will go there in the future; and fifth, the Lord has granted to His born-again people that they will go to the kingdom of heaven and enjoy peace and joy. I believe it is right that we give thanks to God, who has given us this great blessing, and give all the shining good things to the Lord as glory.

*"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also" (John 14:3)*. The Lord said that He would come again and make the born-again be where He is. Then we will be in the kingdom of heaven. This fact becomes our assurance, and we believe it. Even those who have not been born again sing the hymn, "Though the cold wind blows in the wilderness, the kingdom of heaven is my home to return to," but in fact, if there is sin, it is not so. Only for a person who has no sin in his heart is the kingdom of heaven the very home to return to, even while he lives in this world. Our Lord has prepared the kingdom of heaven for His born-again people, for those who believe in Him.

## *"I am the way, the truth, and the life"*

When the Lord said that He was going to prepare a place, Thomas, the representative of the doubting disciples, asked, *"Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?" (John 14:5)*. It is a very human and direct question. Thomas was a man who, later, even after the Lord had risen again, could not believe until he had put his hand into the spear wound in His side. Since the Lord removed even the sins of such a fleshly man, who so stubbornly refused to believe, we cannot but praise the Lord.

Jesus said to Thomas, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6)*. First, the Lord is the way to life for us. In the Old Testament the Lord said countless times that He would remove our sins, and He said that He would be born through the virgin Mary, and just so, He put on flesh and came to this earth. And just as the people of Israel in the Old Testament laid their hands on a lamb to transfer their sins and that lamb received the judgment in their place, Jesus, too, received baptism from John and thereby had all the sin of mankind transferred to Him, bore that sin and suffered the judgment on the Cross, and rose again from the dead, thereby paving the way for us to go to the kingdom of heaven. It is written, *"There is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12)*. There is no one but our Lord who has paved the way from this earth to the kingdom of heaven. No religion and no faith has any way to the kingdom of heaven other than the way the Lord made. Just as the word says, *"You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32)*, those who are bound by sin cannot go up, but a person who knows the Lord rightly goes up.

Next, He is the truth. This means that it is not a lie but the

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truth. All those promises the Lord spoke in the Old Testament are true. Some people say that even if we believe in Jesus, we still have sin, but that is because they do not know the truth. If they knew the truth, they could not say such a thing. Our sins truly disappear, and we truly become righteous. And He is the life. Those who have sin are dead people. If you saw a pine tree off at the base and stick it in the ground, it is only a temporary ornament; as time passes, it withers and dies. A person who has not met the Lord is like that: he is born, holds out by his own strength for fifty or sixty or seventy years, and when he dies, it is hell. But a born-again person has met the Lord and obtained new life.

## *"He who has seen Me has seen the Father"*

*"If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him" (John 14:7)*. We have never met God the Father, nor have we ever touched Him. Yet in Jesus Christ we have met and come to know God the Father. We have come to know what God is like: that He is truly the God of love, the Holy One of truth, the One who hates sin and removes sin. Those who have met our Lord are those who have met God. At first, I did not know that this was such a great thing, either. But once I had truly met the Lord, the kingdom of heaven became mine, new life became mine, the Holy Spirit I had only heard about came to be in my heart, I suddenly became a child of God, and I became a witness who preaches the truth of God. I did not know and believe all this beforehand, but once I had received the remission of sins, I had become even an heir who would inherit all the possessions of God the Father. If our earthly father left us even a single building,

we would be overwhelmed with gratitude— but the kingdom of heaven has become mine!

Next, Philip, who was good at calculating, said, *"Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us" (John 14:8)*. Since he still did not understand even after the Lord had spoken like that earlier, Jesus said, *"Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works" (John 14:9–10)*.

After coming to this earth, our Lord never once committed sin. Because He put on flesh, He felt hunger just as we do and was tempted to sin in every way, but He never once fell into it. If there had been even the slightest lack in Jesus Christ, we could not have believed in the Lord. It is written, *"The Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14)*, and He is Immanuel, that is, God with us. Because Jesus Christ, though He put on flesh, is actually God, He could overcome the schemes of Satan the devil and every suffering with ease.

Are all the words our Lord speaks the word of God, or not? They are the word of God. It is written, *"He sent His word and healed them, And delivered them from their destructions" (Psalm 107:20)*. That word God sent was, for us, none other than Jesus Christ, and the power of that word saved us. At one time in our country a Bible teaching material was popular that marked in color only the words Jesus Himself had spoken. The idea was that these are the words of God and those are the words of men— but how foolish this is! If that were so, all the words the disciples spoke would be thrown out, and only a few sayings would remain. The Lord spoke wearing a human form, but God was in Him and spoke Himself, so this whole Bible is the word of God.

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God speaks in history and reveals His will through history; He is the Master of history, the Alpha and the Omega.

Let me sum up the word. We have seen God in the Lord and believed. God the Father, who is in the Lord, worked and saved us. When we open the hearts we hold within us, it is this: we will go to the kingdom of heaven, and the kingdom of heaven is our very own. Those who have not received the remission of sins say all kinds of things about us—that we are arrogant, or how can we have no sin—but the Holy Spirit within us testifies, saying, "You are My people, and I have prepared the kingdom of heaven for you, so that kingdom of heaven is your very own." That is why we sometimes bring out what is in our hearts and give thanks and praise before the Lord. We thank the Lord for saving us. I thank the Lord for making me such a person. We give thanks before the Lord for the grace and love by which He has made us people in whom there is no condemnation at all in Christ. Even if there are hard things as we live on this earth, it does not matter. We give thanks and praise before the Lord. ✉

Sermon 5 by Paul C. Jong

# If you ask anything in My name, I will do it

**< John 14:5-14 >**

**"Thomas said to Him, 'Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?' Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him.' Philip said to Him, 'Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.' Jesus said to him, 'Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, "Show us the Father"? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves. Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.'"**

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## All the words of the Lord are the truth, and there is no falsehood in them

As the Lord was about to return to where the Father is, the place where He had originally been, He said, *"And where I go you know, and the way you know" (John 14:4)*. Then Thomas asked, *"Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?" (John 14:5)*. He was asking how they could know the way when they knew neither the destination nor the direction. In our lives of faith, we, too, very often give answers that miss the point like this.

But the Lord said, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6)*. He was saying that the Lord Himself is the way, the truth, and the life. If we believe in the Lord—if we believe in this gospel of the remission of sins that the Lord has given us—we can go to where the Lord is. The Lord said that He is the way because He has removed all the sin of mankind, including you and me. When we come to know the truth, it is very easy, but when we do not know it, it is very hard. All the words the Lord spoke are the truth and not lies; and since the Lord is the life, if we only believe, He gives us new life and makes us leave this perishing world, this world heading for destruction, and live forever in the kingdom of God, which never changes.

## *"He who has seen Me has seen the Father"*

The Lord went on to say to His disciples, *"If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him" (John 14:7)*. Whenever Jesus spoke, the disciples could not understand. A moment before, He

had said that they knew the way, without even telling them where He was going, and now He was saying that if they had known Him, they would have known His Father also.

In this Gospel of John, the disciple John tells us in great detail that Jesus is God, that He made all things, that He came as our Savior, that He had our sins transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John, that He carried the sin of the world and paid the price on the Cross, that He rose again from the dead and saved us, and that He who saved us is God, the Son of God, our shepherd, our High Priest, our prophet, and the King of kings. In particular, he tells us that Jesus is God. Is there anyone who has seen God? Is there anyone who has known God? There was no one, but if we know Jesus, we can know, "Ah, so this is what God is like." When Philip asked Him to show them the Father, too, the Lord said, "He who has seen Me has seen the Father, so why do you say, 'Show us the Father'? The Father is in Me, doing the works, and I am in the Father." It is because He is God, equal to the Father—because He is your God.

## No one had ever prayed in the name of Jesus

Now let us look at the last part of this passage. *"And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it" (John 14:13–14)*. We accept and believe this word just as we have read it. But if we know one thing, this word becomes even easier.

What is it that makes it easy? It is that until then, none of the disciples of Jesus, none of the Jews, and no one at all on this earth had ever prayed in the name of Jesus, saying, "I pray in the name of Jesus." Until Jesus spoke this word, there had been no

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one. In the past, people called God Yahweh, the self-existent One, and prayed to the self-existent, almighty God, saying, "Yahweh God, help us. Keep this nation, my family, and our health, and make us win the war." The Jews still do not believe in Jesus and pray calling on Yahweh even today.

Therefore, this word that Jesus spoke to His disciples is a word in which He reveals Himself in a very unique and majestic way. He was saying, "I am God, and if you ask in My name for what you need, I will put it into action and do it. That is, I am your God, your shepherd, your Savior, your teacher, your life, and your everything," and thus He was proclaiming that He is God, the Savior, and the shepherd.

## Pray to Jesus, our Savior

So from this time on, when the disciples of Jesus, and you and I, who have become the Church of God in the New Testament age today, pray, we address Him as 'Lord' or 'God'—whether we say Lord or God, whether we call on Jesus or on the Father of Jesus, to us it is the same God—we give thanks and list the things we need, and then, as the closing, we finish by saying, "I pray in the name of Jesus." We pray like this as a sign of faith, showing that Jesus is God, who answers us, and that we believe in Jesus as God.

This is very important. It is written, *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1)*. In the beginning, when God made the universe, Jesus Christ was there together with the Father and the Holy Spirit, and He said, *"Let there be light" (Genesis 1:3)*, and He said, "Let there be a firmament; let the earth bring forth the herb that yields seed and the fruit tree; let there be the greater light and the

lesser light and the stars; let there be fish in the sea and birds flying in the air," and so everything came to be. And when all mankind, the descendants of Adam, had fallen into sin, in obedience to the will of the Father, He put on a human body and came to this earth, and saved you and me from sin with the truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. That is why He is the One who made us, the One who saved us, and our God, who made all things as well. Until then people had prayed only to Yahweh God, but now we are told to pray to Jesus, our Savior. Then He will do it.

Then what result comes of this? God the Father is glorified. Since His creatures ask in the name of the Son and the Son helps them, God the Father is glorified, saying, "This is what My Son is like," and Jesus, too, becomes the true God to you and me, and the true King of love, shepherd, prophet, and teacher. That is why the whole universe, all people, and all things must praise Jesus Christ, and must know and believe through that Jesus Christ what God the Father is like.

When we know the background of the times, this word feels vivid. Jesus had already received baptism from John and had our sins transferred to Him, and He was speaking this word to His disciples while on His way to the Cross, bearing the sin of the world. *"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me" (John 14:1)*. He was saying, "I will now be nailed to the Cross, rise again on the third day after My death, and leave you, but do not be troubled." If He left, how anxious the disciples would be! Thinking of the tribulation they would face in the future, they would be anxious and would look for someone to believe in, would they not? That is why Jesus said, "Ask Me. Then I will help you. Ask in My name."

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## Hold on to the promise and pray boldly

When we pray, we want to pray with an exact awareness of God. So when we ask for a great thing, we address Him as 'God the Father,' and for a small thing, according to the order we have in mind, we sometimes address Him as 'Jesus' or 'Lord.' But making such a distinction is wrong. When we say God, Jesus is included, and when we say Lord, Jesus is included. The Lord, who came to us and saved us, is included in all of them.

A person knows with his head, feels with his emotions, and moves into action, and this is called 'knowing, feeling, and willing'; and acting according to all three together is called 'personhood.' In the life of faith, too, first of all, our prayer must be exact. Because we have received the remission of sins, we can pray directly before God the Father. But since the Lord says, *"If you ask anything in My name, I will do it" (John 14:14)*, there is a problem if we finish our whole prayer without saying, "I pray in the name of Jesus." In prayer we must first call on the holy name of the Lord, list the contents, and then, when we put the final period, we must say, "I pray in the name of Jesus." Why is that? It is because that Jesus is the God of you and me, the Creator and the Savior, the God of power, who hears and answers our prayers. And it is because He is the God who promised us, "Ask for help. Then I will help you."

It is truly good to pray holding on to this promise. Praying on our own is hard, but there is boldness when we pray holding on to the word and on the basis of this promise, saying, "Did You not, God, tell me to ask You? So I am asking You. If this is not wrong, please answer me." We must learn such things. However much we say about the word of God, we can never say enough, because each person receives only as much as he knows.

To speak in conclusion, Jesus made the universe and all

things, made your ancestors, and is the Master who made you when you were in your mother's womb, and He is your Savior. Let us know and believe this exactly and live our lives of faith. We who believe in Jesus are remarkable people. We know that the Lord is God, who made the universe; we know that though He is God, in obedience to the will of the Father, He put on the garment of a creature, came to this earth, and saved us with the water and the blood; and we have been saved by faith. After we were saved, that God became our shepherd, and He lends His ear to our prayers at any time. Our life of faith is not on the level of the religious life that ordinary people lead. We are children of God with a very high standing, workers of God, soldiers of God, and those who share the gospel and salvation with others. We give thanks before God, who has become our God, who tells us to ask, and who has promised to help us. ✉

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# CHAPTER

# 15

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

# John Chapter 15 seen from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit

## In John 15:1–8, why did Jesus say that He is the true vine and that "you are the branches"?

John 15:1–8 explains the relationship between Jesus and the saved saints with a vine and its branches. Jesus is the true vine, who supplies life; God the Father is the vinedresser, who tends the branches; and a person who has received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit is a branch that is attached to Jesus.

### 1. Jesus is the true vine, who gives life

Jesus said, *"I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser."* A person who has been cut off from God because of sin has no ability to produce eternal life by himself. Life is supplied only from Jesus Christ.

Jesus came in the flesh to make sinners live. And with the baptism He received from John, He had all the sins of the world transferred onto His body once and for all; bearing those sins, He went forward to the Cross, shed His blood, and was judged; and He rose again from the dead. Jesus, who accomplished this salvation, is the true vine, who gives sinners the remission of sins and new life.

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A person who believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit is moved from sin to life, and from the power of Satan to the kingdom of God. He becomes a branch that has received the life of Jesus.

## 2. God the Father is the vinedresser, who tends the branches

A vinedresser waters the vine, tends the branches, and cuts off the unnecessary parts so that the vine may bear much fruit. In the same way, God the Father teaches and trains the saved with His word so that they may bear more fruit.

That He cleanses the branch that bears fruit means that God keeps correcting and refining the hearts of the saints with His word. Even a person who has received the remission of sins can be shaken by the thoughts and worries of the flesh while living in the world. At such times, God makes him realize again, through the gospel of the water and the Spirit that is heard in the church, the fact that Jesus has already borne all his sins.

By believing that word, the saint escapes from the condemnation and confusion in his heart, is united again with the will of the Lord, and comes to bear more fruit.

## 3. The word of Jesus makes us clean

Jesus said to His disciples, *"You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you."*

What cleanses a person's heart from sin is not his own effort or religious deeds, but the word that testifies of the salvation Jesus accomplished. Jesus bore all our sins with the baptism He

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received from John, and He received the judgment for those sins on the Cross. When we believe this word of the gospel with our hearts, we receive the remission of sins.

Therefore, being made clean by the word does not mean only knowing the Bible as knowledge. It is accepting as one's own salvation the word of the remission of sins that Jesus accomplished with the water and the Spirit. In the heart of a person who believes that word, sin disappears and the Holy Spirit comes.

## 4. *"Abide in Me"* means to remain in the gospel by faith

To abide in Jesus is to believe firmly in the gospel of the water and the Spirit in one's heart and to live within that word and that will. It is also to hear the word in the church that God has established, to be led by the Holy Spirit, and to serve the gospel in unity with one's brothers and sisters.

The faith that abides in Jesus includes the following.

1. I believe that Jesus bore all my sins with the baptism He received from John.

2. I believe that Jesus received the judgment for my sins on the Cross.

3. I believe that Jesus rose again from the dead and became my eternal Savior.

4. I believe and follow the written word of the gospel rather than my own thoughts.

5. I hear the word in the church, am led by the Holy Spirit, and serve the gospel.

To abide in the Lord is not for a person to acknowledge the salvation of Jesus once and then live as he pleases. It is to keep

the word of the Lord who saved him in his heart continually, and to live uniting his heart with the purpose of the Lord.

## 5. A branch cannot bear fruit apart from the vine

Jesus said:

*"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5).*

A branch cannot produce life by itself. Only when it is supplied with water and nutrients from the roots and the trunk of the vine does it bear fruit. Likewise, the saints cannot produce the fruit of God by their own wisdom and will.

The Holy Spirit dwells in a person who has received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The Holy Spirit leads the hearts of the saints through the word and makes them do what pleases the Lord. Therefore, the fruit of faith is not a person's boast; it is the result of Jesus supplying life and the Holy Spirit working.

The following fruit appears in a person who abides in Jesus.

— The fruit of faith that firmly believes in the salvation Jesus accomplished

— The fruit of the Spirit, such as love, joy, peace, and longsuffering

— The fruit of love that cares for brothers and sisters and serves the church

— The fruit of preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit to other souls

— The fruit of obedience that follows the word of the Lord even in the midst of hardship

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## 6. A branch that does not abide in the Lord withers

A branch that is not connected to Jesus by life withers in the end. Even if a person looks like a believer in Jesus outwardly and belongs to a church, if he does not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit with his heart and rejects the word of the Lord, he cannot bear the fruit of life.

The word in verse 6 about being thrown into the fire and burned shows the fact that outside of Jesus there is no salvation and no eternal life, and that there is judgment for the person who does not accept His salvation to the end. Just as a branch without life cannot come back to life by itself, a sinner cannot escape the judgment of God by his own deeds and religious zeal.

Therefore, what is important is not to look outwardly as if one had a relationship with Jesus, but to become a person who has received the life of Jesus by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit with one's heart.

## 7. When the word of the Lord abides in one's heart, one comes to pray by faith

Jesus said:

*"If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you" (John 15:7).*

For a person who abides in the Lord, prayer is a privilege by which he can ask God for help. He does not try to produce fruit by his own ability; he asks the Lord for the wisdom, the strength, and the circumstances he needs.

When the word of the Lord abides in one's heart, that person's desires also come to be directed toward the will of the Lord. He comes to pray for the kingdom of God and the spread

of the gospel, for the church and his brothers and sisters, and for the souls that have not yet been saved. The Lord answers such prayers and supplies what is needed so that he may bear fruit.

Therefore, the word *"you will ask what you desire"* is a promise telling us to ask not for the desires of the flesh that are separated from the Lord, but for the desires of faith that have arisen within the word and the will of the Lord.

## 8. Bearing much fruit brings glory to God the Father

*"By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples" (John 15:8).*

A disciple of Jesus is not a person who shows off how excellent he is. He is a person who knows that he is a branch that can do nothing without Jesus, and who relies on the life and the word of the Lord.

God the Father is glorified when, through that person, other souls hear the gospel of the water and the Spirit and receive the remission of sins, when brothers and sisters grow in faith, and when the fruit of love and obedience appears. It is because the fruit does not boast of the ability of the branch, but reveals the life and the power of Jesus, who is the true vine.

## Conclusion

In John 15:1–8, Jesus said that He is the true vine and that those who believe are the branches. Just as a branch is supplied with life and bears fruit when it is attached to the vine, a sinner obtains the remission of sins and new life when he is united with Jesus by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

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A saved person abides in the word of the gospel by faith, and lives in the Church of God being led by the word and the Holy Spirit. Then the Lord brings forth through that person the fruit of faith, love, obedience, and preaching the gospel.

The flow of this word is as follows.

Jesus completed salvation with the baptism He received from John, the Cross, and the resurrection → one receives the remission of sins and the Holy Spirit by believing that gospel → one is united with the Lord within the word and the church → one receives the leading of the Holy Spirit and the answers to prayer → one bears the fruit of love and the spread of the gospel → one gives glory to God the Father

## In John 15:9–16, what did Jesus mean when He told us, *"Love one another"*?

John 15:9–16 tells how Jesus loved us and with what kind of faith a person who has been saved by that love should live. The center of this word is not that we should be saved by human deeds, but that we should believe in the salvation of love that Jesus accomplished, love one another within that love, and bear the fruit of the gospel.

### 1. *"Abide in My love"*

Jesus said:

*"As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love" (John 15:9).*

The love of Jesus is not a mere feeling or a word of comfort. Jesus gave Himself in order to actually save sinners from sin and

judgment.

Jesus came to this earth in the flesh in obedience to the will of God. And with the baptism He received from John, He had all the sins of the world transferred onto His body once and for all, and bearing those sins, He went forward to the Cross. On the Cross He received the punishment of sin in our place, shed His blood, and died; and He rose again from the dead and became the eternal Savior of those who believe.

Therefore, to abide in the love of Jesus is first to believe with one's heart in this salvation that Jesus accomplished with the water and the Spirit, and not to depart from that faith. It is not to doubt one's salvation while looking at one's own weakness or deeds, but to keep holding on in one's heart to the perfect salvation Jesus accomplished as one lives.

## 2. That Jesus kept the Father's commandments was the obedience that completed salvation

Jesus said, *"Just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love."* The commandments of the Father that Jesus kept are connected to the will of God to save sinners.

God the Father sent His Son to this earth, and Jesus obeyed that will. He bore the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John, received the judgment for that sin on the Cross, and completed salvation by rising again from the dead. The obedience of Jesus was not a love shown in words only; it was a love that gave His own body and life.

In this way, the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the real evidence that God loved sinners. By believing in what Jesus did, we accept that love and come to abide in it.

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## 3. Keeping the commandments of the Lord is not a condition for salvation but the life of the saved

Jesus said to His disciples, *"If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love."* This does not mean that one receives the remission of sins only after keeping the commandments well. Jesus first saved sinners, and to those who have received the remission of sins by believing in that salvation, He commanded that they practice the love of the Lord.

Salvation was accomplished by Jesus, and we receive it by faith. And after being saved, we live according to His will, remembering the love the Lord has bestowed on us. To believe in and keep the gospel, to serve the brothers and sisters who have the same faith, and to preach the gospel of life to those who have not yet been saved—this is the life that abides in the love of the Lord.

## 4. The love of the Lord gives true joy within us

Jesus said:

*"These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full" (John 15:11).*

The joy that a person who believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit enjoys is not a joy that arises simply because his living conditions have improved. It is the joy that comes from the fact that Jesus has already borne all his sins and even received the judgment.

The fact that sin has disappeared, that one has been saved from condemnation and judgment, that one has come to call God Father, and that the Holy Spirit dwells in one's heart is the fundamental joy of a believer. Even when one meets hardship in

the world, this joy does not disappear, because the salvation the Lord accomplished does not change.

Also, the joy the Lord has given becomes more abundant the more one shares it with others. To preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit to a person who is suffering because of sin, so that he, too, receives the remission of sins, is to share the joy of the Lord.

## 5. The commandment *"love one another"* is the word telling us to convey the love we received from the Lord

Jesus said:

*"This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you" (John 15:12).*

The important word here is *"as I have loved you."* We do not love according to our own thoughts and feelings; we must first look at the way Jesus loved us.

The love of Jesus was not a love that left sinners in their sins. It was a love that saved sinners from sin and destruction and made them obtain eternal life. Therefore, for the saints to love one another is not only to meet one another's fleshly demands. It is to protect one another's faith, to hold one another up with the word, and to help one another to serve the gospel.

To pray for the weak, to raise up with the word those who have fallen, to serve the gospel together, and to preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit to the souls that have not yet received the remission of sins—this is the love that pleases the Lord.

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## 6. Jesus bestowed the greatest love, that of laying down His life for His friends

*"Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends" (John 15:13).*

Jesus fulfilled this word Himself. Jesus had no sin, but He gave His own life in order to make us His friends and save us.

The death of Jesus on the Cross was not a death that took place without His having borne sin. Jesus first had all our sins transferred onto His body with the baptism He received from John. And He paid the price of those sins with the blood and the death of the Cross. Therefore, the Cross shows how much Jesus loved us, and at the same time it testifies that our sins have been completely judged.

That we became friends of the Lord is not because we loved the Lord first. It is because Jesus loved us first and gave His own life.

## 7. Jesus called His disciples friends, not servants

Jesus said to His disciples:

*"No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you" (John 15:15).*

A servant can only follow orders without knowing the meaning of what his master is doing. But Jesus made known to His disciples the will of God the Father and the plan of salvation. Jesus taught them why He had come to this earth, why He had to receive baptism from John and die on the Cross, and what the disciples were to preach in the future.

A person who believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit also becomes a person who knows the will of the Lord and takes part in that will. A friend of the Lord is not a person who demands only that his own will be done, but a person who knows the heart of the Lord and joins his heart to the spread of the gospel, which the Lord delights in.

## 8. The purpose for which the Lord chose and appointed us is to make us bear eternal fruit

Jesus said:

*"You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you" (John 15:16).*

Salvation is not something that began with a person first choosing God. God loved sinners first, and Jesus came to them first and let them hear the word of salvation. Jesus chose and appointed His disciples and entrusted the gospel to them.

The fruit that the Lord makes us bear is the fruit that comes from faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. It is the fruit of the saints loving one another and being united, the fruit of obeying the word of God, the fruit of serving the gospel, and the fruit of sinners hearing the gospel and receiving the remission of sins.

This fruit is not fruit that disappears together with the achievements of the world. That one soul believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and obtains eternal life is fruit that remains forever in the kingdom of God. The Lord appointed His disciples so that they would bear such fruit, and He also gave them the privilege of prayer, by which they could ask the Father in the name of Jesus for what they needed.

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## Conclusion

John 15:9–16 shows how a person who has been saved by the gospel of the water and the Spirit should live within the love of the Lord.

With the baptism He received from John, Jesus had all the sins of the world transferred onto His body once and for all; bearing those sins, He was judged on the Cross; and He rose again from the dead. This is the greatest love the Lord has bestowed on us.

A person who has received the remission of sins by believing in this love does not keep the commandments in order to be saved; he follows the commandments of the Lord in gratitude for the salvation and the love he has already received. He abides in the love of the Lord, loves his brothers and sisters, is united with the Church of God, and preaches the gospel of the water and the Spirit to the souls that have not yet been saved.

Therefore, the core of this word is as follows: the Lord loved us first and saved us, made us His friends, and now has chosen and appointed us to convey that love to the whole world and bear the eternal fruit of the gospel.

## In John 15:17–27, how does the Holy Spirit help the righteous while those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit receive persecution and hatred in the world?

John 15:17–27 tells why those who have been set apart from the world by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit receive hatred and persecution, and how they should testify of Jesus Christ even in such circumstances. Jesus did not promise

His disciples the welcome of the world; He spoke of a life of keeping and testifying of the truth with the help of the Holy Spirit.

## 1. In the face of the hatred of the world, the saints must love one another

Jesus said:

*"These things I command you, that you love one another" (John 15:17).*

This word emphasizes once again the commandment *"love one another"* that He gave earlier. The reason those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit must love one another is that they have all received the same salvation.

With the baptism He received from John, Jesus had all our sins transferred onto His body once and for all; bearing those sins, He was judged on the Cross; and He rose again from the dead. Those who believe in this salvation have received the one Holy Spirit and have become the children of God.

Therefore, the more the saints receive hatred and persecution from the world, the more they must hold one another up. They must cover one another's weaknesses, protect one another's faith, pray together, and preach the gospel. The love and the unity of the saints become the strength that keeps their faith in the midst of hardship.

## 2. The world hates the saints because it hated Jesus first

Jesus said, *"If the world hates you, you know that it hated*

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*Me before it hated you."*

Jesus healed the sick, raised the dead, and preached the word of life. Above all, He accomplished the work of saving sinners from all their sins. Even so, the Jewish religious leaders rejected Jesus and tried to kill Him. The fundamental reason they hated Jesus was that they did not believe that He is the Son of God and the Savior.

Even today, when the gospel of the water and the Spirit is preached, there are people who reject and oppose this truth. This does not refer simply to differences of personality or personal conflicts between people. It refers to hating and opposing the gospel that Jesus bore all the sins of the world with the baptism He received from John and was judged on the Cross.

If the saints receive hatred because of this gospel, the hatred that was first directed toward Jesus is now being shown toward those who preach the gospel.

## 3. The saints are people who do not belong to the world but belong to the Lord

Jesus said:

*"If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you" (John 15:19).*

Before believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, everyone lived according to sin and the values of the world. But a person who has received the remission of sins by believing in the salvation Jesus accomplished is no longer a person who belongs to sin and the devil. He has become a child of God and a person who belongs to the kingdom of God.

A person who belongs to the world thinks that human glory,

the desires of the flesh, wealth, and power are the most important things. But a person who believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit regards the righteousness of God and the spread of the gospel as the most precious. Because the master and the purpose of his life have changed, conflict with the world arises.

The saints must not hide the gospel or conform themselves to the values of the world in order to avoid the hatred of the world. They must believe that they are people who belong to the Lord and walk the way that pleases God.

## 4. Because a servant is not greater than his master, the disciples also receive persecution

Jesus said:

*"Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also" (John 15:20).*

If Jesus received hatred and persecution on this earth, the disciples who follow Him will also go through the same things. A disciple cannot receive only better treatment than his Lord did.

But not everyone rejects the gospel. Just as there were people who accepted the word of Jesus, there are also people who hear and believe the gospel the disciples preach. Therefore, even if we are rejected while preaching the gospel, we must not be discouraged. We must keep preaching, relying on the Holy Spirit, until there is a soul who accepts it.

Persecution is not a signal to stop spreading the gospel; it is a word that reminds us that we are walking the way Jesus spoke of in advance.

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## 5. Not knowing Jesus is not knowing God the Father

About the reason people persecute the disciples, Jesus said, *"Because they do not know Him who sent Me."*

Jesus is the only begotten Son whom God the Father sent, and He is the One who is God by nature. Therefore, to reject Jesus is to reject God the Father, who sent Him.

If a person says that he believes in God and yet does not accept the work of salvation that Jesus accomplished, it cannot be called a faith that knows God rightly. God revealed Himself through the Son, and Jesus fulfilled the love and the righteousness of God with the baptism He received from John, the blood of the Cross, and the resurrection.

Faith in God the Father and faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that Jesus accomplished cannot be separated from each other.

## 6. Before the word and the work of Jesus, there is no excuse for sin

Jesus said:

*"If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin" (John 15:22).*

Because Jesus came to this earth and clearly spoke the will of God and the truth of salvation, people can no longer excuse their unbelief by saying that they did not know.

Jesus testified that He is the Son of God and the Savior whom the Father sent. And He did not only speak; He actually accomplished the work of salvation. He bore all the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John, received the punishment for that sin on the Cross, and rose again from the dead.

To hear this word of salvation and still not believe is not simply a matter of lacking knowledge. It is unbelief that does not accept the righteousness God accomplished and insists on one's own thoughts and one's own righteousness. Because God has clearly revealed the way of salvation through the gospel, a person must decide, when faced with that word, whether to believe or to reject it.

## 7. Jesus accomplished what no one else could do

Jesus said that He had done the works which no one else had done. The countless signs Jesus performed testified that He is the Son of God. The greatest work that all those signs pointed to was the work of saving sinners from all their sins.

No human being can remove by himself even his own sins, let alone the sins of others. Only the Son of God, who has no sin, can bear the sin of mankind and be judged.

With the baptism He received from John, Jesus had all the sins of the world transferred onto His body once and for all. And He paid the price of sin by being nailed to the Cross and shedding His blood, and He overcame sin and death by rising again from the dead. This is the work of salvation that only Jesus could accomplish.

To see this work and still hate and reject Jesus was to hate not only Jesus but also God the Father, who sent Him.

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## 8. Being hated without a cause fulfilled the prophecy of the Old Testament

Jesus said:

*"But this happened that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, 'They hated Me without a cause'" (John 15:25).*

This word is connected to the suffering of the righteous that appears in Psalm 35:19 and Psalm 69:4. Jesus had no sin at all, and yet He received hatred and persecution from people without a cause.

The hatred Jesus received and His death on the Cross were things that took place within the plan of salvation of God and the prophecy of the Old Testament. People nailed Jesus to the Cross with evil hearts, but through that Cross Jesus bore the judgment for the sin of mankind and completed salvation.

In this way, even the hatred and persecution of people could not bring down the work of salvation of God. Rather, in the midst of it, God fulfilled the word of prophecy and saved sinners.

## 9. The Spirit of truth testifies of Jesus Christ

Jesus said:

*"But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me" (John 15:26).*

The central work the Holy Spirit does is to testify of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit testifies that Jesus is the Son of God and the Savior who removed all the sin of mankind.

The Holy Spirit comes upon a person who has received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the

Spirit with his heart. The Holy Spirit confirms in the heart of the believer that the gospel—that Jesus bore all sins with the baptism He received from John, received the judgment for those sins on the Cross, and rose again from the dead—is the true truth.

The testimony of the Holy Spirit does not create a new truth that departs from the work of salvation of Jesus. The Holy Spirit makes us realize the truth of salvation that Jesus spoke and accomplished, makes us believe it, and makes us preach it boldly.

## 10. The disciples must testify of Jesus together with the Holy Spirit

Jesus said to His disciples:

*"And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning" (John 15:27).*

The apostles went about with Jesus from the beginning and directly heard His word and saw His work. They testified that Jesus received baptism from John, that He died on the Cross, and that He rose again from the dead.

That we preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit today is also to carry on and preach the word of the gospel of which the apostles testified. A witness of the gospel is not a person who speaks based on his own experience or thoughts, but a person who preaches Jesus' work of salvation to which the Bible testifies.

The Holy Spirit is with the saints who preach that gospel, and He testifies in the hearts of those who hear it that Jesus Christ is the true Savior. Even if the world hates and opposes the gospel, the saints must keep preaching the salvation Jesus accomplished, relying on the Holy Spirit.

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## Conclusion

John 15:17–27 tells of the hatred and persecution that those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit will meet while living in the world, and of the mission of being witnesses that they must carry out in the midst of it.

With the baptism He received from John, Jesus had all the sins of the world transferred onto His body once and for all; bearing those sins, He was judged on the Cross; and He rose again from the dead. Yet the world hated and rejected Jesus, who accomplished this salvation. Therefore, those who belong to Jesus and preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit can also receive hatred.

But the saints must not be discouraged or quarrel with one another because of the hatred of the world. They must love one another and be united, keep their faith within the Church of God, and preach the gospel relying on the Spirit of truth.

The Holy Spirit testifies of Jesus Christ and confirms in the hearts of those who believe that the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the true truth of salvation. Therefore, a person who believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit is not a person who seeks the recognition and the glory of the world, but a person who, together with the Holy Spirit, keeps testifying of the gospel of the remission of sins that Jesus Christ accomplished until the end. ✉

# Questions and Answers on John Chapter 15

## [Question] 1. Summarize briefly the structure and the main content of John chapter 15 as a whole.

John chapter 15 contains the words that Jesus, facing the Cross, left with His disciples, and teaches how a saved person should abide in the Lord and live a life that bears fruit.

First, in verses 1–8, Jesus likened Himself to the true vine, God the Father to the vinedresser, and those who believe to the branches. Just as a branch can bear fruit only when it is attached to the vine, the saints must also be united with Jesus Christ by faith and abide in Him. Jesus bore the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John the Baptist, received the judgment for that sin on the Cross, and then rose again, thereby making those who believe clean. Therefore, to abide in the Lord means to believe this word of salvation and keep it in one's heart, and to live in unity with the will of the Lord and with the Church of God. Apart from the Lord we can do nothing, but if we abide in Him, we bear abundantly the fruit of the Spirit and the fruit of saving souls, and give glory to God the Father.

In verses 9–17, He spoke of the life that abides in the love of the Lord. Jesus loved His disciples as the Father loved Him, and He commanded, *"That you love one another as I have loved you."* This love does not stay in words only; it is a love that serves one's brothers and sisters and preaches the gospel of salvation to those who have not yet received the remission of sins so that they may obtain life. A person who acts according to the

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commandment of the Lord becomes a friend of the Lord and fully enjoys the joy the Lord gives. Also, it was not the disciples who chose the Lord, but the Lord who chose and appointed them, and through them He brings forth fruit that always remains.

In verses 18–25, He let them know that those who belong to the Lord will receive hatred and persecution in the world. The world hates the disciples because they no longer belong to the world but are people whom the Lord has chosen. Because the world hated and persecuted Jesus, those who follow Him can also receive the same hatred and persecution. To hate Jesus is to hate God the Father, who sent Him, and because Jesus revealed Himself through His words and the works He did, they can no longer make excuses for their sin.

Finally, in verses 26–27, He spoke of the Helper, the Holy Spirit, and the testimony of the disciples. The Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, testifies that Jesus is the Son of God and the Savior. The disciples, who were with Jesus from the beginning, also come to testify to the world of the work of salvation He did.

Therefore, the word of John chapter 15 is that the saints who have been made clean by the gospel of the water and the Spirit must abide in Jesus Christ, love one another according to the commandment of love of the Lord, and bear fruit by preaching the gospel. Even if there is hatred and persecution from the world, the Spirit of truth testifies of Jesus and is with the saints, so those who believe must remain united with the Lord to the end and live fulfilling His will.

## [Question] 2. What is the core of what the parable of the vine in John 15:1–9 teaches believers?

Jesus likened Himself to the true vine, God the Father to the vinedresser, and the saved saints to the branches attached to that vine. This parable teaches the fact that the saints do not live their lives of faith or bear spiritual fruit by their own ability, but must be united by faith with Jesus Christ, who is the source of life. Just as a branch is supplied with life and nutrients from the tree, the saints must also be supplied with life, faith, and power from the Lord.

Jesus is the true vine because He is God, who gives sinners the remission of sins and new life. Jesus bore all the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John the Baptist, received the judgment for that sin on the Cross, and gave new life to those who believe by rising again from the dead. The word *"You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you"* does not mean that a person washes away his sins by his own effort or by prayers of repentance. It means that one has been made clean by believing in the word of the gospel that Jesus removed sin with the baptism He received from John, the Cross, and the resurrection.

Therefore, the word *"Abide in Me"* does not mean simply to lead a religious life calling on the name of Jesus. It means to keep believing that Jesus is the Savior, who bore all one's sins and was judged in one's place, and to live with one's heart set within His word and His will. It also means a life of being united with the Lord, who is the source of life, and with the Church of God, which is His body, and serving the gospel together in the place one has been entrusted with. To regard the Lord as more precious than the people of the world or than material things and honor, and to believe and follow His word—this is the life that

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is attached to the vine.

When a branch is attached to the vine, it naturally bears fruit by the life the tree supplies. Among this fruit is the fruit of the Spirit, such as love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, and self-control, and there is also the fruit of preaching the gospel, which makes other souls obtain the remission of sins and new life. This fruit is not borne because a person is outstanding or has great ability. It is borne because the Lord gives wisdom and strength and supplies what is needed.

God the Father cleanses the branch that bears fruit so that it may bear even more fruit. Whenever a saint's shortcomings and faults are revealed while he lives in the world, God cleanses his heart and renews his faith by making him believe again the word that Jesus bore even that sin with the baptism He received from John. On the other hand, a branch that does not believe the word of the Lord, goes against His will, and hinders the work of bearing fruit eventually falls away from the vine and withers. This is a solemn warning that a person who has left the Lord cannot be supplied with spiritual life and power.

A person who abides in the Lord and in whose heart His word abides does not rely only on his own strength but asks the Lord for help. That is why Jesus said, *"You will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you."* Prayer offered within the will of the Lord is a privilege given to the saved saints, and the Lord hears that prayer and supplies what is needed to bear fruit.

Therefore, the core lesson of the parable of the vine is that the saints who have been made clean by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit must not leave Jesus Christ, but must abide by faith in His word and His love. When they do, the Lord holds the saints and cleanses them, and makes them bear abundantly the fruit of the Spirit and the fruit of saving souls, so that they give glory to God the Father.

## [Question] 3. To what kind of tree does John 15:1 liken Jesus Christ?

Jesus Christ said that He is *"the true vine."*

*"I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser" (John 15:1).*

The word that Jesus is the true vine means that He is the source of life, who gives sinners the remission of sins and new life. Just as a vine supplies life and nutrients to its branches, Jesus supplies salvation, life, and the strength of faith to those who believe. Apart from Jesus, no one can meet God or obtain eternal life. Through Jesus we come to know and meet God the Father, and we receive the protection, guidance, and blessing of God.

Jesus is not merely a teacher who introduced the way to God. He Himself is God; He is the Savior who saves sinners, and He is the Lord of life. According to the will of God the Father, He came to this earth in the flesh, bore all the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John the Baptist, bore that sin and received the judgment on the Cross, and rose again from the dead. Because through this work He saved sinners from sin and gave them new life, He called Himself the true vine.

Therefore, to believe in Jesus as the true vine does not stop at acknowledging Him as a mere religious teacher. It is to believe that Jesus is one's own God, one's Savior, one's shepherd, and the Lord of life. It is also to accept in one's heart the salvation He accomplished with the baptism He received from John, the Cross, and the resurrection, and to keep abiding in His word and His teaching.

A branch lives and bears fruit when it is supplied with life from the vine. In the same way, the saints do not produce spiritual life by their own wisdom or good deeds; when they

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believe in Jesus, who is the true vine, and abide in Him, they are supplied with life and strength and bear the fruit of faith. Therefore, the word *"I am the true vine"* reveals that Jesus Christ is the true God, who saves sinners and makes them live, and who makes the saved keep living by faith and bear fruit.

## [Question] 4. In the parable of the vine in John 15:1, who is the one shown as the vinedresser?

Jesus said, *"I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser."* Therefore, in this parable the vinedresser refers to God the Father.

God the Father sent His own Son to this earth as the true vine, and through that Son He gives salvation and life to mankind. Jesus Christ, in obedience to the will of the Father, came in human flesh, bore the sin of the world with the baptism He received from John, received the judgment for that sin on the Cross, and rose again from the dead. A person who believes in this work of salvation receives the remission of sins, becomes a child of God, and becomes a branch attached to the true vine.

The purpose for which a vinedresser plants and tends a vine is to obtain fruit. In the same way, God the Father wants those who have been saved by believing in Jesus Christ to bear the fruit of life. He cleanses the branch that bears fruit so that it may bear more fruit, and He supplies faith, strength, and what is needed to those who lack, helping them to fulfill the will of God. Therefore, the spiritual fruit the saints bear is not achieved by their own strength and zeal alone; it is borne because God, the vinedresser, tends them and works.

Therefore, the word that calls God the Father the vinedresser contains the will of God, who saves people through the Son and

tends the saved so that they may convey life to more souls. The saints must know that will, abide in Jesus Christ, and join their hearts to the work of life that God has entrusted to them.

## [Question] 5. In John 15:2, how does the vinedresser deal with the branch that bears no fruit and the branch that bears fruit, respectively?

Jesus said, *"Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit."* What God the Father, the vinedresser, does is to look at whether a branch bears fruit and to deal with the branch accordingly.

First, He takes away the branch that bears no fruit. This refers to a person who says outwardly that he believes in Jesus, but in reality does not believe and follow the word of the Lord, does not join his heart to the will and the heart of the Lord, and goes against the work of life. Because God knows the center of the heart and the faith, He does not leave untouched a branch that refuses to follow the will of the Lord to the end and hinders the work of bearing the fruit of the gospel.

On the other hand, He does not throw away the branch that bears fruit, but cleanses it so that it may bear more fruit. Even if a saint is lacking and his heart is defiled by the thoughts of the flesh while he lives in the world, if he believes in the Lord and wants to bear fruit according to His will, God washes, corrects, and nurtures him. He keeps letting him hear the word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit—that Jesus bore all the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John, received the judgment for that sin on the Cross, and rose again from the dead—and thereby makes the defiled heart clean again by faith.

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Just as a vinedresser fertilizes the branch that bears fruit, treats its diseased parts, and supplies what it needs, God also gives faith, wisdom, and strength to the saints who have joined their hearts to the will of the Lord. Thus He makes them bear the fruit of preaching the gospel and the fruit of faith, and He also makes them bear the fruit of the Spirit, such as love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, and self-control. The saints do not produce fruit by their own ability alone; God cleanses them and supplies what is needed, and so makes them bear fruit.

Therefore, God, the vinedresser, takes away the branch that bears no fruit, and He cleanses the branch that bears fruit with the word, tends and blesses it, and makes it bear more fruit of life. This word teaches that the saints must not draw back because of their own shortcomings, but must live believing in Jesus Christ, who saved them from all their sins, and joining their hearts to the will of God.

## [Question] 6. What does the word in John 15:4–5, that a branch cannot bear fruit apart from the vine, teach about the relationship between the saints and Jesus Christ?

Jesus said, *"Abide in Me, and I in you,"* and said that just as a branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it is attached to the vine, the saints also cannot bear fruit unless they are in Jesus Christ. He also said, *"I am the vine, you are the branches,"* revealing that the relationship between the saints and the Lord is a relationship of giving and receiving life.

A branch has no ability to produce life or bear fruit by itself. When it is attached to the vine and supplied with life and nourishment from the trunk, it naturally bears fruit. In the same

way, the saints do not produce spiritual fruit by their own will, good deeds, or personal ability. They bear fruit when they are attached to Jesus Christ, the Lord of life, and are supplied with the faith, wisdom, and strength He gives. That is why Jesus said, *"Without Me you can do nothing."*

To abide in Jesus Christ is to believe with one's heart in the salvation He accomplished and to remain in that faith. It is to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit: that Jesus bore all the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John, received the judgment for that sin on the Cross, and rose again from the dead to become the perfect Savior. Even when one's shortcomings are revealed, one does not rely on one's own deeds or draw back in discouragement; to believe again the word of Jesus, who has already made one's sins clean, and to rely on the Lord—this is to abide in Him.

The word *"and I in you"* means that the Holy Spirit dwells in the heart of a saint who has received the remission of sins, and leads that person with the word and the will of the Lord. The saints receive the teaching of the Lord, live according to His word, and serve the gospel joining their hearts to the church, which is the body of Jesus Christ. Even though each person is entrusted with a different work, when they are united within the will of the Lord, God brings forth through them the fruit of life, in which the gospel is spread and other souls receive the remission of sins.

Therefore, the relationship between the branch and the vine is a relationship of faith in which the saints depend entirely on Jesus Christ for life. The saints do not bear fruit because they have no shortcomings; they bear fruit because they believe in the Lord, who saved them with the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and abide in Him. Because the Lord supplies life and power to the saints who are attached to Him, the fruit of faith and the fruit

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of the gospel are borne; but if they leave Him and live by their own strength and thoughts, they cannot bear true spiritual fruit.

## [Question] 7. According to John 15:9–10, what does it mean to live continually abiding in the love of the Lord?

To abide in the love of Jesus means first to know and believe how the Lord loved us, and to live keeping that love in our hearts.

*"As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love" (John 15:9–10).*

God the Father gave the Son the commandment to save sinners. In obedience to that will, Jesus came to this earth in human flesh and bore the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John the Baptist. And He received the judgment of sin on the Cross and rose again from the dead, and so saved us. This is the love Jesus bestowed on us.

Therefore, to abide in the love of the Lord is to believe in this love of salvation without forgetting it, and to follow the will of the Lord without having one's heart taken away by other things. Just as Jesus kept the commandment of the Father and loved mankind, a person who has received the remission of sins must also follow the commandment of the Lord, *"That you love one another as I have loved you."*

To love one another is not to show goodwill in words only. It is to cherish one's brothers and sisters, to pray that they may do well in their faith, to help them where they are lacking, and to lead them in the right way. It is also to convey to those who have not yet been saved the joy of the remission of sins and

eternal life that the Lord has given, so that they, too, may enjoy this love.

Therefore, a life that abides in the love of the Lord is a life of believing in and keeping the love that saved me, and, following that love, of loving my brothers and other souls and sharing the gospel. When we carry out the commandment of the Lord by faith in this way, the joy the Lord has given fills our hearts, and our faith grows all the more.

## [Question] 8. In John 15:12, what is the content of the commandment the Lord gave His disciples?

Jesus said, *"This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."* The commandment the Lord gave His disciples was to love one another, and the standard of that love is in the word *"as I have loved you."*

This commandment is not an order for the disciples to produce love by their own strength. God the Father loved the Son, and Jesus loved His disciples with the love He received from the Father. Jesus bore all the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John, received the judgment for that sin on the Cross, and rose again from the dead, giving the remission of sins and new life to those who believe. That He gave His own body and saved us from sin and judgment is the love Jesus bestowed.

The Holy Spirit dwells in the heart of a person who has received this love and obtained the remission of sins. Therefore, the saints do not love reluctantly under the pressure of duty; they come to share with others the love and the joy of salvation they received from the Lord. To preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit that one has heard so that other souls may also receive

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the remission of sins is love, and to cherish one's brothers and sisters in the faith, to hope that their faith goes well, and to pray for and help them is also love.

To love one another is not to say unconditionally that everything the other person does is fine. We must wait for and lead those who are weak in faith, teach those who do not know, and make up for one another's shortcomings. If there is someone going the wrong way, we must not hate and condemn him; we must point out his fault so that he does not leave the Lord, and make him believe again the gospel that Jesus washed away even that sin with the baptism He received from John and the Cross. To hope that the other person's soul lives and stands firm in faith—this is true love.

Therefore, the commandment of the Lord is to hold on to the love one has received, and with that love to cherish one another and share the gospel of life. When the saints love one another according to this commandment, the joy they received from the Lord fills their hearts, and by seeing this, the people of the world also come to know that they are the disciples of Jesus Christ.

## [Question] 9. In John 15:13–14, what kind of person is the one who shows the greatest love?

Jesus said, *"Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends."* Here, being the greatest does not refer to a person's position or ability, but to the greatness of love. The person who shows the greatest love is the one who regards the life and the benefit of his friend as more precious than preserving himself, and who lays down even his own life for him.

This word points above all to the love that Jesus Himself

accomplished. Jesus came to this earth in the flesh in obedience to the will of God the Father. And by receiving baptism from John, He bore all the sin of mankind; He laid down His life on the Cross in order to receive the judgment for that sin in our place; and He rose again from the dead. He gave His own life as the price in order to save sinners, make them the children of God, and make them His friends. Therefore, the salvation Jesus accomplished is the event in which the greatest love actually appeared.

A person who has received this love must not live only for himself, either. Just as Jesus gave His life and saved sinners, a saved person must give his time, strength, possessions, and heart and serve the gospel so that the souls who do not yet know the gospel may be saved. He must also pray for, help, and lead his brothers and sisters so that their faith may go well and their souls may stand rightly before God. Love is not saying in words only that one is for the other person; it is thinking about what is truly beneficial to that person and doing it.

To lay down one's life for one's friends includes, when martyrdom is required, not denying Jesus and laying down even one's life. In ordinary times, it appears as not pursuing only one's own greed and comfort, but giving oneself for the work of the gospel that pleases the Lord. Not only losing one's life all at once, but also using one's lifetime for the gospel and for souls while one is alive is the love that gives oneself.

In the following verse 14, Jesus said, *"You are My friends if you do whatever I command you."* The person who shows the greatest love is the one who first believes in the love of Jesus, who gave His life for him, and who, in response to that love, follows the will of the Lord and gives his life for other souls.

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## [Question] 10. In John 15:14, what kind of person is the one Jesus called His friend?

Jesus said, *"You are My friends if you do whatever I command you."* Therefore, a friend of the Lord is a person who does not stop at hearing the word of Jesus, but does by faith the will He has commanded.

This relationship begins with Jesus first loving and saving sinners. Jesus bore the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John, received the judgment for that sin on the Cross, and rose again from the dead. A person who believes in this gospel of the water and the Spirit receives the remission of sins, becomes a child of God, and is accepted as a friend of Jesus. As Jesus said, *"You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you,"* it is the Lord who first saved us and chose us and made us His friends.

The commandment Jesus gave His friends is *"that you love one another as I have loved you."* Therefore, a friend of Jesus knows the love of salvation he has received, and lives conveying that love to others. He preaches the gospel so that the souls who do not yet know the gospel may receive the remission of sins, prays for and helps his brothers and sisters so that their faith and their souls may go well, and faithfully serves the work the Lord has entrusted to him.

A friend is a person who knows the heart and the will of the other and joins his own heart to that will. A friend of Jesus also knows what the Lord delights in and what He wants to accomplish, and accepts the will of the Lord as his own will. Because he knows that the Lord wants the gospel of the water and the Spirit to be preached to the whole world so that souls may be saved, he uses his time, strength, and possessions to bear the fruit of the gospel. When there are difficulties, he prays to

God in the name of Jesus and receives help, and continues that work.

Therefore, a friend of Jesus is a person who has received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and has been chosen by the Lord, and who, knowing the love of Jesus who saved him, joins his heart to His will and carries out the commandment to love one another and preach the gospel.

## [Question] 11. In John 15:15, what is the direct reason Jesus called His disciples friends, not servants?

Jesus spoke the reason directly.

*"No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you."*

A servant does the work his master orders, yet he does not know what his master is planning or what purpose he is trying to accomplish. But to a friend one does not hide one's heart and plans, but makes them known. Because Jesus did not hide from His disciples the will He had heard from God the Father, but made it all known to them, He called them friends, not servants.

The work the Father entrusted to Jesus was the work of saving mankind, which had fallen into sin. According to the will of the Father, Jesus came to this earth in the flesh, and by receiving baptism from John, He bore the sin of mankind. And He received the punishment for that sin on the Cross and rose again from the dead, thereby completing salvation. Facing the Cross, Jesus made known to His disciples this will of salvation and the work He would accomplish.

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Jesus made known to His disciples even His will that they should not stop at believing in that salvation, but should preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit He accomplished to the whole world so that other souls, too, might receive the remission of sins. That He went on to say, *"You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain,"* means that He chose His disciples as friends and made them take part in the work of bearing the fruit of the gospel.

A friend is a person who knows the will of the other, joins his heart to that will, and shares the work. Jesus revealed to His disciples the plan of salvation of the Father and the purpose of the spread of the gospel, and entrusted that work to them to accomplish together. He also made it so that they could ask the Father in the name of Jesus and receive help to carry out the work entrusted to them. He did not put His disciples in the position of servants who only receive orders; He appointed them as close companions who know the heart of the Lord and share in His will and His work.

Therefore, the direct reason Jesus called His disciples friends is that He made known to them all the will and the plan of salvation He had heard from the Father. Jesus made His disciples friends who know and believe the gospel of the water and the Spirit and take part together in the work of preaching that gospel to the whole world.

## [Question] 12. What does John 15:18–19 reveal as the fundamental cause of the world hating believers?

The fundamental reason the world hates believers is that

believers no longer belong to the world but have become people who belong to God.

*"If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you" (John 15:18–19).*

The world loves those who belong to it. A person who follows the thoughts and desires of the world and lives toward the same goal has no reason to come into conflict with the world. But a person who believes in Jesus has been chosen by the Lord out of the world and has become a person who belongs to God. Because where he belongs and who his master is have changed, he cannot live with the same heart as the world.

A believer believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit: that Jesus bore all his sins with the baptism He received from John the Baptist, received the judgment for those sins on the Cross, and rose again from the dead, and so saved him. By this faith he receives the remission of sins, becomes a person who belongs to God, and follows the word and the will of the Lord. Therefore, his values and his purpose become different from those of the world, and the world comes to hate such a believer, regarding him as a person who does not belong to it.

Also, the world hated Jesus first, before it hated believers. When the world, which does not know God and His Son but opposes them, hates a person who belongs to Jesus, it is the same as hating the Lord who is in that person and the gospel he preaches.

Therefore, the reason a believer receives hatred in the world is that he does not belong to the world but belongs to Jesus Christ and follows His word and His gospel. The Lord told His disciples not to think it strange when they receive hatred, but to remember the fact that the world hated Him first.

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## [Question] 13. According to John 15:19, the saints belong not to the world but to whom?

The saints are not people who belong to the world or to the devil, but people who belong to God. Jesus said, *"You are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world."* Therefore, the master of the saints is not the world, but Jesus Christ, who chose and saved them.

The saints are people who have received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. They believe the fact that Jesus bore all the sin of mankind with the baptism He received from John the Baptist, received the punishment for that sin on the Cross, and then rose again from the dead. By this faith they have been made clean from sin and obtained new life, and they have received the Holy Spirit and become the children of God. This is the ground on which the saints have come to belong to God.

The saints who belong to God are like branches attached to Jesus Christ, who is the true vine. They are supplied with life from the Lord, believe the word of God, and live according to the work of the gospel the Lord has entrusted to them. Even though their flesh is lacking, the direction of their hearts and their faith is not toward the world but toward God.

The world loves those who belong to it, but it does not regard the saints who belong to God as its own people, and so it hates them. Therefore, the central point of the word about being hated by the world is not simply that the saints go through hardship. It lies in the fact that the saints have been chosen by Jesus Christ and set apart from the world, and have become blessed people who belong to God. ✉

Sermon 1 by Paul C. Jong

# When we live a life of faith knowing the will of the Lord, He makes us bear more fruit

**< John 15:1-4 >**

**"I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me."**

## Live a life of faith knowing the will of God

The word we read today tells us that we must live a life of faith knowing the will of God. People say that if you only work hard unconditionally, you go under. In these days it is even more so. Among those who have ended up on the streets, there are many who went under while running their own businesses, and each of them says that he worked unbelievably hard. And yet, they say, they went under. This is not to say that you should not work hard and should idle instead. It is that if you only work hard, you go under. Only when we look carefully at how the world is turning, know what will do well in the future and what we must prepare for, adapt ourselves well to it, and work with

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zeal, can we succeed.

It is the same with our life of faith. What happens if one only lives a life of faith zealously? One day we find that such a person is not in the church. The person who only worked hard unconditionally disappears, while the person who knows what the will of God the Father is and lives a life of faith keeping step with it stays well attached within the church, and we see him living while receiving and enjoying the blessings God gives in due season. That is why we must live a life of faith knowing the will of God.

## Jesus is the true vine, and we are the branches

The Lord spoke a very meaningful word: *"I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser" (John 15:1)*. It means that Jesus is the vine, and the One who farms that vine is the Father. Jesus is the Lord of life, who shares out life; the Savior, who removes all our sins; and the Lord of blessing, who gives us blessings. And God the Father is farming the farm of life, giving salvation and life to mankind through His Son and wanting all people to be saved.

He went on to say, *"Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit" (John 15:2)*. It means that He cuts off the branch that does not bear fruit, and if the branch that bears fruit has become diseased, He treats it so that it may bear more. What is the purpose for which a farmer farms? It is to bear fruit. It is the same with our working. What is the purpose for which we carry out the tasks we are in charge of in our various departments? In the end, we are working in order to earn money and preach the gospel overseas. Likewise, God, too, is farming

grapes on this earth; Jesus is the root and the trunk of that vine, and you and I are the small branches attached to it.

A farmer growing grapes never cuts off the base of the vine because it does not bear fruit. What he cuts off is what is unnecessary. He cuts off the diseased branches and the branches that bear no fruit, and sometimes he cuts off the old branches, too, so that new shoots may come up and bear fruit. When you travel along country roads, you see pruned branches piled up like mountains by the roadside. The farmer prunes the branches like that, sprays pesticide, and gives fertilizer in order to bear fruit. God the Father, too, wants to bear the fruit of saving lives on this earth through us who believe in Jesus. If we stay attached to the vine with the attitude of wanting to bear fruit, the owner sprays pesticide and treats the diseased parts and makes us bear fruit. If we live a life of faith knowing the will of God and wanting to bear fruit, and, since it cannot be done by individual ability, try to do that work in unity, then in the end God holds us and helps us and works so that we may bear fruit. But if we have made up our minds not to bear fruit and do not unite our hearts, we get cut off.

## God blesses us even though we are lacking

What is the will of God? As we know well, it is the will of God that all the people of the whole world receive the remission of sins. Therefore, it is the will of God to preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit through this church, and when, with that kind of heart, we do the flower-calyx work that enables the gospel to be preached, God keeps us and blesses us even though we are lacking. If we do not know the will of God and only diligently live a life of faith, we work hard alone and wear

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ourselves out alone. We end up saying, “I worked so hard, and no one even acknowledges it—what is this?” That is not doing it truly knowing the will of God. When we believe that God is now accomplishing His will through the church, entrusting a certain work to us and intending to bless this work, and go forward step by step keeping pace with those who have gone ahead, God holds us and works even though we are lacking, heals what is spiritually diseased, and blesses us so that He bears fruit through us.

Look at the leader of a certain religious group that caused a sensation in the world. He worked with zeal unconditionally, earned money, put up buildings, and built up a great force, but because he worked with zeal without knowing the will of God, as a result he ended up serving not God but his own greed. He committed countless sins against people and did many wicked things, and so he was rejected before God and rejected before people as well. Even though they ran for decades, they have no fruit of life at all. All they have is the fruit that God hates: making light of human life and saying that it is all right to commit sin as one pleases. That is the result of running without knowing the will of God.

## A life lived in keeping with the purpose of God

For more than ten years now, we have been carrying out the overseas literature ministry. Sending books is not all there is to it; when we look at the photographs the ministers overseas send us, we see that countless people gather to worship and listen to the word with great earnestness. Those who have received the remission of sins and have the Holy Spirit in their hearts go out and preach it in turn. In this world, where people cannot even

feed themselves and struggle to survive, we are living for others. This is the will of God. Because we do the will of God, God has heard and answered our prayers, helped us in everything we do, and given us many blessings.

When there is a purpose, that work is enjoyable. We get energy, thinking about how we can make it well and how we can accomplish that purpose beautifully. Even in farming, when there is a purpose, we can bear it even if it is hard, because affection and joy arise in our hearts. When the purpose becomes dim, only the hardship comes to mind. When there is a purpose, we put up a sunshade if it is too hot, we take shelter at midday, and in any case we use our wits to accomplish it, and as a result we accomplish it beautifully. The work I have mainly been in charge of these days is building the workshop, and frankly, this building is like a shabby shed. But once we set our hearts on using it to serve the gospel, the shed is no longer a shed; it becomes a luxury house and an enormous building. If we design it for the Lord, it becomes a neat, clean, and fresh building without costing much money. That is a life with a purpose and a work with a purpose. Because we are human, we sometimes fall into a slump, and when it is hard, we also have to say that it is hard. But because there is a purpose, we do our best and accomplish it to the end. Even so, if we overwork ourselves until we get sick and ruin our bodies, we cannot work after that, so that is not the will of the Lord, either. We must regulate ourselves well, get over the hard times well, and live a life in keeping with the purpose of God.

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## Stay attached to the vine

We are branches attached to the vine. Jesus is the Head of the church, and we are its members. In order to bear fruit, we must hold on to the vine, we must stay attached to it, and we must be united. It cannot be done by the strength of one person, but when we are united, in the end we come to bear fruit. For that, you and I must believe in the Lord in any circumstances. Even when we have fallen into weakness and committed sin, we must believe in the Lord, and if we have committed sin, we must look at ourselves in the light of the Ten Commandments, admit what we did wrong, and confess it. And when we know and believe that Jesus received baptism from John and had our sins transferred to Him, died shedding His blood on the Cross, and rose again, and so removed all our sins, and we make our hearts clean by faith and hold on to the Lord, the Lord gives us the power to bear fruit and makes us bear much fruit. The One who makes us bear fruit is the Lord.

What is the will of the Lord? It is the spread of the gospel to the whole world. What is it to be united in that? It is to be united in the flower-calyx work. It cannot be done by one's own strength alone, but when we unite our hearts in the work the church is doing, I, too, am used in and take part in the work of bearing fruit, I receive blessings as well, and the Lord supplies more so that more fruit may be borne. Since it cannot be done with only one kind of work, we do five or six kinds, ten kinds of work, gathering a little here and a little there, and when it becomes a large sum, we serve the gospel with it—is that not why we work diligently? When we pray, too, we must pray with a purpose. There are many things to pray for, but we must pray according to the purpose, asking what is needed right now.

## A life of serving with thanksgiving

Working together with you, whether I do the work of a technician or the work of a helper, I do it all in order to accomplish the will of God. I work knowing the will of God, and I live a life of faith in order to live in keeping with the will of God. In accomplishing the will of God, dignity is not what is important. As long as we do not commit sin and do not do anything bad to others, and as long as the will of God is accomplished, dignity is something we can throw away. I eat together with the brothers and talk together with them, tell them everything—that today we will do this work and that the purpose is this—and then carry it out on the site one thing at a time. Then, as a result, that purpose is accomplished exactly. It is because only when our hearts are in tune can we work together and accomplish that will together.

I am truly thankful. How many people there are in this world who call themselves evangelicals, and how vainly they are living! I cannot tell you how thankful I am that God worked so that I would not work together with them. Of course, when I think of the work to be done, I worry, too, and because I am human, it is not that only joy overflows in my heart. But though it is hard, I give thanks that He has given us work to do by which we can serve the Lord. I give thanks that after we met the Lord, He has continued to put this kind of heart into our hearts. Let us become those who know the will of God and live a life of faith with a purpose. And let us pray: "God, give us much work, take good care of us, and let us work and serve the gospel of the water and the Spirit more." I hope that we will pray like this and go on accomplishing the will of the Lord. ✉

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Sermon 2 by Paul C. Jong

# Jesus is truly my God

**< John 15:1-5 >**

**"I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing."**

## We meet God through Jesus

The Lord said, *"I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser" (John 15:1)*. Through whom can we come to know God, meet Him, and experience Him? It is through our Lord Jesus. Jesus is to us the true vine, the Lord of life, the shepherd of life, the guide of life, and the true God, who gives us true life. In obedience to the will of the Father, He came to this earth and became the true vine for us. It is through the Lord Jesus that anyone comes to know God, comes to meet God, comes to receive the protection of God, and receives salvation and blessing as well. All of it is possible through our Lord Jesus.

Many religious people refer to the deity they believe in as God, but God the Father can be truly known only through Jesus Christ. But how can we meet that God? We can meet Him only

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through the Lord Jesus, who came to save us. Yet the people who believe in Jesus today do not know who Jesus is, and they merely say that we should meet God through Him. And yet that Jesus is God—that Jesus is the true Master, the true Savior, the true shepherd, and the One who gives true life! It is a very strange thing.

## There is nothing we have not received from the Lord

The Bible does not speak that way. It says that when people believe through Me, knowing that I am God, knowing that I am the Savior, knowing that I am the guide, and knowing that I am the One who gives true life, they obtain salvation, obtain eternal life, and receive every blessing; and that God the Father is the One who, as the vinedresser, helps, supports, and cooperates from behind. Think about it for a moment. What is there that you have not received from the Lord Jesus Christ? What is there that you have received directly from God the Father without going through Jesus? You have received it all through Jesus. That is why we say that our faith is faith in Jesus. Through Jesus we received the remission of sins, and through Jesus we met God, who is our Savior. Jesus not only saved us; He created the universe, He is God, who will judge in the future, and He is God, equal to His Father.

We have lived another day today, but for whom did we live? We lived for our Lord Jesus Christ. The flower-calyx work of serving the gospel, the tasks we are in charge of—we did them all for the Lord. The word *As the Apostle Paul wrote, "Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God," the purpose of our whole lives should be to glorify God*. We were originally sinners, while

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God is holy, but Jesus brought us to God the Father. Is it not Jesus? Through Him, who is our God and our Savior, we meet God the Father; there is no such thing at all as meeting God the Father directly or doing the work of God directly without going through Jesus. We do everything by going through our Lord without fail.

## The will of the Father, who wants to make all submit to the Son

Through whom does God the Father reveal Himself, and through whom does He give us salvation, blessing, and eternal life and protect us? He does it through His Son. There is a will in this. It is to make His Son, too, receive glory from all creatures, just as He does. The Bible says so, too. In order to make everyone bow the knee before the feet of His Son Jesus Christ, He sent Jesus Christ to this earth and made Him receive baptism from John and have our sins transferred to Him, and He made Him bear those sins, suffer and die on the Cross, and rise again. Therefore, it says that from now on everything God has made must submit to His Son, just as it submits to God the Father.

That is why we must believe in the Lord as our true God and receive His teaching. If we say that we believe in Jesus as our Lord and yet do not learn from the Lord Jesus, we are merely believing in a generic God. We must move according to what Jesus said, what He taught, and what He commanded. People think that because He is the Son of God, He is of a lower rank, but Jesus is God, equal to the Father. There are also people who teach that Jesus is only the Son of God and not God, but that is ungrateful, and it hinders people from believing in Jesus. If we truly believe in Him, we must receive the teaching of the Lord

Jesus, who is God. The Lord spoke directly through the four Gospels, He spoke through the disciples, and now He is speaking to the disciples who follow Him. When we receive His teaching and His warnings and accept all His teachings, we can say that we are the children and the workers of God, people who believe in and follow the Lord Jesus.

What is the difference between the ordinary people who believe in Jesus today and us, who have been born again by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit? They only say that they believe in God unconditionally through Jesus, and they do not receive the teaching of Jesus. They say that they receive the teaching of God directly, but in reality they make decisions by the fleshly thoughts of man and by their own judgment and act in ways that have nothing to do with Jesus. Such people have a serious problem. In the eyes of the Father, who is the vinedresser, if a branch claims to be attached to His Son yet bears no fruit and only sucks up the nutrients, He cuts it off.

## Receive teaching through the word

The Lord said, *"You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you" (John 15:3–4)*. What does this mean? It means that we should believe in the Lord Jesus as God, as the Savior, as the shepherd, as the guide, as the judge, as the teacher, and as the prophet, receive His teaching, and abide in the Lord, within the teaching and the admonition of His word. Then the Lord also abides in us and makes us bear much fruit—this is the core of the word of John chapter 15.

Our Lord Jesus told you and me the gospel of the water and

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the Spirit and taught it to us, and we believed. Have we been made clean, or have we not? Because He is God and the Savior, when we learn this written word and accept it in our hearts, our hearts are made clean. This is the power of God. Did we go back two thousand years and see Jesus being nailed to the Cross? Did we see Him shedding His blood? We know it through the word. After we have been saved, we must throw away everything of our own and learn from the beginning what He teaches us. We must receive teaching like kindergarten children. Everything is new and completely different from the world.

## Abide in Jesus

The Lord went on to say, *"As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing" (John 15:4–5)*. It means that we must be in the Lord. This word carries the meaning that He is our God and, along with it, that we must follow His teaching. If we accept salvation by faith and then do everything else as we think fit, then even if we are attached to the vine for a while, there is no fruit at all.

People today say that they believe in Jesus, yet they live as they please. There are also many clergy who, thinking that the Lord will be pleased if they earn a lot of money and offer it, tried to give large offerings even by committing fraud and ended up in prison. Among those in prison, there are pastors, evangelists, senior deaconesses, elders, and laypeople—all of them. What is that? It is that they do not accept the Lord Jesus as their true God, Savior, teacher, and judge. They accept only salvation and judge and act in everything else according to their own will, and that

is why they end up like that. Such people have no faith, either. Such people are called false prophets.

The work we did today, too, was all doing the work of the Lord. Today, too, we served the Lord, we did the work the Lord told us to do, and we did it as we learned from the Lord. We give thanks to our Lord Jesus. The Lord is our God, our shepherd, our Savior, and our judge. I hope that the Lord will give health, safety, and wisdom to the men and women workers of God, bless them so that they can do well the tasks they are in charge of, and bless the spread of the gospel. ✉

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Sermon 3 by Paul C. Jong

# Abide in the Lord

**< John 15:1-6 >**

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

I would like to speak about what we must do in order to bear the fruit of faith. All of us, believing in God and living a life of faith, have the heart that wants to bear the fruit God desires. How a person who has received the remission of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit bears the fruit of faith, the fruit of his life of faith, while abiding in the Lord by that faith—this is the greatest task. The purpose of a vine is to bear grapes. Just as it is the assignment of a vine to bear much fruit and grow well and healthily, we must know that the purpose of our faith, too, is to bear the fruit of faith.

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## The preparation of our hearts to bear the fruit of faith

The word we read today tells us what our hearts and our deeds must be like in order to bear the fruit of faith. The Lord gives an unconditional command: *"Abide in Me, and I in you" (John 15:4)*. This is the whole of the first task after we have received salvation. Stay attached to the vine; abide in Me—that is what He says. A person who has been saved and a person who has been saved and is abiding in the Lord are different.

Look at the parable of the man who fell among thieves. The man who fell among thieves met a Samaritan and his life was saved. But the Samaritan did not merely save his life; he took him to an inn, gave money to the innkeeper, and asked him, saying, "Take good care of this man, and if it is not enough, I will repay you when I come back." We can see that the will of the Lord does not end with our being saved. It is to be saved, and then to abide in that inn, being cared for and bearing fruit. After the Lord saves us, He puts us in the church. And He puts those who have gone ahead in the church to carry out the will of God, and makes those who follow serve in unity in various ways, so that they accomplish that will and bear the fruit of faith.

## First throw away what is your own, and obey

To abide in the Lord, we must obey. Only when we obey the order God has established and obey the will of God does it become abiding in the Lord. Ordinary people think, "I have been saved, so why do you keep interfering? If you would just stop nagging, I would do better." So-called smart people are like that. But the One who saved us is our Lord, and the One who

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commands us is also our Lord. The Lord is the One who had our sins transferred to Him with the baptism He received from John, died shedding His blood on the Cross, and rose again, and so removed our sins. Since it is the work that the Lord tells us to do, we must listen to that command and do it in the way the Lord tells us to do it. Otherwise, we cannot bear fruit.

For that, we must first empty our hearts. If a person has a lot of his own, he does not hear whatever the other person says. No matter how much is said during the sermon, not even a tiny bit of it gets into a person who has many thoughts of his own. If a cup is full of water, no matter how good the water you pour in, not a single drop is held, and if it is mixed in by force, it goes bad. That is why the Lord said, *"If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me" (Matthew 16:24)*. We must throw it away first. Even after we throw it away, remnants remain inside and oppose again and have a tug-of-war inside, and at that time we deny ourselves. In the past we lived according to our own thoughts and our own will, but now, only when we have first firmly resolved in our hearts to throw away our own will and follow the will of God, to throw away our own purpose and follow the purpose of God, and to throw away our own thoughts and follow the thoughts of God, do we then bear much fruit.

## A life of abiding in Jesus without compromising with oneself

After I met the Lord, I ran into this problem. The moment I read the word and the gospel was accomplished in my heart, a task fell on me. "To follow the Lord, I will have to throw away everything. Even if I preach this gospel, people will hardly

believe it; this is something unfamiliar, something that was possible only in the age of the apostles; if I preach this gospel, I will be rejected by people; if I follow this gospel, I will lose my family and my friends and everything…" The moment the word came into me, I first took up that heavy burden. So I tried hard to compromise, but I gave up. It was because it seemed the Lord was saying to me, "If you compromise for your own comfort while knowing this, I will require from you the price of the blood of life that these people shed as they die." In a way, meeting the Lord was like having a ring put through my nose. There is not even one percent of doing as I please. "Now I cannot live according to my own will. My life is not my own." That is exactly the word of Jesus telling me to abide in Him. I decided to yield and to follow, not because of my own soul but because of the souls of others. And so God opened the way and enabled me to live like that, and having lived on until now, I met you and am living like this.

## What the Lord wants is self-esteem, not pride

Reciting the word of God fluently and summarizing it is something anyone can do. The point is to yield oneself to the word of God and follow it by faith—to abide in the Lord. What do parents say to a child entering elementary school? "When you go to school, listen well to what the teacher says. Do well what the teacher tells you to do." The word telling us to abide in Him is just like those words. We are making too light of a word that is so simple. And the One who is commanding now is not a human being. It is the Lord, our Master, the Master of life, and the judge, who is commanding. Among people, holding out and being stubborn may work, but before God it does not work. If

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He says to abide in Him, we must abide in Him.

Your self is something full of stubbornness, self-will, and wickedness, so that even if you throw it out, no one will pick it up; only the devil would pick it up and use it to make you do wicked things. You must know what a wicked human being you can be if you live according to your own will. If you cannot examine yourself and you insist on your own stubbornness, how can you follow the Lord? We must look into ourselves from time to time. If we live according to our stubbornness and the thoughts of the flesh, countless people get hurt. That is why we must be united within the church God has established, know its heart and its purpose, unite our hearts, and follow by faith. This is not something that can be learned at school, nor something known only with the head. Only when we actually obey and follow in such an environment, when at last the Holy Spirit says, "Yes, you did well," and gives peace to our hearts and leads us, can we know it.

First we obey, and what this word means we come to know afterward. When we obey by faith, submit to the command, follow, pray, and see what happens, we experience that God leads us like this and gives us faith, and then, when we look at the word of the Bible, we come to realize, "Ah, so that is what this word meant." If we do not actually live a life of faith like that, however much we look at the word of God, it is all just theory. That is the difference between the real thing and the fake. A person who has been saved and yet does not follow well has a lot of theory, so when some problem comes, he is soon shaken. Satan likes such people, uses them, and then tramples them down. But God is not like that. When I follow God, what is there for my pride to be hurt about? What on earth is so great about us that we assert our pride before God? When we go into the Lord, only the Lord is there, and I am not. What the Lord wants is self-

esteem, not pride. For a worker who has received the remission of sins, there is no such thing as pride before God.

## If we stay attached, we bear fruit naturally

*"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5)*. Faith is something that must be learned through those who have gone ahead. Some people think that when they become the person in charge, they have become someone who lords it over others and is served, but that is not what they learned from the Lord; it is what they learned from the world. A person who has truly followed while being led by the Lord comes to know that when he becomes the person in charge, there are more people for him to serve. He serves those under him—not telling them to serve him, but serving them so that they may serve the Lord. If a person says that he is serving while thinking, "I only have to do my own work," without giving any thought to what heart and what purpose those who have gone ahead have, that is doing his own work, not serving the Lord; it is not being united, and it is not being attached to the vine. And then, unable to receive the strength the Lord supplies, he withers completely.

If you are stubborn and hold out before God, you are the only one who loses. If you hinder a branch that can bear fruit, you end up becoming kindling that goes into the fire. God leads us to green pastures and still waters, but you go against Him and tumble down a cliff and do harm to yourself. Because there are those who have gone ahead in the church and those who love you, they tell you the word of God so that you will not end up like that. The Lord said, *"If anyone does not abide in Me, he is*

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*cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned" (John 15:6)*. If you say that you have received the remission of sins, you must stay attached. When a small branch is attached to a thick branch, it bears fruit of itself.

Following the Lord, I have experienced all of this word. Knowing that if I did not follow the Lord I would shrivel up, and that because He is so great, my not obeying was in itself a great sin, I could not help but obey. Even so, I was not one who did everything one hundred percent well. "Let me at least imitate it for now. Never mind whether I do well or badly; let me just yield and follow unconditionally. Then surely something will come of it." Frankly, that is how it was. But when I yielded and followed, the Lord gave me faith each time, gave me wisdom, protected me, and blessed me. And so today I have become one who serves the gospel to the whole world together with you. Because this word has led me, I thought it would be a blessing to share it with you, and so I have shared it. A life of faith is absolutely good. Let us experience how good our good Lord is, follow Him by faith, and live a life of abiding in the Lord. I hope that God will give you, too, exactly the same grace and blessing. ✉

Sermon 4 by Paul C. Jong

# Is the center of your heart turned toward God?

**< John 15:1-7 >**

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

## God, who knows the center of our hearts

We must know that God knows the state of our hearts well. The Lord said, *"Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit" (John 15:2)*. It means that though a person says he believes in God, He knows the center of that heart well—whether that heart really holds on to God, and whether it wants

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to live as God pleases. Does God know or not know the difference between a life of faith lived halfheartedly and a life of faith of truly believing in God? He knows it well.

## Examine yourself so that you do not become a diseased branch

As the saying goes, a tree is known by its fruit; when we look at the fruit, we come to know whether that brother or sister believes in and follows the Lord or not. But the real problem is the heart. If a person has no heart at the center of his heart to live united with God and opposes Him instead, as a result he becomes not one who does the work of God but one who wrecks the work of God. When a branch of a vine becomes diseased, it rots inward, and it does not rot alone; it makes all the other branches rot as well. From the farmer's standpoint, even if he wants to keep this branch, he cannot. If he leaves it alone, the germs spread to the main stem and the other branches, so even if half of it is still fresh and alive, he cuts it off from the inside.

He does not cut it off merely because it is diseased. If it is diseased, He sprays pesticide and treats it, too. But if a branch does not want to stay attached to the trunk of the vine and wants to live independently on its own, and even while attached has a heart that hates to become one with the vine, the owner says, "This will not do," and cuts it off. Those who quit their life of faith along the way, whether they wanted it or not, were cut off according to the will of the owner because fundamentally there was no heart in them to believe in and follow God. Even the cases of people leaving the church look outwardly as if people had done it, but when we analyze them carefully, we come to know that it was not people who did it, but God who took away

that branch. When we look at the people who ended up like that, there is no heart at the center of their hearts to stay attached to the vine. In the church, they are always alone. They are not united, saying that the work of the church is the work of the church and my work is my work. They have no interest in bearing fruit; their purpose is only to take in the nutrients that come up from the root and fatten their own branch. A cut-off branch seems alive for a while because some moisture remains, but as time passes it dries up completely, and people pick it up and burn it as kindling.

Still, if God cut off all the people who are lacking, how many people would be left? God waits, giving us time. He teaches us faith and teaches us unity through various events, and He leads us while allowing circumstances in which we cannot help but ask the Lord for help. What is important is not our ability, but whether, even though we are lacking and weak, we fundamentally have the heart at the center to believe in, obey, and follow God. Whether the center of our hearts is right or not before God—that is the basis, and on top of that, whether we believe or do not believe is what matters.

## The willing and the unwilling

When doing some work, a person who does it willingly and a person who does it only passively are completely different. When I work with the brothers at the workshop, there are dangerous jobs. A person who does only as he is told, without thinking, gets himself hurt and gets the person next to him hurt as well, and a great accident happens. He must obey, but even to obey that one instruction, he must think of dozens of things and cooperate: why he was told to do it this way, how he can keep

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the person next to him from getting hurt, and what would happen if a steel post fell over. Because a person who thinks and works willingly thinks of himself and thinks of his brothers and sisters as well, even if something goes wrong, no one gets hurt, and it can be set up again and done. That is why at the worksite I often say jokingly, "Keep your head on when you go about. Don't take your head off and leave it at home." It is because a person who does not think as he works is living as if he had no head.

## Faith is relying on Him

To follow God, faith is needed. We obey because we believe, we follow because we believe, and we bear fruit by faith. If we do not believe, we may be able to obey once or twice, but we cannot keep following. However much the Lord is our Savior and leads us and blesses us, if there is no faith in our hearts that believes in the word of the Lord and in the Lord Himself, we are living apart from the Lord. Even though we have been saved, we are living apart from Him. Originally, faith is relying on someone. The one without strength leaning on the One who has strength is what we call faith. To rely on Him and hold on to Him, saying, "Lord, You have power, and You are perfect. Please help me"—that is faith. The words *"If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned" (John 15:6)* and *"You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you" (John 15:3–4)* are all speaking of faith. Just as a branch is attached to the vine, being united with the Lord and attached to Him is faith. If we believe and follow, we bear fruit, and if we do not believe and follow, we cannot bear fruit.

What is important is the faith that believes with the heart that the Lord has actually saved you and me with the word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit—with His word and His body. The Lord is our Savior, who had our sins transferred to Him with the baptism He received from John and removed our sins with the Cross and the resurrection. We must believe in and hold on to that God with our hearts, and we must believe in and hold on to all the words that God has spoken to us. Depending on whether we believe with our hearts or do not believe, we either bear good fruit or fail to bear it. Then what kind of people should you and I become? We should become those who bear good fruit. For that, we must believe the word of God, believe in our Lord, and believe that God does His work through the church, and follow Him. When we do, good fruit is borne by the strength of the church, through the power of God. It is not that each individual bears it alone; fruit is borne through the hearts and the faith of those who believe in God.

## A life of faith that bears fruit

The Bible summed up faith neatly in one sentence: *"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1)*. It means that even though it has not appeared before our eyes yet, it will surely come about just as it is. A few days ago the brothers planted pepper seedlings in the field, and as it happened, a few peppers came up on the dinner table that evening, so I said jokingly, "Have the peppers we planted this morning already borne fruit, so that you picked them?" But that is actually a story about faith. The pepper seedlings were planted in order to eat peppers, and once time passes, those peppers will surely grow. That is faith. When we serve the gospel like this

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now, even though it is not visible to our eyes, as time passes it appears as reality.

Faith seems dry and tasteless at first. Since the word *"seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you" (Matthew 6:33)* exists only as a sentence, it is not that a wave of emotion sweeps over us just because we believe this word. At first it feels like a lifeless stick. But because it is the word of God and His promise, when we believe in and rely on this word and follow it and obey it, saying, "It will come about just as this word says," we come to experience that word actually coming about, and later on a wave of emotion comes sweeping over us as well. That is why we must believe the word of God, follow it, and obey it. This is a life of faith. Then we come to bear fruit, and God comes to accomplish His will through us.

## Set your heart on God

There are also people who leave the church and then slander the church. I think they are truly pitiful. What did the church do wrong to them? Was it a sin to feed them and clothe them when they were in need, to let them live to their heart's content, and to keep them from going down the wrong path? But there is no time to deal with such people, and it is not worth it. Not knowing that slandering believers is in the end slandering God, they have no fear. Just as when someone slanders the sons and daughters of a house, in the end the parents of that house step forward, there is no need for us to step forward; God takes care of it Himself. Instead, we need only pray, "God, bless them, too, so that they may eat well and live well, and lead them so that they do not do evil."

I do not only preach this word to you; I also apply it to myself. Because the one who preaches the word is also included in the word of God, I must look back and ask whether I am not one who is immersed only in the work and tries only to get the work done without thinking of the will of God. We must live a life of faith that is worthy of the name. To look carefully at whether our hearts are turned toward God, and whether we do much work or little, to do it with the heart that says, "This is doing the work God has told me to do. I am doing it in obedience in order to accomplish the will of God through the church"—that is exactly a life of faith, and that is faith. God knows the center of our hearts completely, and He knows the hearts that are not right, too, but He waits for a long, long time and gives us opportunities. Even so, if we make light of God and, caught up only in our own thoughts, lead our lives ourselves, in the end we get cut off. It is not that God forsakes us; it is that we ourselves oppose God. Therefore, while there is the opportunity in which God shows mercy, we must look back at ourselves day by day and rely on God and believe in Him as we follow Him. With human cunning and brains, we may calculate what is before our eyes, but we do not know what will happen in the future. I hope that you will not trust yourselves but rely on the LORD, and become wise people who entrust your lives to God and follow Him. I believe that God will lead us in goodness. ✉

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Sermon 5 by Paul C. Jong

# We have become the disciples of the Lord

**< John 15:5-8 >**

**"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples."**

## Labor that is not in vain

Through the labor and service of our brothers and sisters, we are sending the gospel of the water and the Spirit overseas in large numbers of printed books. Our fellow workers overseas receive our books and carry out the literature ministry themselves as well. We cannot go around and preach all of the gospel by word of mouth, and the content we preach is vast, so we do it through literature. We do the flower-calyx work and send the books; overseas, the believers receive those books and hand them out, preach with those books, and those who read those books receive the remission of sins and become workers, and they in turn preach the gospel and hand out the literature. And so the gospel is spreading throughout the whole world. I am

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truly thankful that since meeting the Lord I have been able to do work that has not been in vain up to now. Because the things we do are not in vain, the gospel is being spread, souls are being saved, and they are being blessed in both body and spirit, so there are truly many things to be thankful for.

## The Lord, who comes without fail, like the seasons

There is something that comes to my mind again and again. Spring comes, summer comes, autumn comes, and winter comes, and whenever that season comes around, that season arrives without fail, unfailingly. When it is bitterly cold all winter long, we wonder when summer will ever come, but as soon as the time comes, it arrives without fail. So I give thanks to God. Since the Lord said that He would come someday, will He not come without fail? He did not say on what day of what month He would come, but just as the seasons come to us unchangingly, the Lord, too, will surely come to you and me, who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. While I serve the gospel together with you like this, when the time comes, the Lord will come and take us with Him and make us live reigning in the kingdom of the Lord. He told us not to lose heart in doing good, and since we are serving like this, I think that He will surely come; since there are many souls overseas receiving the remission of sins, I think that He will soon come to take them—and so I have a truly thankful heart.

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## A life that gives benefit and trust

I am truly thankful that the things we do, in both body and spirit, are of help to people. It is good not to commit fraud. If we say that we ourselves are good, it does not inspire trust, but how good it is that people who have dealt with us say, "What these people do is the best!" On the other hand, the things that that man who caused a sensation in the world set up are all going to ruin now. Why do they go to ruin? They go to ruin because there is no credibility. When things were going well, instead of giving benefit to people and dealing with them sincerely, he committed fraud, so people turned their backs on him and he is going to ruin. A person who commits fraud is instinctively anxious and always lives ready to run away. But because we never commit fraud, we have nothing to be ashamed of before God and nothing to be ashamed of before people. I am truly thankful that we can live preaching the truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit without any such heart.

They say that when you make something known, rather than speaking only of its good points, it is imprinted on people's hearts much better if you point out what loss they suffer if they do not accept it. It is because everyone says that something is good. It is the same with the gospel. If we preach, "If you do not believe in this gospel of the water and the Spirit, you suffer these losses: first, you go to hell, and second, you lose the blessing of God," it will be imprinted on their hearts more. Of course, if we say it to a person so bluntly, we may be rejected as well, but the point is that when we preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit to people, it gives them benefit, and that is good; we, too, receive love, and that is good; the gospel is spread overseas, and that is good; and the things we do are not in vain, and for that we are thankful.

## If we stay attached by faith, we bear fruit

The Lord is the vine, and we are the branches. If a branch is attached to the vine, it bears much fruit, but if it falls off, it withers, and people pick it up and burn it in the fire. What a simple word! How do we stay attached? We stay attached by the faith that believes in the salvation the Lord accomplished for us by receiving baptism from John and having our sins transferred to Him, dying on the Cross, and rising again, and in the word the Lord has given. If we stay attached, we bear much fruit, and if we bear much fruit, we become His disciples—that is what this word means. We make a fuss about being cold if it gets only a little cold; we are such changeable and weak beings, but because we are attached to the Lord, the gospel is being spread and the literature ministry is being carried out through the flower-calyx business, so how thankful we are! Even though it seems that each team repeats its own tasks day after day, because those tasks are not in vain, the gospel is being spread steadily. As the saying goes, patience is bitter, but its fruit is sweet; once we have endured the hard process, later on we are gratified, thinking of our brothers and sisters working and resting in the place we have prepared. Because there is hope, because there is expectation, we endure this heat and these hardships, too.

*"If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you" (John 15:7)*. It seems that we ask for too little. We must ask to be made to live well, too, but if we only live too well, we are apt to hold on to that alone and not do the work of God, and so fall into corruption. If we have faith, even while living well we think of the will of God and serve the Lord. So I want our lives to become prosperous in proportion to how much we serve the Lord. We believe the word of the Lord and ask that the gospel be spread to

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the whole world, and the gospel actually is being spread.

In the early days, we handed out books and each person read them and was saved, but now the pattern of spreading the gospel has changed a great deal: they read the books and are saved, have the Holy Spirit in their hearts, and then gather people and go to preach and hand out the books. We are doing the flower-calyx work, so how thankful we are! My wish is not to live miserably on this earth because of the problems of food, clothing, and shelter. I think it is humiliating to ask favors of the people of the world because of making a living. Rather, I want to live a life of living well and sharing. But for the sake of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, I think we must know how to bow our heads.

## We are the disciples of the Lord

*"By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples" (John 15:8)*. We have now become the disciples of the Lord. You and I are the disciples of the Lord. We are now doing the work the Lord did on this earth. A disciple follows in the footsteps of his teacher. Just as the Lord loved the people of this earth, we, too, love the people of this earth, and just as the Lord loved us, we, too, love one another. If we do something bad, we cannot bear to live because it torments us. If we commit fraud or steal or make someone sad, we cannot bear to live because our hearts are troubled.

When we sometimes exhort the workers, it is so that things will go well for them. To a person who does the work entrusted to him carelessly, we sometimes exhort, "You must not do it that way. Why do you hurt the other person's heart? If you are going to do the work anyway, do it thoroughly. It is the person who does it faithfully whom we appoint as the one who has gone

ahead; who would appoint a person who does it carelessly?" If we come to run a private business in order to make a living, we must really give benefit to the consumers and receive their love; we must not think of receiving love while committing fraud. People are made to like those who give them benefit. When we preach the gospel and when we do business, too, we must keep giving benefit. If someone in the church happens to be under restriction, I hope you will know that it is not that he is being restricted out of hatred. It is telling him to become a person who gives benefit to others. Only when one becomes such a person can one be recognized as a disciple of the Lord. There is order and there are rules like this in the Church of God. We do not appoint as the one who has gone ahead a person who does not give benefit to others. It is because we are the disciples of the Lord.

We give thanks that He has made us the disciples of the Lord and enabled us to serve so as to give benefit and the gospel to many people all over the world. ✉

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## ◇ 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.

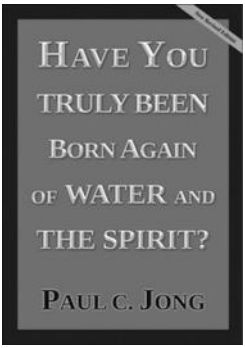
We sincerely hope that the books by Pastor Paul C. Jong, which will continue to be published, will serve as spiritual nourishment to strengthen your faith.

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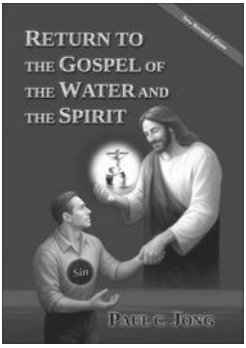
## *Paul C. Jong's Sermons*

**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.

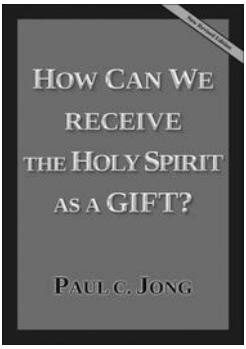
**RETURN TO THE GOSPEL OF THE WATER AND THE SPIRIT [New Revised Edition]**




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!

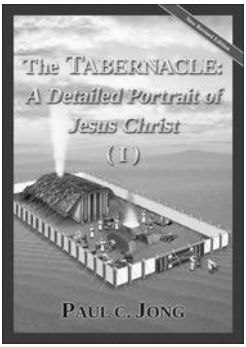
## HOW CAN WE RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT AS A GIFT? [New Revised Edition]




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]

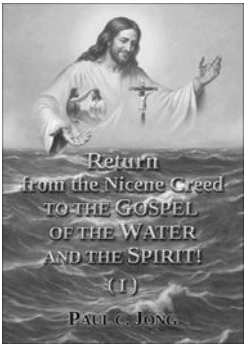



How can we find out the truth hidden in the Tabernacle? Only by knowing the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the real substance of the Tabernacle, can we correctly understand and know the answer to this question.

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.

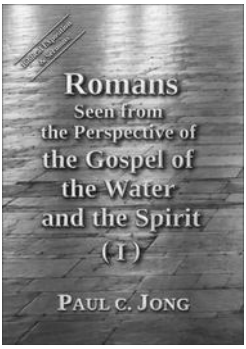
However, in the process of the Nicene Creed's formation, the ministry of Jesus having the sin of the world transferred to Him by being baptized by John was deleted from the creed's contents. As a result, this truth has been passed down in a hidden state within Christianity for about 1,700 years, reaching 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,

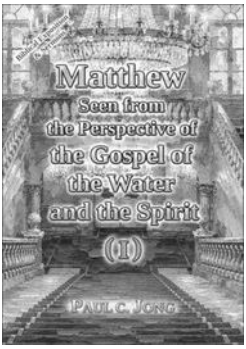
A person who embraces the gospel of the water and the Spirit in their heart comes to read Romans completely differently. The moment one opens this letter holding onto the gospel that Jesus had the sins of the world transferred to Him by receiving baptism from John, completely received the judgment of 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)



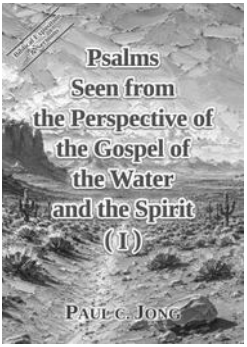

Why does sin still remain in your heart, even after believing in Jesus, reading the Bible for years, and attending church faithfully? Through Matthew chapters 1–4, this book answers clearly from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

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!

## Psalm seen from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit (I)

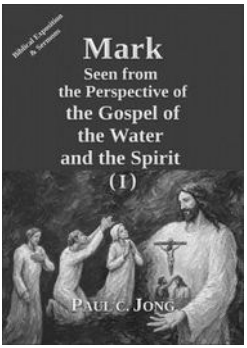



For long ages the Psalms have been the prayer book and the hymnal of the saints. Yet if we read them only as beautiful religious poetry or as an expression of emotion, we easily miss the meaning of these songs of praise. For David's laments and praises ultimately point to Jesus Christ, the Savior who is to come.

This book is a biblical exposition that unfolds the Psalms from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. David's songs are not an outpouring of emotion but the confession of a righteous man who has received the remission of sins, a prophetic praise that looked up to the Christ who is to come. The blessing, righteousness, and peace of the Psalms do not come from human goodness but from the salvation God accomplished in Christ.

Beneath it all flows a single gospel. It is the gospel of the water and the Spirit, by which Jesus took our sins upon Himself through the baptism He received from John, paid the price of those sins on the cross, and rose from the dead to make us righteous. When you open the Psalms with this gospel, the old songs come alive as your own confession, and this book leads you to the blessed place of those clothed in the righteousness of God.

## Mark Seen from the Perspective of the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit (4-Volume Series)



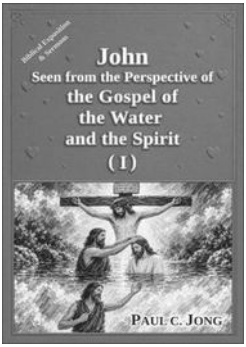

Who do you believe Jesus to be? Through Mark chapters 1–4, this book testifies to the beginning of the gospel, the Lord's authority to remit sins, and the ground of the heart that hears the Word.

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)**

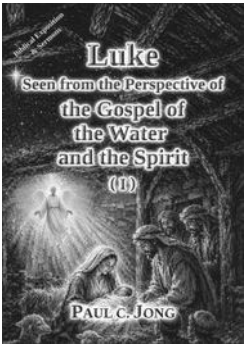



*John seen from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit (I)* is a book that examines, through the entire Gospel of John, how the Word, who is God, came to this earth clothed in flesh and saved sinners from sin.

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)**

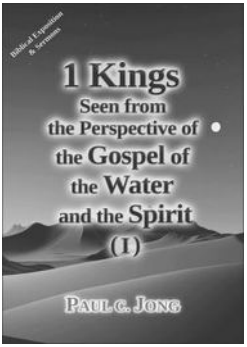



*"Luke Seen from the Perspective of the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit (I)"* expounds the Word from Luke chapters 1 through 6 from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Each chapter is composed of three parts: Biblical Exposition, Questions and Answers, and Sermons. The central 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!

## 1 Kings seen from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit (4-Volume Series)

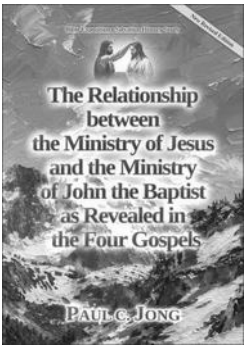



Why did Solomon, who received great wisdom from God, spend more time building his own palace than the Temple? Through David's old age and Adonijah's fall, and Solomon's accession and the building of the Temple, 1 Kings chapters 1–7 show that the glory of man fades, but the faith that fears God endures forever.

This book reveals the gospel of the water and the Spirit contained in the Temple and its furnishings. Jesus took the sins of the world upon Himself through the baptism He received from John the Baptist, was judged and died on the Cross, and rose again to complete salvation.

Do not rely on your own wisdom and your own kingdom. Use the wisdom, wealth, and time you have received for the gospel and for souls, and serve Jesus Christ as the King of your heart, building the house of God.

## The Relationship between the Ministry of Jesus and the Ministry of John the Baptist as Revealed in the Four Gospels




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.

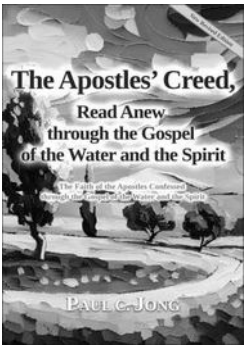
This book makes clear that we receive the remission of sins not by human zeal, but by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Just as sins were passed on to the sacrificial offering through the laying on of hands in the Old Testament, so Jesus took upon Himself the sin of the world through 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!

## *Paul C. Jong's Special Features*

### The Apostles' Creed, Read Anew through the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit [New Revised Edition]

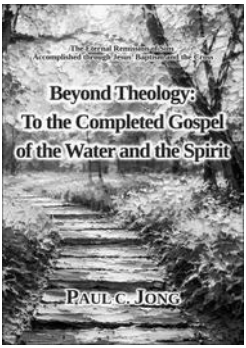



As you recite the Apostles' Creed every week, have you ever asked whether its statements are consistent with the gospel of the water and the Spirit proclaimed in the Bible? Countless Christians recite the Apostles' Creed, yet live without assurance as to whether they themselves have received the remission 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.

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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



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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 the past 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. The compilation of these manuscripts has given rise to today's 'Biblical Exposition Series from the Perspective of the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit.'**

**His works, comprising an ongoing 110-volume series, have been translated into more than 110 languages and are read in over 160 countries. E-books and audiobooks are available for free at www.bjnewlife.org, while physical books can be purchased on Amazon.**

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

# The Gospel of John, seen from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit

**"Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God" (John 3:5).**

**Nicodemus, who came to Jesus, was the teacher of Israel, but he did not know about being born again. This is because one cannot see the kingdom of God with religious status and knowledge of the Bible. Being born again does not come about through human effort or goodness, but takes place when one believes in one's heart that Jesus, through the baptism He received from John, bore all the sins of mankind, received the judgment for them on the Cross, removed all sins, and rose again.**

**Those who, through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, have received the remission of sin and obtained new life no longer try to come before God with their own righteousness and religious efforts. They abide in Jesus and are led by the word and the Holy Spirit, and with the love they have received from the Lord, they love one another and testify to the gospel. When they remain attached to Jesus, who is the true vine, they bear the fruit of faith.**

**The Gospel of John does not let us stop at knowledge, but invites us to the faith of being born again of water and the Spirit. As you follow the word together with Paul C. Jong's *John seen from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit (I)*, may you enjoy this grace of being brought from death into life.**

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