

Christ's Laborers Who Deliver Eternal Blessing

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Overseer Sung-Hyun Kim

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Those Who Struggle for Our Eternal Blessings

“which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel,”

Ephesians 3:5-6

“which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel,” (Ephesians 3:5-6)

How would you react if someone, covered in sewage, approached you and extended their hand? You might step back with a frown. The Jewish perspective toward the Gentiles went beyond this. How did Jonah respond when the people of Nineveh repented, and God chose not to bring the disaster He had foretold? Jonah became so angry and disheartened that he asked God to take his life. The attitude of the Jews toward the Gentiles persisted in the early Christian church. Even the apostles initially could not imagine that the Gentiles would receive forgiveness and the Holy Spirit. It took quite some time for them to accept this.

Now, after 2,000 years have passed, we clearly know that whether one is a Jew or a Gentile, if they believe in Christ, they will receive salvation, become part of the church, and ultimately be resurrected to enter heaven! How did we come to possess such faith? There was no place in the hearts of the Jews for the Gentiles. Then, how is it possible that we now accept that we are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ? Is it simply because so much time has passed, and this faith has naturally developed? Or is it because Gentiles have independently studied the Jewish faith and come to this understanding?

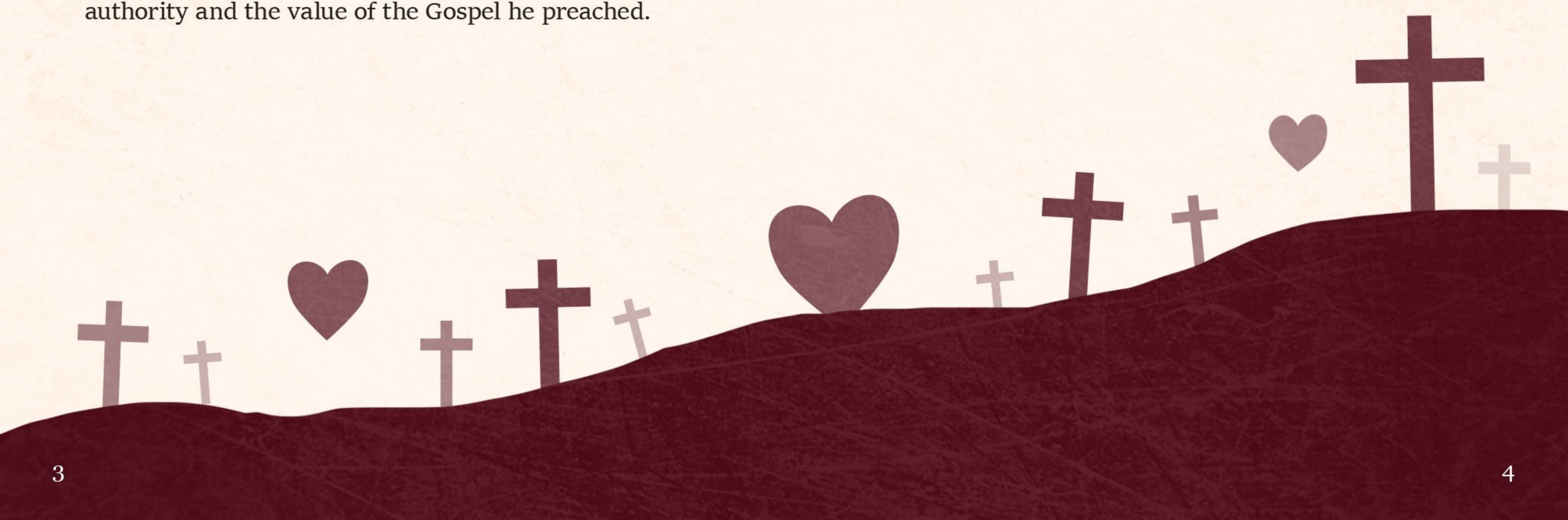
To answer these questions, one person cannot go unmentioned: the apostle Paul. He is the first person to realize that God’s will is the preaching of repentance for

the forgiveness of sins in His name to all nations, starting from Jerusalem – this fact is already written in the Old Testament. Paul also initially introduced the concept that both Gentiles and Jews together are part of Christ's body. He emphasized that this mystery, unknown in other generations, was revealed to the holy apostles. However, Paul himself understood this mystery with his insight before any other apostles did, and it was formally acknowledged by the apostles during the first Sanhedrin held in Jerusalem.

In a situation where no one acknowledged that Paul understood God's will, he preached the Gospel and endured all kinds of suffering to protect it. Can you imagine the level of opposition and resentment he faced from Jews who regarded Gentiles as beasts? Did the Jews who converted to Christianity support him? No, they did not. Then, were the Gentiles who received Paul's Gospel any different? They should have been in a position to support the apostle Paul, but they, too, continuously questioned his authority and had doubts. Nevertheless, Paul remained unwavering and fulfilled his mission to the end. Eventually, other apostles, including Peter, wholeheartedly recognized his unique authority and the value of the Gospel he preached.

Through the sacrifice of a few, we now have the privilege of walking the path to eternal life. The sacrifices made by these few individuals should never be taken for granted. Recognizing the value of their sacrifices and expressing gratitude for them is a fundamental attitude of faith. It is by no means a given that we can now live a faith life while being protected within the system of the church. We enjoy all of this because of someone else's sacrifice. Now, let us become workers ourselves. Let us lead a sacrificial life for the church, even if no one acknowledges it! God will consider this righteousness. While our righteousness cannot be compared to the righteousness of the Lord, let us struggle to practice righteousness. Through this, God's work of bestowing eternal blessings upon all nations will be fulfilled.

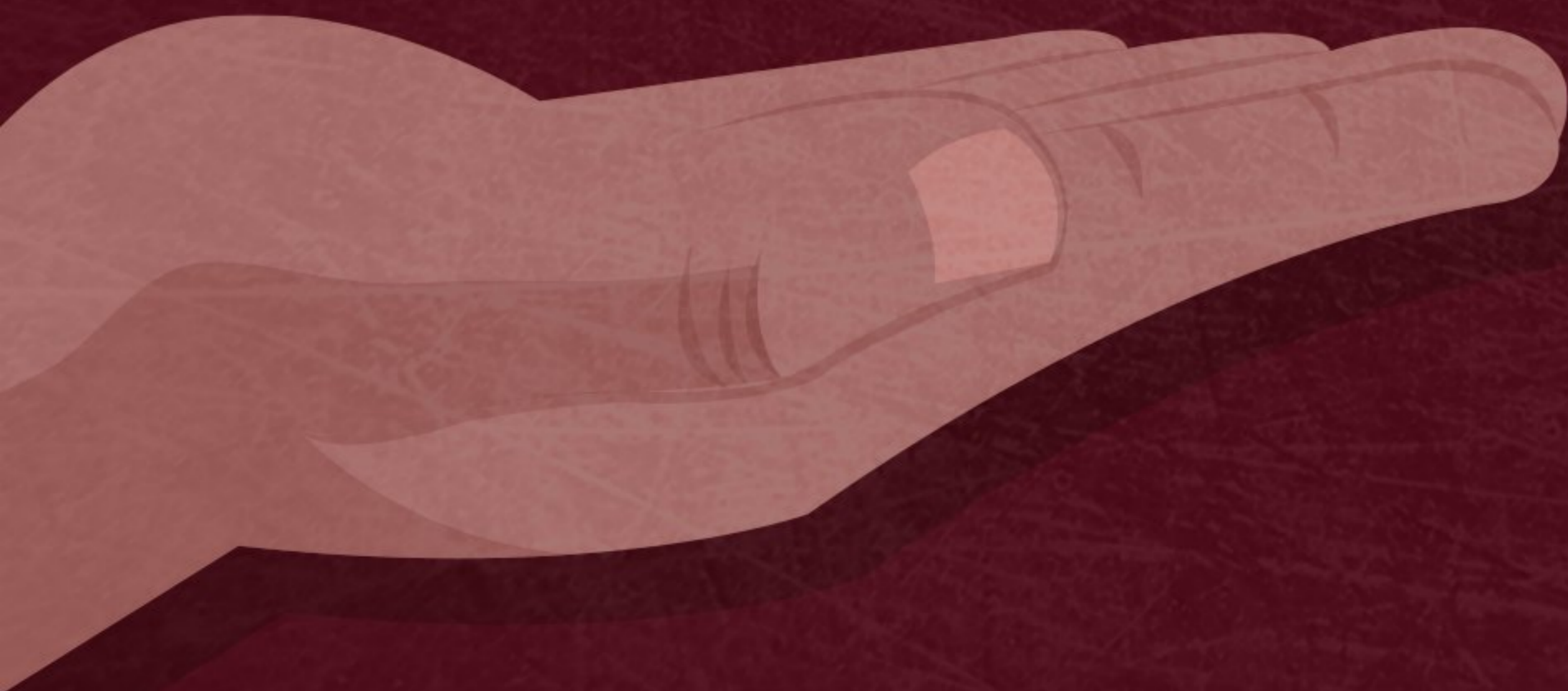
Sermon by **Overseer Sung-Hyun Kim**
Lord's Day Service on November 19, 2023





The Life that Testifies of His Grace

*"We have to dedicate
the remainder of our lives to Jesus
so that He can effectively use it for His purpose."*



Why does God still keep us in this dark world after we have become His children?

After our conversion, we must allow God to use our lives like remnants of cloth. The Lord can use us in various ways. He can use us as evangelists, volunteers, or financial supporters of missions. Just as Jesus rode on the colt when He went into Jerusalem or used a boat to cross the Sea of Galilee, financial support is needed for foreign missions. We must allow our Lord to utilize our lips, knowledge and wisdom. We have to dedicate the remainder of our lives to Jesus so that He can effectively use it for His purpose. We have to tell our children on our deathbed, "Listen, if you love me, maintain your spiritual lives and reach out to your neighbors with the Gospel. This is how you can love me even when I am gone." Even to our last breath, the Lord should use our lips for His glory.

When one does not testify of Jesus Christ, he has not really submitted his life to the Lord. When one does not give true thanksgiving, he has not really submitted his life to the Lord. The same applies for not evangelizing to others. From now on, instead of being so attached to sicknesses, our lives must be offered to the Lord. Since He has saved us, we must offer our lives to Him so that He can use us.

Everybody wants to be blessed. However, they are unaware of the true meaning of blessing. People usually think of money and possessions as blessings, but blessings mean spiritual riches. However, many people try to change their worldly situations through Jesus instead of receiving true, spiritual riches. Jesus said that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God. Why would people who have already

received salvation put themselves in such a dangerous state? You are not cursed just because you are poor. You are not cursed though you lose your money and business. For people who have met Jesus, the possessions of this world do not have any meaning. The parable of the rich man and Lazarus shows that wealth and honor of this world do not benefit the spirit.

We have to testify of the grace that God has given us whenever and wherever possible. We must be available so that the Lord does not feel uncomfortable to use us. As invited guests, we can experience uncomfortable situations. Daily activities that were comfortable in our own homes become uncomfortable when we are guests in another's home. We have to welcome Jesus not as a guest but as Lord, so that He can comfortably live in us as His home.

In 1 Corinthians 3:9, it says that we are God's building and His field. Whether peas or beans, what will be planted is up to the farmer. Whether the master plants a pastor Kim or a deacon Park, the most important thing is for the master to be comfortable using the field. We are Christ's fields and buildings. The Lord has to completely fill our lives and be comfortable using us.

From the moment we receive salvation, we must stop trying to change our fortunes and allow God to use us. That is the life that testifies of His work. I pray in the name of Jesus that you will allow Him to use you throughout your remaining time on earth.

in Know Jesus and Suppress Deceiving Spirits,
Chapter 11 "The Life that Testifies of His Grace"

*“Thank you Lord
for Your amazing grace!
Now, please use me
for Your gospel! ”*





Testimonies of Blessings

*From Kenya, Uganda,
Russia, and China*



“A New Way of Looking at Life Has Emerged for Me.”

Hello, please accept my humble greetings.

I am delighted with the letter that contained the sermon, and through it, I have learned a lot of things. Through the Lord’s Day sermon, my eyes have been opened to see life differently. I have sinned against God’s commandments, yet I had no concern for how God would perceive and feel about me.

I have come to realize that God endures pain even now to forgive us. I have strayed and followed the devil’s will, forgetting that God is with me. I have caused much pain for God, yet despite it all, I fervently pray that He forgives me. I now acknowledge my ignorance and am committed to changing my ways.

I yearn to dwell in God’s infinite grace, my spirit, body and mind, never forgetting His abundant love for me and His constant presence in my life. Even if there are challenges in following God’s will, I pray that He grants me the perseverance and strength to do so until the end.

Sincerely,
Geonalee from Kenya
September 18, 2023

“I Will Look Upon Only God, Who Is Eternal.”

After listening to the sermon titled ‘The Desire for Eternity,’ I have come to realize that I share the same feelings. This realization has offered a clear explanation for the sense of despair I’ve been enduring. I invested significant effort in making numerous friends and forming connections, but every time they departed, I felt worthless and abandoned. Eventually, I chose a solitary life, fearing that any new relationship would come to an end. Trying new things became a source of anxiety for me, as I knew they wouldn’t last indefinitely. I led a solitary existence, carrying the weight of this burden on my shoulders. When a friend made a new acquaintance, I experienced a blend of jealousy and the fear of losing them in my heart.

During that time, I longed to be loved, but I eventually gave up because I felt unlovable, and it seemed illogical that I yearned for something I had missed. In the past, I repeatedly followed the same pattern, waiting for the day when I would be loved without a clear sense of direction. However, I have now discovered the answer.

After listening to the sermon, my perspective underwent a change. For some time, I believed that I was abnormal, but now I have come to realize that I was not losing my sanity. It became clear to me that I should not allow fear to control me. Those who judged and dismissed me were guilty of the very actions I had resolved not to repeat. I am now content because I have discovered what God has placed in my heart.

Now, I focus solely on God, who is eternal, and in doing so, I gain clarity about myself. I have come to realize that nothing is eternal except that which originates from God. Moreover, after hearing the Word, I have acknowledged that my desires were centered around worldly things. I no longer pursue things that are temporary and no longer feel regret about it. It may sound silly, but even if someone wishes to be a part of my life for a long time, they will pass away before eternity arrives, and they cannot remain in my life indefinitely. Everything, except for eternal things, is fleeting. This is what I have come to understand through the sermon. Thank you for sharing this precious message with me.

Sincerely,
Asiimwe from Uganda
November 11, 2023

“In the Midst of a War Where Bullets Fly”

I live in Donetsk, Russia. Bullets are flying here, and leading a normal life is impossible. However, through the word sent by Sungrak Church, I find joy and receive the strength that the Lord provides.

Today, I heard the sermon twice you sent me, and the second time, I was deeply moved and gained more insight. This is because I remembered the sins I committed in the past and the encounters with other gods mentioned in the sermon. I sought forgiveness from the Lord for my sins, and He granted me forgiveness.

I have not been able to conceive since my marriage, and it remains so today. All my friends have become pregnant and given birth, and I desperately wished for the same. I became obsessed with pregnancy and started consulting doctors, acupuncturists, and herbalists. In my desperation, I even visited fortunetellers and shamans, and I fell into utter despair. Amid all of this, I began to question myself, "What am I doing? Who are these fortunetellers, and what can they really do?"

Thankfully, I began to introspect and started making the most sincere confession of my life. "Lord, I believe in You. I entrust my life to You. From the moment I accepted Jesus as my Savior, the moment I was baptized, and the moment I received the Holy Spirit, I believed." It's crucial to always remember this and not falter.

The Lord is gracious and forgives, but it's also crucial that we guard against committing sins. We must teach and warn others to follow the word of the good and Almighty God with a careful and humble attitude so that they do not fall into sin.

I praise and worship the great, Almighty, and merciful Father God with all my heart!

Sincerely,
Lylia from Russia
September 20, 2023

“I Wanted to Crawl Under a Rock.”

Whenever I feel guilty listening to the sermon, I want to prove myself that I am not that kind of a person. That is why it is difficult to write sharings after listening to the sermon. I used to think I should be a good person since I was young, and this idea has been deeply ingrained in me.

Even though I believed in Jesus, I had an arrogant passion to repay the debt of His blood. Furthermore, I considered myself righteous because there was nothing bad that I had done to feel sorry for others. However, after listening to this week's Lord's Day sermon, I wanted to crawl under a rock. I closed my heart with my own righteousness and only knew to accumulate spiritual knowledge, which made my heart hardened. Nevertheless, even though I am very filthy, I consider myself obedient and selfless in my narcissistic state.

I thought that merely listening to the sermons of the mother church was following the mother church, and I believed that I had done my job by delivering those sermons to the members of the church. When I listened to the sermons and read letters, I convinced myself that I understood everything. Even though I confessed that I was a dogshit, it was just words from my mouth, not deep down in my heart, and I considered that the overseer was talking about other people.

Through the sermon “Believe in the Gospel,” it became clear that I am just like a Jew. If I had kept on living like this, someday, I would eventually become someone who causes division. The reason I could not receive the word of God despite reading the Bible is because I selectively chose the word according to my own needs and ignored God, who declared that I was a sinner.

I was deeply immersed in the thought of being righteous, and even after taking Berea Academy, I did not truly realize the Picture of God's Will and instead considered myself outstanding. I believed that my faith was in a good state because I was conveying the words of Berea, and also, I have stuck in the thought that my behavior was nobler than others. The reason the church did not change was because of me.

I want to change. Lord, help me to repent. I am grateful for the love of my mother church. I came to realize that the purpose of repentance is not for self-realization but rather to change throughout my entire life to be used by the Lord.

After listening to the sermon "Believe in the Gospel" by Overseer Sung-Hyun Kim on August 28th, 2022.

Minister Rue from China

October 11, 2023

“Thanks for Your Dedication”

Sungrak Church has kindly sent me the Berea books related to Jesus Christ. These books are masterpieces that include the essence of the Lord’s teachings. The dedication of Sungrak Church to preach all over the world is truly moving. I deeply respect your dedication and passion.

Here, there is a great need for spiritual nourishment. Many people are seeking to discover the meaning of life. I believe that your assistance can shine the path with the Lord’s light for these individuals. I hope that you might consider establishing the Sungrak Church here or sending more books that can help us. Your support will bring hope to those to those in darkness.

I am grateful for the dedication and thoughtfulness of Sungrak Church. I pray that the Lord Jesus Christ will bless your ministry abundantly.

Sincerely,
Nayiga from Uganda
November 1, 2023





Reason for Not Agreeing with a Dissuasion

And as we stayed many days, a certain prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. When he had come to us, he took Paul's belt, bound his own hands and feet, and said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt, and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.'" Now when we heard these things, both we and those from that place pleaded with him not to go up to Jerusalem. Then Paul answered, "What do you mean by weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." So when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, "The will of the Lord be done."

(Acts 21:10-14)

This is a scene where Paul, returning from his second missionary journey, bid farewell to the elders in Ephesus and headed towards Jerusalem. At that time, a prophet named Agabus arrived from Judea. He took off Paul's belt and bound his own hands and feet with it, saying, "The Holy Spirit says, 'In this way, the Jewish in Jerusalem will bind the owner of this belt and will hand him over to the Gentiles.'" Perhaps Agabus saw a vision during prayer or was inspired in some special way, leading him to convey this message to Paul. Upon hearing this, Paul's followers tried to dissuade him from going to Jerusalem.

Some might interpret this verse to mean that "the Holy Spirit said not to go," but it is an exaggeration. The Holy Spirit did not explicitly prohibit going; rather, He foretold what would occur. However, how did people react to this? They said, "You shouldn't go." What led them to this conclusion? Those who heard Agabus' prophecy about Paul facing persecution in Jerusalem dissuaded him from going. Yet, there is a significant distinction between this prophesy and their advice. It may seem obvious, but it is actually quite different: the statement "If you go there, you will be bound and handed over to the Gentiles," should not be equated with "Don't go." While some might assume they mean the same thing, actually, they are not. If Paul had genuinely refrained from going to Jerusalem due to this prediction, many would naturally assume that Agabus intended for Paul not to go. However, Paul did not understand it in that manner and disregarded their advice. What caused people to believe that Paul should not go? They received the same information, but their perspectives were different. Those vessels are completely distinct. Paul's vessel differs significantly from others.

The situation that Paul might face was extremely difficult and painful for those around him, so they worried about Paul and felt sympathy for him. However, those who felt sorry for Paul lacked faith. That is not the perspective one should have regarding God's worker. When Jesus carried the cross on His way to be crucified, people were mourning and weeping for Him. Jesus must have found this scene bewildering and speechless. "Who am I suffering for now? Are you crying for me? I am enduring this suffering on your behalf out of compassion, yet you are pitying me..." Their actions left Jesus feeling deeply frustrated. However, to human eyes, the scene of Jesus carrying the cross appeared pitiful and tragic. Therefore, we can discern whether someone is a fleshly person or a spiritual person in situations like this. Since we have received the Holy Spirit and come to know the truth, we should strive to be a spiritual person.

What was Paul's response to their advice? He said, "Why are you weeping and breaking my heart? I am ready not only to be bound but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." Is there a necessity to pity and cry for someone who already possesses such determination? Just as those who were mourning for Jesus made Him feel absurd, Paul must have experienced a similar sentiment at that moment. From a human perspective, he should comfort those people and say, "Oh, okay, I'll listen to you and not go." However, that was not the point.

From a human-centered perspective, it might seem like Paul disregarded the Holy Spirit's warning, even though the Holy Spirit clearly warned him. However, this explanation is solely based on a human standpoint. Despite receiving a revelation from the Holy Spirit, there exists a higher purpose—God's will. Therefore, no matter what the Holy

Spirit reveals, we must also act according to the higher value, which is God's will. Jesus came to the earth, preached the Gospel, endured persecution and was eventually killed. After Jesus was resurrected from the dead, He commanded His disciples not only to suffer persecution with Him but also to spread the Gospel to the ends of the earth. Thus, from Paul's perspective, this represented a great opportunity. This was an excellent opportunity. If he was captured in Jerusalem and handed over to the Gentiles, it would provide the opportunity to go to Rome. Moreover, facing trial before the Roman emperor, Caesar, would present another significant opportunity. However, those influenced by human perspectives would try to persuade Paul, pity him, and do whatever it took to save him, even resorting to bribery. Nonetheless, Paul was arrested in accordance with God's will.

So, a certain level of calm and rational thinking is necessary at this point. This dispassionateness should not only apply to yourself but also to others. That is why in verse 14, it is said, "When he would not be dissuaded, we gave up and said, 'The Lord's will be done.'" Indeed, the highest priority is the will of the Lord. It is akin to a situation where the commander-in-chief has devised a strategic plan and revealed it all. Consequently, we must be equipped at His level. On the battlefield, each individual has a distinct division of labor and role. The commander-in-chief must give orders in accordance with the overall context of the war and not alter strategies based on the individual tragic crises that may arise.

As we engage in missionary work, we often face such contradictions and decisions, which can be described as ethical dilemmas. I have personally experienced numerous instances up to this point. Even now, I receive daily reports

of Chinese believers facing persecution, almost every day. When leaders of the Berea churches get caught, within my human mindset, I honestly want to rush to them and help them, but I still adhere to the established principles. What did Paul just say? “I’m ready to die,” he said. Hence, I teach them in the same way based on these principles, “While incarcerated, you should pray diligently and preach the Gospel to those who are imprisoned. While you’re in prison, your church members will be awake and pray fervently, leading to your church’s revival. Moreover, how can you be certain that you won’t have the opportunity to preach the Gospel to the police? So, pray earnestly while you’re inside and wait patiently! Even if you were to endure beating or face death there, it would still hold value. The blood you shed will pave the way for the growth of the church in that area.” You know, the church has grown by drinking blood. Just as plants grow through the water, the church flourished through the shedding of blood. The rapid growth of the Korean church is attributed to the bloodshed of missionaries. Thus, I instruct them, “Your bloodshed will bring growth to the church, so be prepared to die generously.”

In the long run, we can observe that the authenticity of a person’s beliefs becomes evident. Those who have been nurtured gradually by the words remain unshaken and they accept them as guidance based on the Picture of God’s Will. Some have chosen to adhere to our guidance in this manner, while others choose not to. Then, what happens to them after time passes? Remarkably, those who choose to follow often experience positive outcomes. How wonderful it is to have such a dedicated group of people who persist in the Berea Movement! There is no need to fear at all, no matter how severe the persecution may be. We will remain

faithful until the end. Even if everything else is taken away, including our lives, our faith cannot be taken away, and therefore, there is nothing to fear. Our hearts are filled with profound peace. However, the root of the lack of peace lies in an attachment to things that can be taken away, eventually leading to failure.

When we prioritize God’s will above all else, we will remain steadfast, regardless of what others say they have seen or heard. We have a clear understanding of our direction. We are not wandering aimlessly but fully aware of our path. Therefore, no matter what others say, we continue forward. We have encountered many individuals, each with their own personal problems. Their difficult situations are indeed pitiful, but these problems are not something we can directly assume responsibility for. Our role is to assist them in finding solutions to their problems independently. Our objective is not to be responsible for their problems but to empower them to address those issues themselves to truly experience long-lasting growth. That is what we need to do.

in *Breaking Away from Mysticism in Faith Life*, Part 7

Sermon by **Pastor Ki-Taek Lee**

The Director of Sungrak Mission Center

