
THE CROSS OF CHRIST

Redeemer Jesus Christ

But he was pierced for our transgressions,
he was crushed for our iniquities;
the punishment that brought us peace was on him,
and by his wounds we are healed. [Isaiah 53:5]



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The Cross of Christ

A 40 Day Lenten Bible Study with Illustrations

John 13:1-19:30

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Lectured by Dr. David Jang
Compiled by Dr. Christy Tran

Foreword

This Lenten Bible Study is designed to help you deeply meditate John 13:1 to 19:30 for each day of Lent with illustrations. The Last Supper begins in John 13 and Jesus dies on the cross on John 19:30. These passages in John focus on the 'death' of Christ. These are the most central part in the whole arrangement of the Gospel of John.¹

Then why should we focus on the 'death'?

It is because we wish to know the love of God. Martyn Lloyd-Jones states: "Nothing is more wonderful than to know that God loves you; and no man can truly know that God loves him except in Jesus Christ and Him crucified."²

You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! (Romans 5:6-8)

'Christ', Paul says, 'died'. This is most important ... It is not the life, it is not the teaching, it is not the miracles; but 'Christ died'. This is what he emphasizes in order to show and to prove God's love towards us.³

The reason why we should pay attention to the death of Christ is to know God's love. The cross of Christ is the message of the greatest love in human history. This love was born again with life. The resurrection is promised after the cross. The resurrection is eternal life born of love. In summary, the love of the cross and the resurrection of eternal life is the message of the Gospel. Therefore, the reason why we focus on the death of Christ is to know the Gospel better.

"Spurgeon used to say, and I am increasingly convinced of the rightness of his dictum, that the ultimate way to test whether a man is truly preaching the gospel or

¹ Leon Morris states: "It is clear that for John the death of Jesus occupied the central place. He has referred to Jesus' "hour" or his "time" on a number of occasions during his account of the public ministry of our Lord to let us know that everything moves on to his climax, and his arrangement of his Gospel gives twelve chapters to the whole of the life of Jesus up to the eve of the crucifixion and nine to the last night of his life, together with the death and resurrection narratives. It is obvious where the emphasis lies. John will not let his reader miss what is the very central thing." Leon Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc, 2000), 466.

² Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Assurance: Romans 5* (London: Banner of Truth Trust, 1971), 19.

³ Lloyd-Jones, *Assurance: Romans 5*, 109.

not, is to notice the emphasis which he places upon 'the blood.' It is not enough to talk about the cross and the death; the test is 'the blood'.⁴

We ought to know the love of God through Jesus Christ and him crucified. It is the foundation of the Gospel and the driving force in our lives.

Faith can be defined as a proper relationship. Faith in God lets humanity form a proper relationship with God. The proper relationship with God that the Bible exhorts is the relationship of love, which must be formed with love. It is because God is love as Apostle John testifies. (1 John 4:8; 4:16)

The cross of Christ is an incident that the love of God was revealed most clearly. Prior to this incident no one saw God's love. God revealed His love to the whole world through the cross, by which He enabled the resurrection. The cross and resurrection is the essence of the Gospel.

The heart of all meditations in this book lies the cross. Rather than introducing the cross to explain the key doctrines of Christianity, I placed the center of all studies on the cross.

In summary the following two objectives are expected as the result of this Bible study;

First, by knowing the meaning of of passion of Christ, rediscover the love of God that is revealed through Christ and gain a key to comprehend the Gospel.

Second, by knowing the cross of love in Christ, form a relationship of love with Christ and joyfully follow his path.

During the season of Lent I wish that this study will lead you into deeper meditation of the Lord who was crucified for us and resurrected. I also hope to challenge you in rediscovering the passion of the cross and the grace of salvation, which otherwise would be degraded into 'cheap grace.' Finally I wish that it will lead you to walk together with Christ carrying his cross as my cross.

⁴ Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *God's Way of Reconciliation: Ephesians 2* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1981), 331.



The Sacrifice Feeding the Flowers by *Monica Carmona*

Distinctive Characters of the Gospel of John

There is a need to briefly look at the distinctive characters of the Gospel of John before we begin our studies.

We call the three Gospels, excluding the Gospel of John, Synoptic Gospels. Synoptic Gospels means taking a common view. While the first three Gospels share similarities of form of descriptions, and the style of writing in regards to the life and ministry of Jesus, the fourth Gospel is distinctively different.

John Calvin compared and contrasted Synoptic Gospels to the Gospel of John in the preface of his commentary to John: "The other three Gospels give a fuller narrative of the life and death of Christ, but John dwells at greater length on the teaching about the role of Christ and the power of his death and resurrection. The others certainly say that Christ came to bring salvation the world, to atone for the sins of the world by the sacrifice of his death, and, in short, to do everything that was required from the Mediator. John, likewise, devotes a portion of his work to historical details. But the teaching which points out to us the power and benefit of the coming of Christ is far more clearly shown by him than by the rest. They all had the same purpose: to point out Christ. The first three Gospels show his body, so to speak, but John shows his soul. For this reason I usually say that this Gospel is a key to understanding the rest; for whoever understands the power of Christ strikingly pictured here will then profit by reading what the others tell about the Redeemer who appeared."⁵

To help us understand the characters of the Gospel of John more let us continue to look at words from a few more renowned scholars who studied John:

"I like the comparison of John's Gospel to a pool in which a child may wade and an elephant can swim. It is both simple and profound. It is for the veriest beginner in the faith and for the mature Christian. Its appeal is immediate and never failing."⁶ – *Leon Morris*

"*The Gospel according to St. John* is to many people the most precious book in the Bible. It is an amazing book. It can be read and loved without any commentary at all. Throughout the generations simple people have fed their hearts and nourished their souls on it with nothing but the text of the Authorized Version in their hands. But the more we study *John*, the more wealth arises out of it."⁷ – *William Barclay*

⁵ John Calvin, *John: The Crossway Classic Commentaries* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1994), Xii.

⁶ Leon Morris, *The Gospel according to John*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament Series, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995), 3.

⁷ William Barclay, *The Daily Study Bible: The Gospel of John*, vol. 1. 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1956), ix.

“John was a poet; his Gospel, an elaborate poem. Its simplicity is deceptive. John specialized in double meaning, allusion, allegory, irony, and symbolism. His well-crafted work, like a symphony, advances new themes, drifts into others, then returns with similar sounds yet fresh and alluring.”⁸ – *Philip Wesley Comfort*

“Here it is necessary to say that for as long as I can remember I have had more love for St. John’s Gospel than for any other book. ... St. Paul is the exciting, and also rather bewildering, adventure; with St. John I am at home.”⁹ – *William Ebor*

“The Gospel of John has long been a favorite Bible students, and yet it is the most enigmatic of the four canonical Gospels. It is the most highly symbolic of all of the Gospels, yet it presents stories in a simple language and in an inviting, dramatic style. It lends itself easily to retelling. .”¹⁰ – *Dennis Smith*

As examined above the Gospel of John has its own distinctive flavor which is differentiated from Synoptic Gospel. As we study this book of John, filled with double meanings and symbolism, we are advised to meditate the underlying meaning and savor its flavor thoroughly. Let us go deep into the story of Jesus that John depicted and engrave the story in our heart for the (coming) 40 days. As John did, let us also retell the story of Jesus with our own words.

Lastly, a different aspect is displayed from chapter 13 distinguished from the first twelve chapters of the book of John. As we begin our Lenten journey, which begins from 13:1 and leads till 19:30, it will be advantageous to overview the structure of this Gospel.

John Philips summed up this well: “John has set before us the signs of the Son of God (chapters 1 - 12). Now (beginning from chapter 13) he sets before us the secrets of the Son of God. The first major section of this gospel is public, the second is private; the first part is full of controversy, the second is full of confidences; in the first part the Lord reveals his person, in the second he reveals his passion.”¹¹ (The parentheses include the author’s own explanation.)

Beginning from John chapter 13, before going to the cross the Lord calls his beloved disciples to the upper room, leaving the hostile world behind. He now

⁸ Philip Wesley Comfort, *I am the Way: A Spiritual Journey through the Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2004), 11.

⁹ William Temple, *Readings in St. John’s Gospel: First and Second Series* (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1950), vi.

¹⁰ Dennis E. Smith, *The Storyteller’s Companion to the Bible, John* vol. 10 (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 9.

¹¹ John Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John: An Expository Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2001), 247.

manifests the most significant and profound secret of the Son of Man intimately and most confidently. From here begins the passion of Christ that John depicts before us.

What is Lent?

Lent is a 40 day period starting on Ash Wednesday that lasts until Easter Sunday (not counting the six Sundays between those two dates) when believers prepare for Easter through self-denial and repentance, endeavor for personal piety, and remember the passion and death of Jesus Christ.

The number 40 appears frequently in the Bible; Moses fasted for 40 days in Mount Sinai; Elijah fasted for 40 days on the way to the mount of God; Israelites spent 40 days in the wilderness; Jesus was tempted after fasting 40 days in the wilderness.¹² We witness 40 in Noah's 40-day flood, the event that Jonah warned the impending judgment of God after 40 days in Nineveh, 40 days from resurrection to ascension of Jesus. In other words, 40 is a significant number that signify suffering and renewal.

The original meaning of Lent is a time of preparation and training for the people who were to be baptized on Easter Sunday. In the early Church, people naturally had a training period in which they prepared to be baptized on Easter; this period is Lent. Baptismal candidates were required to fast during this period, and later, this act of fasting was requested of the entire congregation.

Over the course of time, Lent has emphasized solemn worship and the pious lives of Christians regardless of baptism and it became a period of self-abasement and repentance, following the example of the *kenosis* love of Christ on the cross. Thus, Lent should be a season of love when Christians meditate on the amazing love of God that was revealed through Jesus Christ and not extinguish this flame of love. When we have a deep meditation on this love, we should not lose focus but receive spiritual and pious training.

When Christians, however, have piety and spiritual training, they might run into a problem. When they try to reveal their self-righteousness, they will face a crisis in their faith. Thus, rather than *a literal period* in which they focus only on the physical suffering of Christ, Lent should be *a spiritual period* in which believers embody the meaning of the passion of Christ as depicted by authors of the Bible and reflect the meaning in their life.

As one of the most important seasons, along with Easter in the church year, Lent contains the core of the Gospel. If Easter connotes brightness and life, the preceding season, Lent, embodies darkness and death. The message of the Gospel is the good news of purifying our sin, perishing the power of death, and gaining a new life through Jesus by his blood shed on the cross. At its simplest, the Gospel signifies the cross and

¹² Jangbok Jung, *Introduction to Liturgics* (Seoul: Worship and Sermon Academy, 1999), 299.

resurrection. However, just as the order of Lent and Easter cannot be altered, the order of cross and resurrection cannot be reversed either. One of the most critical problems in modern day Christians is their sole focus on the glorious resurrection without looking at the suffering of the cross.

The words of Cicero are often quoted, when he spoke of crucifixion as “that most cruel and disgusting penalty.” We should perhaps notice also the words of the Jewish writer Josephus who spoke of it as “the most wretched of deaths.”¹³ It was that death, the most dreaded death in the ancient world, the death of slaves and criminals, that Jesus died.¹⁴ This death of Jesus is the love of God for us and through this death God gave a life to us. . In order for Christians to fully savor the joy of resurrected life on Easter, they must meditate on the meaning of Jesus’ death during the season of Lent.

Ash Wednesday

The first day of Lent is called Ash Wednesday from the custom that prevailed in the early Church of sprinkling ashes on the heads of penitents on the first day of Lent, in token of repentance for sin.¹⁵

Passion Sunday

The fifth Sunday in Lent is known as Passion Sunday, because it marks the beginning of Passiontide, the last two weeks of Lent. These two weeks specifically commemorate the Passion of Jesus, or His experiences following the Last Supper.¹⁶

Passiontide

Passiontide refers to a two week period from Passion Sunday to Holy Saturday. It is the last two weeks of Lent.

Palm Sunday

The sixth Sunday of Lent, the last Sunday before Easter is called Palm Sunday. It commemorates Jesus’ entry to Jerusalem riding on a donkey.

Holy Week, or Passion Week

Palm Sunday leads to Holy Week. It is the last week of Lent followed by Easter. Commemorating the passion of Christ - him being arrested, tried by Pilate, and crucified,

¹³ Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 655.

¹⁴ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 291-292.

¹⁵ Charles Fillmore, *Keep a True Lent* (3rd ed. Lee’s Summit: Unity School of Christianity, 1954), 138.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

it is the climax of the Lenten period. Holy Week may properly be called the very center of the Christian Year.¹⁷

Three Minor Days

The first half of Holy Week is called Three Minor Days. It is Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday of Holy Week.

Triduum, The Paschal Triduum, or The Easter Triduum

Triduum is also called The Easter Triduum. Based on Jewish concept of the start of a day, which counts from sunset to sunrise, it begins from the evening of Maundy Thursday and lasts until the evening of Easter Sunday. Triduum commemorates the passion of Jesus Christ, his death and resurrection. It is the summit of the Church Calendar which includes Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, and Easter Sunday.

Maundy Thursday, or Holy Thursday

Maundy Thursday, the Thursday before Easter, is a corruption of the Latin word *mandati* meaning “of the commandment,” and refers to the command “This do in remembrance of me” spoken by Jesus in regard to His breaking of the bread and drinking of the wine at the Last Supper. Mandy Thursday commemorates the event of the Last Supper.¹⁸

According to the Synoptic Gospel, the Last Supper was the Passover meal and John records that Jesus was crucified on the day of Passover.¹⁹ It is also the day that Jesus washed the feet of disciples according to John.

Good Friday, or Holy Friday

Good Friday, the Friday before Easter, probably known originally as God’s Friday, commemorates the crucifixion of Jesus.²⁰ It commemorates the series of events that Jesus was arrested, tried, suffered and crucified. Paradoxically it also celebrates the Good News of the cross. The cross of Christ was not a failure but victory. Salvation came to all sinners as it is a day to preach the Good News of the cross, the blessed good news, the news of victory. This day, therefore, is called Good Friday.

¹⁷ Victor E. Beck and Paul M. Lindberg, *A Book of Lent* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1963), 32.

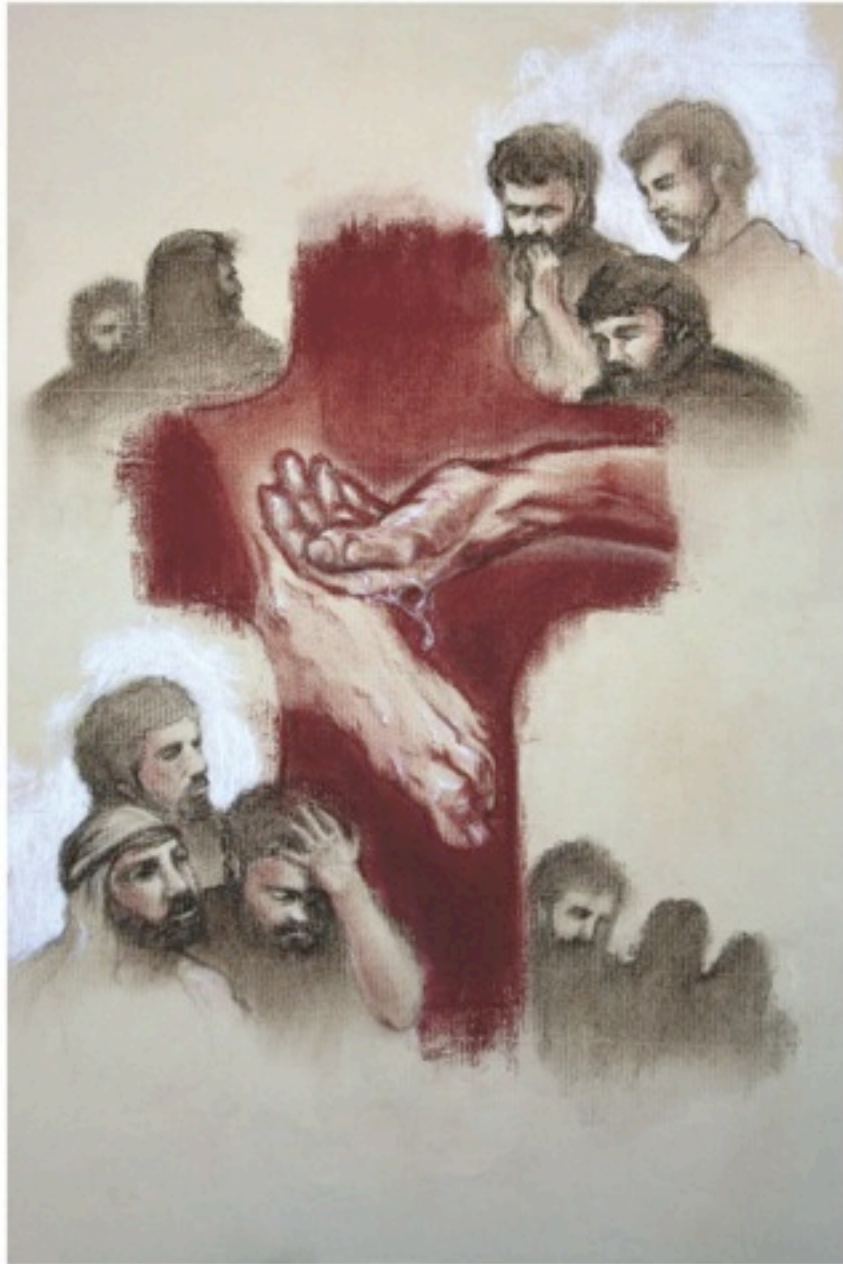
¹⁸ Fillmore, *Keep a True Lent*, 139.

¹⁹We should be aware of John’s intention in recording this way. John connects the Passover festival, which commemorates that the angel of death passing over the households of Hebrews, on which doorposts were sprinkled with the blood of lambs. He intends to emphasize that the death of Jesus was the death of redemption and that the true Passover lamb shed his blood for the world.

²⁰ Fillmore, *Keep a True Lent*, 139.

Holy Saturday

Holy Saturday is the day that Jesus rested in the tomb. It is also the Jewish Sabbath. Traditionally Church has emphasized and meditated the redemptive passion and death of Christ on this day. Especially this day is traditionally a day of fasting together with Good Friday. Whole congregations were requested to participate in fasting. It is also the last day of Baptismal education in preparing those who are to be baptized in the dawn or morning of Easter Sunday.



Footwashing by *Ginturn H. Tran*

Day 1: Ash Wednesday

Loving unto The End

John 13:1-3

¹ It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

² The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already prompted Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus.

³ Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God;

It was before the Passover Festival. Passover was a festival commemorating the deliverance of the Israelites; the angel of death passed over the households of Israel on which doorpost shed the blood of lambs. 'Before the Passover Festival' means that Jesus, the true Passover Lamb, was about to be scarified; his hour had come.²¹ This is the beginning point that unfolds the acts of Jesus Christ's last three days on earth. The term 'the last days on earth' is in other words 'death.' The time of death is approaching for Jesus. John does not record that 'Jesus knew that his end has come,' rather he records 'Jesus knew that he was returning to God.'

The life of Jesus Christ was begun for God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son to this world (John 3:16). Jesus also knew that "he had come from God and was going to God" (13:3; cf. 8:42; 16:5). This is self identity and self awareness of Jesus. This is a summary of the whole mission of the Son. Indeed, it is a summary of the whole gospel.²²

"Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end." This is the first verse of chapter 13 and it may be regarded as a kind of headline for the remainder of this gospel.²³ The life of Jesus Christ was begun because of the love of God. Therefore his whole life can be summarized in one word, 'love.'

Even at the moment of death that he had to carry the cross, Jesus loved.

What kind of love is this love of Jesus Christ?

To say that this is only a new category of love, or to insist that this was only divine not human love, may not situate us no different from Gnostics that as long ago as the first century denied the reality of Jesus' humanity. However this love is not

²¹ Comfort, *I am the Way: A Spiritual Journey through the Gospel of John*, 114.

²² Stanley B. Marrow, *The Gospel of John: A Reading* (New York: Paulist Press, 1995), 227.

²³ R. H. Lightfoot, *St. John's Gospel: A Commentary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1960), 260.

metaphysical and mysterious, not just divine love but it is the love that we also possess. Unlike us, Jesus simply loved *unto the end*.

That he loved them *unto the end, eis telos* means he loved ‘completely.’²⁴ This love was dedicating himself completely without leaving anything at all for his own. This unchanging love of Jesus swallowed even the impending death of the cross. He knew that he was returning to heaven. While he was hurrying there, he did not cease to love his own as before.²⁵

“... Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end (John 13:1)”

If we remember that when the evangelist uses “his own” rather than “his disciples,” he wishes to include all believers down the ages.²⁶

But we must not allow ourselves to think that this love for the world was in any way abstract or undifferentiated. This love with which Christ loved his own in the world is individual as well as distinctive.²⁷ Jesus loved all, even the ones who are not worthy to be loved, including Peter who denied him and even Judas who betrayed him.

“Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus (John 11:5)” In this list of Jesus’ love my name also is included and can be protracted to infinity.

+ Questions

1. Summarize today’s message in your own words.
2. Death to Jesus meant that the life which was initiated by love is now returning back according to the will of love of God. What is the meaning of death to me?
3. How can I apply the lessons from today’s message into my life?

+ Prayer

Jesus was born of God’s love, obeyed God’s will with love, and then returned back to God. I wish to know more about the life of Jesus Christ. Especially during this period of Lent I want to be touched by the love of Jesus Christ who gave us all things without leaving anything. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Day 2: Thursday after Ash Wednesday

The Gift of Love

John 13:4-11

²⁴ R. V. G. Tasker, *The Gospel According to St. John: The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965), 154.

²⁵ Calvin, *John*, 319.

²⁶ Marrow, *The Gospel of John*, 234.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 225.

⁴ so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist.

⁵ After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

⁶ He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

⁷ Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand."

⁸ "No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me."

⁹ "Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!"

¹⁰ Jesus answered, "Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you."

¹¹ For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean.

Jesus got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and washed the dirty feet of his disciples one by one. There are few incidents in the gospel story which reveals the character of Jesus, and which so perfectly show his love.²⁸

John records that Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power (John 13:3). What the Father had given into his hands was a gift of love. It is his recognition of this fact that sets him free to love his own "to the end" (13:1), and to demonstrate it by washing their feet.²⁹

However when Jesus Christ bent down and offered to wash the feet, Peter rejected the offer because he did not know the meaning. Then Jesus said, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me." Only the Lord is able to wash our sin and only after we are cleansed can we be the disciples of Christ.

The event of Jesus' footwashing foreshadows the cross itself. ³⁰ "... the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin (1 John 1:7)." Jesus' death on the cross will be like the bath: it will cleanse us wholly.³¹

Furthermore, Jesus' offer of footwashing is an offer of love. However Jesus, who "loved his own" (13:1), can only offer this love to them, but cannot compel them to

²⁸ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 159.

²⁹ Marrow, *The Gospel of John*, 230.

³⁰ Morris, *The Gospel according to John*, 544.

³¹ Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 470.

accept it.³² Only the ones who are willing to accept can receive the gift of love of Jesus Christ.

To accept the gift of love I should first be humble, confessing that I need his love. The gift of love that the Lord wishes to offer us is the gift of life that he lavishly gives all things, not sparing even his own life. It is heart trembling blood-red love. When we reject this love, we do not have a part in him and be his disciples.

Being loved is the indispensable precondition for loving (“We love, because he first loved us” 1 John 4:19).³³ When we are not loved, we cannot keep the command to love each other.

To accept this love of the Lord is “*eternal life*”; to refuse it is the “*judgment*.”³⁴ We should willingly accept the Lord’s love and be cleansed with the love.

+ Questions

1. Summarize today’s message in your own words.
2. By washing the feet of his disciples, Jesus is lowering himself to the very nature of a servant for the sake of love. With humility, the Lord offers the gift of love into my life today. Reflect if my arrogance hinders me from accepting this gift.
3. Based on today’s message, explain the meaning of “it is love alone that can appreciate love.”³⁵
4. How can I apply the lessons from today’s message into my life?

+ Prayer

Even today the Lord bends down and offers to wash our dirty feet. He knocks on the door of our hearts to give the gift of love. May we never reject this heart trembling holy love of the Lord as Peter did because of his arrogance. May we instead open our hearts wide, receive the love of the Lord fully into our hearts, be cleansed, and be led to eternal life. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

³² Marrow, *The Gospel of John*, 229.

³³ *Ibid.*, 230.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 231.

³⁵ Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *The Unsearchable Riches of Christ: Ephesians 3* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1979), 214.

Day 3: Friday after Ash Wednesday

“As I have done.”

John 13:12-17

12 When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them.

13 "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am.

14 Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet.

15 I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.

16 I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him.

17 Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

Though John did not record it, Luke included a very tragic line in his record of the Last Supper: "A dispute also arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest (Luke 22:24)." Even at the Last Supper, with the shadow of the cross approaching, the disciples were in a dispute over who is greater. (Matthew 20:20-28; Mark 10:35-45; Luke 22:24-27).

Back in the day of sandaled feet, footwashing was a humble but necessary service. After traveling over dusty and muddy paths, a foot bath was most refreshing. It was usually performed by the more lowly slaves - for there were distinctions of rank in slavery.³⁶

Jesus' footwashing was not a grand drama aiming to attract the eyes of audiences. The upper room that this incident took place was no theater.³⁷ This was real life. You cannot wash feet without getting down. Jesus' stooping to wash his disciples' feet was symbolic of God's humility.³⁸ Accordingly, it was not *in spite of* but *because of* the consciousness of his divine origin and destination that he arose from supper and assumed the dress and posture of a slave.³⁹

It is the story of this final submission of Jesus to death of which the footwashing was an acted parable.⁴⁰ It demonstrates what the Lord had always been teaching, will

³⁶ Chester Warren Quimby, *John, The Universal Gospel* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1947), 175.

³⁷ Marrow, *The Gospel of John*, 228.

³⁸ Quimby, *John, The Universal Gospel*, 176.

³⁹ Tasker, *The Gospel According to St. John*, 155.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 154.

be teaching, and showing after this incident. In one word he had demonstrated 'love.' Love compels the most menial services willingly because love is always like that.⁴¹

"Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, "If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all (Mark 9:35)." (Matthew 23:11; 20:27, Mark 10:43-44, Luke 22:26-27).

Jesus is teacher and Lord (John 13:13) but the greatest became the least. The Son of God came to us, became the lowliest of all servants, the last of all, and served all.

"Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. (John 13:14)" As Jesus lowered himself and washed our feet with his great love, we should also wash one another's feet with his love. What Jesus commands us to do is not to reciprocate his love and service, but to replicate it in our daily life in the community of believers.⁴² What John wants to tell us is that not just Jesus Christ can lower down to the bottom but, anyone, everyone, can be slaves.⁴³

The Lord said that "Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them." Blessed are those who comprehend Jesus' words as a way of life. Believing in him is not just an intellectual exercise. It is rather a whole life lived in accordance with the word he utters.⁴⁴ The love of Jesus Christ that John testifies is neither emotional nor theoretical. The love that Jesus demonstrated was self-denial and the acts of self-sacrifice based on love. This is the essence of love that John speaks to us. Let us also not be a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal without love (1 Corinthians 13:1), but act out the truth as we wash one another's feet with love.



Questions

1. The entire scene of footwashing is very close to what Paul verbalized in Philippians 2:5-11. John 13:3-12 provides the portrait, Philippians 2:5-11 the caption.⁴⁵ Provide your own caption to today's message.
2. "When Jesus had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them (John 13:12)." Give an answer to this question of the Lord.
3. How can you apply the lessons from today's message into your life?

⁴¹ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 159.

⁴² Marrow, *The Gospel of John*, 235.

⁴³ Quimby, *John, The Universal Gospel*, 176.

⁴⁴ Marrow, *The Gospel of John*, 233.

⁴⁵ Comfort, *I am the Way: A Spiritual Journey through the Gospel of John*, 113.

Prayer

Jesus Christ is the humble Lord who demonstrated the love of God not only in the incident of washing the feet of disciples but also in his whole life. My soul longs for this Lord. As the Lord emptied himself by love, let me also turn back from exalting myself. Lord, lead me to live like you resembling your love. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Judas' Last Sop by Ginturn H. Tran

Day 4: Saturday after Ash Wednesday

"He immediately went out; and it was night."

John 13:18-30

¹⁸ “I am not referring to all of you; I know those I have chosen. But this is to fulfill this passage of Scripture: ‘He who shared my bread has turned against me.’

¹⁹ “I am telling you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe that I am who I am.

²⁰ Very truly I tell you, whoever accepts anyone I send accepts me; and whoever accepts me accepts the one who sent me.”

²¹ After he had said this, Jesus was troubled in spirit and testified, “Very truly I tell you, one of you is going to betray me.”

²² His disciples stared at one another, at a loss to know which of them he meant.

²³ One of them, the disciple whom Jesus loved, was reclining next to him.

²⁴ Simon Peter motioned to this disciple and said, “Ask him which one he means.”

²⁵ Leaning back against Jesus, he asked him, “Lord, who is it?”

²⁶ Jesus answered, “It is the one to whom I will give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish.” Then, dipping the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. ²⁷ As soon as Judas took the bread, Satan entered into him. So Jesus told him, “What you are about to do, do quickly.”

²⁸ But no one at the meal understood why Jesus said this to him.

²⁹ Since Judas had charge of the money, some thought Jesus was telling him to buy what was needed for the festival, or to give something to the poor.

³⁰ As soon as Judas had taken the bread, he went out. And it was night.

Jesus said that one of you is going to betray me and the Twelve is clean, though not every one of them. He was referring to Judas. The uncleanness of Judas, to whom Jesus alluded by his remark, was not in his feet but in his heart.⁴⁶

This unclean one, the betrayer is now in the midst of the Last Supper. Jesus invited him to the table and washed his feet too. And he gave a piece of bread after having dipped it in the dish.

At first this looks like a device on Jesus’ part to expose Judas. Actually it is the exact opposite. In the Orient it was the custom to eat seated or squatting about a common bowl. Into it the participants dipped with fingers or folded bread to obtain what they wanted. When guests were present, the host, if he wished especially to honor one of them, would fold a piece of bread spoon-like, dip it into the dish and, securing some choice morsel, hand it to that guest as a special favor. This did Jesus unto Judas. It was thus no effort to expose Judas. It was an attempt to shield him.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Merrill C. Tenney, *John: The Gospel of Belief, An Analytic Study of the Text* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1948), 200.

⁴⁷ Quimby, *John, The Universal Gospel*, 177.

It was Jesus' last effort to win Judas. It was as if he said: 'Judas, tonight you are my most honored guest. Tonight you are my dearest friend.'⁴⁸

However Judas could not bear this love of Jesus Christ. He went too far to turn back. He was damned, not by any action of Jesus to expose him, but by the love of Christ to save him.⁴⁹ Judas finally forsook the last exhortation of love of Christ. Why did he forsake this love?

Because he could not comprehend the love of the Lord, all the acts of the Lord would have been like mockeries and nonsense. His own frustrated ambition, greed, and dishonesty drove him further and further away from Christ.⁵⁰ At the end, he rejected the love of Christ and departed to the path that has no point of return. But Judas had no excuses. He was chosen by Christ to be a disciple. He had become a disciple of his own free will. It was by his own choice he became a traitor.⁵¹

"As soon as Judas had taken the bread, he went out. And it was night (John 13:30)."

Though he was offered the bread of love, he turned it down. He fled into the blackness of spiritual death.⁵² His heart was too distanced from the Lord. Therefore he departed from the upper room of the bright light where the radiant truth of the Lord is being proclaimed and disappeared into the pitch-black night. There it is perpetual night.⁵³ This night is the dark night of his soul.

"..."What are you willing to give me if I hand him over to you?" So they counted out for him thirty silver coins. (Matthew 26:15)"

That night Judas left to betray Jesus. It is a very sorrowful and tragic story. Hester H. Cholmondeley speaks in his short poem:

*Still as of old
Men by themselves are priced –
For thirty pieces Judas sold
Himself, not Christ.*⁵⁴

Judas priced himself and ultimately sold himself as he sold Christ. Each of us, though able to stand by the grace of God, is free to fall by himself because of our free will. Though we may be with him, if we do not comprehend Jesus and do not know his

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John*, 254.

⁵¹ Ibid., 254.

⁵² Quimby, *John, The Universal Gospel*, 177.

⁵³ Marrow, *The Gospel of John*, 240.

⁵⁴ John C. Maxwell, *Developing the Leader Within You* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Inc, 2005), 45.

love, we too may sell ourselves as we sell the Lord in a cheap price just like Judas. Though there is only one way to stand, there are myriad ways each of us can choose to fall.⁵⁵ “So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! (1 Corinthians 10:12)”



Questions

1. Summarize today's message in your own words.
2. Judas' departure from the light was a journey into the darkness. There it is perpetual night. Reflect on myself, whether I reside in the light where the truth is proclaimed or reside in the night refusing the love of the Lord.
3. How can I apply the lessons from today's message into my life?



Prayer

The love of Jesus Christ is truly amazing. Though he knew that Judas was going to betray him, he still invited him to the table and washed his feet. He gave the piece of bread and offered the last exhortation to win him. The Lord loved even his betrayer and he still loved him unto the end. Let us not turn away the Lord's love by rejecting his supper of love. Let us not depart from light to darkness. Let us not sell ourselves as we sell the Lord. Let us respond to the love of the Lord with our love and reside in the light of the truth. In Jesus' name, Amen.

⁵⁵ Marrow, *The Gospel of John*, 227.



Judas immediately went out; John 13:30 by Joungmi Kang

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

The older I grow the more I ponder Judas Iscariot. He came so near to *not* betraying Jesus. He was a loyal disciple. It took courage to join that little band, and Judas had it. Then doubts began. What kind of Messiah was this who refused violent revolution and talked about loving one's enemies? Was not this idealistic Jesus letting them down? So the doubts grew, until in an explosive hour--oh, fifty-one votes against forty-nine--Judas sold his Lord. He came so near *not* doing it, that when he saw what he had done he hanged himself in shame. Ah, Judas, if you had only doubted your doubts enough to wait until Easter, until Pentecost, until Paul came, you would not be the supreme traitor of the centuries. You stood in the presence of divine greatness, and you disbelieved.

Harry Emerson Fosdick⁵⁶

⁵⁶ Thomas G. Long and Cornelius Plantinga, *A Chorus of Witnesses: Model Sermons for Today's Preacher* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1994), 116-117.



He immediately went out; and it was night; John 13:30 by Joungmi
Kang

Day 5: Monday of the First Week in Lent

“Now is the Son of Man glorified.”

John 13:31-32

31 When he was gone, Jesus said, "Now is the Son of Man glorified and God is glorified in him.

32 If God is glorified in him, God will glorify the Son in himself, and will glorify him at once.

Judas forsook the last exhortation of Jesus' love and departed from the light into the pitch-black darkness. What is the meaning of the departure of Judas?

The departure of Judas heralded the departure of Jesus. He was on his way home. The road was dark and steep. The cross stood astride the way.⁵⁷ Judas was on his way to betray Jesus into the hands of those who would have him crucified.⁵⁸

At this time Jesus proclaimed, "Now is the Son of Man glorified and God is glorified in him." 'Now' – Jesus says 'now.' Now is the time that the cross has become evident and soon he will face a brutal death but he speaks of glory. Jesus speaks in a past tense: "Now is the Son of Man glorified."

Judas has gone out, and the cross is a certainty. Now the glory of Jesus has come; and that glory is the cross.⁵⁹

Why is the cross glory?

It has been determined by God: it will assuredly come to pass. And when it comes to pass it will be the supreme manifestation of glory.⁶⁰ The Lord saw beyond the dark valley to the glory crowned peaks beyond.⁶¹

Jesus is looking right through the passion to the resurrection and to his restoration to his place in heaven. He is saying that the Father will be glorified in the cross and that he will glorify the Son when he raises him from the dead.⁶²

Because the whole world will know that Jesus is the Christ when he is lifted to the cross, the cross was the glory for Jesus. And on the cross it will be manifested that Jesus is the Son and God is the Father. Therefore God is also glorified by the death on the cross.

⁵⁷ Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John*, 259.

⁵⁸ Comfort, *I am the Way: A Spiritual Journey through the Gospel of John*, 120.

⁵⁹ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 171-172.

⁶⁰ Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 483.

⁶¹ Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John*, 259.

⁶² Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 483.

Jesus says all these things will take place “at once.” (13:32) This is the *faith* of Jesus. “Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. (Hebrews 11:1)” Faith enables us to see the future. Faith is the power to draw the future to today. Jesus saw the glory of the future in faith.

There is no glory like the glory of being loved. Had God remained aloof and majestic, serene and unmoved, untouched by any sorrow and unhurt by any pain, men might have feared God, and men might have admired God; but men would never have loved God.⁶³ But God offered the greatest sacrifice as he led his Son to the cross. The cross is the greatest sacrifice of God and of Jesus. The blood-red love that gave all without reserving is engraved indelibly in this sacrifice. Can we not help but love this God?

+ Questions

1. John Calvin spoke of the glory of the cross: “Indeed, God’s glory shines in all creatures on high and below, but never more brightly than in the cross, in which there was a wonderful change of things. There the condemnation of all men was manifested, sin blotted out, salvation restored to men; in summary, the whole world was renewed and all things restored to order.”⁶⁴ Explain why the cross is glory in your own words.
2. The greatest glory in life is the glory which comes from sacrifice. Mankind forgets the successful man, but mankind never forgets the sacrificial man.⁶⁵ What is the meaning of the sacrifice of the Lord who gave his life for us?
3. How can I apply the lessons from today’s message into my life?

+ Prayer

We may never forget this Jesus of love who gave all and at the end, sacrificed his life. The glory of Jesus shines through this sacrifice and love. May we remember this love of Jesus. Just as Jesus did, may we glorify God by loving Him. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

⁶³ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 172.

⁶⁴ Calvin, *John*, 331.

⁶⁵ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 172.



The Upper Room by Ginturn H. Tran

Day 6: Tuesday of the First Week in Lent

A New Commandment

John 13:33-35

3 "My children, I will be with you only a little longer. You will look for me, and just as I told the Jews, so I tell you now: Where I am going, you cannot come.

34 "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.

35 By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

After the departure of Judas now only the eleven and Jesus remain in the upper room. In this place Jesus calls his beloved disciples 'little children'⁶⁶ for the first time. His deep love towards the disciples is embedded in this word. In a little while Jesus has to leave his loving disciples behind in the hostile world. He alone will depart. In this word lurks the heart of Jesus.

Now Jesus gives out the word as if it is the last farewell, the last will to the remaining disciples.

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. (John 13:34)"

To those that seek him and want to follow him where he is going, Jesus gives a "new commandment." Thus he answers their request to follow him and to be with him by turning their attention away from themselves and to "one another."⁶⁷

However the commandment to love one another is not a new commandment at all. It was the word of God given to Israelites in the Old Testament era: "... love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD. (Leviticus 19:18)"

Why does Jesus call the same commandment 'a new commandment'? Not because of any other reason but because he urges us to love just as he loved, it ought to be a new commandment. It is an old commandment but at the same time, a fresh new commandment; As we ought to love in the resemblance of the love of Jesus. Because of his love he was not confined in his own situation but even in the shadow of death he unchangingly and unconditionally loved unto the end.

Disciples were the example of sinful humans that they dispute over who is greater among them even at the last moment of their teacher. Nonetheless Jesus loved them so deeply that he was about to carry the cross for them.

The love that Jesus requests from us is this kind of love. Just as he loved us, he wishes us to love in the same way. It is natural for us to love those we find attractive. Even the world does it all the time. But Jesus is not looking for a worldly attitude from his followers. He is looking for them to be transformed by his love so that they would be

⁶⁶ According to Vine, the phrase has four different meanings: affection, parental care, compassion, and family intimacy. W. E. Vine, *Vine's Expository Commentary on John* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1997), 164.

⁶⁷ Marrow, *The Gospel of John*, 243.

loving people. They would love because of what they are through Christ, not because of what the people they love are.⁶⁸

We ought to love deeply as Jesus loved; Then the world will recognize us as his disciples; Then the aroma of Christ will spread through us. "For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. (2 Corinthians 2:15)"

Questions

1. Summarize today's message in your own words.
2. The new commandment of Christ is to love one another just as he loved us. When we love like him we may be called true disciples of Christ. Therefore we are urged to know the love of the Lord clearly. What is the love of the Lord that I came to know?
3. How can I apply the lessons from today's message into my life?

Prayer

The word that Jesus truly wanted to exhort to his loving disciples before he was leaving this world was to love one another just as he loved. It was the new commandment to the eleven disciples. To love not as the world loves, but to love as Jesus loved is the new commandment given to us too. Let us mature in love, love with the love of Christ, and spread his aroma. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 7: Wednesday of the First Week in Lent

"You shall follow afterward."

John 13:36-38

36 Simon Peter asked him, "Lord, where are you going?" Jesus replied, "Where I am going, you cannot follow now, but you will follow later."

37 Peter asked, "Lord, why can't I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you."

⁶⁸ Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 484-485.

38 Then Jesus answered, "Will you really lay down your life for me? I tell you the truth, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times!

Peter asks: "Lord, where are you going? Lord, why can't I follow you now?" The Lord's heart must have warmed again to his friend Peter.⁶⁹ Judas in the end refused to have a loving relationship with Jesus. Instead a beautiful relationship of love was formed between Jesus and Peter.

"I will lay down my life for you." said Peter and he demonstrated his love for Jesus by risking his life in drawing out his sword in the mount of Olives. Yet at the last moment when the shadow of death approached, he was no different from the other disciples in deserting the Lord and even denying him. The Lord, who knew Peter better than he knew himself, foretold that he will disown the Lord that night. Peter was shocked by his words but eventually it happened as he Jesus predicted.

Why did this tragedy take place?

Anyone who thinks that following Jesus is a heroic act cannot avoid repeating the same mistake of Peter. Following Jesus is to respond to his call and to recognize in the very act of following him that both the call and the response are his gift to us and not our prowess.⁷⁰

The Lord is always unchanging but as situations change our prowess is changing and not trustworthy. We are too vulnerable before God.

We are warned not to let our optimistic estimate of our human capabilities be our guide. Christians, above all people, should be conscious of their weakness and of their constant need for divine help. All that we have and all that we owe to our Lord.⁷¹ What we need is not our untrustworthy prowess but the grace of the Lord. We should humbly seek the Lord and ask for his grace.

In the end Peter turned away from the cross. Yet Jesus was determined to give his life for his beloved and went to the cross. The path of the cross is the path of the greatest love and the greatest sacrifice.

"Jesus replied, "Where I am going, you cannot follow now, but you will follow later."..."

The disciples cannot come where he is going, that is, to the bosom of the Father's love (1:18, 17:24 end). The reason for this is that they do not love one another with the infinite love with which he has loved them.⁷² His new commandment given to

⁶⁹ Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John*, 261.

⁷⁰ Marrow, *The Gospel of John*, 247.

⁷¹ Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 487-488.

⁷² Lightfoot, *St. John's Gospel: A Commentary*, 268.

us was that our love together should be as his for us. When we love with this love of sacrifice, we may also go to the bosom of God.

“Jesus replied, "..., but you will follow later."

It is the greatness of Jesus that he sees the heroic even in the coward; He sees in us, not only what we are, but also what he can make us. Jesus has the love to see what we can be and the power to make us attain to it.⁷³

Aren't we following Jesus because of nothing else but the faith in his love for us?

Questions.

1. Summarize today's message in your own words.
2. What is the true meaning of following the Lord based on today's message?
3. How can I apply the lessons from today's message into my life?

Prayer

The night when Peter boasted that he will lay down his life for the Lord, the same night he cursed and denied Jesus. Peter's love for the Lord is beautiful and yet his love was changing according to situations. His love was not the same love as the Lord's. The love of the Lord was not sparing even his life but gave out all things. It was the greatest sacrifice. May we resemble this love with your grace and follow you. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 8: Thursday of the First Week in Lent

“If you had known me, you would have known my father also.”

John 14:1-7

- 1 "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me.
- 2 In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you.
- 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.
- 4 You know the way to the place where I am going."

⁷³ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 177.

5 Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?"

6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

7 If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him."

The disciples followed Jesus leaving their boat, net, father, and everything else behind. What is being unfolded before them now? Jesus is leaving them and is going to a place where they cannot follow him. And it is not happening in the distant future but is happening now.

The disciples were about to face the darkest three days in the history of this planet. Every prop, anchor, every familiar landmark and guiding star, were to be swept away. Jesus would lie still and cold in death, his body riddled with wounds, his voice silent, his presence gone, and his personality removed somewhere on the other side of the grave beyond their reach.⁷⁴

Think of the chaos, terror, and despair of the disciples at this moment.

Concerned about the disciples whom he will leave behind in the evil world, Jesus, prepares them: "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. (John 14:1)"

Now Jesus speaks about a new peace: "Believe."⁷⁵ Although the shadow of death is about to engulf you, have trust in the Lord. Trust in God and trust in Christ. With this trust do not let your hearts be troubled but rather gain peace.

Whatever we render to God we render to Jesus. There is not one particle of difference between faith in God and faith in Jesus. Jesus is God, as God is God.⁷⁶ Indeed, as Pascal has said, "We know God only through Jesus Christ" (*Pensées* 547),⁷⁷ and no one comes to the Father except through Jesus Christ (John 14:6).

In a few hours Jesus would have been killed by people who vigorously opposed the way of God, but he could say, "I am the way." In the face of the approaching victory of evil people whose lies would bring about his death, Jesus could say, "I am the truth." And although his lifeless body would be put in a tomb so soon he could say, "I am the life."⁷⁸ Jesus knew what God will be demonstrating through his death. He knew well that God will let the world know that Jesus is the way to God, Jesus is the substance of the

⁷⁴ Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John*, 263.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 262.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ Marrow, *The Gospel of John*, 248.

⁷⁸ Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 494.

truth and eternal life through his death. We cannot know God and cannot go to God without through Jesus.

“If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him. (John 14:7)”

To know Jesus is to know God. This is the very God whom “no one has ever seen” (1:18), whose “voice you have never heard, [whose] form you have never seen” (5:37). What the prologue said about beholding the glory of the Word who “was God” (1:1) and “became flesh and dwelt among us” (1:14) is here spelled out.⁷⁹ The one who knew Jesus truly knew God and has seen God. Truly Jesus is the way and the truth and the life for us.

Questions

1. Summarize today’s message in your own words.
2. Humanity has tried a series of attempts to see God. According to today’s message “to know Jesus is to know God and to see God.” Explain the meaning of the statement thinking about the limits of human attempts of knowing God.
3. How can I apply the lessons from today’s message into my life?

Prayer

Even in the shadow of the cross Jesus comforted the disciples and told them to trust in him as they would trust God. Jesus said, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.” God and Jesus became one in love and faith. May we remember that it is nothing else but the very love and faith that unite us with God. May we know the love and faith of Jesus more and live resembling his love and faith. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

⁷⁹ Marrow, *The Gospel of John*, 251.



The Father and the Son by *Ginturn H. Tran*

Day 9: Friday of the First Week in Lent
The Father and the Son
John 14:8-14

8 Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us."

9 Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

10 Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work.

11 Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves.

12 I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.

13 And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father.

14 You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

Philip asked Jesus to show him the Father. Philip is no different from Thomas, who did not witness the resurrected Jesus and therefore insisted unless he sees the nail marks in Jesus' hands, puts his finger where the nails were, and puts his hand into his side, he will not believe (20:25).

It is necessary of us to pay attention to the word of Jesus spoken to Thomas: "... "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." (20:29)"

The faith that Jesus looked for, and still looks for from his followers is not a faith dependent on visions.⁸⁰ Instead (Rather) blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed. Though unseen, when we listen to the word of Christ and witness his work in our lives, we still cannot see with eyes of the flesh but we do come to see with opened eyes of the heart. It is how we come to faith. There are two different types of faith: 'faith of seen' and 'faith of unseen.' To those whose lives have been genuinely transformed by Christ the two are never different.

Jesus said in effect to Philip: "Listen to me! Look at me! And believe!" That is still the way to Christian belief. The way to Christian belief is not to argue about Jesus but to listen to him and to look at him. If we do that, the sheer personal impact upon us will compel us to believe.⁸¹

Jesus vividly revealed God to us. All that Jesus is for us, he is by reason of the totality of his obedience to the Father's will. He makes this explicit by adding, "the Father who dwells in

⁸⁰ Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 498.

⁸¹ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 190.

me does his works.” The whole “work” of the Son is to do the Father’s will. Therefore, the works he does, the signs he performs, the words he utters, the revelation he brings, are all the work of the Father.⁸² Jesus, therefore, is nothing but the executor of the Father’s will.⁸³

He is a *Father*, a God of comfort, a God of compassion, one who has a home and a family. The Lord used this name for God over and over again. How well John remembered it! In his gospel the expression “the Father” or its kindred expression “my Father” occurs 156 times.⁸⁴ Jesus calls God ‘my Father.’ The relationship between father and son is the relationship of unity which cannot be severed nor separated. The son dwells in the father and the father dwells in the son. Christianity is not a faith in faith. It is faith in a God who has revealed himself in Jesus. It is faith that the Father is in Jesus and Jesus is in the Father. Anything less than that is not Christian faith.⁸⁵

Jesus promises that he will do whatever we ask in his name. We are to bear in mind that his name points us to the incarnate life of the Son of God, to the atoning death, to the powerful resurrection, and to the sending forth of the messengers of salvation in the strength of the Holy Spirit.⁸⁶ Therefore praying in Jesus’ name means praying according to the will that Jesus, the incarnation of God wanted to fulfill through his life. Anyone who prays according to the will of Jesus, who came to this world with the commission from God, can be sure that his prayers will be fulfilled.

+ Questions

1. Summarize today’s message in your own words.
2. Explain the following statement based on today’s message: “Our Christian service is something that can never be done by our own strength. It proceeds only on the basis of what God has done in Christ for our salvation and in the continual help that God gives.”⁸⁷
3. How can I apply the lessons from today’s message into my life?

+ Prayer

To those who wished to see God Jesus said that he had already shown God. He exhorted to listen to the word of the Son, see the work of the Son, and believe that the Father is in him. The Father and the Son became one in love. They became one in the will of life, commission,

⁸² Marrow, *The Gospel of John*, 254.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John*, 269.

⁸⁵ Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 499.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 500-501.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 501.

and all things. Jesus lived the life of prayer calling the name of the Father. We also wish to pray in the name of Jesus. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 10: Saturday of the First Week in Lent

"If you love me."

John 14:15-17

15 "If you love me, you will obey what I command.

16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever--

17 the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.

"If you love me, you will obey what I command. (John 14:15)"

Love is always the first and the last and beginning and ending in the teaching of Jesus. The life of Jesus was started because he came from heaven by love and he lived the life of love and returned back to heaven because of love. This Lord of love says, ""If you love me, you will obey what I command."

Notice how love and keeping of the commandments go together. The person who loves will keep the commandments, not as a means of acquiring merit or deserving a reward or winning affection, but because that is the way the one who loves us so much and who we love so much wants us to live.⁸⁸

Keeping of the commandments is in one word 'obedience.' To John there is only one test of love, and that test is obedience.⁸⁹ If you genuinely love, no matter how ill the circumstances may you be placed, how great a hardship may be coming, you will obey to the will of your beloved. If you truly love, because of nothing else but love you will silently obey despite all things. Therefore obedience is the only test of love.

Jesus is the one who overcame this test of love. Even as he was driven to the dreadful death, he still obeyed until the end because he genuinely loved God.

The term, obedience is too foreign to us today. We confess that we love God and want to be loved by God but we are reluctant to obey to his will. We sing hymn of praises but we do not contemplate the way of obedience.

The truth of the love of Christ is proclaimed very simply. "If you love me, you will obey what I command. (John 14:15)"

Obeying someone is never an easy task. The Lord who knows our weakness does not leave us to pull through the thorny path alone but promises to send the 'Counselor' for us.

The Counselor originated from *parakletos*, which is translated in English as advocate, helper(NRSV), comforter(KJV), or counselor(NIV/RSV). It has the meaning of helper, encourager, comforter, etc. It refers to the spirit of the truth, the Holy Spirit. When Jesus closed his earthly ministry and returned back to the Father, the Holy Spirit was sent to the disciples, came to reside with them and be with them.

So what Jesus is saying is: "I am setting you a hard task, and I am sending you out on an engagement very difficult. But I am going to send you someone, the *parakletos*, who will guide you what to do and who will make you able to do it. The Holy Spirit will bring you truth and will

⁸⁸ Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 502.

⁸⁹ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 193.

make you able to cope with the battle for the truth.”⁹⁰ The Lord of love has given us the Holy Spirit as a gift and leads our footsteps even today.

Questions

1. Summarize today’s message in your own words.
2. Explain the following statement based on today’s message: “Christianity is not a creed, it is a living Christ; it is not a matter of obeying precepts and principles, it is a matter of obeying a person; it is not law, it is love for the kindest, most generous, most powerful, most loving person in the universe. Christianity is not a theological proposition, it is choosing to love Jesus. All the rest follows as a matter of course.”⁹¹
3. How can I apply the lessons from today’s message into my life?

Prayer

The one who loves obeys and the one who obeys loves. This love does not change according to situations but it is love that is unconditional and loves until the end. Jesus loved God and obeyed until the end and gave his life. May we live the life of love and obedience with the help of the Holy Spirit following the Lord of love and obedience. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

⁹⁰ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 195.

⁹¹ Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John*, 271.

An impressive picture of Calvary can be seen in the National Gallery in London. Christ is on the cross, almost hidden in the darkness. At first the one who looks observes nothing in the blackness and through it in the dim figure of the suffering Christ. But if his gaze does not falter, he glimpses a figure with arms outstretched, tenderly holding up the suffering one. His face is twisted by a pain which is more agonizing even than that of Christ. God the Father is grieving with his Son as he hangs on the cross.

G. Ernest Thomas⁹²

Day 11: Monday of the Second Week in Lent
“We will Come to him and make our home with him.”
John 14:18-24

18 I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

19 Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live.

20 On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.

⁹² Charles L. Wallis, *Lenten-Easter Sourcebook* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1961), 123.

21 Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him."

22 Then Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, "But, Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?"

23 Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.

24 He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.

This night is the last night of Jesus being together with the disciples. Tomorrow Jesus dies. Now the Lord leaves and the disciples will be left in this world. Despair, emptiness, and the waves of **perplexity and terror are sweeping through them** as the night gets deeper. **The Lord of love promises them, "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you after living again from death."**

Jesus continues to talk about a mysterious world: "On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. (John 14:20)" It is a very beautiful world of love. God loves Jesus; Jesus loves God; God loves men; Jesus loves men; men love God through Jesus; and men love each other; heaven and earth, man and God, man and man are all bound together by this bond of love.⁹³ Though Jesus is about to leave, he says that I will tie I and you with the bond of love and I will be in you, you will be in me. In this love Jesus forms the relationship of love with us today and leads us.

As we have studied earlier, the one who is in the love of Jesus keeps his commandments. It is because "obedience is the only proof of love."⁹⁴ It is to the man who keeps his commandments that Christ reveals himself. Fellowship with God, the revelation of God are dependent on love; and love is dependent on obedience. The more we obey God, the more we understand God.⁹⁵

Jesus says, "We will come unto *him*, and make our abode with *him*." With whom? With the person who loves Jesus!

God is not impressed by the high and mighty of this world, by princes and presidents, by the rich and famous, the learned and great. He is, however, drawn irresistibly to the man, woman, boy, or girl who loves him. Of all the people on this planet with whom God could take up his abode, if he so desired, he takes up his abode with those who loves Jesus. By so doing, he makes them the aristocracy of the universe.⁹⁶

⁹³ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 197.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 198.

⁹⁶ Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John*, 277.

My loving Lord who never leaves those who love him and wants them to reside in his love eternally! Because of this love of the Lord however the bitter cold winter cannot be cold, however distressing hardship cannot discourage us.

Questions

1. Summarize today's message in your own words.
2. Explain the meaning of the following statement based on today's message: "No love, no obedience. Love is the only power that can draw a person to keep the Lord's commands."⁹⁷
3. How can I apply the lessons from today's message into my life?

Prayer

When my heart is darkened by great despair and hollowness, when I cannot feel the presence of the Lord near me, when I feel like I am left alone, I wish to remember today's promise of the Lord. Before the reality of death the Lord gave the promise of love. You will not leave the ones who love you and keep your commandments as orphans but be with them forever tying them with bond of love. My Lord, you wish to be with them and reside with them. I love you Lord. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 12: Tuesday of the Second Week in Lent

Mystery of the Cross

John 14:25-31

25 "All this I have spoken while still with you.

26 But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 278.

28 "You heard me say, 'I am going away and I am coming back to you.' If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.

29 I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe.

30 I will not speak with you much longer, for the prince of this world is coming. He has no hold on me,

31 but the world must learn that I love the Father and that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me. "Come now; let us leave.

The Lord will never leave the side of those who love him but give the Holy Spirit and the true peace of the Lord, not the false peace of the world. Although death comes to us, we should neither worry nor fear the reality of death. We should be worried about whether we love the Lord. The Lord of love that we believe in does not forget us. He sends the Holy Spirit to be with us eternally in teaching us all things of the truth.

The Lord says him being lifted up to the cross is only going to the Father who is greater than him. After going to the Father, he does not stay to the side of the Father only, but after going to the father he returns to us. He is this kind of loving Lord. Therefore we cannot help but rejoice.

Now the cross is coming to everyone's eyes. The end is near, 'the prince of this world' is coming. 'The prince of this world' is a designation of Satan; it is in this world that he holds sway.⁹⁸ "The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. (2 Corinthians 4:4)" Although Satan overturns and sways the world, he "has nothing at all" in Jesus, for Jesus has no sin. There is nothing in him that Satan can take hold of.⁹⁹

In the end the prince of this world drove Jesus to the cross. It seemed to be the greatest/ curse and the worst shame. "You must not leave his body on the tree overnight. Be sure to bury him that same day, because anyone who is hung on a tree is under God's curse. You must not desecrate the land the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance. (Deuteronomy 21:23)" It seemed to be a sure victory of Satan.

But the true victory belonged to Jesus. The cross manifested to the whole world that the Son genuinely loved the Father and obeyed the Father. He obeyed in faith in loving his Father.

The cross of the Lord is a beautiful story of love and obedience between the Father and the Son. The Father and the Son became one in love and faith. It urges me to follow the life of the Lord, who loved and obeyed.

The cross is the brightest and warmest light. This light is so bright and strong that it shines our darkened hearts with the light of the truth of the Lord. This light is so warm that it melts our frozen hearts and brings out tears which leads us to confess our love to the Lord just as he loved us.

⁹⁸ Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 513.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

Questions

1. Summarize today's message in your own words.
2. Explain the meaning of the cross of the Lord based on today's message.
3. How can I apply the lessons from today's message into my life?

Prayer

The love and obedience of the Lord are truly amazing. The cross of shame and curse became the cross of the greatest love in the love and obedience of the Lord. May our hearts be more humble as we listen to the story of the cross. May we never let go of this precious truth of life and embed it in our hearts forever. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Death works in me, but life in you by *Joungmi Kang*

Day 13: Wednesday of the Second Week in Lent

"I am the vine; you are the branches."

John 15:1-8

- 1 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener.
- 2 He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.
- 3 You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you.
- 4 Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.
- 5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.
- 6 If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.
- 7 If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you.
- 8 This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

Jesus refers to himself as the true vine. There must be no better fitting metaphor than this reference to Jesus.

The vine lives to give us life-blood. Its flower is small, its fruit abundant and when that fruit is mature and the vine has for a moment becomes glorious, the treasure of the grapes is torn down and the vine is cut back to the stem and next year blooms again.¹⁰⁰ Truly Jesus lived the life of the true vine.

The parable of the vine gives us deep truth. Jesus is the vine; we are the branches. A vine branch no longer attached to the vine is useless. Vine wood cannot be used for making furniture, for building, or for making a kitchen utensil. It will not even serve as a peg on which to hang a hat. A vine branch that does not bear grapes is worthless.¹⁰¹

The destiny of the branch, cut off from the vine is being thrown away and withers. Such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.

On the contrary the branch attached to the tree is bound to bear abundant fruits. When the branch is separated from the vine, it cannot certainly bear fruit. As long as it is attached to the vine, it will automatically bear fruits. Fruitfulness is not something we achieve in the natural energies of the flesh but something that follows naturally enough when we are in Christ.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ Temple, *Readings in St. John's Gospel*, 252-253.

¹⁰¹ Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John*, 288.

¹⁰² Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 519.

Jesus lived the most abundant fruit bearing life. The secret of the life of Jesus was his contact with God.¹⁰³ As Jesus is always abiding in God, we should abide in Jesus. The abiding life is the abounding life.¹⁰⁴ A very important element of our life is that we are to be “in” him and he is to be “in” us. Without that continual and close contact our lives will always be unfruitful.¹⁰⁵

Therefore we should unite with Jesus. As long as our branch unites with the vine of Jesus, we will bear much fruit.

“This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. (John 15:8)” Jesus does not look for fruitfulness simply from a few great saints. He expects each one of us to live a fruitful life. And he speaks of a large quantity of fruit. We are not disciples in the sense in which we should be if we are content with the minimum. Jesus expects each of his followers not only to bear fruit, but to bear much fruit.¹⁰⁶

What does the parable of the vine teach us?

Bearing fruit does not depend on the branch, but from the tree. As long as the branch is attached to vine, it will bear abundant fruits of grapes, berry after berry. This is the truth that we ought to remember.

Questions

1. Summarize today's message in your own words.
2. Explain the meaning of the following statement based on today's message: “Bearing abundant fruits depends not on the extent of our talents but on our contact with our Lord.”¹⁰⁷
3. How can I apply the lessons from today's message into my life?

Prayer

The Lord is the vine and we are the branches. As long as we unite, you allow us to bear much fruit in our lives. How great comfort is this word for our soul! When the vine yields fruits, all is torn down and the tree is cut back to the stem. But the tree still gives life-blood and next year blooms again. In the same way, the Lord is the true vine. Truly apart from you there is no life. May we brag that we are the disciples of the Lord and give glory to God. In Jesus' name, Amen.

¹⁰³ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 205.

¹⁰⁴ Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John*, 289.

¹⁰⁵ Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 518.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

Day 14: Thursday of the Second Week in Lent

Love and Joy

John 15:9-13

9 "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love.

10 If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love.

11 I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

12 My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.

13 Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.

The truth is that only someone who is loved can love.¹⁰⁸ Jesus is the only begotten son of love who was fully loved by the Father. Jesus, with the love that he received from the Father, loved us. The reason why his love never dried up was because it was originated from the Father.

There are many kinds of love and many kinds of people who love in the world. What is this love of Jesus that never dries up? How is the love of Christians different from any other kind of love?

Love is shown in many different colors. Romantic love, family love, love of friends – all these are parts of well-rounded life. But we must be clear that, wonderful as they are, they are not “love” in the sense that Jesus is using the term here. He is talking about the kind of love that persists even though it means death.¹⁰⁹ The love of Jesus is the greatest love. It is the love that he lay down his life for his friends. It is the love that gives out all things and still looking if there is anything left to give more, and finally gives even the life that remains last.

Jesus regarded the ones gathered in the upper room as his friends and was determined to give his life for them. But one of the little band was Judas, who even as Jesus spoke had gone out to betray him. Others had spent time in the upper room quarreling about who would be the greatest (Luke 22:24). In Gethsemane, when Jesus would ask the three who were closest to him to watch with him in the hour of his greatest agony, they would simply fall asleep (Mark 14:33f., 37). And when soldiers came “they call forsook him and fled” (Mark 14:50).¹¹⁰

Jesus gave his precious life for these sinners. Despite all their iniquities and weakness, the love of Jesus was unconditional, loving the sinners.

Love in the Christian sense is not sentimentality; it is not a gushing emotional indulgence of some loved one. Love is what we see in the cross. It is what Christ showed when he laid down his perfect life for sinners.¹¹¹

Jews, Moslems, pagans, even the so-called godless, not only can but often do love with utmost generosity and utter selflessness, even to the laying down of their lives. What distinguishes Christians is merely this: when they love, they love *as* Christ loved them and

¹⁰⁸ Marrow, *The Gospel of John*, 275.

¹⁰⁹ Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 524.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 523.

because he loved them. What makes their love “Christian” is neither its quantity nor its quality. What makes “Christian” is their faith in the love of Jesus for them, their abiding in his love (15:9), and nothing else.¹¹²

Augustine said: “Love, and do what you like.” But we must understand Augustine carefully. He was not saying that if we love we can go happily through life doing good or ill as we choose. He was saying that if we understand what love in the Christian sense is, if we really understand it, then we need no other guide to Christian living.¹¹³

If we can love just as Jesus loved us, the true joy of the Lord, that sings out delight in the pitch-black darkness before the shadow of the cross, will overflow in our lives.

+ Questions

1. Summarize today’s message in your own words.
2. Explain the meaning of the following statement based on today’s message: “Joy is not like happiness, which depends very largely on what happens. The Lord's heart was full of joy even with Gethsemane a few hundred yards ahead. It was for the joy that was set before him that he endured the cross, despising the shame. Joy is one of the fruits of the Spirit, second only to love. This joy he offers to us, joy resulting from obedience, flanked on one side by love and on the other side by peace. Joy is like a rainbow shining above our tears.”¹¹⁴
3. How can I apply the lessons from today’s message into my life?

+ Prayer

Jesus, filled with the love of God, loved us. May we also live the life of love, full of love given by Jesus. As Jesus kept the Father’s commands and was in his love, may we also keep his commands, be in his love, and enjoy the true joy of the Lord. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Day 15: Friday of the Second Week in Lent

“You did not choose me, but I chose you.”

John 15:14-17

14 You are my friends if you do what I command.

15 I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.

¹¹² Marrow, *The Gospel of John*, 279.

¹¹³ Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 523.

¹¹⁴ Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John*, 291.

16 You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit--fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.

17 This is my command: Love each other.

Jesus is telling an important truth about election. The truth is that it is not us who chose God but it is God who chose us; being chosen is not our merit but through God's grace. Our action is all response; all initiative is with the Lord.¹¹⁵

The Lord came to us and called, and chose us. "This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us... (1 John 4:10)" The relationship between God and us was initiated because not that we loved God, but that he loved us first.

Jesus found us first and called us "friends." Jesus called us to be his friends and the friends of God. This is a tremendous offer.¹¹⁶

Jesus called us to be his *partners*. The slave could never be a partner. The slave was defined in Greek law as *a living tool*.¹¹⁷ The slave had to do what he was told without reason and without explanation and at the end he does not know his master's business. But Jesus called us friends, opened his heart, came to us, and told us the deep truth of the Father. He told us his business and called us his partners.

The Lord loved us first before we loved him. He chose us first before we knew him. He called us his friends and invited us to cowork with him in doing his work. Our Lord is not the Lord who does not mind our business and dominates without relating to us. He is my friend, my Lord who unlocks his heart and wants us to cowork.

Futhermore Jesus chose us to be *ambassadors*.¹¹⁸ Just as a president commands his ambassadors to be dispatched representing a nation today, the embassaors of the Lord are the representatives, chosen and called by the Lord, sent in place for the Lord to relay the will and commission of the Lord. He did not choose us to live a life retired from the world; he chose us to represent him in the world.¹¹⁹

The Lord chose us not because of our conditions but only by grace. He called us friends and sent us to the world. This grace can bear fruit only if we respond to this love.

Questions

1. Summarize today's message in your own words.

¹¹⁵ Temple, *Readings in St. John's Gospel*, 269.

¹¹⁶ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 208.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 209.

¹¹⁹ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 209.

2. Explain the meaning of this statement based on today's message: "Our being Christians is no doing of ours, any more than our being civilized; it is something done to us and for us, not by us, though we have to make appropriate response in the form of obedience promoted by love."¹²⁰

3. How can I apply the lessons from today's message into my life?

Prayer

Lord, you knew us before we knew you. You loved us first, called, chose us and made us your friends. It is truly amazing grace and a beautiful world. We wish to know you and love you just as you knew us and loved us. May we not spill out the precious grace with which you called us and chose us. May we act out your word in love and be your true friends. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 16: Saturday of the Second Week in Lent

"Know that the world has hated me before it hated you."

John 15:18-21

18 "If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first.

19 If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.

20 Remember the words I spoke to you: 'No servant is greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also.

¹²⁰ Temple, *Readings in St. John's Gospel*, 269.

21 They will treat you this way because of my name, for they do not know the One who sent me.

The world hated Christ. Christ, the king of love was sent to the world by the love of God. But the world hated him to the utmost and crucified him instead of receiving his love.

With the same hatred, the world hates the followers of Christ. In the era the *Pax Romana*, the Roman peace, stretched over all the world.¹²¹ But Christians were threatening the Roman peace. The government persecuted the Christians because the Christian insisted he had no king but Christ. Persecution came to the Christians because they put Christ first. Persecution always come to the man who does that.¹²²

William Temple remarks that the world “would not hate angels for being angelic; but it does hate men for being Christians. It grudges them their new character; it is tormented by their peace; it is infuriated by their joy.”¹²³

Jesus said, "If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first." The hatred against Jesus gives birth to the hatred against Jesus followers. If we are scorned and hated because we follow Jesus, we should remember his word and know that Jesus went through the even greater contempt and hatred ahead of us. Then we will gain comfort and courage to overcome all things.

“Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you. (Matthew 5:11-12)”

The world loves its own things but hates Christians who long for things of heaven more than the things of world. Ultimately, Christians do not belong to the world. Though we live in the world, the foundation of our existence is from God. God chose us and called us out of this world with his unconditional love. This is how we came to be today.

Another important truth from today’s message is that the world hating Christ and Christians is ultimately because it does not know God, the one who sent Christ. In other words, the hatred of the world essentially results from refusal to acknowledging God.

We stand in between the hatred of the world and the love of God. However the world hates us, no force, nothing can separate us from the love of God that is in our Lord, Christ Jesus!

“For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

¹²¹ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 213.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 214.

¹²³ Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 528.

(Romans 8:38-39)" However persecutions be, may this beautiful confession of Apostle Paul be our own.

Questions

1. Summarize today's message in your own words.
2. Explain the meaning of this statement based on today's message: "The basic demand on the Christian is the demand that the Christian should have the courage to be different. To be different is dangerous, but no man can be a Christian unless he accepts that risk, for there will be a difference between the man of the world and the man of Christ."¹²⁴
3. How can I apply the lessons from today's message into my life?

Prayer

The greatest hatred of the world was revealed on the cross. But on the same cross the most magnificent love of the Lord was manifested ever so clearly to the whole world. The world hated but the Lord did not repay the hatred with hatred. Instead the Lord gave the greatest love to the world. You gave your life on the cross. May we resemble the Lord and overcome the world with love though it hates us. In Jesus' name, Amen.

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

How Christ's death takes away thy sins thou wilt never know on earth-perhaps not in heaven. It is a mystery which thou must believe and adore. But *why* He died, thou canst see at the first glance, if thou hast a human heart and wilt look at what God means thee to look at-

¹²⁴ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 217.

Christ upon His Cross. He died because He was *love-love* itself-love boundless, unconquerable, unchangeable-love which inhabits eternity, and therefore could not be hardened or foiled by any sin or rebellion of man, but must love men still; must go out to seek and save them; must dare, suffer any misery, shame, death itself, for their sake; just because it is absolute and perfect Love which inhabits eternity.

Charles Kingsley¹²⁵

Day 17: Monday of the Third Week in Lent

“He who hates me hates my Father also.”

John 15:22-16:2

22 If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not be guilty of sin. Now, however, they have no excuse for their sin.

23 He who hates me hates my Father as well.

24 If I had not done among them what no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin. But now they have seen these miracles, and yet they have hated both me and my Father.

25 But this is to fulfill what is written in their Law: 'They hated me without reason.'

26 "When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me.

27 And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.

1 "All this I have told you so that you will not go astray.

¹²⁵ Charles Kingsley, *The Good News of God* (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1908), 321-322.

2 They will put you out of the synagogue; in fact, a time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering a service to God.

Until Jesus had come men had never had the opportunity really and fully to know God; they had never fully heard the voice of God, and they had never seen fully demonstrated the kind of life which God wished them to live.¹²⁶ When the time had come, Jesus came to the world and clearly demonstrated the truth of God in this world. Jesus taught the truth of God with his word and life and showed us God.

But the world rejected Jesus. Rejecting Jesus is rejecting God. The Son and the Father cannot be separated nor divided.

What is the sin that Jesus accuses of from today's passage?

Sin is defined solely as hatred of Jesus and, consequently, as hatred of the Father who sent him.¹²⁷ The hatred of the Lord is a transgression. If the one great commandment is love, the one great transgression is hatred.¹²⁸

The Lord said that this is to fulfill what was written in their Law: 'They hated me without reason.' (Psalm 35:19; 69:4) It was written in "their law, the sacred Scriptures they acknowledged."¹²⁹ Possession of the Scriptures adds to the guilt of those who reject Christ rather than granting indulgences because the warning of the word had been fulfilled.

There are many in this world who aggressively oppose Christ; yet many live ignoring Christ as if Christ never came. Not only the first but also the latter cannot escape the Lord's accusation of sin. Not thinking it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God (Romans 1:28), not loving Christ as Christ loved us but hating him without a reason is an evident sin. The Lord shed his precious blood on the cross and clearly demonstrated his love for us in the whole world. We are without excuse before the telltale love of the Lord that cannot be uncovered.

The Son who came to show the love of God, who took the path of self-denial with the form of servant – to pay him with a cross was the crime of crimes.¹³⁰

Furthermore this sin was committed by the brothers of the same faith convinced that they are offering a service to God. Who drove Christ to the cross? It was not the authorities of the world who did not know God but the core of the religious authorities. It is one of the tragic

¹²⁶ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 218.

¹²⁷ J. Ramsey Michaels, *John: New International Biblical Commentary* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc, 1984), 276.

¹²⁸ Michaels, *John*, 276.

¹²⁹ Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John*, 296.

¹³⁰ Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John*, 295.

ironies of history that from time to time the phenomenon recurs: people who are convinced that they are serving God oppose in the strongest way the real servants of God.¹³¹

The word of Jesus spoken to the Pharisees after healing the man blind from birth overlaps with today's message: "Jesus said, "If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains. (John 9:41)"

+ Questions

1. Summarize today's message in your own words.
2. Persecution is a destiny that the disciples of Christ cannot avoid. But the greatest persecution often comes not from secular but from religious authorities who are convinced to serve God. In relating to this teaching of Jesus, testify the life of Paul within the range of the following verses.

"I too was convinced that I ought to do all that was possible to oppose the name of Jesus of Nazareth. (Acts 26:9)"

"As for zeal, persecuting the church; as for legalistic righteousness, faultless. (Philippians 3:6)"

"I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my own countrymen, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false brothers. (2 Corinthians 11:26)"
3. How can I apply the lessons from today's message into my life?

+ Prayer

Christ and God are one that cannot be separated. Not loving Christ is not loving God and hating Christ is hating God. Sin is hating Christ instead of loving him. Let us not forget the spiritual truth that those who drove the Lord to the cross were the religious who were proud to serve God. Let us be concerned not to fall into this dreadful sin.

May we not forget what the Lord asks from us is nothing else but our love. May your word renew the heart that refuses to serve God in us, this calloused, as hard as stone, and arrogant heart. In Jesus' name, Amen.

¹³¹ Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 537.

Day 18: Tuesday of the Third Week in Lent
"Yet none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?'"
John 16:3-6

3 They will do such things because they have not known the Father or me.

4 I have told you this, so that when the time comes you will remember that I warned you. I did not tell you this at first because I was with you.

5 "Now I am going to him who sent me, yet none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?'

6 Because I have said these things, you are filled with grief.

The night when the shadow of death was approaching the Lord did not look after himself but he was concerned about his disciples who would be left behind. Knowing that the disciples to face all kinds of hardships, he exhorted and taught the most important messages one by one, which the disciples were to engrave in their hearts. As the Lord was despised and persecuted, he warned that for the true Christian opposition is inevitable.¹³² The Lord said that all the hatred and persecution come because they have not truly known God and Jesus Christ.

¹³² Morris, *The Gospel According to John*, 600.

The Lord was expecting the disciples to gain wisdom from his last words, with which overcome the coming conflicts.

In the place where the death was waiting for, the place where undescrivable dreadful passion of the cross was waiting for and anyone will be confinded by his own situation – even in this place the Lord still loved the disciples.

Observe the one fallen in love. If he is in true love, the center of all his thoughts and perception is not on him but shifts to the one he loves. He worries about the need and wellbeing of his beloved before looking after his own welfare.

Because of love, the Lord thought of the the future of his beloved disciples ahead of his own imminent death. If he had been with the disciples, he would have warded off and carried all the persecution before them. He did not say this word about the coming adversaries from the beginning. But now the time came for him to leave. He now poured out his things and exhorted them. Though the disciples may not know all things now, believing that they will remember the words of the Lord later when they face the time, he counseled them in love, in his faith.

Yet none of the disciples asked where he was going. Of course, Peter and Thomas had asked the Lord questions about his departure; the Lord obviously had not forgotten that. But they had not asked him where he was going in the sense meant here.¹³³ The Lord was not waiting for their questions of worries, which only concerned about their own destiny of being left alone after the Lord's departure. Rather he was waiting for questions that respond to his love.

Surely they could have asked him that: "What will this departure mean to *you*?" In their selfishness all they could think of was their sorrow. In their love they might have talked about the happiness his departure would mean to him. If they had been a little less selfish and a little more loving, thoughts of his departure would have been tintured with thoughts of the glory and joy that were soon to be his.¹³⁴ "You heard me say, 'I am going away and I am coming back to you.' If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. (John 14:28)" If their thoughts had been centered on the Lord, they could have rejoiced that he was going to the Father who is greater than him.

The Lord embraced with his eternally unswerving love but eventually all the disciples had not yet realized this love.

"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. (1 Corinthians 13:4-8)"

Are we the ones whose eyes are open to the love of the Lord?

¹³³ Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John*, 301.

¹³⁴ Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John*, 301.

+ Questions

1. Summarize today's message in your own words.
2. Before the death of cross the image of Christ is clearly contrasted to that of the disciples. Thinking of the two different images, diagnose my own image.
3. How can I apply the lessons from today's message into my life?

+ Prayer

At the moment of going toward Gethsamane a step further the Lord of love was not confinded in his own situations. Worrying about the disciples that are left behind, the Lord exhorted them and comforted them. Yet the disciples sought only their welfare and were not concerned of the path that the Lord was taking. Their hearts were filled with worries. If we have this image of the disciples, may we repent at this time. May we love the Lord as he loved us. May we not abandon the Lord alone on the path of the cross. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 19: Wednesday of the Third Week in Lent

The Work of the Holy Spirit

John 16:7-11

7 But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

8 When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment:

9 in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me;

10 in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer;

11 and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.

The Lord promised to send the Holy Spirit after his departure. The disciples may not be with the Lord in the flesh but it was for their greater good; the Lord can now be with them in every moment of their lives surpassing the boundaries of the flesh. Not knowing that the Holy Sprit was the the greatest gift and love from the Lord to them, who are left behind, the disciples were filled with worries in their hearts.

To these disciples the Lord explains the work of the Holy Spirit. Here we have an almost perfect summary of the work of the Spirit.¹³⁵

When the Spirit comes, he will reprove the world in regard to sin, righteousness and judgement. To reprove (convict of guilt, convince, *elegchein*) is the word which is used for the cross-examination of a witness, or a man on trial, or an opponent in an argument. It has always this idea of cross-examining a man until he sees and admits his errors, or acknowledges the force of some argument which he had not yet seen.¹³⁶

Sin, righteousness, and judgement are fundamental issues of our walk of faith. There must be the sense of sin, or he will not seek the Saviour. There must be a belief that righteousness is possible, or the convicted sinner will die of despair. There must be the assurance that sin is doomed, and shall be finally vanquished, or the baffled warrior will give up the long conflict as hopeless.¹³⁷

When the Spirit descends, he will first convict the world of guilt in regard to sin. The message of salvation is useless to those who do not even recognize their sin. When a man realizes that his life is being eaten out by some insidious disease, he will need not further urging to go to a physician. In the same way when a man realizes his sin, he will naturally feel his need for salvation. The Holy Spirit convicts men of the sin of refusing to believe in Jesus Christ.¹³⁸

There stands the cross, the evidence and symbol of God's love; and there stands the risen Christ, offering himself to men. There is nothing which more certainly proves the innate evil of the human heart than its refusal of that mystery of grace.¹³⁹ When the Spirit comes, he will lead us to look at the cross of Jesus Christ and fully disclose all our sins.

Jesus is gone to the Father; and it is clear, therefore, that he has been accepted as the Savior and Redeemer of men. He is gone to the Father in the likeness and nature of men; evidently, then, man is an object of God's love, is reconciled to God, and is admitted to the rights and privileges of a son and heir.¹⁴⁰ As the Son had gone to the Father, the love of the Father had been clearly manifested in us. The Spirit comes and leads us to see the cross of Christ which ever so brightly discloses the love of God towards us.

The Spirit reproves the world in regard to judgement. When we have been freed from sin, and made righteous in Christ, we are left face to face with a tremendous struggle against

¹³⁵ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 224.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ F. B. Meyer, *The Life and Light of Men and Love to the Uttermost: A Commentary on the Gospel of John*, 2nd Impression (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1952), 281.

¹³⁸ Meyer, *The Life and Light of Men and Love to the Uttermost: A Commentary on the Gospel of John*, 281.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 283.

sin. The sin of the past is indeed forgiven, the voice of conscience has been hushed, the sinner rejoices to know that he is accepted on the ground of righteousness; but the old temptations still crop up.¹⁴¹

What we should remember is that the Lord we believe in is the victor Christ. The whole Gospel is a story of the duel in which our Lord for ever worsted and mastered Satan. The conflict began with the lonely struggle of the temptation in the wilderness; it pervaded Christ's earthly career; it culminated in the cross.¹⁴² The cross was the crisis of this world's history: the prince of this world measured himself for one final wrestle with the Son of God. Had he succeeded, evil would have reigned but since he failed, he fell as lightning from heaven.¹⁴³ The Holy Spirit has come, let us see the cross of Jesus Christ, and has already judged all the sin of the past, the present and the future.

The amazing sacrifice of the Lord has opened a new era of the Holy Spirit. This Spirit of God does not leave us but leads us to the Lord in the each corner of our lives.

Questions

1. Summarize today's message in your own words.
2. Explain the cross of Jesus Christ in relation to the work of the Holy Spirit based on today's message.
3. How can I apply the lessons from today's message into my life?

Prayer

The Lord had gone to the Father but has sent us the Holy Spirit, still intervenes in our lives and leads us. The Holy Spirit exposes our sin ever so clearly, lets us know the Lord who saved us, and judges our sin. May we remember that all the work of the Holy Spirit was the blessing of God that came down to us because the Lord died on the cross. May we live following the invisible hands of the Holy Spirit today. In Jesus' name, Amen.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Ibid., 284.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

Day 20: Thursday of the Third Week in Lent
"When the Spirit of truth comes"
John 16:12-15

12 "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear.

13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.

14 He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you.

15 All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you.

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth (John 14:17). The Spirit guides the believers into all truth of God, the great work of the Spirit is to bring God's truth to men. We have a special name for this bringing of God's truth to men; we call it *revelation*.¹⁴⁴

The Spirit comes to us and gives us revelation. Revelation is bound to be a progressive process.¹⁴⁵ The Lord had many things yet to say but as the listeners could not bear he could not

¹⁴⁴ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 226.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

say all he had to say. He tempers his discipline to our spiritual capacity.¹⁴⁶ Truth is proclaimed only as much as the listeners can bear and comprehend.

Although Christ could have taught more, he could not. Believers should be very careful here, for from time to time through the history of the Christian church, people have arisen who have said that they had new revelations and they have led people astray. It is important for us to keep a firm hold on the truth that the definitive revelation has been given in Scripture. Christian teaching is the teaching God gave through Christ and Christ's apostles. Nothing can claim to be authentic Christian teaching that does not agree with this.¹⁴⁷ The truth which the Spirit will disclose is not truth additional to 'the truth as it is in Jesus' (Eph. 4:21); it is the further unfolding of that truth.¹⁴⁸

Revelation is unfolding of the importance of what belongs to Jesus. Revelation is a continual opening out of the meaning and the significance of Jesus Christ.¹⁴⁹ In other words, revelation is nothing else but revealing Jesus Christ to us.

Revelation comes to us from a living person. The nearer we live to Jesus, the better we will know him. The more we become like him, the more he will be able to tell us.¹⁵⁰ The more we follow the leading of the Spirit, the more of the truth we come to know.¹⁵¹ Ordinarily, men ask to know the truth before they obey. The Spirit demands that they should obey before they know.¹⁵² Submission to Christ and knowledge of Christ go hand in hand. It is only to the man of God that God can reveal his truth.¹⁵³

Truth is not men's discovery; it is God's gift.¹⁵⁴ The Holy Spirit, which unfolds the truth to us, is a gift for us after Jesus having paid with his blood. The Spirit offers courage and comfort to the many disciples of today who are in the same situation as the disciples of Jesus then.

¹⁴⁶ Meyer, *The Life and Light of Men and Love to the Uttermost: A Commentary on the Gospel of John*, 287.

¹⁴⁷ Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 546.

¹⁴⁸ F. F. Bruce, *The Gospel of John: Introduction, Exposition and Notes* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1983), 320.

¹⁴⁹ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 229.

¹⁵⁰ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 229.

¹⁵¹ Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 546.

¹⁵² Meyer, *The Life and Light of Men and Love to the Uttermost: A Commentary on the Gospel of John*, 288.

¹⁵³ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 229.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

May it be ours to be patient and willing pupils in this heavenly school, in which the Holy Spirit is Teacher and Jesus the Text-Book, and obedience the essential condition of knowledge.¹⁵⁵

✚ Questions

1. Summarize today's message in your own words.
2. Explain the meaning of this statement based on today's message: "The best Christian preparation for what is coming to pass is not an exact foreknowledge of the future but a deep understanding of what Jesus means for one's own time."¹⁵⁶
3. There is no passage in the New Testament which shows us what we might call the principles of revelation better than today's passage does.¹⁵⁷ Explain the principles of revelation from today's study.
4. How can I apply the lessons from today's message into my life?

✚ Prayer

The Holy Spirit does not speak on his own but ever so clearly will he unfold the truth of Christ to us. We have come to know that this truth is revealed/open to only those who obey. May we obey the word of Christ and live following the guide of the Spirit. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 21: Friday of the Third Week in Lent

"Your sorrow will turn into joy."

John 16:16-24

16 "In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me."

17 Some of his disciples said to one another, "What does he mean by saying, 'In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me,' and 'Because I am going to the Father'?"

18 They kept asking, "What does he mean by 'a little while'? We don't understand what he is saying."

19 Jesus saw that they wanted to ask him about this, so he said to them, "Are you asking one another what I meant when I said, 'In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me'?"

¹⁵⁵ Meyer, *The Life and Light of Men and Love to the Uttermost: A Commentary on the Gospel of John*, 289.

¹⁵⁶ Raymond E. Brown, *The Anchor Bible: The Gospel According to John XIII-XXI* (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1970), 716.

¹⁵⁷ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 226.

20 I tell you the truth, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy.

21 A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world.

22 So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy.

23 In that day you will no longer ask me anything. I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.

24 Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.

The disciples will see the Lord no more in a little while, and then after a little while they will see him. The disciples did not comprehend this mysterious word of the Lord. The Lord saw that they wanted to ask him about this, so he explained to them.

A woman who is conceived with a life worries when a birth time comes and goes through an intense labor pain. Yet when she gives birth to a baby, she forgets the pain and is filled with joy for the joy of birthing a new life to the world is incomparable to the pain. The labor pain does not end in pain but is born with the jubilation of a new life. This is the very life of carrying the cross. The life of the cross is the life of suffering. But this life does not end with pain but resurrection is promised. Therefore Jesus said the the disciples' grief will turn to joy. The enduring joy of the disciples (20-22) is contrasted with the false and cruel joy that seizes the world when Jesus dies. The joy of the disciples is also related to his death, but it is a joy that emerges triumphant from suffering.¹⁵⁸

The end of the cross is not death but resurrection. Therefore the Lord sang of joy at the moment of death. The suffering of true Christians, carrying the cross as they follow the Lord, will surely turn to joy of resurrection.

In a little while Jesus will die on the cross, and then after a little while the disciples will see Jesus with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. "Seeing" Jesus has been reinterpreted to mean the continued experience of his presence in the Christian, and this can only mean the presence of the Paraclete/Spirit.¹⁵⁹

The Spirit came down to the disciples who only saw the death and despaired in darkness and he made them see the resurrected Christ of glory. The beginning of this new vision was at the resurrection. The enlargement of that new vision was suddenly theirs at Pentecost. The final manifestation of it awaits the rapture when we shall see him "face to face" (1 Corinthians

¹⁵⁸ Brown, *The Anchor Bible: The Gospel According to John XIII-XXI*, 731.

¹⁵⁹ Brown, *The Anchor Bible: The Gospel According to John XIII-XXI*, 730.

13:12). Today we see him with the eye of faith.¹⁶⁰ The Lord is unseen to the world without faith but he is seen to the ones whose eyes are open.

Therefore the suffering of those who follow the Lord carrying the cross will not end in sorrow. The Spirit will open the eyes of faith, let them see the resurrected Lord, and fill them with joy. The Lord said no one will take away the joy of believers, gained through suffering. This joy is the Lord's blessing that our spirit will rejoice forever.

Do we have worries and pain because of the cross? The Lord says: "Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete."

Questions

1. Summarize today's message in your own words.
2. Explain the meaning of this statement based on today's message: "The two privileges of joy (through Jesus' presence in the Paraclete) and understanding (afforded by the Paraclete) are not really distinct, for the joy flows from the fact that the Christian has come to know and understand Jesus."¹⁶¹
3. How can I apply the lessons from today's message into my life?

Prayer

Only after an intense labor pain will a new life be born. Only after going through the suffering of the cross will we also enjoy the glory of resurrection. The darkness is not darkness but it is just a transition to those who have faith. May we not despair in darkness but live with a confession that in a little while we will see the Lord. In Jesus' name, Amen.

¹⁶⁰ Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John*, 309.

¹⁶¹ Brown, *The Anchor Bible: The Gospel According to John XIII-XXI*, 733.

Day 22: Saturday of the Third Week in Lent

“In that day you will ask in my name.”

John 16:25-27

25 "Though I have been speaking figuratively, a time is coming when I will no longer use this kind of language but will tell you plainly about my Father.

26 In that day you will ask in my name. I am not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf.

27 No, the Father himself loves you because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God.

Jesus had spoken in parables *paroimia*. It is as if he spoke of the truth that the meaning of which is veiled to the casual listener.¹ But he proclaimed that when a time comes, he will no longer use this kind of language but will tell us plainly about the Father.

After the crucifixion of Jesus the new era of the Holy Spirit has been opened. Jesus is returning to the Father who sent him, having fulfilled his mission in the world; but he remains the revealer of the Father to those of whom he now takes his leave—with this difference, that he now reveals him through the Spirit.² In other words, although Jesus returns back to the Father, he will send the Spirit and unveil the truth.

The veil that Jesus wishes to take off is the love of God. If the Lord had not come to us and unfolded, we would never have known this love. The Lord demonstrated this love in his whole life and on the cross was this love the most vividly revealed. But only after his resurrection from the dead did the disciples comprehend the meaning of Jesus' suffering and death on the cross.³

Jesus says: “In that day you will ask in my name.... (John 16:26)” All this can dawn upon them only “in that day,” only after the death and resurrection of Jesus.⁴ It is the day that the love of God will be clearly shown in this world; the dividing barrier that separated God and humans will disappear; humans will go to God through Jesus; indeed it is truly a touching day.

Jesus said that in that day the disciples, not Jesus, will directly ask in his name. Perhaps then the real import of this word is not to exclude intercession but not to

¹ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 234.

² Bruce, *The Gospel of John: Introduction, Exposition and Notes*, 324-325.

³ Marrow, *The Gospel of John*, 299.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 300.

explain that in interceding Jesus will not be a *tertium quid* between the Father and his children. Rather, Jesus' necessary role in bringing men to the Father and the Father to men (14:6-11) will set up so intimate a relationship of love *in and through Jesus* that Jesus cannot be considered as intervening. The Father will love the disciples with the same love with which he has loved Jesus (17:23-26); and the Father, Jesus, and the disciples will be one (17:23-26).⁵ The essence of all things is love. In a relationship that forms unity by love, through Jesus, can we go to God.

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6). Jesus is the only way to God. When we pray, we must/ pray in Jesus' name. When this name is substituted/ by anything else, our prayer cannot be accepted by God.

Asking in Jesus' name is acknowledging that we love Jesus and believe that Jesus came from God (John 16:27). Love and faith go together.⁶ God does not willingly accept love isolated from faith and faith separated from love. When we go to God with love and faith in Jesus, God will receive us with love. The God we trust in is our Father who intimately loves us; he is the Father of love who opens his ears even to the prayer of the littlest of his children.

+ Questions

1. Summarize today's message in your own words.
2. Explain the meaning of this statement based on today's message: "It is not a case of the exchange of love in which humans gain access to God and God therefore responds in an accepting manner. God and Jesus are the prime movers in our relationships, and humans respond to the movements of God."⁷
3. How can I apply the lessons from today's message into my life?

+ Prayer

We know the meaning of love only in that it was none less than God that sent his Son to die for us (1 John 4:10).⁸ Thank you Lord for your Holy Spirit which works within us so that it illuminates that the cross is love for us, when we look at the cross of the Lord. May we pray in Jesus' name loving Jesus and believing that Jesus came from God. May we offer the sacrifice of love and faith. In Jesus' name, Amen.

⁵ Brown, *The Anchor Bible: The Gospel According to John XIII-XXI*, 735.

⁶ Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 559.

⁷ Gerald L. Borchert, *The New American Commentary: John 12-21*, vol. 25B (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2002), 178.

⁸ Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 560.

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

When the autumn comes

I am a flower.
My leaves, I have given to butterflies,
My honey, I have given to honey bees,
My fragrance, I have sent to the wind.
Yet I have not lost anything.
I will be born with more fruit
When the autumn comes.

Yongtaek Kim

“I have overcome the world.”

John 16:28-33

28 I came from the Father and entered the world; now I am leaving the world and going back to the Father."

29 Then Jesus' disciples said, "Now you are speaking clearly and without figures of speech.

30 Now we can see that you know all things and that you do not even need to have anyone ask you questions. This makes us believe that you came from God."

31 "You believe at last!" Jesus answered.

32 "But a time is coming, and has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home. You will leave me all alone. Yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me.

33 "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

Jesus was dispatched to the world with the commission from the Father; now he is leaving the world and going back to the Father. The origin of the Lord was initiated from the Father and his end is also concluded to the Father. The beginning and end of the Lord derived from God.

“Now we can see that you know all things and that you do not even need to have anyone ask you questions. This makes us believe that you came from God. (John 16:30)” The disciples were at the end convinced that Jesus was sent by God. But Jesus was a realist.⁹ This confession of the disciples was a beautiful confession of faith but Jesus knew the human frailty; he knew it was too frail a confession at the same time. A time of trial lay ahead them, and that trial would show up some of their deficiencies.¹⁰ He knew that his friends would abandon him, yet at the moment he did not upbraid them, and afterwards he did not hold it against them. He loved men in all their weakness; he saw men and loved them as they are.¹¹

Although Jesus was with the disciples, he was alone. At the moment of his speaking Judas departed for the darkness to betray Jesus; soon the first disciple, Peter too will deny him three time; at the moment of his arrest everyone will look after their own life, desert him and flee (Mark 14:50). Jesus, though he was with the disciples at the moment, was utterly left all alone and forsakened.

⁹ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 236.

¹⁰ Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 561.

¹¹ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 237.

But the Lord was never alone. “The Father is with me.” He does not say “will be with me” but “*is* with me.” The Father does not leave his Son alone in any moment of hardships but the Father is with the Son. He is talking about the most wonderful of realities, namely that no matter what evil people do, they can never cut God’s Son off from communion with his Father.¹²

“... Yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me. (John 16:32)”

Though we are placed in the midst of hardships and have nothing to depend upon, we too can gain boundless comfort and peace when we remember this word of Jesus.

About to face the cross that would look to everyone-his followers as well as his enemies-as total defeat, he gives a cry of victory. “I have overcome the world” does not express a wish or a hope but a fact—and a fact that is regarded as already complete (as the use of the perfect tense shows).¹³ The Lord did not despair but fulfilled a victory of perfect love in the place of total abandonment and solitude. We too ought to resemble the Victor Christ, willingly carry the cross before us, and be the victors of love instead of being defeated by hatred.

+ Questions

1. Summarize today’s message in your own words.
2. Explain the meaning of this statement based on today’s message.

“Jesus proceeded to formulate three paradoxes:

First, That within an hour or so he would be alone, yet not alone.

Secondly, That they would have tribulation, and yet be in peace.

Thirdly, That though he was going to his death, he was certainly a conqueror, and had overcome the world, whose princes were about to crucify him.”¹⁴

3. How can I apply the lessons from today’s message into my life?

¹² Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 562.

¹³ Ibid., 563-564.

¹⁴ Meyer, *The Life and Light of Men and Love to the Uttermost: A Commentary on the Gospel of John*, 290.

Prayer

"I have overcome the world." We wish to remember the last words of Jesus about to face the cross. Though everyone was terrified, despaired, and deserted the Lord, and everyone was convinced that it was the failure, the cross of the Lord was never despair, never failure. The cross was a perfect victory of the Father and the Son who overcame all despair and distrust with love and faith. May we also follow your path. In Jesus' name, Amen.



The Farewell Prayer *by Ginturn H. Tran*

Day 24: Tuesday of the Fourth Week in Lent
"Glorify thy Son that the Son may glorify thee."

John 17:1-2

1 After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: "Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you.

2 For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him.

Right before today's passage Jesus had completed his farewell sermon and proclaimed a victory, "I have overcome the world." And now he gives his prayer. The entire chapter of seventeen is the farewell prayer, the longest prayer of Jesus' prayers recorded in the Bible. Jesus' last teaching, a gem is embedded in this farewell prayer. Compared to the divisions of Israel's earthly sanctuary, the holy of holies is the seventeenth chapter.¹⁵

This last prayer was solemn. But we should not overlook the fact that there is an air of triumph about it. Jesus knew that the cross loomed before him. In a very short time he would lay down his life. But he was not looking at his death as a tragedy. He was looking beyond it to the triumph that was sure.¹⁶ Therefore the Lord was able to offer this prayer to God before going to the most cruel and dreadful death.

For Jesus life was life with a climax, and that climax was the cross. To Jesus the cross was glory of life and the way to the glory of eternity.¹⁷

To Jesus his life came from God and returned to God. The life of Jesus was initiated for God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son to demonstrate his love to the world. The commission of Jesus was to preach this love in his life. The cross was not an obstacle but a way to fulfill this commission. Therefore the cross is nothing but the glory.

The life of Jesus was not "glorious" in the way the world understands glory. But in God's eyes his life was the life of glorious Christ that ought to be exalted to the highest place and at his name every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth; his life glorified the Father (Phillipians 2:9-11).

¹⁵ Arno C. Gaebelein, *The Gospel of John: A Complete Analytical Exposition* (Neptune: Loizeaux Brothers, 1965), 244.

¹⁶ Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 566.

¹⁷ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 239.

The cross is the place where we see what real glory means.¹⁸ The true glory is being exalted only after lowering, being served only after serving, and being filled only after emptying myself. The entire life of Christ was the path of humble service. And the cross is the lowliest of lowly service and therefore the most splendid revelation of glory.¹⁹

He left his throne in glory, he served people in lowliness and humility, he died in pain and shame, and in all this what we see is not disgrace and humiliation. If we have eyes to see, it is real glory.²⁰

The cross is not only the glory of the Son but it glorifies the Father. There is only one way to glorify God, and that is to obey God.²¹ The gospel story makes it quite clear that Jesus could have escaped the cross. Humanly speaking, he could have turned back, and he need never have gone to Jerusalem.²² But he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross! (Phillipians 2:8).

“If God is glorified in him, God will glorify the Son in himself, and will glorify him at once. (John 13:32)” “After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: “Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. (John 17:1)” The Son’s victory is the Father’s victory; the Son’s glory is the Father’s glory. Just as Jesus was glorified, God was glorified, we too wish to achieve victories and glorify God.

Questions

1. Summarize today’s message in your own words.
2. John 17:1 may be summed as self-identity of Jesus. Explain the self-identity of Jesus and reflect on my own self-identity before God based on today’s message.
3. How can I apply the lessons from today’s message into my life?

Prayer

The Lord prayed that the cross was the glory of the Son and the way to glorify God. The Lord said that the glory of the Son is no different from the glory of the Father

¹⁸ Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 568.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid., 572.

²¹ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 241.

²² Ibid., 242.

and lived a life that truly glorifies the Father. This last prayer of the Lord, the farewell prayer is truly precious and profound. May we enter into the prayer of the Lord more deeply and embed the word, the last will of the Lord in our hearts. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 25: Wednesday of the Fourth Week in Lent

Eternal Life**John 17:3-5**

3 Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

4 I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do.

5 And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.

Before going to the place of death, Jesus speaks of eternal life. Eternal life is a most important topic in this Gospel.²³ Let us deeply contemplate on eternal life today.

In Greek *eternal* is the word *aiōnios*. This word has got to do, not so much with duration of life, for *duration* of life need not necessarily be a boon. The main meaning of this word is quality of life. There is only one person to whom the word *aiōnios*, *eternal*, can properly be applied, and that one person is God. Eternal life is therefore nothing other than the life of God. To possess eternal life, to enter into eternal life, is to experience here and now something of the splendor, and the majesty, and the joy, and the peace, and the holiness which are characteristic of the life of God.²⁴

Jesus gives a definition of eternal life ever so vividly. “Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent (John 17:3).” Eternal life is knowing the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom God has sent, namely the Father, the one who sent and the Son, the one who was sent. The knowledge of God and of Jesus is itself eternal life.²⁵ From the previous studies we came to know that knowing God is no different from knowing Jesus. The knowledge of God is more than intellectual knowledge but it is forming an individual relationship with God. The knowledge of God is a knowledge which comes from experiencing the character of God in our lives.

To know God, really to know God, is to enter a transforming experience. If we come to know God, we can never be the same sinful old people we were. To know God is life.²⁶

²³ Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 569.

²⁴ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 243.

²⁵ Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 571.

²⁶ Ibid.

Jesus came to this world and let us know God, through which he gave eternal life to us who were in the midst of death. It was the task entrusted to the Son by the Father; it was accomplished through the life and cross of Jesus.

“They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. (Isaiah 11:9)”

A beautiful day when the whole world will be full of the knowelege of the Lord-it has been a long lasting dream of God and Jesus came to us to fulfill this dream.

Questions

1. Summarize today's message in your own words.
2. Explain the meaning of this statement based on today's message: “Jesus goes on to say that it is eternal life to know the Father and himself. He does not say that to know them *brings* life; he says that to know them *is* life.”²⁷
3. How can I apply the lessons from today's message into my life?

Prayer

Jesus' dream was God's dream. God's dream was a world full of knowledge of the Lord that without harm and destruction, a world that everyone will gain eternal life. May we know God and Jesus and march out of the shadow of death into the midst of the light of eternal life. In Jesus' name, Amen.

²⁷ Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 571.

Day 26: Thursday of the Fourth Week in Lent

“I am glorified in them.”

John 17:6-13

6 "I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word.

7 Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you.

8 For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me.

9 I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours.

10 All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them.

11 I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name--the name you gave me--so that they may be one as we are one.

12 While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.

13 "I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them.

The life of Jesus was a life that revealed the name of the Father to the world. It does not mean simply the name by which a person is addressed or called; it means the whole nature and character of the person in so far as it can be known.²⁸ Jesus lived a life that he proclaimed that “Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father (John 14:9).” Therefore the true essence and character of God is demonstrated through the life of Jesus.

Jesus revealed the name of God to us. It is amazing grace that even the littlest of all believers are now able to call the name of God, the holy name that could not dare to be called.

Furthermore Jesus gives a very surprising prayer: “All I have is yours, and all you have is mine... (John 17:10)” Jesus claims God’s possessions as his own. To help us understand this, let us listen to the compassionate word of the father spoken to the son in a parable in the gospel of Luke: “‘My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours.’ (Luke 15:31)” Everything the Father has is the Son’s. The Father’s and the Son’s cannot be separated because the Father and the Son has a

²⁸ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 245.

complete relationship of unity which cannot be severed. The world that the Lord wants to open for us is the world that we unite with God as Jesus united with God.

The beginning of the earthly ministry of Jesus was too shabby. Now that he is about to conclude his ministry only eleven ignorant Galileean disciples remain with him. But he was not afraid of small beginnings. He was not pessimistic about the future. He seemed to say: "I have only won eleven very ordinary men; but give me eleven ordinary men and I will change the world."²⁹

Jesus said, "... glory has come to me through them. (John 17:10)" They are the disciples who did not deeply comprehend Jesus' teachings, betrayed Jesus, and fled. What glory did he ever gain through them? It is the glory of the future that originated from faith. The Lord absolutely trusted God and with the same absolute faith did he trust his disciples. No matter how small and ignoble we may be, today the Lord still looks at us with the absolute faith. We too must go forward with Jesus' confident belief in God and in men. If we believe in God and in men we will never be pessimists, because with these two beliefs the possibilities of life are infinite.³⁰

Although the most horrendous shadow of death approaches, within this faith there was no darkness in the Lord. On the contrary joy welled up in his heart. We too should be the disciples who enjoy the full measure of his joy within us resembling the faith of the Lord.

Questions

1. Summarize today's message in your own words.
2. Jesus had absolute faith in the disciples just as in God. The disciples did not understand Jesus when he was going through the passion of the cross and could not give him strength on his side. However, after the resurrection they were completely transformed, feared death no longer, and devoted their lives to preach the name of Jesus. Share an experience of someone absolutely trusting that I would change beautifully and greatly in the future though my present was small and shabby, just as in the example of Jesus and the disciples. And explain what this faith means to me.
3. How can I apply the lessons from today's message into my life?

Prayer

²⁹ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 249.

³⁰ Ibid.

The prayer of the Lord deeply moves our hearts. The entire life of the Lord was to make the name of God holy. In the complete unity with God, Lord, you glorified the name of God not only in your life but also in your death. You trusted and loved us with your same trust and love for God. May we trust and love you, Lord as you trust and love us. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 27: Friday of the Fourth Week in Lent
The Farewell Prayer of Jesus Christ
John 17:14-26

- 14 I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world.
- 15 My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one.
- 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of it.
- 17 Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.
- 18 As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.
- 19 For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.
- 20 "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message,
- 21 that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.
- 22 I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one:
- 23 I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.
- 24 "Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.
- 25 "Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me.
- 26 I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them."

Jesus seeks for largely three things for his own who will remain in the world.

First, he asks God to protect them from the evil one (John 17:15). Not following the value of the world but the truth of Christ, the disciples cannot help but be hated by the world. Persecutions are unavoidable to those who do not belong to the world. Christianity does not offer us an easy peace; it offers us a triumphant warfare. Christianity does not offer us a life in which troubles are escaped and evaded; it offers us a life in which troubles are faced and conquered.³¹ Therefore Jesus does not pray so that the coming persecution and hatred of the world will run away from the disciples but he prays so that God will protect them from the evil one when adversaries are on their way. The Lord earnestly prays that his disciples, left in the hostile world, will not fall into temptation, no matter what difficulties and hardships are on the way but triumph with only faith.

Secondly, he prays for them to be sanctified by the truth (John 17:17). How can we be sanctified? We are sanctified by the truth. "Sanctify them by the truth; your word

³¹ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 252.

is truth (John 17:7).” The truth by the word of God—by this truth we become clean (John 15:3) and holy. Therefore we meditate the word of God day and night and always check on our lives whether we live holy lives that the word of God does not depart from our mouth.

Lastly, the Lord prays that all of the disciples may be one, just as the Father and the Son are one (John 17:21). How can God and man be one? Jesus speaks of the unity between his Father and himself and prays “that they also may be in us.” The unity he seeks comes about not by human effort and initiative, but by being “in” the Father and the Son.³² Human efforts and determination cannot lay a foundation of the relationship of unity. Only God, who does not change eternally under any circumstances, is the foundation of all relationships. Therefore the closer we live to God, the closer we find ourselves to other Christians.³³

“On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you (John 14:20).”; it is a world of beautiful unity that forms one. This beautiful unity may be open only when we are in the love God has for Jesus. “... the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them. (John 17:26)” The love of God is the only power that makes us one.

Questions

1. Summarize today’s message in your own words.
2. Explain the meaning of this statement based on today’s message: “The disciples have accepted and kept the word that Jesus brought them from God (John 17:6, 14); this word has cleansed them (John 15:3)”.³⁴
3. How can I apply the lessons from today’s message into my life?



Prayer

When the Lord gave the last prayer, you did not ask that the disciples may live abundant and comfortable lives. You prayed that they may not fall into the evil but overcome it and asked the Father to protect them from the evil one when the evil

³² Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 594.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Brown, *The Anchor Bible: The Gospel According to John XIII-XXI*, 765.

comes to them. You prayed that they may be sanctified by the truth of God's word and be one in the love of God. In each prayer of the Lord for the disciples embed such great love and faith. May we fulfill the Lord's wish displayed in this prayer. In Jesus' name, Amen.



With Lanterns and Torches and Weapons by *Ginturn H. Tran*

Day 28: Saturday of the Fourth Week in Lent

“With lanterns and torches and weapons”

John 18:1-3

1 When he had finished praying, Jesus left with his disciples and crossed the Kidron Valley. On the other side there was an olive grove, and he and his disciples went into it.

2 Now Judas, who betrayed him, knew the place, because Jesus had often met there with his disciples.

3 So Judas came to the grove, guiding a detachment of soldiers and some officials from the chief priests and Pharisees. They were carrying torches, lanterns and weapons.

John chapters thirteen to sixteen record the last supper and the farewell sermon and chapter 17 records the farewell prayer. After finishing precious words like the last will, Jesus now together with his disciples is entering into an olive grove crossing the Kidron Valley.

When it was a time of the Passover, the Jews had a ritual of sprinkling the blood of lambs, free of defects. As the blood of all these lambs was dashed on to the altar, from the altar there was a channel down to the Kidron Valley, and through that channel the blood of the Passover lambs drained away. When Jesus crossed the Kidron, what did he have in mind? He would have thought of the Jewish history of the Exodus that they were saved from the shadow of death because of the sacrifice of lambs. And surely as he did so, the thought of Jesus' own sacrifice would be vivid in his mind.³⁵

Having crossed the channel of the Kidron, they came to the Mount of Olives, Olivet; and on the southern slopes of it there lay the little garden full of olive trees, Gethsemane which means the oil-press, the press where the oil was extracted from the olives which grew on the hill. Often Jesus and his disciples had gone to that garden for peace and quiet.³⁶ This was no doubt the place to which Jesus went night by night during Holy Week (Luke 21:37), but John may mean that it had served as a rendezvous

³⁵ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 259.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 260.

for him and his disciples during earlier visit to Jerusalem also.³⁷ This was the place of the rest and the place where Jesus loved the most. So tragically, in this very place was Jesus arrested.

Judas knew it. Judas knew that he would find Jesus there and it was there that Judas had decided that it would be easiest to engineer the arrest of Jesus.³⁸ At the last supper though Jesus offered the last exhortation of love to win Judas, after receiving the sop from Jesus, Judas had become the tool of Satan and had gone off into the night. Judas had turned to be a traitor and led the authorities in order to arrest Jesus at the grove. This was the evil night of which Jesus had warned in 11:10 and 12:35, the night in which men stumble because they have no light. ("It is when he walks by night that he stumbles, for he has no light. (John 11:10); Then Jesus told them, "You are going to have the light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you. The man who walks in the dark does not know where he is going. (John 12:35)")

Perhaps this is why Judas and his companions come bearing lanterns and torches. They have not accepted the light of the world, and so they must have artificial light.³⁹

Although the full moon of the Passover was brightly lighting up just like the day time, they came to arrest Jesus, still armed and carrying lanterns and torches.

It is necessary for us to pay attention to the fact that Judas brought a detachment of soldiers, the cohort and some officials from the chief priests and Pharisees, who are the representatives of the his own people, to Jesus. Judas, one of the Twelve that Jesus dearly loved and trusted was guiding in front the representatives of the people, who were supposed to receive and testify the Christ who came to his own, instead they were arresting the Son of God at this evil night with lanterns and torches and weapons. Isn't this a tragedy of history?

Questions

1. Summarize today's message in your own words.
2. Today's passage records one of the most tragic scenes of history. Explain the meaning of this statement based on today's message: "This moment of darkness may be contrasted with the final triumph of Jesus in the heavenly Jerusalem (Revelation 22:5)

³⁷ Bruce, *The Gospel of John: Introduction, Exposition and Notes*, 339.

³⁸ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 260.

³⁹ Brown, *The Anchor Bible: The Gospel According to John XIII-XXI*, 817.

where the blessed will need no lamps for the Lord God will be their light.”⁴⁰

3. How can I apply the lessons from today’s message into my life?

Prayer

After having finished with the farewell sermon and the prayer, now Jesus had gone to the grove crossing the Kidron Valley filled with the blood from the Passover lambs. The perfect little lamb of God who carries the sin of the world knew that a time had come for him to sacrifice himself for the world. To the grove, filled with memories of love with Jesus, Judas became a traitor and came, armed with lanterns, torches, and weapons, leading a group of people who were supposed to protect Jesus. The disciples of Jesus had followed him looking for life; Judas’ party has come looking for Jesus’ death.⁴¹ May we not reside in the darkness of death like Judas’ party but receive Jesus, the light of the truth and life. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Brown, *The Anchor Bible: The Gospel According to John XIII-XXI*, 818.



The Kidron Valley by Joungmi Kang
PASSION SUNDAY

All the solutions of the world are insufficient to get rid of the stain of my sins,
but here is the blood of the Son of God, spotless, blameless, and I feel that
this is powerful.

There is power, power, wonder-working power
In the precious blood of the Lamb.

His blood can make the foulest clean,
His blood availed for me.

Charles Wesley.

That is our comfort and consolation.

Martyn Lloyd-Jones⁴²

⁴² Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Life in Christ: Studies in 1 John, Fellowship with God* (Wheaton: Crossway, 1993), 144.



Jesus crosses the Kidron Valley by Koeun Lee

Day 29: Monday in Passion Week

"Let these men go."

John 18:4-11

4 Jesus, knowing all that was going to happen to him, went out and asked them, "Who is it you want?"

5 "Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "I am he," Jesus said. (And Judas the traitor was standing there with them.)

6 When Jesus said, "I am he," they drew back and fell to the ground.

7 Again he asked them, "Who is it you want?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth."

8 "I told you that I am he," Jesus answered. "If you are looking for me, then let these men go."

9 This happened so that the words he had spoken would be fulfilled: "I have not lost one of those you gave me."

10 Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear. (The servant's name was Malchus.)

11 Jesus commanded Peter, "Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?"

As we have studied, Judas did not come alone but brought the cohort to arrest Jesus. John mentions "the cohort," a military term for the Roman soldiers. Strictly a cohort was the tenth part of a legion and comprised of six-hundred men.⁴³ Evidently a multitude of people rushed in, armed with lanterns, torches and weapons, to arrest Jesus, a king of peace who have never used any form of violence in his life.

They were so sure that Jesus would undoubtedly hide himself and therefore prepared to catch him using their armed forces. However, completely different from their expectation, Jesus showed his appearance under the moonlight and first approached them asking, "Who is it you want?" "I am he. I am the one whom you are looking for." Then they drew back and fell to the ground. Falling down is a reaction to divine revelation in Daniel 2:46, 8:18; Revelation 1:17.⁴⁴ Amazing divine revelation and the spiritual authority that spurted out from Jesus made those who came to arrest him draw back and fall down. The one who is being arrested made the ones who came to arrest kneel down.

John recorded that Jesus, knowing all that was going to happen to him, went out to the band. John wanted to testify that Jesus was not driven to the cross because Judas betrayed him and a great number of armed forces thoroughly searched lighting up the lanterns and torches but Jesus gave himself to the cross *by his own will*. It was no one else but Jesus who was the master of his destiny. The Lord knew all that was going to

⁴³ Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 604.

⁴⁴ Brown, *The Anchor Bible: The Gospel According to John XIII-XXI*, 818.

happen to him and if desired, he could have avoided the confrontation very easily! Nevertheless he did not evade, did not front out even for once, but *willingly* chose and *bodily* walked the path—this was the path of the cross.

For the second time Jesus asked, "Who is it you want?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth." "If you are looking for me, then let these men go. I identified that I am the one whom you want to arrest for two times. Arrest me but do not harm my disciples and let them go on their way safely." He thought more of their peril than of his own.⁴⁵ Even on Gethesamane where he carried a greater spiritual cross than on Calvary the Lord desired to protect the disciples till the end and he alone was arrested and alone carried the cross.

"If you are looking for me, then let these men go." As the Good Shepherd steps to the front and sheathes the swords of his foes in his own breast, while he demands the release of the cowering flock, he is doing on a small scale what he did once and for ever on Calvary.⁴⁶ The cross is the path that instead of us the Lord took up our infirmities to protect us. He bore the extreme brunt of all that was to be borne. He substituted his suffering for ours, his wounds for our pain, his death for our sins.⁴⁷ He stood to the front, was arrested, and led away instead of us. Truly, as the Lord was bounded, aren't we freed?

Even today the Lord speaks to the forces of darkness waiting to bound and catch us: "Take me; but let these go their way."

"...The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me(Galatians 2:20)."

Questions

1. Summarize today's message in your own words.

⁴⁵ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 262.

⁴⁶ Meyer, *The Life and Light of Men and Love to the Uttermost: A Commentary on the Gospel of John*, 315.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

2. Explain the meaning of this statement based on today's message: "His life and death were not merely a sacrifice, but a self-sacrifice. He freely gave himself up for us all."⁴⁸
3. How can I apply the lessons from today's message into my life?

Prayer

John conveys a heart-trembling record that the Lord, though knowing all that was going to happen to him, did not evade but boldly dealt with the forces of darkness. To the holy authority of the love of the Lord those who came to arrest could not help but submit. Though all the dark forces concerted their efforts and surrounded the Lord, the Lord did not look after himself but thought of our welfare first. The Lord willingly gave up his life to pay for the price to save us. The Lord was sold away for the price of our transgressions and we were bought at a price, a price of the Lord's sacrifice. May we remember this love and respond to it. In Jesus' name, Amen.

⁴⁸ Meyer, *The Life and Light of Men and Love to the Uttermost: A Commentary on the Gospel of John*, 312.



The Prowess of Peter by *Joungmi Kang*

Day 30: Tuesday in Passion Week
Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?"
John 18:10-11

10 Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear. (The servant's name was Malchus.)

11 Jesus commanded Peter, "Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?"

Many say Peter is a coward because he disowned the Lord and ran away. But today's passage defeats the claim but testifies his courage. But today's passage shows that Peter is not at all cowardly. He has courage that cannot be found in anyone else in this world. Although an army of hundreds armed and stormed in to arrest the Lord, Peter, all by himself, drew out his sword. If we were Peter, would we have drawn a sword and dealt with the multitude of armed enemies in a situation where it is impossible to win? Peter surely did know that a price to pay was high when he was branded as a follower of a criminal who was to be crucified. However Peter was a disciple who loved the Lord. Therefore he wanted to protect the Lord risking his life. This is the beautiful prowess of Peter.

The Lord did not compliment on this prowess of Peter. Instead, he rebuked him commanding him that he put his sword away. The Lord knew that nothing can be fulfilled with Peter's method and moreover he was already determined to drink the cup the Father has given him.

John did not record the prayer of Gethesame unlike other Evangelists of the Synoptic Gospels. But, in a sense, the scene of the arrest in John has within it the familiar "agony in the garden" motif summed up in the, "Shall I not drink the cup which the Father has given me?" (John 18:11).⁴⁹

The cup that the Father has given, which all Gospels speak of, is the cup of suffering and the weight to carry the sin of the world. It was vividly revealed as the cross before the Lord.

One, out of the Twelve, left that night and eleven remained, among which the Lord took the three disciples and prayed in Gethesame before the cross. "He took Peter, James and John along with him, and he began to be deeply distressed and troubled. (Mark 13:33)" Now that the Lord was about to be arrested soon, he prayed with loud cries and tears. "During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. (Hebrews 5:7)"

⁴⁹ Marrow, *The Gospel of John*, 327.

The band of soldiers arrested a flesh and blood person just like any one of themselves.⁵⁰ The Evangelists did not hide that Jesus was a human who had tears and emotions just like us. Though Jesus was a human, deeply distressed, troubled, concerned and cried, it was not the end. The Lord prayed and beyond all his weakness, suffering, pain, sorrow and tears, he confirmed that he was ready to submit to drink the cup that God had given him.

The cross is one of the most painful and dreadful punishments that humans have ever invented. You are not allowed to die quickly though desired. It is a gruesome death that the pain is slowly aggravated to its end. It was unimaginable that a Roman citizen be crucified and it was an awful punishment that is given to only slaves or the most evil criminals that rebel against Roman empireship.

Before the death on the cross the Lord fell with his face to the ground and earnestly prayed: "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. (Matthew 26:39)" "And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground. (Luke 22:44)" "Yet not as I will, but as you will. (Matthew 26:39)" Jesus can call on the Father and the Father will at once put at his disposal more than twelve legions of angels (Matthew 26:53). He was the Son of God who at anytime can end all circumstances. But he was determined to readily drink the cup that the Father had given him. It is self-denial, self-lowering, in other words, *submission*. Though it may mean his own death, the Lord decided to obey to the will of God.

How did the Lord, who has the same frail flesh like us endure the dreadful cross?

Surely it was because of nothing else but love. His love is stronger than death, and mightier than the grave.⁵¹ How greatly he must have loved us! It was love, and only love, that kept him standing at the bar of Pilate, bending beneath the scourge of the soldiers, hanging in apparent helplessness on the cross.⁵² He would suffer and he would die, but not because of the activities of the soldiers or those who sent them. He would do so because that was the cup the Father had given him.⁵³ It was not even the compulsion of the Divine purpose. It was his own choice, because of a love that would bear all things if only it might achieve redemption for those whom he loved more than himself.⁵⁴

On the journey of faith when our will collide with God's will, and when we have confusion, fear, and pain, we should remember the Lord's voice: "Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?"

⁵⁰ Marrow, *The Gospel of John*, 325.

⁵¹ Meyer, *The Life and Light of Men and Love to the Uttermost: A Commentary on the Gospel of John*, 311.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 608.

⁵⁴ Meyer, *The Life and Light of Men and Love to the Uttermost: A Commentary on the Gospel of John*, 311.

Questions

1. Summarize today's message in your own words.
2. Explain the meaning of this statement based on today's message: The prayer of Gethsamene (Matthew 26:36-46, Mark 14:32-42, Luke 22:40-46) recorded in the Synoptic Gospels plainly records the suffering of human Jesus. "But such knowledge must not be allowed to diminish the reality of what he suffers throughout the passion."⁵⁵
3. How can I apply the lessons from today's message into my life?

Prayer

For the Lord Peter drew his sword and dealt with the enemies, armed and bloodthirsty. Though this prowess of Peter is beautiful, it was changing prowess which disowned the Lord at the most critical moment. Jesus offered up the prayer of tears but he in the end overcame the force of death that was coming to him and submitted to the will of God. Not shaking even a bit, the Lord willingly drank the cup that God had given him. As we have discovered the secret how the Lord was able to carry the cross, may we also carry the cross following the Lord. In Jesus' name, Amen.

⁵⁵ Marrow, *The Gospel of John*, 327.

Day 31: Wednesday in Passion Week
The Trial of Annas
John 18:12-14, 19-24

12 Then the detachment of soldiers with its commander and the Jewish officials arrested Jesus. They bound him

13 and brought him first to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year.

14 Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it would be good if one man died for the people.

19 Meanwhile, the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching.

20 "I have spoken openly to the world," Jesus replied. "I always taught in synagogues or at the temple, where all the Jews come together. I said nothing in secret.

21 Why question me? Ask those who heard me. Surely they know what I said."

22 When Jesus said this, one of the officials nearby struck him in the face. "Is this the way you answer the high priest?" he demanded.

23 "If I said something wrong," Jesus replied, "testify as to what is wrong. But if I spoke the truth, why did you strike me?"

24 Then Annas sent him, still bound, to Caiaphas the high priest.

That night the band together with Judas bounded Jesus and brought him first to Annas. Annas was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. High priesthood was originally a tenured post but since Rome has ruled over, Roman governance appointed high priests. Annas had been appointed to the office of high priest in A.D. 6 and was deposed in A.D. 15. But as he offered incessant flatteries and bribes, his five sons, a grandson, and a son-in-law, Caiaphas consecutively stepped into his post. He is said to have been about sixty years old at this time.⁵⁶ He was still the most powerful living bearer of that title of high priest. The whole family partook of his character, and was notorious for unwearied plotting. The gliding, deadly, snake-like smoothness with which Annas and his sons seized their prey is said to have won them the name of "hissing vipers."⁵⁷

Annas' family mounted up extravegat wealth in a most contemptible way. Every victim which was offered in the Temple had to be without spot and blemish. There were inspectors to see that it was so. If a victim was bought outside the temple it had to be inspected and examined, and it was certain that a flaw would be found. Therefore it was required to buy the victims from the Temple shops and pay double the price. The whole Temple business was sheer

⁵⁶ Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John*, 344.

⁵⁷ Meyer, *The Life and Light of Men and Love to the Uttermost: A Commentary on the Gospel of John*, 316.

exploitation; and the shops where the Temple victims were sold were called The Bazaars of Annas.⁵⁸ There is a passage even in the *Talmud* which says: “Woe to the house of Annas!”⁵⁹

Jesus was a pain in the neck to a viper such as Annas. Jesus was the man who had attacked Annas’ vested interest; Jesus was the man who had cleared the Temple of the sellers of victims, and who had hit Annas where it hurt--in his pocket and his bank account.⁶⁰ Therefore Jesus was brought first to Annas.

The examination before Annas was a mockery of justice. It was an essential regulation of the Jewish law that a prisoner must be asked no question by answering which he would admit any kind of guilt.⁶¹ Jesus, knowing it well, requested that they not ask Jesus but ask those who heard him and bring witnesses.

Annas, the most powerful living bearer of the high priesthood, who therefore was supposed to observe the law more than anyone else, broke the law by himself, threatened and examined Jesus without the presence of any witnesses. Annas and Caiaphas must not have the intention of following rightful procedures and regulations from the first place.

John accuses that it was absolutely illegitimate and detestable examination. Prior to the examination they pre-decided the death of Jesus. “Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it would be good if one man died for the people. (Joh 18:14)”

The true high priest, who became the bridge between God and people, saved lives of people, led them to repentance and salvation, was killed by a detestable false high priest, who tempted, condemned, murdered and led many to sin.

Questions

1. Summarize today’s message in your own words.
2. John has a very intense indignation in mentioning the name of Annas and Caiaphas though he records after 60 or 70 years since the incident of the cross. John must have still been revolted by the thought of them. What are the warning messages towards today’s churches and believers as we reflect on the fallen image of the high priests in John’s era?
3. How can I apply the lessons from today’s message into my life?

Prayer

⁵⁸ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 264.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 265.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

We came to know that Jesus suffered because of the authorities of religion and of sin. The authorities that the Lord dealt with were detestable and evil power. They claimed that they serve God and people as representatives of the people. In actuality they deceived God and had only judgement to receive from. The Lord came to us in person and became our true high priest. May we never forget the grace of the Lord who showed the way of eternal life and led us to God. May we preach this message to the whole world. In Jesus' name, Amen.



The Denial of Peter by *Ginturn H. Tran*

Day 32: Thursday in Passion Week

The Denial of Peter

John 18:15-18, 25-27

15 Simon Peter and another disciple were following Jesus. Because this disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the high priest's courtyard,

16 but Peter had to wait outside at the door. The other disciple, who was known to the high priest, came back, spoke to the girl on duty there and brought Peter in.

17 "You are not one of his disciples, are you?" the girl at the door asked Peter. He replied, "I am not."

18 It was cold, and the servants and officials stood around a fire they had made to keep warm. Peter also was standing with them, warming himself.

25 As Simon Peter stood warming himself, he was asked, "You are not one of his disciples, are you?" He denied it, saying, "I am not."

26 One of the high priest's servants, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, challenged him, "Didn't I see you with him in the olive grove?"

27 Again Peter denied it, and at that moment a rooster began to crow.

Although all disciples left Jesus, Peter could not leave him. The beloved teacher was about to meet the last moment; he could not shut his eyes and leave him alone on this cold night. When the band bounded and took Jesus, Peter followed them Jesus from afar, and in the end he entered into the high priest's courtyard. The beautiful memories of love about Jesus instilled amazing courage and led him to the dreadful place where death is awaiting.

However Peter eventually disowned the Lord three times. Why did Peter, who so dearly loved the Lord, turn cowardly and denied him?

He had relied on his own braggart resolutions; he had counted himself strong because he could speak strongly and loudly when danger was not near.⁶² He did not know his own weakness but depended on only his strongness.

If we do not reside in the grace of God, at any moment our resolutions cannot help but change according to situations and circumstances. The resolutions of the evening are not strong enough to carry us victoriously through the morning conflict. We must learn to watch and pray, to lie low in humility and self-distrust, and to be strong in the grace which awaits all tempted ones in God.⁶³

⁶² Meyer, *The Life and Light of Men and Love to the Uttermost: A Commentary on the Gospel of John*, 322.

⁶³ Ibid.

Peter, leaving the Lord being examined, stood around a fire and warmed himself together with the servants and officials. It is always dangerous for the Lord's people to put themselves in compromising positions, always dangerous to stand and warm one's hands at the world's fire.⁶⁴ The world's fire seemed to offer Peter some comfort, but he was about to be badly burned.⁶⁵

On this cold night Peter failed to be on Lord's side, defend for him, and strengthen him, but he left him alone. Peter warmed himself at the fire and denied the Lord three times. When a rooster crowed, Peter was reminded of the word of the Lord and went outside and wept bitterly. "Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken: "Before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times." And he went outside and wept bitterly. (Matthew 26:75)"

Peter must have remembered his own confession that he vowed on the same night, just a few hours before the incident that he would lay down his life for the Lord (John 13:37). Reflecting on his sin that unknowingly he committed, he must have been judged by his own word. He must have remembered the warning of Lord that he warned that he would deny the Lord three times so that he must be on his guard. He must have thought of the image of the disciples including himself, changing so easily, disowning the Lord, even cursing, failing to be with him and strengthening him but deserting him. On the contrary, he must have thought of the image of the Lord who unchangingly went forward with only love and faith before the dreadful cross. He was loved even more gratefully because he was the first disciple; he must have remembered the love that the Lord had given. Therefore, he could not help but weep bitterly.

Remember that this very circumstantial account was given by one who was an eye-witness of the whole scene; and who, withal, was then and in after years the warm friend and companion of Peter. But his love did not lead him to conceal his brother's sins. Peter himself would not have wished him to do so, because where sin had abounded, grace had had the greater opportunity to super-abound.⁶⁶

Though we are the underserving ones no different from Peter, the grace of the Lord abundantly comes down, washes away our sin, and covers us more than enough.

Questions

1. Summarize today's message in your own words.

⁶⁴ Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John*, 346.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 348.

⁶⁶ Meyer, *The Life and Light of Men and Love to the Uttermost: A Commentary on the Gospel of John*, 320.

2. Explain the differences between the betrayer of Judas and the denial of Peter based on today's message.
3. How can I apply the lessons from today's message into my life?

Prayer

Remembering today's message, we wish to contrast Christ's love with our ingratitude, Christ's constancy with our fickle devotion, Christ's meekness to take the yoke of his Father's will, and our unwillingness to bear his cross of shame.⁶⁷ And we, too, wish to reflect and repent shedding the tears like those that Peter shed. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 33: Friday in Passion Week

"This was to fulfill the word."

John 18:28-32

⁶⁷ Meyer, *The Life and Light of Men and Love to the Uttermost: A Commentary on the Gospel of John*, 322-323.

28 Then the Jews led Jesus from Caiaphas to the palace of the Roman governor. By now it was early morning, and to avoid ceremonial uncleanness the Jews did not enter the palace; they wanted to be able to eat the Passover.

29 So Pilate came out to them and asked, "What charges are you bringing against this man?"

30 "If he were not a criminal," they replied, "we would not have handed him over to you."

31 Pilate said, "Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law." "But we have no right to execute anyone," the Jews objected.

32 This happened so that the words Jesus had spoken indicating the kind of death he was going to die would be fulfilled.

That night after the long examination when it was early morning, Jesus was led from Caiaphas to the Praetorium, the palace of Pilate the Roman governor. The Praetorium was where the Roman governor kept as the headquarters during his stay in Jerusalem. Now that it was during the Passover festival, the Jews did not want to enter the palace of the gentiles fearing that they may disqualify to eat the Passover due to ceremonial uncleanness.

The Passover is the Feast of Unleavened Bread. All Jewish households strictly held a ceremony of removing all the yeast, which symbolizes evil. Those who examined the Son of God by breaking the law by themselves did not enter the Praetorium in fear of the presence of even the littlest of evil because they wanted to observe the Passover holy. Therefore they had to call Pilate out to them. Those who strictly keep the ordinances and festivals of God without any defect burned with indignation and hatred towards Christ, the Incarnation of love and are about to remove the Christ, the bread of life, not the yeast.

John points out their restriction to the dead religious formalities and rituals and further, their spiritual blindness. According to John, when Jesus was crucified at 12 noon, this was the very moment when the Passover lambs were being killed in the temple in preparation for the meal (John 19:14).⁶⁸ They were scrupulous about the rituals, "that they might eat the Passover," he says. Little did they know that Christ was the true Passover lamb, and that they were about to kill him in that capacity.⁶⁹

When they brought Jesus to Pilate, he asked his charges. But the only fabricated charge that they could bring out was the blasphemy that Jesus claimed that he was the Son of God (Matthew 26:63). This charge was not legitimate ground to Roman. Kowning very well that it was a matter that would be sneered at, they had found no answers and were unable to present his charges because they could not discover any sin in Jesus. Therefore they said he was

⁶⁸ G. Henton Davies and J. E. Morgan-Wynne. *The Last Seven Days: The Story of Jesus and Holy Week*. Regent's Study Guides 7 (Macon: Regent's Park College, Oxford with Smyth & Helwys Publishing, Inc., 1999), 109.

⁶⁹ Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John*, 349.

kakopoios, an evildoer, a criminal. They falsely accused him the Son of God, who has in him no evil at all.

They brought Jesus to Pilate because they wanted him to put to death by crucifixion. They wanted this one who claimed to be God to die under the curse of God (Galatians 3:13).⁷⁰

But John wanted to testify that all these things were to fulfill the will of God. What God permits is as equally his will as what he appoints. Joseph tells his brethren that it was not they who sent him to Egypt, but God. David listens meekly to Shimei's shameful words, because he feels that God allowed them to be spoken.⁷¹ Jesus said, "Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up. (John 3:14)" and also said, "But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself. (John 12:32)" No matter what kind of schemes may Judas craft, although all the disciples denied and fled not being able to give strength, eventually the will of God was fulfilled.

Although we may do the evil according to our own intention and plans, God will finally fulfill his will beyond the evil; he will change the evil to greater good. Therefore God's allowing is no different from God's planning. Though seeing only evil surroundings, Jesus was able to so confidently carry the cross as he was assured of the good hands of God working in the midst of evil.

Questions

1. Summarize today's message in your own words.
2. Explain the meaning of this statement based on today's message: "John is telling us that in the end God carried out his purpose. Though there is a sense in which they all acted freely and did what they chose, there is a deeper sense in which they did nothing other than what God determined."⁷²
3. How can I apply the lessons from today's message into my life?

Prayer

They did not want the littlest of evil to affect them by perfectly removing even a bit of the yeast but they, not knowing that removing Jesus of love was the greatest evil, drove the Lord to the cross. Today we came to realize that no matter what and how happened, in the end God's promise was fulfilled and God's will was accomplished. It is not the evil but the good

⁷⁰ Ibid., 350.

⁷¹ Meyer, *The Life and Light of Men and Love to the Uttermost: A Commentary on the Gospel of John*, 314.

⁷² Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 626.

which was triumphant. God is indeed living. May we not let go of this important message that John testifies. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 34: Saturday in Passion Week

"What is truth?"

John 18:33-38

33 Pilate then went back inside the palace, summoned Jesus and asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?"

34 "Is that your own idea," Jesus asked, "or did others talk to you about me?"

35 "Am I a Jew?" Pilate replied. "It was your people and your chief priests who handed you over to me. What is it you have done?"

36 Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place."

37 "You are a king, then!" said Pilate. Jesus answered, "You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."

38 "What is truth?" Pilate asked. With this he went out again to the Jews and said, "I find no basis for a charge against him.

The Lord is exchanging profound questions and answers with Pilate. Unlike other Evangelists John spares thorough descriptions and teach us great spiritual wisdom.

Pilate asks Jesus, "Are you the king?" But Jesus here makes it quite clear that he claims to be a king, and makes it equally clear that his kingdom is not based on force and arms, but that it is a kingdom in the hearts of men. He would never deny that he aimed at conquest, but it was the conquest of love.⁷³

The Son of Man, who came to our world armed with no authority save that of truth, clothed with no power but that of love.⁷⁴ The kingdom of the Lord is not of this world but it is a kingdom of truth. It is a kingdom that they cannot see and hear though they have eyes and ears but only those who realized the truth can truly see and listen and become its people. The Lord is the true king of this kingdom. He is neither a king who intends to acquire powers by force nor a king who is bound to a nation, but he is only the king of truth.

Pilate asked Jesus, "What is truth?" John records no answer to this Pilate's question, at least in words. But a number of commentators have pointed out that the whole sequence of events that followed is John's answer in action. Truth is seen in the quality of Jesus' action in going to the cross for the salvation of sinners. Truth is seen in the action of the loving Father in giving up his Son to effect this salvation. It is when we see the sinless Son of God hanging on Calvary that we come to understand what truth in action, real truth, means.⁷⁵

To our question, "What is truth?" Jesus stands before us as as he stood before Pilate. Truthfully Jesus is the absolute truth, perfect truth.

Pilate did not comprehend Jesus, who was standing before himself as the real truth itself. At least he was convinced of his innocence. "... I find no basis for a charge against him. (John 18:38)" John recorded that Pilate proclaimed of the innocence of Jesus upto three times (Joh 18:38; 29:4, 6). Both the power of the religion and of the world could not discover any sin from the Lord. His death was not inflicted by the price of his own sin. John wanted to testify that his death was righteous death; through his death he was giving his life to us; it was the death that redeemed our sin.

Questions

⁷³ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 284.

⁷⁴ Meyer, *The Life and Light of Men and Love to the Uttermost: A Commentary on the Gospel of John*, 339.

⁷⁵ Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 634.

1. Summarize today's message in your own words.
2. Pilate can be understood as a representative of secular power. What the secular authorities are concerned about can be summed up as, "Are you a king? What is your nation like?" Answer to these questions based on today's message.
3. Explain the meaning of this statement based on today's message: The world's religions and philosophies have debated the substance of truth for centuries. Nowadays the idea is current that truth is relative.⁷⁶
3. How can I apply the lessons from today's message into my life?

Prayer

Thank you for letting us know that truth is nothing but Jesus. His birth, his life, his death, his resurrection, and the ascension--all these are the revelation of God for us. Christ, the revelation of God is absolute and perfect truth, who clothed in blood and flesh so that all can see him. This the voice of truth, which cannot be seen though having eyes, which cannot be heard though having ears, is heard and seen by us. Now may we testify to this truth. In Jesus' name, Amen.

PALM SUNDAY

Were you there when they crucified my Lord? I was there. I can see myself in each of the actors in that drama. I was there in Caiaphas who would save the nation by letting Jesus perish. I was there in Nicodemus who would not risk his position in the Sanhedrin for Jesus' sake. I was there in Peter who loved but was unprepared. I was there in Judas who followed, but sought to bend Jesus to his own ends. I was there in Herod who did not care. I was there in Pilate who was afraid. I was there among the fickle crowd. I was one of the soldiers who simply did his duty. I know I am guilty of his death.

Daniel T. Niles⁷⁷

⁷⁶ Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John*, 354.

⁷⁷ Daniel T. Niles, *That They May Have Life* (New York: Harper & Row, 1951), 55.

Day 35: Monday in Holy Week
"No, not him! Give us Barabbas!"
John 18:39-19:6

39 But it is your custom for me to release to you one prisoner at the time of the Passover. Do you want me to release 'the king of the Jews'?"

40 They shouted back, "No, not him! Give us Barabbas!" Now Barabbas had taken part in a rebellion.

1 Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged.

2 The soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head. They clothed him in a purple robe

3 and went up to him again and again, saying, "Hail, king of the Jews!" And they struck him in the face.

4 Once more Pilate came out and said to the Jews, "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no basis for a charge against him."

5 When Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe, Pilate said to them, "Here is the man!"

6 As soon as the chief priests and their officials saw him, they shouted, "Crucify! Crucify!" But Pilate answered, "You take him and crucify him. As for me, I find no basis for a charge against him."

Convinced of the innocence of Jesus, Pilate tried to release him. He proposed to release either Jesus or Barabbas knowing a custom that one prisoner may be freed at the time of the Passover. Barabbas was the man of force, the man of blood, the man who chose to reach his end by violent means. Jesus was the man of love and of gentleness, who would have nothing to do with force and whose kingdom was in the hearts of men.⁷⁸

But they chose Barabbas. They were burning with such great hatred so that all their reasons and judgement were paralyzed. They failed to see that Barabbas whom they chose was a murderer, the one who took away lives and Jesus whom they abandoned was a savior, the one who gave lives.

Startled by their selection, Pilate desired to mitigate their hatred by afflicting Jesus to brutal tortures and gain their sense of sympathy, and free him. Therefore Pilate had Jesus flogged. This scourging (*phragelloō*) was a murderous form of torture; the whips with which it was carried out were reinforced with sharp pieces of metal or bone which left the victim's body a bloody pulp, and it is not surprising that this treatment was sometimes sufficient in itself to cause death.⁷⁹

Jesus, whose flesh was ripped away, is brutally bloody. Additionally the soldiers put the crown of thorns on his head and smote him with their hands, mocking him. Their hatred and wrath were still not fading away after they saw all these happened.

They shouted Barabbas be released but Jesus be crucified. "Barabbas" means "son of father."⁸⁰

Jesus, the true "Son of the Father" freed Barabbas, which literally means son of father-- in other words all of us. He instead of us was crucified and gave his life.

What happened to Barabbas no man knows; but John Oxenham in one of his books has an imaginary picture of him. At first Barabbas could think of nothing but his freedom; but then he began to look at the man who had died that he might live. Something about Jesus fascinated him and he followed him out to see the end. As he saw Jesus bearing his cross, one thought burned into his mind: "I should have been carrying that cross; not he; he saved me!" And as he saw Jesus hanging there on Calvary, the only thing of which Barabbas could think was: "I should have been hanging there; not he; he saved me"⁸¹

Truly didn't Christ shed his precious blood on the cross for my sin!

Questions

⁷⁸ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 290.

⁷⁹ Bruce, *The Gospel of John: Introduction, Exposition and Notes*, 358.

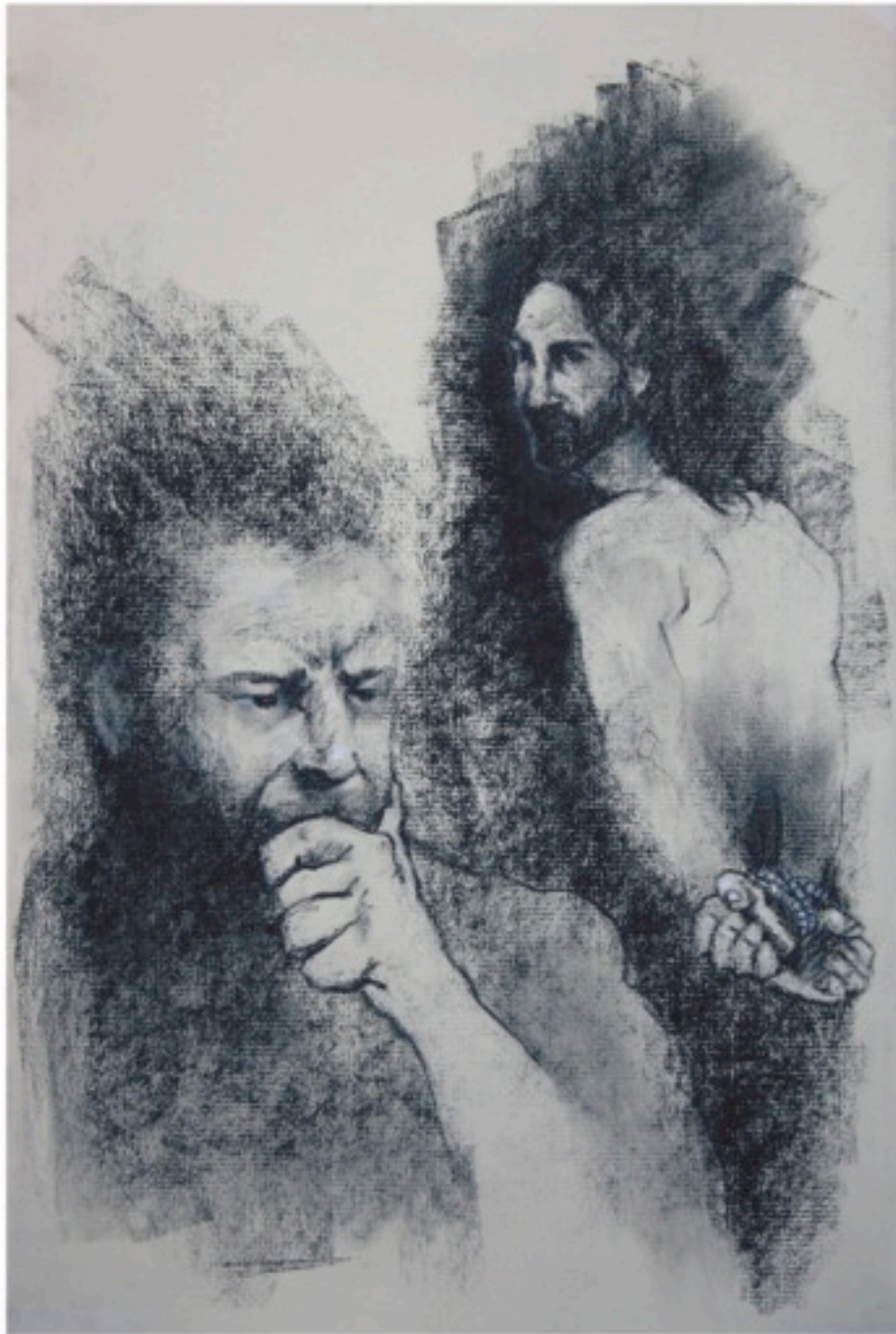
⁸⁰ According to Morris, Barabbas is not really a name at all. "Bar" is an Aramaic expression meaning "son of" and "abba" is the Aramaic for "father." "Barabbas" is thus the transliteration into Greek of an expression that means "son of father."

⁸¹ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 290.

1. Summarize today's message in your own words.
2. Explain the sin of the chosen people and religious leaders of today's era by reflecting on the sin of the chosen people and religious leaders of John's era.
3. How can I apply the lessons from today's message into my life?

Prayer

We saw that there is more brutal and evil image in the chosen people of God than in Pilate. When the secular leader was convinced that Jesus was sinless and proclaimed that he was innocent, they were burning with groundless hatred and rage and crucified the Lord. The Lord is impeccable and sinless but we are stained with all kinds of evil and sin. But still the Lord bore the cross instead of us and gave out his precious life. May we remember that the cross is where we, not he, should have been hung. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Jesus and Pilate by Ginturn H. Tran

Day 36: Tuesday in Holy Week

"You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above."

John 19:7-16

7 The Jews insisted, "We have a law, and according to that law he must die, because he claimed to be the Son of God."

8 When Pilate heard this, he was even more afraid,

9 and he went back inside the palace. "Where do you come from?" he asked Jesus, but Jesus gave him no answer.

10 "Do you refuse to speak to me?" Pilate said. "Don't you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you?"

11 Jesus answered, "You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above. Therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin."

12 From then on, Pilate tried to set Jesus free, but the Jews kept shouting, "If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar. Anyone who claims to be a king opposes Caesar."

13 When Pilate heard this, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judge's seat at a place known as the Stone Pavement (which in Aramaic is Gabbatha).

14 It was the day of Preparation of Passover Week, about the sixth hour. "Here is your king," Pilate said to the Jews.

15 But they shouted, "Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!" "Shall I crucify your king?" Pilate asked. "We have no king but Caesar," the chief priests answered.

16 Finally Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified. So the soldiers took charge of Jesus.

The Jews said because Jesus claimed that he was the Son of God, he must be killed. Having heard it, Pilate the Roman governor came to have greater fear. It is possible that Pilate shared in a superstitious fear of what could follow a manifestation of divinity in human form, and the words of the Jewish leaders may have led him to fear the worst.⁸²

Gripped by fear, Pilate tried deeper dialogues with Jesus but the Lord did not give answers to Pilate's questions. Being in no doubt that he was completely master of the situation⁸³, Pilate wanted to give a golden opportunity to have Jesus evade from the path of the cross and asked: "Do you refuse to speak to me?" ... "Don't you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you? (John 19:10)"

We ought to pay attention to the words of the Lord to this question of Pilate: "...You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above.... (John 19:11)" The Lord looked at the will of God beyond all circumstances and, without compromise, willingly carried the dreadful cross. This death could be avoided. But the Lord did not seek any other way but went to the most miserable path unto the end because it was the way that God had permitted.

⁸² Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 641.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 643.

After having heard that Jesus was the Son of God, the chosen ones, the Jews, instead of having fear, flared up in hatred. They shouted, "Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!"

To this Pilate asked: "Shall I crucify your king?"

How does the chief priest answer then? "We have no king but Caesar." The hatred of the Jews turned them into a maddened mob of shrieking, frenzied fanatics. In their hatred they forgot all mercy, they forgot all justice, they forgot all their principles, they even forgot God.⁸⁴ The only king of Israel is the LORD God--this was the foundation of their faith but they deserted even this essence.

They live like shrewd and cynical politicians, people who know how to manipulate others in order to get the result at which they aim. They are not concerned in the slightest to set forward the purpose of God if those purposes do not fall in with what they see as politically expedient.⁸⁵ Their accusation aiming to crucify Jesus turned political surpassing religious issues. They abhorred the Son of God who came to give them life and love.

In the end sitting down on the judge's seat, Pilate handed over the Son of God to be crucified.

But who really was being judged that day?⁸⁶ Clearly the one who was judged was not the Son of God. Pilate, though being afraid of the Son of God, did not have true prowess to act out the truth. The Jews drove the Son of God to death flaring up in fury and hostility. All of us, besides Pilate and the Jews we who are now reading their stories also ought to come before the judge of Christ at the end as destined. Christ is our true judge and the cross is our only judgment.

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad. (2 Corinthians 5:10)"

+ Questions

1. Summarize today's message in your own words.
2. Explain the meaning of this statement based on today's message: "As we study John's account of this terrible business we get the feeling that Pilate was on trial rather than Jesus. Certainly he had never met anyone in his life like Jesus and, before he was through, he was frightened of him."⁸⁷
3. How can I apply the lessons from today's message into my life?

⁸⁴ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 276.

⁸⁵ Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 653.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 648.

⁸⁷ Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John*, 351.

Prayer

The chief priests, saying that they have no king but Caesar, drove the Lord to the cross. The representatives of the chosen people are truly abominable and contemptible that they deserted even God in order to get what they wanted. All our sins are laid open before the cross of the Lord. The Lord boldly said that God in heaven, not the Roman contingent, is the only one in control. Though avoidable, the Lord took the path of the cross without any compromise. He looked at only the will of God and gave his life to fulfill the will. This story of the Lord deeply touches our hearts. Indeed the cross of the Lord is our judgment. Before the cross we wish to live lives that are not ashamed. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Bearing his own cross by *Joungmi Kang*

Day 37: Wednesday in Holy Week
"Bearing his own cross."
John 19:17-22

17 Carrying his own cross, he went out to the place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha).

18 Here they crucified him, and with him two others--one on each side and Jesus in the middle.

19 Pilate had a notice prepared and fastened to the cross. It read: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

20 Many of the Jews read this sign, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and the sign was written in Aramaic, Latin and Greek.

21 The chief priests of the Jews protested to Pilate, "Do not write 'The King of the Jews,' but that this man claimed to be king of the Jews."

22 Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written."

In the end Pilate, washing his hands, said that he was innocent of Jesus' blood and it was their responsibility (Matthew 27:24) and handed Jesus to the furious crowd to be crucified.

John accounted that Jesus was carrying his own cross and went out to the place of the Skull. It was called Golgotha in Hebrew, more specifically in Aramaic, and Calvary, *calvaria* in Latin. Carrying his own cross, the Lord of life went to the place of the Skull where the most wretched death was awaiting. There may not be anything more frightening than nearing a place of death carrying the tool which will be used for your own execution.

But what message does John intend to convey by this account?

It is that Jesus was walking to the death as a sole master of his destiny. Previously we have heard that Jesus would lay down his own life and that no one would take it from him (John 10:18).⁸⁸ The Lord on his own willingly carried the cross.

This image of the Lord reminds us of the antitype of Isaac's carrying the wood⁸⁹ for his own sacrifice (Genesis 22:6). Though Isaac, carrying the wood, went up to Mount Moriah not knowing that he himself was the victim, the Lord, carrying the cross, went up to Golgotha after knowing that he was the very sacrifice to be hung on the cross. Jesus as a true Passover lamb shed his precious blood on the cross which he himself carried. John looked upon Jesus as a sacrificial victim who died at the same hour that the Passover (paschal) lambs were being slaughtered in the temple.⁹⁰

⁸⁸ Brown, *The Anchor Bible: The Gospel According to John XIII-XXI*, 917.

⁸⁹ Bruce, *The Gospel of John: Introduction, Exposition and Notes*, 366.

⁹⁰ Brown, *The Anchor Bible: The Gospel According to John XIII-XXI*, 918.

They crucified the Lord, and with him two others--one on each side and Jesus in the middle. Though the Lord was sinless, he came to save sinners, lived as the “friend of sinners”, and died to save them, was hung between sinners. His death was a death on behalf of sinners.⁹¹

In the end Pilate in his last conscience did not yield to the chief priests but wrote in Hebrew (Aramaic), Latin and Greek: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. Hebrew, Greek, and Latin were the languages of the then known world. So John is actually declaring that Jesus is a King for everyone,⁹² beyond Israel. In the three great languages of the world, men called him King.⁹³ This verdict of Pilate illuminates the light of truth eternally. Jesus of Nazareth is a king and the Christ of the Jews, Rome, Greece, and all humanities.

✝ Questions

1. Summarize today’s message in your own words.
2. Explain the meaning of the cross of Jesus Christ based on today’s message in the following statement: “John says simply “they crucified him” (v.18). Like the other Evangelists, he dismisses the frightful horror that was crucifixion in one word. It is interesting that not one of the four writers of Gospels tries to arouse our pity or play on our emotions. They all content themselves with the facts. They tell us what happened and that is all. It is important that we get it clear that Jesus died for us. It is not important that we harrow our feelings by reflecting piously on the details of what he endured for us.”⁹⁴
3. Explain the meaning of this statement based on today’s message: “He turns an obscene instrument of torture into a throne of glory and ‘reigns from the tree’.”⁹⁵
4. How can I apply the lessons from today’s message into my life?

✝ Prayer

The Lord of life willingly carried his cross to the place of death. Though the Lord came to this sinful world as a sinless, he was despised, mocked, and crucified with the sinners. Because of our sin the Lord carried the cross but the cross of the Lord was love for us and redemption for us. Even today this verdict of Pilate shines eternally on the cross: Jesus is not a savior only for the Jews, but for Romans, Greeks, and the world! In Jesus’ name, Amen.

⁹¹ Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 658.

⁹² James Montgomery Boice, *The Gospel of John: An Expository Commentary*, vol. 5 John18:1-21:25 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1982), 192.

⁹³ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 293.

⁹⁴ Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 657-658.

⁹⁵ Bruce, *The Gospel of John: Introduction, Exposition and Notes*, 369.



Who will get it? by *Ginturn H. Tran*

Day 38: Maundy Thursday
"Let's decide by lot who will get it."
John 19:23-24

23 When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes, dividing them into four shares, one for each of them, with the undergarment remaining. This garment was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom.

24 "Let's not tear it," they said to one another. "Let's decide by lot who will get it." This happened that the scripture might be fulfilled which said, "They divided my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing." So this is what the soldiers did.

The four soldiers crucified Jesus and took his clothes. The usual clothing of a first-century Palestinian man was a loincloth, an undergarment (a tunic), an outer garment (a cloak), a belt, a covering for the head, and a pair of sandals.⁹⁶ Each of the four soldiers must have taken their own shares from the five items of Jesus. Now lastly the undergarment, seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom, was remaining.

The soldiers said to one another that they should not tear it into four pieces but decide by lot who will get it. What are the soldiers doing before Jesus, who is experiencing the most miserable death?

They are gambling under the cross. There is no picture which so shows the indifference of the world to Christ. There, on the cross, Jesus was dying in agony; and there at the foot of the cross the soldiers threw their dice as if it did not matter.⁹⁷

John said that Jesus' tunic is described as being without seam, and woven in the piece from top to bottom. That is the precise description of the linen tunic which the high priest wore. Let us remember the function of the priest. The function of the priest was to be the liaison between God and man. The Latin for priest is *pontifex*, which means *bridge-builder*.⁹⁸ Jesus as a true priest became a bridge between God and us. When we cross this bridge, we can come to God.

In its seamless perfection it was like the robe of the high priest; and it was like the inner life of the Lord—flawless, perfect.⁹⁹ The Lord had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him (Isaiah 53:2), but he lived as a perfect high priest in his inner life.

Two illustrations are being depicted to us. One is the true high priest who became a bridge between God and us as he shed the precious blood on the cross; the Lord who kept

⁹⁶ Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John*, 663.

⁹⁷ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 296.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 296.

⁹⁹ Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John*, 365.

nothing as his own; he gave out all things and lastly even his life. The other is the soldiers gambling and competing to take even the last undergarment of the Lord at the foot of the cross for themselves. We ought to remember the two images casted to us.

Questions

1. Summarize today's message in your own words.
2. Depict the image of the Lord on the cross and soldiers under the cross based on today's message and compare the Lord's image and my own image.
3. How can I apply the lessons from today's message into my life?

Prayer

The Lord lived the life of complete self-empty and self-denial. He gave all things for us in the lowest place even his life that remained last. When the Lord carried the cross giving his life for humanity, the soldiers under the cross of the precious blood took away the last undergarment of the Lord. May we not be like the soldiers but resemble the Lord and empty and give out ours. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 39: Good Friday
"Woman, behold, your son!"
John 19:25-27

25 Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

26 When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Dear woman, here is your son,"

27 and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.

There were four soldiers, cruel and indifferent, who only were interested in taking for themselves. There were also four women, who came near the cross to be at the side of Jesus not fearing death. It was always a dangerous thing to demonstrate one's love for someone whom the orthodox regard as a sinner and a heretic.¹⁰⁰ But numerous reminiscences of love called these women to this place. The power of love made the weak women strong and led them to the place of death. Truly it is only love that overcomes death.

When Jesus, shedding blood, was looking down from the cross, he saw his mother Mary. It is generally accepted that Joseph, the husband of Mary the Lord's mother, was dead and that she was now a widow. Her other children were not yet believers.¹⁰¹ Referring to John, Jesus said to Mary, "Dear woman, here is your son," and to the beloved disciple John, "Here is your mother." He entrusted his mother to John. This is one of the most beautiful scenes in the Gospels.

Jesus in the agony of the cross, in the moment when the salvation of the world hung in the balance, thought of the loneliness of his mother in the days when he was taken away.¹⁰² Jesus was the Son of God but he did not forget that he was also the son of Mary. Jesus of love did not fail to recognize love of his mother who came to the dreadful place because of love towards her son. He did not turn away from her love. In the midst of severe misery that his life is ending, and in the moment of the cosmic battle, he did not forget his mother and called her. Could we do like Jesus in the moment of indescribable torment that our limbs are crucified and we cannot even properly breathe shedding blood?

We ought to meditate on this deep love of Jesus.

To the end of the day, even on the cross, Jesus was thinking more of the sorrows of others than of his own.¹⁰³ Truly, having loved his own who were in the world, Christ loved them unto the end(John 13:1).

Questions

¹⁰⁰ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 297.

¹⁰¹ Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John*, 366.

¹⁰² Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 299.

¹⁰³ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 299.

1. Summarize today's message in your own words.
2. Explain the meaning of the Bible verses based on the image of Jesus in today's message: "He replied to him, "Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?" Pointing to his disciples, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers. For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother." (Matthew 12:48-50)
3. How can I apply the lessons from today's message into my life?

Prayer

The four women, who loved Jesus, came to the place of the cross of death. They were fearful of the Roman soldiers and death but the fear could not overcome the power of love. Jesus remembered his mother, who came to him in risk of death. He was concerned of her, and entrusted his mother to his beloved disciple. Jesus is a savior of humanity but he as a son of a mother still completed his duty of love. May we remember his deep heart of Jesus. In Jesus' name, Amen.



It is finished by *Joungmi Kang*

Day 40: Holy Saturday

“It is finished.”

John 19:28-30

28 Later, knowing that all was now completed, and so that the Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I am thirsty."

29 A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus' lips.

30 When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Knowing that all was now completed, and so that “the Scripture would be fulfilled”, Jesus said, “I am thirsty.” and received the wine vinegar. All his acts including his birth, his life, and his passion were “the fulfillment of the Scripture.” In other words, the prophecies and will of God were fulfilled through the life of Christ.

John records that they soaked a sponge in a jar of wine vinegar, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus' lips. Jesus received the drink. The hyssop in the Old Testament is used in the Passover ceremony (Exodus 12:22) and in purificatory ritual (Numbers 19:6, 18; Psalms 51:7).¹⁰⁴ The spirit of death passed over the households of the Jews whose doorpost was sprinkled with the blood of lambs. The Jews also used the hyssop to purify those who touched a dead body or grave. John wished to testify that just as the blood of lambs saved the chosen people of God, the blood of Jesus, defectless lamb of God will save the life of the world and his blood will cleanse our sin. We must remember that when we believe that the death of Jesus is our true Passover and trust in the power of his precious blood, our sin will be burned away.

After all things have happened, the last proclamation of Jesus on the cross was “It is finished!” Spurgeon said of the word, *tetelestai*¹⁰⁵: “It would need all the other words that ever were spoken, or ever can be spoken, to explain this one word. It is altogether immeasurable. It is high; I cannot attain to it. It is deep; I cannot fathom it.”¹⁰⁶

This was not the despairing cry of a helpless martyr; it was not an expression of satisfaction that the termination of his sufferings was now reached; it was not the last gasp of a worn-out life. No, rather was it the declaration on the part of the Divine Redeemer that all for which he came from heaven to earth to do, was now done; that all that was needed to reveal the full character of God had now been accomplished; that all that was required by the law

¹⁰⁴ Bruce, *The Gospel of John: Introduction, Exposition and Notes*, 373.

¹⁰⁵ In English this is only three words (‘It is finished’), in Greek just one (‘*tetelestai*’).

¹⁰⁶ Charles Haddon Spurgeon, “Christ’s Dying Word for His Church” in *Sermons on the Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1966), 170.

before sinners could be saved had now been performed; that the full price of our redemption was now paid.¹⁰⁷

This moment was not the moment of failure but of consummation in Jesus' life. The Lord proclaimed to the world in a loud voice, "I have fulfilled all things. I have accomplished the work the Father gave me to do! (John 17:4)"

John says that Jesus leaned back his head and gave up his spirit after this declaration of victory. The word that John uses is the word which might be used for settling back upon a pillow.¹⁰⁸ As a complete master of his own destiny the Lord laid his life of his own accord, not that anyone took it away from him (John 10:18). Now the fierce strife of long and yet short life of 33 years of Jesus was over and the battle was perfectly won. After having completed his task from God, he now leans back and enters into the rest, content and at peace. Now he commits his spirit to the hands of the Father and passed away.

"Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." When he had said this, he breathed his last(Luke 23:46)."

Questions

1. Summarize today's message in your own words.
2. Explain the meaning of this statement based on today's message: The remarks on this verse (John 19:30) by Augustinus of the fourth century are most appropriate. "Not against His will did the Saviour's spirit leave the flesh, but because He would, and when He would, and how He would. Who is there that even can go to sleep when he will, as Jesus did when He would? Who thus puts off his clothes, when he will, as Jesus unclothed Himself when He would? Who goes thus out of doors when he will, as Jesus, when He would, went out of this world?"¹⁰⁹
3. Based on the accounts of John, for 40 days, we have meditated the last three days of Jesus' acts on earth beginning from the scene of footwashing of the disciples in the upper room to that of his passing away . The last three days of Jesus is culminated on the cross. Explain the meaning of the cross of Jesus Christ based on the messages so far.
4. How can I apply the lessons from today's message into my life?



Prayer

The Jews were saved from the spirit of death when they placed the blood of lambs. In the same way, we have realized once again that as we believe the power of Jesus' blood and place it inside us, we can be crossed over from death to life. As the Lord died on the cross of curse, he gave life for us. Therefore the cross is not shame but glory; it is not despair but hope.

¹⁰⁷ Arthur W. Pink, *The Seven Sayings of the Saviour on the Cross* New pbk. ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2007), 102.

¹⁰⁸ Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 301.

¹⁰⁹ Gaebelein, *The Gospel of John: A Complete Analytical Exposition*, 372.

The holy life of the Lord was completed by the declaration of perfect victory, "It is finished!" Just like the one who has finished all his hard labor and is going to bed, the Lord had completed the commission given by God and went to sleep on the cross as he was going to the heart of God. Thank you for the grace that allowed us complete this 40 day Bible study. May we always look at the cross of the precious blood (of the Lord). May we be true disciples who walk together the way of the cross following the Lord's footsteps. In Jesus' name, Amen.



It is finished by *Ginturn H. Tran*

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