

Jesus' conviction and patience (Luke 22:24-46)

We've been studying the gospel of Luke together. Last time, we looked at the scene of the Last supper. At the Passover meal, Jesus told his disciples that he would give his body, and his blood would be shed. After that he also said that there was a betrayer among them. Then they began to question among themselves which of them it might be who would do this. Today, we will continue to study from there. The title is "Jesus' conviction and patience."

1. To inherit the kingdom

24-30

²⁴ Also a dispute arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest. ²⁵ Jesus said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors. ²⁶ But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves. ²⁷ For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves. ²⁸ You are those who have stood by me in my trials. ²⁹ And I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me, ³⁰ so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Whenever Jesus talked about his death, there was always a dispute among his disciples as to which of them was the greatest. (cf. Matt. 18:1-5; 20:24-28; Mark 9:33-37; 10:41-45; Luke 9:46-48). Perhaps, all of them wanted to be a leader after Jesus' death. Once, John and James together with their mother went to Jesus and even asked him to grant that one of them may sit at his right and the other at his left in his glory. When the other ten heard about this, they were indignant with them. (Matt 20:20-24, Mark 10:41-45)

Even at this Passover meal, their attitude appeared the same. Jesus got up from the meal, took of his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel round his waist. Then, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet one by one. But no one stood up to take Jesus' place to wash other's feet. (John 13:4-5,12) Then, they are not different from teachers of the law who love to have the most important seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at banquets.

(Luke 20:46)

How did Jesus see such disciples? He sees them as ones who would “rule”, who would “inherit the kingdom” in the future. And he related to them, treating them as people who were going to reign like that.

That is not because they are great, of course. But that is because they heard the call from Jesus, responded to it, came to Jesus and remained in Jesus.

Some people came to Jesus to receive some benefit. When they realized they couldn't receive the benefit, they left Jesus. Or when they realized being with Jesus would cause them inconvenience, they left Jesus. Some people pictured the ideal Savior in their mind, and when they realized Jesus didn't match their ideal, they left Jesus.

What about disciples?

John 6:66-68

⁶⁶ From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him. ⁶⁷ "You do not want to leave too, do you?" Jesus asked the Twelve. ⁶⁸ Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.

John 11:7-8, 16

⁷ Then he said to his disciples, "Let us go back to Judea." ⁸ "But Rabbi," they said, "a short while ago the Jews tried to stone you, and yet you are going back there?"

¹⁶ Then Thomas (called Didymus) said to the rest of the disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

Disciples followed Jesus even in his many trials. They chose to be with Jesus. So, they will be the ones who “rule,” “inherit the kingship” and “inherit the kingdom”.

It is not just limited to the eleven disciples who were there. But this applies to everyone who hears Jesus' call, responds to it, comes to Jesus and remains at him.

James 2:5

Listen, my beloved brethren: did not God choose the poor of this world to be rich in faith and **heirs of the kingdom** which He promised to those who love Him? (NASB)

Matt 25:34

"Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, **inherit the kingdom** prepared for you from the foundation of the world. (NASB)

The cross of Jesus can transform sinners into people of Holy God. The gospel of Jesus can make someone who used to oppose God born again into heir of God's kingdom. Apostle Paul is its classic example.

Those who were dead in sin will start to live in God's righteousness. Those who were the objects of God's wrath will started to proclaim God's reconciliation. Those who used to hurt will become those who give life. Those who used to destroy will become those who serve. That is the power of the gospel! And we are also taking part in this gospel. (1 Peter 2:9)

Fellowship among saints, disciples and in church is the friendship to support one another. We help and encourage one another with God's love so that each of us can remain faithful in our calling, though there may be difficulties and trials. Jesus has conviction that his disciples can be like that, and with patience he continues to relate to them so that they can be like that.

2. To experience the Lord's restoration

31-34

³¹ "Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. ³² But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers." ³³ But he replied, "Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death." ³⁴ Jesus answered, "I tell you, Peter, before the rooster crows today, you will deny three times that you know me."

"You" in v.31 is plural. This means all of the disciples.

To sift is a process of (1) to shake grain in a sifter to remove dirt and

small stones and other contamination, or (2) to separate the grain from the chaff by winnowing. Here the word is used as metaphorical expression of the word "test". TEV expresses those meanings accurately:

"Satan has received permission to test all of you, to separate the good from the bad, as a farmer separates the wheat from the chaff" (31, TEV)

For Satan to enter a person (v. 3), and for Satan to sift a person (v. 31) are two different things. Here Satan has asked to sift disciples like he asked God to test job, and he got "permission to do that."

To sift people like wheat is essentially Messiah's work. (Luke 3:17) From the extreme viewpoint, God can even turn around Satan's attack against disciples and use it for His purposes.

Let's remember this. When we encounter temptation, that is our chance to grow further. And the best way to overcome temptations is to love God because He is God. Battle with temptation is always an opportunity to taste God's grace afresh.¹

Disciples heard that they would be sifted by Satan, and heard that the Lord had prayed for Simon Peter so that his faith may not fail. So, even when they face trials from Satan, they don't have to be terrified. They knew very well that there would be trials from Satan. Even if they once give in to Satan's trial, that is not the end. They knew that the Lord prayed for recovery. That prayer will definitely be answered.

Peter experienced his failure and the recovery by the Lord. He could recover not because his faith is strong, but only because of the Lord's mercy and the power of the Lord's restoration. This fact made him totally humble. And because he knew the gratitude and joy of being recovered, it gave him motivation to serve for the recovery of his friends in faith who were now weak. It's not just for Peter, but it's for every Jesus' followers.

2 Cor 1:3-4

³ Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of

¹ James Houston, "Prayer, The Transforming Friendship" (Japanese Translation), Word of Life Press Ministries, 1999, p.359

compassion and the God of all comfort,⁴ who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.

Because we have experienced the recovery by the Lord, we can serve other believers humbly. We can strengthen the weak. We will not give up, but keep encouraging. We have confidence in Lord's recovery and try to bring our friends back to Him.

Ps 94:18-19

¹⁸ If I should say, "My foot has slipped," Your loving kindness, O LORD, will hold me up. ¹⁹ When my anxious thoughts multiply within me, Your consolations delight my soul.

We shouldn't forget this. The life of Christians is not completed by our diligence, but is completed by our fellowship with Jesus.

Some people are afraid of expressing their weaknesses before God. They are hesitant to disclose their flaws. They behave as if they could manage themselves though there were some problems. In other words, their relationship with Jesus is only superficial where they smooth over the surface. Then, how can they experience true wonder of Jesus? How can they know the abundance of His love, and grace of His restoration?

The reason why Jesus called us to be his friends is to share the wonder of our friendship with Jesus with others.²

Peter experienced his own failure and the restoration by the Lord. If he wants to talk about the wonders of the Lord's restoration, he has to talk about his failure. If he doesn't disclose his weakness, even if he says the Lord's power will be shown in your weakness, he can't touch the heart of others. Because we know Peter denied Jesus three times, we know the abundance of Jesus' love when he asked Peter three times, "Do you love me more than anything?" And we know clearly Peter was restored by the power of Jesus.

Unless we die to ourselves, and throw away our own pride, we cannot truly proclaim the happiness of the Lord's restoration, encourage the weak and support those who were about to fall.

If someone truly experiences the Lord's restoration, that person cannot

² Ibid., p.169

help becoming humble. It goes without saying he has nothing to be proud of. He owe what he is now only to the Lord's grace.

Jesus knew that Peter would fail. He also knew that the other disciples would also fail. Moreover, as to believers who come after them, some will fail, some will give in to temptation, and some will become weak. Jesus knows them all. At the same time, Jesus was confident that Peter would encourage other disciples, and they would encourage other brothers and sisters who come after them, and their faith would be restored. The kingdom of God will be extended that way. That is because they would experience the restoration by Jesus.

3. To walk with the Word

35-38

³⁵ Then Jesus asked them, "When I sent you without purse, bag or sandals, did you lack anything?" "Nothing," they answered. ³⁶ He said to them, "But now if you have a purse, take it, and also a bag; and if you don't have a sword, sell your cloak and buy one. ³⁷ It is written: 'And he was numbered with the transgressors' ; and I tell you that this must be fulfilled in me. Yes, what is written about me is reaching its fulfillment." ³⁸ The disciples said, "See, Lord, here are two swords." "That is enough," he replied.

In Luke chapter 9, Jesus sent out twelve disciples. At that time, Jesus said, "Take nothing for the journey—no staff, no bag, no bread, no money." (Luke 9:1) In Luke chapter 10, Jesus sent out 70 disciples. At that time, Jesus said, "Do not take a purse or bag or sandals." (Luke 10:4) And wherever they were sent, they didn't lack anything. (Luke 22:35)

Before, they didn't have to have them. But from now on, it will be different. They have to prepare for the battle by themselves. The seasons change. We need to see the change of the season, and respond to it.

In chapter 9, disciples experienced to be sent out under the authority of Jesus. And they were challenged to submit themselves to Jesus, "Deny yourself, take up your cross daily and follow me." (Luke 9:23) In chapter 10, disciples experienced that the blessings of kingdom of God was brought to the people through them. And they were told by Jesus, "Do not rejoice that the spirits submit

to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven." They had to ask themselves whether they were motivated to minister because they can use the authority and they can feel satisfaction about themselves, or because of their joy of salvation. (Luke 10:20)

The disciples had been trained through these experiences. They have followed Jesus even when Jesus had to go through many trials. Now, Jesus is about to leave them. Whether they like it or not, they are going into a new season. From now on, they need to prepare by themselves, and fight by themselves.

In v.36, Jesus talked about sword. If he literally meant a "sword" as weapon, that would contradict His word:

John 18:36

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."

Jesus used the word "sword" as a metaphor. But the disciples took this word literally. So, Jesus finished the conversation saying, "That is enough."

The "sword" is the word of God. That is given by the Holy Spirit. (Eph 6:17) That is the weapon for spiritual warfare. (Eph 6:12-13)

The disciples heard that they would be sifted by Satan. Satan doesn't just attack Jesus. He will also attack his disciples. So the spiritual warfare is their reality. It's the same for us.

We live in the world full of sins. We are in the current of time where some people even boast about their sins. It is either the world evangelizes us, or we evangelize the world. We must judge things according to the Word of God, seeing them from God's point of view. We are so easily disheartened and wavered. We need Word of God for encouragement, comfort and strength. Then we will not lose sight of what was entrusted to us, will not give it up, but continue to fulfill it. By the word of God, in this transient and confusing world, we can stand firm, and will not lose sight of our true self who is made in the image of God.

37

It is written: 'And he was numbered with the transgressors'; and I tell you that this

must be fulfilled in me. Yes, what is written about me is reaching its fulfillment."

Jesus would be numbered with sinners. And that was about to be fulfilled. The time was coming closer when Jesus was crucified on the cross.

2 Cor 5:21

God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Jesus was made to be sin on our behalf. If not, there is no one who can become the righteousness of God. That implies all are sinners. Even his disciples who were with Jesus at the last supper are the same. Without the cross of Jesus, every human being are just sinners before God.

The gospel of the cross of Jesus will transform sinners into soldiers of God's kingdom. And they will win victory over Satan, using the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Not only that, but God will also use them to restore people to Himself.

Jesus has conviction. "What is written about me is reaching its fulfillment." The work of Jesus is the work the Father God started at the creation of heaven and earth. That is, to restore humanity to be the image of God and complete their God-likeness.³

Jesus had been talking to his disciples about the cross many times. And now that was about to be fulfilled. Jesus was about to leave disciples soon. For its last preparation, he told them that they would need to prepare by themselves and fight by themselves. But they couldn't get it. Here we see the patience of Jesus. And his conviction has not been changed. "What is written about me is reaching its fulfillment." Jesus mission as Christ will be completed. The victory of the cross will not be shaken. He prepares his disciples to walk with the Word.

4. To make God's will my will

39-46

³⁹ Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him.

³ Ibid., p.332

⁴⁰ On reaching the place, he said to them, "Pray that you will not fall into temptation." ⁴¹ He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, ⁴² "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." ⁴³ An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. ⁴⁴ And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground. ⁴⁵ When he rose from prayer and went back to the disciples, he found them asleep, exhausted from sorrow. ⁴⁶ "Why are you sleeping?" he asked them. "Get up and pray so that you will not fall into temptation."

Jesus prayed, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done."

Jesus knew how painful the crucifixion would be. And that is not just physical pain, but there will be also emotional humiliation. He will not only be insulted, and ridiculed, but also, for Jews, being hung on a tree is considered to be cursed. (Gal 3:13) And he is regarded as sin before Father God, and his relationship with the Father will be broken off.

"If I don't have to take this cup, please take this cup from me. But if I don't take this cup, what happens to the salvation of the world? All men are sinners by nature, objects of God's wrath." (Eph 2:3) Here Jesus suffers an inner conflict as a man. Being in anguish, in his prayer, Jesus went back and forth between these two opposing thoughts.

The Bible records that an angel from heaven appeared to Jesus and strengthened him. I don't think Luke heard about it from those disciples who somehow saw it dimly while they were half asleep. But I think after his resurrection, Jesus talked to his disciples about his experiences.

The help from heaven is not to take the cup away, but to strengthen him to drink up the cup. Receiving strength from heaven, Jesus spent time before God, in anguish, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground. "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done. But Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet"

After the long struggle, finally he finished his prayer, "Yet not my will, but yours be done." He rose from prayer and went back to the disciples. And he said, "Pray so that you will not fall into temptation." (v. 46) "The time has come. I am about to go. You will no longer have me with you on this earth. You will be attacked. Pray with the help of the Holy Spirit on all occasions." (Eph 6:18)

James Houston explains about “prayer” in his book, “Prayer: Transforming Friendship” like this; “Prayer shows all our life before God. To pray is to ask God to change our way of life. If we don’t seek the revolution of way of life in worship, that is not true worship.”⁴

I think the greatest temptation in prayer is to ask God to change His mind so that my wish be granted. We may look as if we were worshipping, praising God, and honoring God, but actually we are trying to control God according to our wish, pleasure and preference.

“Pray in the name of Jesus is to pray that Jesus’ will may be realized in us”.⁵ In prayer, we battle with our thoughts, and with the help of the Holy Spirit, we make God’s will ours.

And sometimes, while praying we feel as if we were beating the air and God was not listening to our prayers. Sometimes we feel as if God wasn’t answering our prayers at all, although we’ve been asking Him a question. Sometime we feel empty because we feel he doesn’t care us as if he closes his ears for our prayer no matter how fervently we speak to him. It is not easy to keep praying in times like these. So we are talked to pray with the help of the Holy Spirit.

God’s absence and presence will make our prayers more personal, real experiences. If we experience God’s presence whenever we pray, we will not learn how to distinguish our prayer and our imagination. Sometimes God purposely chooses to be a little far from us like a mother does to her child.⁶

While raising a child, if a mother never withdraw her breast from her baby, nor keep herself from the baby, how can this baby learn the depth of true love? When we realize that God is another existence separate from us, and He is not there just to provide us with what we want, then we can start to see ourselves more realistically.⁷

God’s absence teaches us in a fresh way, how wonderful God is, and how full of wisdom and love He is.⁸

⁴ Ibid., p.278

⁵ Ibid., p.168

⁶ Ibid., p.94

⁷ Ibid., p.96

⁸ Ibid., p.98

Today we studied about Jesus' conviction and patience from the scene of the last supper through His prayer in Gethsemane. His disciples compete for power or position. They boast about their faithfulness, but fail. They hear the word of Jesus, but what they understand is off the point. They are told to pray, but they fall asleep. But Jesus was sure that they will be the heirs of the kingdom, experience the Lord's restoration, walk with the Word, and they will make His will their will. That is because Jesus' cross has the power to change people.

Our walk and growth as believers are not by our own struggle and diligence, but by our fellowship with Jesus. By the cross of Jesus, we were forgiven and our fellowship with Him was restored. And we will remain in Jesus' love. We will be protected, lead, and will grow by His love. And carrying the cross daily, we will be used for others. Their faith will be strengthened. Relationship will be restored. The image of God in them will be recovered.

"But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us." (2 Cor 4:7)