

Sunday, September 1, 2024 Sunday Morning Worship Sermon

「The Resurrection of the Last Days」 Pastor : Takaaki Inoue
Acts 20:7~11 、 John 6:39~51

❶ 【Our resurrection is what the Lord wants】

What did Christ come down from heaven for? Jesus Himself gives us the answer. "I did not come down from heaven to do my own will, but to do the will of Him who sent me" (verse 38). He came to do the will of God the Father. What, then, is God's will? It is written in verses 39~40. "For the will of Him who sent me is that he who has given me should not lose any of whom has given me, but be resurrected at the last day, for the will of my Father is that whoever sees the Son and believes in him will have eternal life, and that I will raise him up at the last day." The people given to Christ are those who believe in Christ, Christians, and it is God's will to resurrect them at the end of the world without losing a single person. It says, "I will raise him up at the last day," so Christ will resurrect us at the end of the world. What is resurrection? It is that both body and soul are entrusted to God's eternal life and become eternal beings. It's not just about the soul. This body can also be transformed into a body that does not die. Since the purpose of Christ's coming was to "resurrect man," the goal of the life of faith is "resurrection." It is necessary to have a firm goal in everything. If the boat goes out without a destination, it will wander on the sea. It's the same with life. Many people don't know where to go and don't know what they live their lives for. Don't do that. The purpose of Christians is the resurrection. If you aim for anything else, your way of life will change. I want you to know that the goal of the life of faith is the resurrection. Christ's method of resurrecting the dying man was for God to unite with man and to give His divinity to man so that he would not die. That is why God became man.

●Irenaeus of Lyon in the 2nd century said: "The Son of God became the Son of Man, that man might be mixed with the Word of God, and receive the grace of being a son, and become the Son of God. For we could not otherwise partake of immortality or immortality unless we were united with immortality and immortality."

Christ's life was moving toward resurrection. There was the tribulation of the cross, but beyond that was the resurrection. Life has suffering, but that's not what it's about. He resurrected Himself to show that life does not end with suffering, but that a glorious resurrection awaits those who become one with Christ.

What I need to know for sure here is that God of the Father and the Son wants to resurrect me. God wants you to be an eternal person before we humans want

to live forever. He risked His life to resurrect me. Therefore I will be resurrected. Nothing could be more certain.

● Last week, I told you that Jesus picked up five loaves of bread and "uttered a prayer of thanksgiving" (John 6:11). The five loaves are us. We are too weak, too small, too helpless to do anything against the big problems of reality in front of us. But Christ "thanked" me. We can't look at ourselves and be grateful, but He was grateful. In other words, God is pleased. The Bible is filled with God's joy. When God created the heavens and the earth, He rejoiced, saying, "It's good," and He rejoiced when He created man. When Christ found the lost man, He said, "Rejoice with me" (Luke 15:6), and there was great joy in heaven. When Christ came to earth, the angels sang "Gloria," saying that He would "deliver great joy" (Luke 2:10). The night before He was crucified, Christ "took up bread and gave thanks" (Luke 22:19). I was "grateful" that I was going to die. Christ is always grateful. I am delighted. God rejoices in my presence, rejoices that I have become a believer in the Lord, and rejoices in my small service. If the Lord is pleased, why is man not pleased? When I saw that Christ was happy, the lethargy and despondency in me was blown away, and I jumped up with joy.

Knowing God's thoughts is the source of our strength.

② **【Christ is the life】**

It is baptism that unites with Christ, but its renewal is the sacrament. Jesus continues to give us His life and resurrect us through the sacrament. Verses 48~51 "I am the bread of life, and your fathers ate manna in the wilderness, but they died. But this is bread that came down from heaven, and whoever eats it will not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever." Jesus says of himself, "I am the bread of life." In English, it is "I am the bread of life.", but in the original Greek it is "ho (preposition) artos (pan) thes (english is) zoace (life)", and the literal translation is "this bread (I) is life", and the emphasis is on Jesus being "life". There is no real life in this world. I understand the world's idea of cherishing the life of this world, but in God's eyes, it is nothing more than a desperate attempt to protect the life of the decaying earth. No matter how much you protect it, what rots will rot. However, if it leads to real life, it will not rot. Human beings do not know what real life is. Because the devil turned his eyes to the world. It is a great sin not to know true life.

Verses 54~56 say, "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood will have eternal life, and I will resurrect him at the last day. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood is always in me, and I am in him." So says the Lord. The Lord says that partaking of the sacrament leads to eternal life. The sacrament and the

resurrection are related. This is what generations of the Church have taught.

●In 107, the martyr Ignatius of Antioch wrote, "The breaking of a loaf of bread, this is the medicine of immortality, the antidote to death, the giver of eternal life in Jesus Christ."

Furthermore, through the sacrament, Christ comes into me in the form of bread and wine and becomes one with me. In this way, the Lord dwells in me and walks with me in this world. This oneness does not end with the death of our physical body. The Lord who is in me will resurrect me. Here is the secret of our peace.

●In 202 AD, the Roman emperor Severo began the persecution of Christianity. The following year, it spread to Carthage in Africa, and five members of the congregation were captured. Among them was a beautiful woman named Perpetua, who was 22 years old. She came from a prestigious Carthaginian family, was already married to another family, and had a two-year-old child when she was captured. Her father, out of deep love, persuaded her to somehow reverse her decision to be martyred. But Perpetua said to her father: "Father, you will see the jars here, can you call these things by any other name? I can't. I must not be called by any other name other than Christian." She never gave up her faith no matter what she did. Brought out into the arena, Perpetua sang hymns, hung on the horns of an ox, threw up, and then died a martyrdom by being slashed with a sword.

We are also "Christians". Christian means the things of Christ. I have become Christ's. Because the Lord has bought me. How many prayers and sacrifices were offered for the birth of a believer? Not everyone can have this faith. There will be hardships in this world, but there will always be a glorious resurrection. Victory is predetermined. Let us have the courage to bear witness of Christ in this life.