

Last Week's Sermon Summary

"The Power of Praise"

Pastor Takaaki Inoue
Acts 16:25~34, John 6:11~21

❶ **[By midnight praise]** Paul and Silas went to the Greek city of Philippi. After expelling evil spirits from female slaves who were possessed by divination spirits, they were captured, whipped, and imprisoned. Verse 25 says, "At about midnight Paul and Silas were singing songs of praise and praying to God, and the other prisoners listened intently." The wounds on their backs must have hurt, but they sang songs of praise and prayed to God in the middle of the night in prison. The other prisoners in the prison listened intently to this praise. This teaches us that praise and prayer can heal and comfort people's suffering. There is a story that reminded me of the midnight praise. This is an article in a book by Dr. Takashi Nagai (a Catholic) who was exposed to the atomic bomb in Nagasaki and died at the age of 41, leaving behind two young children. "When the atomic bomb exploded, 8,000 of the 10,000 Catholics in Urakami died. There were two girls' schools here, Junshin and Changqing. All of them were run by women's religious orders, and almost all the teachers from the principal down were nuns. The students of Pure Heart, who had been mobilized to work in the factory, died one after another and were reduced to ashes while singing hymns in the blazing fire. ... The same fate occurred at Changqing Girls' School. ... At the river's edge, 200 meters east of the girls' school, several choirs of Latin hymns could be heard

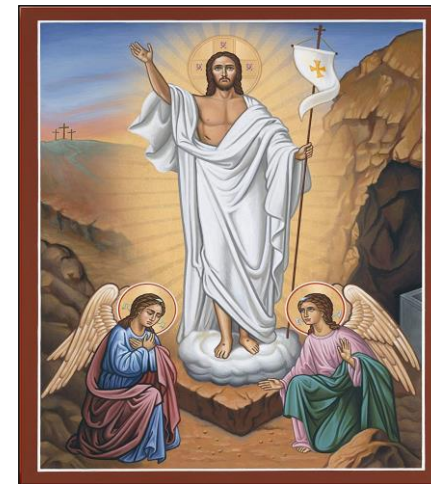
in the middle of the night. When night fell, the nuns were in a clump and cold." Once, when I attended Carol Zach's harp healing meeting, I heard that praise eases the pain of the sick and gives them peace of mind and comfort. Dr. Shigeaki Hinohara of St. Luke's International Hospital, who has since passed away, also practiced "music therapy." I don't know what Paul and Silas praised, but I think it's probably the Psalms. The Psalms were originally meant to be sung to the tune of the psalm. The Psalms are comforting to listen to, as well as to read them aloud. It also gives faith and courage. The power of praise is great. I think the reason why no one escaped when the earthquake occurred and the prison doors were opened was because the prisoners' hearts were filled with praise and healed. It is through this that the jailer family will enter the path of faith. Praise is the heart that God has given to man.

❷ **[After reciting a prayer of thanksgiving]** "Now Jesus took the bread and recited the prayer of thanksgiving, and then divided it among those who were seated, and in the same way he gave the fish as much as he wanted." (John 6:11) In the face of 5,000 men alone, five loaves and two fishes would be "of no use" (v. 9), as Andrew says. But Jesus was grateful for the mere five loaves of bread and two fishes. If it were us, this would be too little and discouraged. Why was Jesus able to give thanks? There is a famous phrase in the Bible, "Give thanks for everything" (1 Thessalonians 5:18). It's a good word, so I think it's a word that Japan people like even if they are not Christians. But this is followed by the words, ↗

Weekly Report

The United Church of Christ in Japan
Miyakojima Church
Mission Established December 1, 1957
Church Established December 2, 2001
2-6-17Miyuki-cho, Miyakojima-ku, Osaka 534-0012
TEL06-6922-1120 FAX06-6922-1120
E-mail address: miyakoch@eagle.ocn.ne.jp
HomepageAddress: <https://miyakojima-church1.com>
Postal transfer 00920-4-1442 Japan Miyakojima
Mission Senior
Pastor Takaaki Inoue

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《The Resurrection of Christ》

Miyakojima Church's 2024 Mission Policy

Motto : "Let's prepare for the construction of the church "

Scripture : "No one can lay any other foundation, ignoring the foundation that has already been laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 3:11)

Goals for FY2024

- 1 Observe worship services every week and aim for an average of 27 people to attend services.
- 2 We invite one person to worship in one year.
- 3 Make concrete preparations for the construction of the church.
- 4 Cultivate the consciousness of building a church together.