

Sunday, April 13, 2025 Sunday Morning Worship Sermon

" Accomplished " Pastor Takaaki Inoue

Psalms 69:14~22, John 19:28~42

### ❶ 【Let's embrace Christ the King and His Kingdom】

Today is the Sunday of the Crucifixion. Worship with a palm leaf in your hand. Christ entered Jerusalem as king on this day on a donkey with a child. It is the same as the Old Testament saying, "Behold, your king is coming, he who obeys God and is given victory. They come on a donkey without pride. Riding on an ass, the son of a female ass." (Zechariah 9:9). The crowd happily took the branches of the palm tree, a sign of victory, and the olive branch, a sign of peace, and laid their clothes on the road to welcome Christ the King. But within a week, they had returned the palm of their hand, forsaking the king and choosing an earthly Roman emperor. But since that day, "the kingdom of Christ, the kingdom of God" has already come to this earth. We died at our baptism, left this earthly nation, accepted Christ as my King, and chose His kingdom. Some may ask, where is such a country? Like an iceberg, the homeland is hidden in the heavens, and on earth it is revealed to those who yearn for it and worship it. It is invisible to those who think that the world is everything. Christ the King, who is now in hiding, will eventually return to His kingdom with tens of thousands of angels. The nations of the earth will eventually perish like scrolls, but the kingdom of Christ will last forever. Then everything will be clear, and our labors will bear fruit. We vow today to make this kingdom of Christ our home, to do what is pleasing to Christ the King, and to be His approved servants. Do you see that kingdom?

### ❷ 【The birth of a new family of God and the end of the curse】

Now, there is an account of Jesus' crucifixion that is found only in the Gospel of John. It is: "When Jesus saw his mother and his beloved disciple by his side, he said to her, 'Lady, behold, it is your son.' Then he said to his disciple: "'Behold, it is your mother.' From that time on, this disciple took the mother of Jesus into his home." (John 19:26~27). Jesus said to his mother Mary that his disciple John was "your son," and to his disciple John, he said that his mother Mary was "your mother." Under the cross, we can see that the words of Christ gave birth to a spiritual "new family" that does not depend on flesh and blood. This is a template for the church. It is a new family born of Christ. It's a family that lasts forever. That's why the Church calls us "brothers and sisters." In the same way, we call Mary our mother and become a family of the saints in heaven.

● Philip Yancey writes: "Let's read the book of Genesis. There is a family history |

written on it. It begins with the family of Adam and Eve. ... As you continue reading, you will meet Abraham's family. It's a family that has traveled for decades. Then the story of Isaac's family, and then the story of Jacob's family. ... In contrast to the Bible, which tells the history of the family, the textbook tells the history of the origins and fall of civilizations. Today's newspapers are filled with articles about nations, cities, universities, government agencies, and corporations. The focus has shifted from the family to the organization. But the New Testament stubbornly presents the church as more like a family than an organization."

The church is a flock of people united by Christ. Therefore, if Christ becomes smaller, the church will fall apart. On the other hand, if the Christ in the person grows larger and smaller, and the individual becomes smaller, the church will become like one body, and the bond will be strong, and it will be as warm as a family. Enlarge Christ in you. After this, Jesus knew that all things had been accomplished, and He said, "I thirst." When the people poured sour wine into a sponge and held it up to Jesus' mouth, He took the wine and said, "It is accomplished" (John 19:30), bowed His head and died. The colloquial translation is "everything is over." In English, "It is finished. It is accomplished!" Are. It means that everything related to salvation has been completed. The cross is terrifying and miserable, but I feel something strange comforting. It emits light, not darkness. It marks the end of the old and the beginning of the new. The Church called the cross of Jesus the "New Tree of Life." For death ended with the cross, and all things came to life. The cross put an end to all curses. The cross stands firm in the suffering and death of man. The cross is a "sign" that God bears them with us. If the cross is standing there, any hell will turn into the Garden of Eden.

### **③ 【Life of blood and water flowed out for all mankind】**

Those who were crucified usually live for about seven days. However, since the important Passover began the next day, the chief priests feared that the festival would be defiled by crucifying the body as it was, so they broke the legs of the criminals so that they would be killed on the same day. This is because if you break a bone in your leg, you will not be able to support your body and will die of suffocation. But when he came to Jesus, he was already dead, so he didn't break his leg. This is the fulfillment of "He will protect him so that not a single bone will be damaged" (Psalm 34:21). So I stabbed Jesus with a spear to see if the soldier was really dead. "One of the soldiers stabbed Jesus in the side with a spear, and immediately blood and water flowed out." (verse 34). It is the fulfillment of "they look at me, the one whom they themselves have pierced" (Zechariah 12:10). Medically, blood and water flowing out of the flank is a

symptom of a ruptured heart. The heart was gone, the cells were destroyed, and they turned into water, which separated from the blood. John would not have understood the medical aspects, but he interpreted this phenomenon as a testimony of God. This water and blood are symbols of the sacraments of baptism and the sacrament. We are brought back to life by this water and blood. The Passion prayer reads:

●"Oh, O power of the cross, Christ opened the flower of temperance for the Church, and pulled out the root of the sin of Adam's disobedience in Eden. But Christ will always shed immortality for the sake of the world. Just as a spring gushed out of paradise, so came the life-giving blood and water from Christ, which is now another spring. All men will be brought back to life by this."

Let me tell you one last story. —

●It is a true story when Soviet communism occurred and the army and the army of the Romanov dynasty were divided into enemies and allies and fought for three years. A small village fell into the hands of communist troops. One mother with young children aged 4 and 5 was stranded in the village. Her husband served in the army of the Romanov dynasty. She hid in one house, waiting for a chance to escape. One evening, a woman named Natali, who was in her early 20s, knocked on the door of the house and asked her mother, "What is your name?" When her mother said, "Yes," Natali told her, "You've been spotted here, and the soldiers are coming to kill you tonight, run away immediately." When her mother said, "I can't run away," Natali replied, "I can run away, I'll stay behind. If they come to get you, I'll give you your name." Her mother said, "If you do that, you'll be killed," and Natali said, "It's okay, because I don't have any children," and Natali stayed in the house and she died.

(Excerpt from "The Birth of Prayer")

Yesterday, I went to the ordination ceremony of the bishop of the Osaka Diocese of the Anglican Church of Japan, and I was deeply made to feel the meaning of "dedication". The bishop asks the new bishop. "Will you accept this vocation and respond to it with total submission to Christ?", "Will you pray faithfully and study the Bible in order to have the heart of Christ in your heart?", "Will you boldly proclaim and preach the gospel of Christ in order to open the eyes of your people and stir up their conscience?", "You will be kind to all and will not come to the poor, the unapproachable, Are you going to protect these people in the shoes of the helpless?" he sounded like he was saying this to himself. So do you. Not only the pastor, but also the congregation was committed to the congregation. I would like to remind you of that anew.