

Sunday, May 4, 2025 Morning Worship Sermon

"Two eyes are open " Pastor Takaaki Inoue

Luke 24:13~17, 25~35

① 【Reading the Bible by the Holy Spirit】

On the day of Jesus' resurrection, two disciples left Jerusalem and traveled to a village called Emmaus. Emmaus is a village located about 11 kilometers west of Jerusalem. The disciple's name is said to be Cleopas and Luke, who wrote this Gospel. We don't know why they went to Emmaus. But in the west, the direction of the sun sets, so I feel something lonely. In Christianity, churches were built towards the east. It means to look up to Christ, the sun of righteousness. Since the west is the direction in which the country turned its back to the east, we can see that it has turned its back on Christ and departed. Jesus approached them in the form of a traveler and began to walk with them, but their eyes were blocked and they could not see that it was Jesus. When Jesus asked, "What is that story that we are talking about as we walked" (v. 17), they stopped with dark faces and told them that Jesus had been killed, that there was no body in the tomb on the third day, and that an angel appeared to them and said, "Jesus is alive." In their words, "This person ... He was a powerful prophet" (v.19) and "he was pinning his hopes" (v.21), all in the past tense. I can feel the lament that everything is over, that hope is lost. When we lose hope, we become dark. Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Oh, those who are dumb and dull-minded and do not believe in all that the prophets said, the Messiah should have suffered like this and entered into glory," and He "explained what is written about Himself throughout the Bible, starting with Moses and all the prophets" (verses 25~27). "Moses and all the prophets" refers to the Old Testament. In other words, he took the passage about the Messiah from the entire Old Testament and explained that the Messiah would suffer and be glorified, and that it would have been true. It is the interpretation of the Bible and the sermon of Jesus. Hearing this, their hearts warmed and they felt hopeful. Later, he recalled that time and said, "When He explained the Bible, our hearts were on fire" (24:32).

●Last week, Pastor N, who came to the service, said, "Oh, it was fun, I felt so close to Jesus. The story made sense. Also, when I saw everyone's faces, they looked happy." He said. When I understand the meaning of the words of the Bible, everything is connected and I am convinced, and hope comes out, and I am happy and my heart is excited. It is important to listen to the sermon and feel warm and joyful.

The Church Fathers of old used to say, "We know the alike by the like." The word that comes from God means that only the same God can understand it. Therefore, the words of the Bible can only be understood by Jesus himself, who spoke them. So how do we understand the Bible today? It is to pray and receive the Holy Spirit. Jesus Himself clearly said: "When he comes, the Spirit of truth, he will lead you to realize all the truth" (John 16:13).

● A man named Carlo Carretto wrote: "This is why I do not believe in theologians who do not pray, because they are not in loving and humble fellowship with God." Also, Stanley Jones wrote: "If I had a gift, and I were to give that one gift to the Church of Christ, I would give it to the Church of Christ. For all things arise from prayer. Prayer is an uplifting part of life as a whole. I have learned from experience that whether I pray a lot or a little, I can be better or worse. When my prayer life is sloppy, so does my whole life. As my prayer life improves, so does my whole life. If you fail here, everything will fail, and if you succeed there, you will succeed everywhere."

I have read many papers by so-called modern theologians, but they are of little use. The so-called scholars are the same now as they were in the past. I believe that the writings of people who live a monastic life are the true theology (wisdom). The prayer book is a treasure trove of its theology. But modern scholars study prayer books, but they don't pray with them. The Bible must be guided by a teacher who possesses the Holy Spirit. Even if you read the same Bible, if you are guided by a teacher who does not have the Holy Spirit, you will have a ridiculous interpretation (as in cults, but also in other ways). When a teacher who does not have the Holy Spirit speaks of God, do not believe it. I don't think pastors and churches today pray. That's why the sermon has no power and you don't know what you're saying. That's why you don't get into people, and your heart doesn't get hot. Those who possess the Holy Spirit smell the same throughout the ages. Whenever there is a crisis in the church, it is a time of prayer.

② **【Jesus' sacrament opens their eyes】**

Eventually, they reach their destination, but Jesus "seemed to be about to go ahead" (Luke 24:28). Jesus' destination was different from theirs. It is a sin to miss the mark. So they forcibly held him back, saying, "Please stay with me, for it will soon be evening and the sun is already setting" (v. 29). The words "together," "together," and "staying" are repeated here. When Jesus comes to a certain point, He asks for your will. If you want them to be with you, He will be with you, but if you don't ask for them, He will move on. Well, it's time for dinner.

"When they sat down to eat together, Jesus took the bread, said a prayer of praise, broke the bread and gave it to them, and their eyes opened and they saw that it was Jesus, but they could not see Him." (verses 30~31). "Take the bread, recite the prayer of praise, break, and pass on" These four actions are the same as in the sacrament. The sacrament opens their eyes. The sermon alone does not open the eyes yet, but when it comes to the sacrament, the eyes open. These two things are necessary for worship. I always know what I wanted to say most in the sermon of the day after I have received the bread and wine in the sacrament. When their eyes opened, they could no longer see Jesus. The fact that it is no longer visible means that it is okay not to be invisible, and there is no need to do so.

③ [Truly, the Lord has been resurrected]

They immediately return to Jerusalem. Turn from west to east. In other words, we will make a U-turn into the City of God. It shows that they have begun their journey of faith again. The worship of sermons and sacraments has the power to make a U-turn in life. It has the power to lift us up to heaven as we fall to the earth. When he returned to Jerusalem, he was met by a crowd of 11 apostles and his companions. This is a template for the church. They testified that "indeed the Lord was resurrected and appeared to Simon" (v. 34). This will become the Easter greeting of the Eastern Church (ancient church). "Christ has been resurrected!" Truly, the Lord has been resurrected!"

That's the greeting. I noticed this time when I read here. The traveler explains the Bible, but does not say that he is Jesus. Even at supper, the guest does not say that he is Jesus. Jesus did not bear witness to anything. The disciples did not open their eyes because Jesus testified, "I am." The disciples' eyes were opened by the sermon and the sacrament. The sermon and the sacrament bear witness to Jesus. In other words, Christ is present and manifested in the sermons and the sacraments. Through preaching and the sacraments, I can see that Jesus is with me.

"Truly, the Lord has been resurrected" means that He is still alive and working. So where are you and where do you work? It is in you and works through you. In the old days, He appeared and worked in that age through the body he took from Mary. After that, He works through the bodies of all Christians in all ages. The Lord needs your body to work in this day. That is why the Lord is incarnate and is with you in you. It appears only to those who do the word of Christ. This is because those who do the words of Christ appear because they are acting in the same way as Christ. Those who only listen are the ones who bury Christ in the dirt, so they do not appear. For example, He said, "The Lord inquire of those who are in prison." When I obey it, Christ in me works and speaks the necessary

words. Then the other person changes. The signs of believers like those in Mark will appear. When I preach, Christ and the Holy Spirit in me speak through my mouth. At the time of the sacrament, it is Christ in me who presides. That's why we become Holy Bread. Christians and Christ are bound together in an eternal bond like husband and wife, and gradually we begin to resemble Him. It is impossible to bear similar fruits if they do not have the same roots. Oh, how blessed are the Christians! How blessed are those who know this mystery and those who practice it! I want you to know that. The Lord is in you. Don't you want to see that Lord? Commune with the Lord. Hear the word of God and pray to receive the Holy Spirit. Practice God's Word. Then your eyes will be opened to the fact that Christ is with you. Cherish a life of prayer.