

Last Week's Sermon Summary

『Way do you look for the living among the dead』 Pastor Takaaki Inoue
1 Corinthians 15:44-50, Luke 23:50-24:8

❶ **【The Burial of Christ】** Joseph of Arimathea took Jesus' body down from the cross, wrapped it in linen cloth, and laid it in a tomb hewn out of rock. The word "body" appears three times here (verses 52, 53, and 55). The text carefully emphasizes that Christ was not merely a vision, but a real person who truly existed, and that He truly died and was buried. When a person dies, that is the end. There is nothing more they can do. Everything comes to an end. However, the Bible teaches us that it is precisely when human beings can do nothing more that God's own work begins; it is in the very place where human hands play no part that God initiates something new. We live in a world where we believe human works are everything, and we do not know God's world. To that extent, we have driven God out of our lives. "It was the day of preparation, and the Sabbath was about to begin," (verse 54). Luke tells us that the day when everything has ended is a day of preparation for something new to begin.

❷ **【The Living One】** When the women went to the tomb early in the morning, they found the stone rolled away, but Jesus' body was nowhere to be found. Then an angel appeared and said, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen. Remember what he told you while he was still in Galilee: Did He not tell you that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinners, be crucified, and rise again on the third day?" (verses 5-7). In the Bible, "the Living One" refers to God. Christ is God.

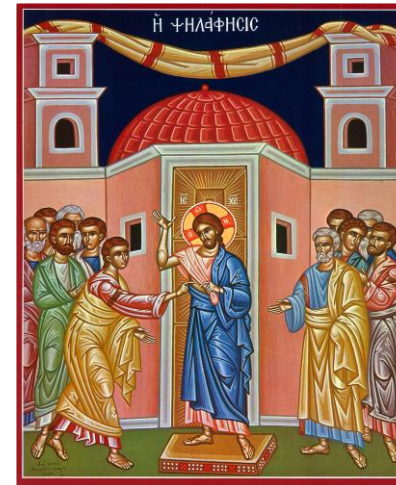
That is why He did not die even after being killed. Human beings were not originally created to die. This is because God, who is life, did not create death. Death began because of human sin. Since people sin every day and die every day, they have become accustomed to sinning and to death, and they think of death as a natural part of life. However, Christianity declares that death is an anomaly and an enemy of God. "The last enemy to be destroyed is death." (1 Corinthians 15:26) Whatever God did not create will surely be eradicated from this world. God became human in order to destroy this death. For without a human body, one cannot die. And so God Himself, taking on human nature, experienced death, was swallowed up by the realm of death, and destroyed death from within.

❸ **【It is God's work to resurrect humanity】** There is a letter written by Pope Francis, a Catholic leader who passed away last April, shortly before his death. "To all my beloved children in this world. Today, as one who is passing through this life, I would like to leave behind a small confession. Every day, I washed my face, groomed myself, and stood before the mirror to live. I believed that image was 'me.' But looking back, it was merely a garment I wore temporarily. We spend our time, money, and pour our love and passion into this body. We wish to be beautiful, not to grow old, not to fall ill, and... not to die. But in the end, regardless of my wishes, this body grows fat, falls ill, ages, and quietly slips away from me. In this world, there is not a single thing I can truly call my own. ...All events in this world follow their own course. All we can do is create a little breathing room within that flow." A little give-and-take, a little kindness, a little humility. These small acts can offer someone a warm respite. ↗

Weekly Report

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《Thomas Sunday》

Miyakojima Church's 2025 Mission Policy

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

Scripture : " The toil of those who build houses is in vain, unless the Lord Himself builds them " (Psalm 127:1)

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 We value the fellowship of believers.
- 4 Make concrete preparations for the construction of the church.