

Last Week's Sermon Summary

「The Qualifications of a Disciple」

Pastor Takaaki Inoue

2 Corinthians 2:14-17, Luke 14:25-35

❶ 【The Meaning of the Two Parables】

Jesus told the crowd that no one can be His disciple unless they are willing to forsake their parents, wife, children, brothers and sisters—even their own life—and unless they take up their cross and follow Him. He said that unless one makes Jesus their top priority—rather than putting family or oneself first—they cannot be His disciple. To take up one's cross means to deny oneself. Then He told two parables. The first parable is about someone who wants to build a tower: anyone would sit down and carefully calculate whether they have enough funds to complete it. The second parable is about going to war: any king would sit down and carefully calculate whether he can successfully fight an enemy with 20,000 soldiers with only 10,000 of his own. This means, "Know your true self." Otherwise, you will abandon your life of faith halfway through and become a laughingstock. After this, the Lord said, "In the same way, none of you can be my disciple unless you give up everything you own" (Luke 14:33). To give up everything you own means that unless you let go of everything you rely on, you cannot become a disciple of Jesus.

❷ 【Knowing Yourself Is the Beginning of Faith】 The first step toward salvation is recognizing that you are someone who cannot love others, cannot keep the commandments, is not righteous, and is gravely ill in spirit. That is why God first gave the Ten Commandments to humankind. The Ten Commandments are a checklist designed to show us that we have ceased to be truly human. What I learned at a seminar on mental illness is that "many people feel unwell but lack

awareness of their illness." People are often reluctant to admit that they are sick. People with alcohol dependence say, "I just like alcohol; I'm not an alcoholic." The criterion for determining whether someone is simply a lover of alcohol or an alcoholic is whether they are causing trouble for those around them. If those around them are suffering, then it is an illness, and treatment is necessary. Only those who acknowledge that they are sick, that they must change, and that change is necessary will seek treatment. In other words, they will come to church. Such people are disciples of Christ.

❸ 【Have Christ, Who Is the Salt, Within Yourself】 Jesus went on to say, "Salt is good. But if salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot." (Luke 14:34) In this context, "salt" refers to Christ. He is saying that if Christ is removed from a Christian, that person is of no use whatsoever. The other day, I conducted the funeral service for a member of Senri Seiai Church. I knew this person personally; he had taken care of me 38 years ago when I was serving as a student pastor at Senri Seiai Church. I find this to be a mysterious connection. I was with them until the very end, when their ashes were collected. When the remains were taken out of the cremation chamber, they were brittle and had almost completely crumbled. It was not possible to place all of the ashes into the urn—only a small portion could be contained. I thought to myself, "Ah, so this is what becomes of a human being in the end." And I realized clearly that our physical bodies in this world are merely vessels for the soul. Once the soul departs, this vessel returns to the earth. I think I intuitively knew that every time I attended a funeral and saw the deceased, they looked as if they were just an empty shell. ↗

Weekly Report

The United Church of Christ in Japan
Miyakojima Church

Mission Established December 1, 1957

Church Established December 2, 2001

2-6-17 Miyuki-cho, Miyakojima-ku, Osaka 534-0012

TEL06-6922-1120 FAX06-6922-1120

E-mail address:

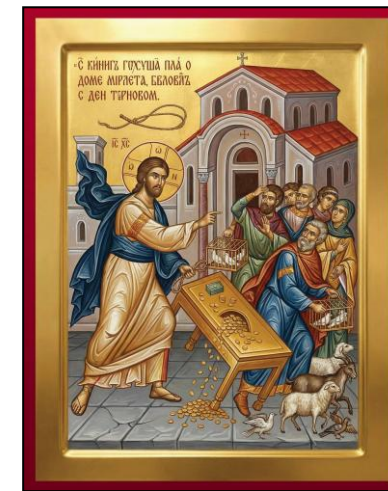
Homepage Address: <https://miyakojima-church1.com>

Postal transfer 00920-4-1442 Japan Miyakojima

Mission Senior

Pastor Takaaki Inoue

October 11, 2026, No. 1894



《Expelling Merchants from the Temple》

Miyakojima Church's 2026 Mission Policy

Motto : " Let us become faithful servants of the Lord Jesus Christ "

Scripture : " Stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord will return." (Matthew 24:42)

Goals for FY2024

- 1 Observe worship services every week and aim for an average of 28 people to attend services.
- 2 I will make good use of my time to invite the people I meet to worship.
- 3 We don't just listen to the Word; we put it into practice.
- 4 Make concrete preparations for the construction of the church.