

Sharing with gratitude

[Short Word Meditation (1)]

James Kim

Are you familiar with suffering?

Although Jesus Christ is familiar with suffering (Isa. 53:3)

I am familiar with comfort.

Can Satan entice us even by using close loved ones?

Satan deceives us.

He can even use

Our brothers and sisters,

Our children,

Our wife (husband)

Our friends who share life with us

(Deut. 13:1-5).

We can't get closer.

We cannot get closer to each other in Christ

With those who are not repenting,

With those who are not forgiven.

(Cf.: Eph. 2:13)

He shouldn't have gotten closer.

Where the Lord will destroy in the future

Lot shouldn't have gotten closer there (Gen. 13:10, 12).

Eventually he lived in there (14:12) and made friends with them (19:7).

And he gained an authority there (v. 1).

It was none other than Sodom and Gomorrah where wicked and great sinners lived (13:13).

They will become poor.

Drunkards,

Gluttons,

Drowsiness are related.

The result is they will become poor (Prov. 23:21).

We must live sincerely even in poverty.

Better a poor but wise whose walk is blameless

Than a fool whose lips are perverse and who no longer knows how to receive instruction

(Prov. 19:1; Eccle. 4:13).

We must not join

When we have too much concern about two brothers are arguing with each other in church,
We may interfere with it because we want to know why they are fighting.
Then there is greater chance that we may make contention bigger
By listening to only one side and
Not being neutral but joining and leaning to that side (cf. Prov. 26:17).

“Do not be like Cain”

"Do not be like Cain" (1 Jn. 3:12).
Like Cain, we should not hate our brothers (v. 15).
“Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer” (v. 15).
Like Cain, we should not kill our brother (v. 12).
We must know that “no murderer has eternal life in him” (v. 15).
Cain killed his younger brother Abel because his own actions were evil (v. 12).

Be like Abel!
We must be killed like Abel.
Doing like Abel means saving another person through our own death.
To be like Abel is to be like Jesus.
Jesus was killed to save us (4:9).
We too must be killed like Jesus.

We must not be like Cain.

We must not belong to the evil one and murder our brother

Because our own actions are evil and our brother's actions are righteous (1 Jn. 3;12).

We who do not love our brothers (sisters) but hate them are murderers (v. 15).

We should not disguise ourselves.

We must not disguise ourselves (2 Cor. 11:13-15).

The purpose of God's fiery trial in the wilderness is ...

1. To test our family members to know what is in our hearts, whether we will keep His commandments or not (Deut. 8: 2).
2. To make our family members to understand that we do not live by bread alone, but by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord (v. 3).
3. To do good for us in the end (v. 16).

The more we are hated by our family?

As the Lord extended kindness to Joseph, who was hated even more by his older brothers
(Gen. 37:3-5, 8; 39:21)

I think the more we get hated by people, especially by our own families,
God extends His kindness to us.

Hidden intention of a cunning woman?

A cunning woman (a harlot)

Hides her intention

And meet a foolish man who is without wisdom (Prov. 7:10).

Her hidden intention is to dig a pit (22:24; 23:27-28; cf. 26:27)

In order to make him to be unfaithful to his marriage.

The true hidden intention of the harlot

Is to make many men to destroy the covenant

That they have made during their marriage ceremony (Park Yun-sun).

Let's not interfere

We don't need to go through unnecessary difficulties

By interfering in a quarrel that is not our own as a passer-by.

It's not wise

And it's not loving neighbor

To meddle in the quarrel that is not our own

(Prov. 26:17; 1 Pet. 4:15).

Even though I know it's adultery ...

I saw a scene I shouldn't see.

I shouldn't be interested, but I was interested.

In the end, I sinned even though I knew it was adultery (2 Sam. 11:2-4).

Even if we think we are trapped ...

Although our adversary may think that we are trapped (Exod. 14:3; 1 Sam. 23:7)

God will provide a way out and enable us to handle it (1 Cor. 10:13).

“a staff of reed”

Although it seems on the surface that we can rely on

Something like “a staff of reed” (or a person) (Ezek. 29:6)

So we walk with that staff of reed as we lean on it,

But eventually we tore open our shoulders and

We broke and our backs are wrenched (v. 7).

Therefore, the Lord who loves us

Makes the staff of reed, which we leaned more than the Lord, very weak

So that never again will we look at the staff of reed and rely on it.

Therefore, the Lord makes the staff of reed as a reminder of our sin

In turning to that staff for help (vv. 15-16).

This is God's grace and love.

Faith and bearing

Need strong faith in order to bear with the failings of the weak (Rom. 15:1).

Let's offer thanksgiving prayer

Let's not be anxious about anything,
But in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving,
Let's present our requests to God (Phil. 4:6).

Sharing with gratitude

There will be left over when we share with thanksgiving (Mk. 8:6-8).

When we begin to praise the Lord with thanksgiving ...

As we begin to praise the Lord with thanksgiving because of His eternal lovingkindness
By trusting God that this great crisis is in God's sovereign hands
And God will certainly deliver us from it,
Then God will work and will destroy our enemies
(2 Chron. 1:1-23).

Thank God and give glory to Him

He who has been pitied by the Lord and healed
Should go to the Lord and bow down,
Giving thanks to Him,
Should give glory to God
(Lk. 17:11-19).

I can only thank God.

I can only thank God (1 Tim. 1:12)
Because even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man (v. 13),
The worst sinner (v. 15),
Christ Jesus my Lord has given me strength that
He considered me faithful, appointing me to His service (v. 12).

Let's find the conditions to be thankful for.

Let's not be anxious about anything as the Scripture says,
But in faith let's find the conditions to be thankful for
Even in the midst of our worrisome circumstances
And let's offer our prayer and petition with thanksgiving
(Phil. 4:6).

Those who overuse their power

Those who overuse their power hotly pursue the afflicted (Ps. 10:2).
They give trouble and grief (v. 14) to
Those who are weak) (v. 2), helpless (vv. 9, 12),
Unfortunate (v. 10), innocent (v. 8)
Their mouth is full of curses and deceit and oppression,
So their tongue hurts others and sins (v. 7).
They sit in the lurking places of the villages,
Their eyes stealthily watch for the unfortunate,
And they kill the innocent (v. 8).
They lurk in a hiding place as a lion in their lair
And lurk to catch the afflicted when they draw them into their nest (v. 9).

They boast of their heart's desire and are the greedy people (v. 3).
They are arrogant and haughty (v. 4).
So they say, "Nothing will shake me;
I will always be happy and never have trouble" (v. 6).
They don't seek God;
In all their thoughts there is no room for god (v. 4).
They think that God has forgotten.
He covers His face and never sees (v. 11).
Their ways are always prosperous (v. 5).
So they don't realize that God's judgement is waiting (v. 5).

But God saw the wicked things they were doing.
The Lord knows that they are giving trouble and grief (v. 14).
Therefore, the Lord will judge them (v. 18).

But the Lord helps the helpless who commits himself to Him (v. 14).
He listens to the desire and the cry of the afflicted who are in trouble and grief
And encourages them (v. 17).

Worship that costs me something?

What is the price that I am paying for worshiping God?

(2 Sam. 24:24)

To give to those who cannot afford to repay ...

When we give to our neighbor

We should give to “the poor” who cannot repay us,

Rather than to “the rich neighbors” who are capable of repaying us.

The reason is because we will be blessed because they cannot repay us.

That blessing is we will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.

(Lk. 14:12-14; cf. Mt. 25:40).

Shepherds who are worse than dogs

Shepherds who are worse than dogs don't tell the flock to go the right way.

The Bible says that these shepherds are “mute dogs” who cannot bark (Isa. 56:10).

The holy God is just.

David who was convinced that
God who struck Nabal (1 Sam. 25:38)
Would also strike Saul (26:10) ...
Since David had done evil in the sight of the Lord (2 Sam. 11:27)
God struck the child of David and the Uriah's wife Bathsheba (12:15)
So the child eventually died (v. 18).
After all, David not only experienced God striking Nabal and Saul
But also his own child.
The holy God is just.

Christians who regard the God's command as easy to disobey without any hesitation

Although we rebel against the command of the Lord (Deut. 1:26) without trust Him (v:32)
We regard His command as easy to obey without hesitation
Even though we didn't truly repent our sin (v. 41).
This will lead us to disobey God's command again and again without hesitation (v. 42)
That will result in sin.

Refuse and reject

The fool and arrogant person
Refuses and rejects the advice of the wise (2 Chron. 10:1-15).

We shouldn't be disobedient.

We shouldn't be disobedient to the vision from heaven (the revelation from God).

We shouldn't be disobedient to the Lord's calling (Acts 26:19).

False pastors bear bad fruit.

False pastors who are like "the bad tree"

And who prophesies in His name,

Cast out demons in His name,

Perform many miracles in His name,

Practice lawlessness

And thus bear bad fruit.

(Mt. 7:17, 22, 23).

We shouldn't love the false gospel.

Now even though we don't have peace
Because of our unrepented sins
We like to hear the message "Peace, peace" and love the false gospel.
How can we Christians who know that we are sinning against God now
Enjoy peace when there is no peace
By just hearing the false message of "Peace, peace"?
Shouldn't we first repent our sins and turn to God
So that we enjoy peace
By receiving forgiveness from God?
Why, then, do we want to enjoy peace without repentance and turning to God?
Why do we want to be free from sin without forgiveness?
I think we no longer have the biblical concept of sin.
We don't regard sin as sin.
And since God's punishment is slow,
We are bold in committing sins against God.
Why have we come to this point?
The reason is because we the pastors are preaching and teaching
Other gospel that is false gospel to God's people.
Now we say that we are preaching and teaching them the way to the Father God and His commands,
Without truly knowing the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.
Now we the pastors are not nurturing God's people with "knowledge and understanding" (Jer. 3:15).
As a result, the church members now consider the message
'God bless you. Live positively. Then you can have happiness on this earth.'
Than "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mt. 3:2).
We must love this false gospel (Jer. 5:31).

False Prophet, False Pastor?

Like the false prophets who stole God's words
At the time of Prophet Jeremiah (Jer. 23:30)
There are false pastors who plagiarizing sermons in this age.

False rich

A false rich man's ways are perverse (Prov. 28:6).
Although he seems to walk on the good way outwardly
He is actually walking on the evil way (Park Yun-sun).

In short,
The false rich man is gathering his riches
By inconsistent behavior between outward and inward actions.

Isn't it a lie?

Isn't it lie
That we don't love our brothers who we have seen
And saying that we love God who we have not seen?
(1 Jn. 4:20)

Even those who have been tempted by “a lying spirit” ...

Even those who have been tempted by “a lying spirit” (2 Chron. 18:21)
Know that God’s word of disaster is “the truth” (v. 15; cf. vv. 18-22, 29).
And yet the reason why they refuse to accept the truth is
Because that word of God is not “good” about them but “bad” (vv. 7, 17).

Those who take delight in lies

Those who take delight in lies
Bless with their mouths
But curse in their hearts.
(Ps. 62:4).

We shouldn’t cause anyone to stumble.

We shouldn’t cause those whom we want for them to be saved to stumble.

Those who cause them to stumble ...
Don’t edify them.
Seek their own benefit instead of them.
Don’t act according to their own conscience.
(1 Cor. 10:23-33).

Outside, but inside ...

You look clean, beautiful and righteous on the outside
But inside you are full of greed, self-indulgence,
Hypocrisy and wickedness, and full of everything unclean
First clean the inside!
(Mt. 23:25-28)

A lazy man

A lazy man makes his hands lazy (Prov. 10:4)
But his head diligent (15:19).

A lazy man

A lazy man ...

- (1) Wants wealth on in his heart (Prov. 13:4).
- (2) Desires the plunder of evil men (12:12).
- (3) Plunders whatever is left even by all means of injustice (v. 12).
- (4) Pursue what is worthy nothing and vain dissipation (13:11).
- (5) Is a great waster (18:9).

As a result, he will become poor (10:4).

The sluggard is unwise. The unwise man lacks sense.

The sluggard is unwise.

The unwise man lacks sense (Prov. 24:30).

His lack of sense is a priority.

The sluggard is lack of judgement in setting priority,

Which he should do first,

And what he should do later.

For example,

The unwise sluggard doesn't seek first His kingdom and His righteousness (Mt. 6:33).

Rather, he worries about his life, what he will eat, or drink;

Or about his body, what he will wear (v. 25).

Since the unwise sluggard doesn't trust God and His words (vv. 31-33)

He doesn't live up to the priority that God says.

Laziness, foolishness, arrogance

Laziness and foolishness,

Laziness and arrogance,

There seems to be related.

The sluggard is wiser in his own eyes

Than seven men who can give a discreet answer.

This is because he is not only arrogant

But also he is foolish and lacks discernment

(Prov. 26:16).

Pastor like Gehazi? Pastor like Elisha?

I should be a pastor like “Elisha” ...

No matter how many times the church member is urging me to accept the gift,

I must know how to say ‘No’ ...

I must know that Now is not the time to receive it ... (2 Chron. 5:15-16, 26)

We shouldn’t be a pastor like “Gehazi”.

We shouldn’t run after our church members

And try to get something from them (2 Kgs. 5:20).

We shouldn’t lie to them

And try to get some money from them (v. 22).

We shouldn’t try to hide the money

That we receive from the church members (vv. 24-25).

In the end you will be ashamed.

Those church members who turn away from God’s Word and always turn away from God,

Think that they are wise even though they aren’t.

They don’t say what is right, cling to deceit,

And don’t say “What have I done?”

By repenting of their wickedness.

They walk in lying path

And will eventually be ashamed (Jere. 8:5-9).

In the end, God will restore you.

Although God hides His face from us
According to our uncleanness and our offenses for His holy name,
In the end, He will restore us and will have compassion on us
And will make us to forget our shames and all the unfaithfulness we showed toward Him
When we live in safety in our land with no one to make us afraid
(Ezek. 39:24-26).

In the end, poverty awaits him.

He who has the covetous eyes walks the perverse way
Because he is eager to get rich.
In the end, he will not go unpunished, will suddenly fall
And poverty awaits him.
(Prov. 28:18, 20, 22).

We should never love it.

Without washing the evil from our heart
And harboring wicked thoughts for long time
Make us not to love the thing we suppose to love
And makes us to love the thing that we aren't supposed to love
So that we commit sin against God in confusion
(Cf. Jere. Chs. 4-6, 5:31)

God never wastes His time.

Although it seems to us
That Joseph wasted his time for 13 years
When he was hated by his older brothers (Gen. 37:4, 5)
And was sold to the merchants (v. 28)
And became a slave at an Egyptian Potiphar (39:1)
When he was 17 years old (37:2)
And was in prison (39:20-23) for 2 years (41:1)
And was put in charge of the whole land of Egypt (v. 41)
When he was 30 years old (v. 46)
God never wasted His time.

God delivered Joseph from the cistern (37:20, 22)
And raised him as Potiphar's attendant (39:4).
Although it seems that Joseph wasted his 2 years
While he was falsely accused and was in prison,
God showed him kindness and granted him favor in the eyes of the prison warden (39:21-22).
Not only God allowed Joseph to meet the cupbearer of the king of Egypt (40:1)
But He also made the cupbearer to introduce Joseph to King Pharaoh after 2 years (41:9-13)
And interpreted the Pharaoh's dreams
So that he was put in charge of the whole land of Egypt (v. 41).

Like this, the reason why God didn't waste Joseph's 13 years (vv. 17-30)
And raised him to be in charge of the whole land of Egypt
Was to save and preserve the Jacob's and his descendants' lives on earth (45:5, 7).

It's not a waste.

A woman poured perfume on Jesus' body beforehand
To prepare for His burial (Mk. 14:8).
But His disciples thought that
She was wasting perfume (v. 4).

The thing that is offered to the Lord
For the preparation of His Second Coming
Is valuable
And is not a waste.

You married men, mothers with (only) son!

God tells
The married man
To leave his father and mother (Gen. 2:24).
But what if his parents (mother)
Refuse to let him go
And continue to hold him back? (Exod. 9:2)

To the humble ...

The humble will rejoice in the Lord (Isa. 29:19).

You cannot ...

You cannot serve both God and Money (Mt. 6:24).

You cannot drink the cup of the Lord

And the cup of demons too (1 Cor. 10:21).

[While the cup and the table of the Lord

Refer to the believer participating in the blood and body of Christ (v. 16),

The cup of demons

Refers to the unbeliever offering sacrifice to idols (vv. 19-20)]

A godly man is ...

A godly man is not without sins.

But he confesses his sins to God without hiding them.

Thus he receives forgiveness,

And his sins are covered

And the Lord does not count against him.

(Ps. 32:1-6)

Dangerous pattern to watch out for

We should watch out for this pattern:

Sin → God's discipline → Adversity/Affliction/Suffering (Slander/Mock) → Discouragement →

Unbelief (Ps. 42)

Pastors who are leading them astray

Now we pastors are leading God's flocks astray.
As a result, they are wondering over mountain and hill
And forgetting their own resting place (Jere. 50:6).

Are you keep on changing? Or are you getting corrupted?

On the one hand,
King Saul, who comes out in the Old Testament,
Was humble but corrupted
And became proud
(1 Sam. 15, esp. vv. 11-12, 17, 22)

On the other hand,
Apostle Paul, who comes out in the New Testament
Was proud but changed
And became humble.
(1 Cor. 15:8-10; 1 Tim. 1:12-15)

Am I keep on changing now Or am I getting corrupted?

Sufferings flow and comfort overflows

Where sin increased,
Grace increased all the more
(Rom. 5:10),
Where sufferings flow
God's comfort overflows.
(2 Cor. 1:5).

Suffering itself is comfort.

We need to be comforted in our own suffering.

The reason is because if the suffering is due to our sins then it is for our own good (Ps. 119:71)

And if the suffering is for the gospel and the church of Jesus Christ, it is God's grace (Phil. 1:29).

When we are in trouble

When we are in trouble

We must not forget the Word of God,

But we must seek and think about only His Word

And we must delight in His Word.

Then the Word of God will preserve our lives (Ps. 119:92-95).

When we are afflicted

We must ponder the Word of the Lord (Ps. 119:95)

Because His Word will preserve our lives (v. 93).

We must seek His Word (v. 94)

Because we are seeking His salvation (v. 94).

True believers place their hope in the Word of God.

Therefore, we don't forget His Word (Park).

The Lord is our only hope in suffering.

Therefore, we must seek and think about the Lord's word more and more in our sufferings.

The Lord will strengthen us by His Word in our sufferings.

The Lord will save us according to His Word.

The Lord who troubles us through affliction?

Perhaps the reason why the Lord troubles us through affliction
And makes us not to be in peace and to crush each other
Is because maybe He wants us to repent our sins of living
Without the true God and a teaching pastor
And without the commands of God.
(2 Chron. 15:3-6)

Suffering is ...

Suffering can be temptation that may make us to leave God's Word
But it can also be an opportunity to make us to get closer to His Word,
To pray to God by holding on to His promised Word,
And to make His Word our possession by keeping it (Ps. 119:49-56).

Comfort to endure suffering

The purpose why God uses us to
Comfort our beloved brothers and sisters in Christ
Is not to get rid of their sufferings
But this comfort can produce in them patient endurance of the sufferings.
(1 Cor. 1:6).

Why shouldn't we refuse to suffer?

The reason why we shouldn't refuse to suffer for Jesus and His church is because

We learn to obey by participating in His suffering (Heb. 5:8)

And "our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us"
(Rom. 8:18).

Through suffering, through obedience

We learn obedience through suffering (Heb. 5:8)

And through obedience we learn Father God's heart (Hosea ch. 1).

I want to learn even through suffering.

Rather than asking God, "may this cup be taken from me"(Mt. 26:39)

We must learn obedience (Heb. 5:8) like the Son of God, Jesus, even through this cup of suffering

So that we be able to pray, "Yet not as I will, but as You will" (Mt. 26:39).

The important thing is not for suffering to be removed

But to learn obedience even through suffering.

Path of Suffering, Path of Grace

The way of Jesus, the way of suffering, is the way of grace (Phil. 1:29).

The benefit of affliction is ...

The benefit of affliction is that through affliction

We realize that we were going astray in the sight of God,

We learn His Word, and

We obey His Word (Ps. 119:67, 71).

If there is no realization of our sins

And no learning of God's Word

And obedience to His Word,

Then our affliction is useless.

The blacksmith Lord who makes us to go through the furnace of affliction

The Lord the Blacksmith makes us to go through the furnace of affliction (Isa. 48:10).

The purpose is to test our hearts (Prov. 17:3),

And to remove the dross from us

So that we may come forth as gold (Job 23:10) and a vessel for the smith (Prov. 25:4)

So that the Lord can use us

As an instrument for noble purpose (2 Tim. 2:21).

Is suffering an opportunity?

Many sufferings in our lives

Can be an opportunity to imitate our Lord Jesus Christ.

In order to do so,

We must receive the Word of God “with the joy of the Holy Spirit” (1 Thess. 1:6)

And obey His Word.

Our groaning due to the bondage

When we cry out to God for help because of the bondage,

God heard our groaning

And remembers His covenant with us

And takes care of us (Exod. 2:23-25).

God’s promise to heal

God sees us walking in the path of sinful greed.

Nevertheless, God promises to heal us.

God will guide us.

God will restore comfort to us (Isa 57: 17-18).

Sin over pain

We must be much more afraid of being still in our sins than in our pains (1 Cor. 15:17).

The pain among the pains ...

I think the pain among the pains is being forsaken by a loved one.

Jesus was forsaken by Father God.

“About the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice,

‘Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?’—

which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Mt. 27:46)

Two questions to ask God in pain

When we are in a tension between personal suffering and God's promise

Two questions can be asked of God:

1. God, how long will you let me suffer?
2. God, when will you fulfill Your promise to me?

(Ps. 13)

(As I was reading Professor Mark D. Futato's book on "The Book of Psalms")

Looking at the loved one suffering ...

Although when I see a loved one suffering
My heart hurts and tears come out
I can go to Dad Father God and cry out to Him in tears.
Then God helps us to acknowledge God's sovereignty
That His sovereign will is good, pleasing and perfect (Rom. 12:2)
And that He will cause all things to work together for good to us who love God (8:28).
In the end, God makes us to confess that 'God is good, all the time' (Ps. 43:4).

A sorry comforter

A sorry comforter (Job 16:2)
Keeps on speaking unlimited windy words to me (v. 3)
He cannot speak as if he is in my place (v. 4).
He torments me and crushes me with words (19:2).
He exalts himself above me (v. 5).
He thinks that he is better me.

Through suffering

As Christians and Jesus' disciples
We must imitate Jesus
And learn obedience through suffering (Heb. 5:8).

When suffering is stopped?

When we suffer as a result of our sins
We seek God desperately.
But when suffering is stopped,
Then we sin again and harden our hearts.
We disobey God's word again (Exod. 9:34).

Suffering is an opportunity to make the Word mine.

If we don't leave the Word of God in the midst of severe suffering and pain
But rather keep it more and better,
Than His Word will become mine (Ps. 119:51, 55-56).

We must get rid of our spiritual unbalanced diet habit.

When God who speaks to us whom He chose in love
We must get rid of our spiritual unbalanced diet habit
In which we pick only the Word that we like to hear
(2 Chron. 18:5, 7, 11-12, 17).
Our spiritual unbalanced diet habit
In which we pick only the Word we like to hear
Doesn't make our souls healthy.

There is communal responsibility.

We who believe in Jesus in a community called church
Have communal responsibility as a member of the body of the Lord.

For example,

We must grow in faith not only for ourselves
But also for the whole community.

Also,

We must obey the Word of God
So that we may not sin not only for our own souls but also for the whole community.

In particular,

We must overcome the sin of covetousness.

We must guard ourselves from covetousness.

The reason is because covetousness makes us to extort from others (Ecc. 7:7).

If we have covetousness like Achan

Then we will even steal something from the devoted things (Josh. 6:18).

As a result,

Because of one man Achan's sin

He troubled the whole Israelites (7:25).

Likewise

I will trouble the whole church members

Because of one person my sin (7:25; cf. 1 Cor. 12:26).

Christians who miss the past?

Like Dathan and Abiram,
Who said that Egypt, in where the Israelites were slaves,
Was like “a land flowing with milk and honey” (Num. 16:12-13),
There are many Christians who think
That this sinful world, in where we used to live as slaves to sins as non-believers,
Is God’s Promised Land, Heaven ...

Past and Present

In the past, we were under law (Rom. 6:15).
Originally we were slaves of sin (v. 17).
Before we presented our members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness,
Resulting in further lawlessness (v. 19).
At that time, we bore the shameful fruits (v. 21).
When we were slaves to sin, we were free from the control of righteousness (v. 20).
Therefore, we supposed to die as slaves to sin (vv. 16, 21).
The wages of sin is death (v. 23).

We are now under grace (v. 15).
Now we are slaves to obedience which leads to righteousness (v. 16).
We are wholeheartedly obeying the form of teaching to which we have been entrusted,
So that we have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness (vv. 17-18).
Now we offer the parts of our body in slavery to righteousness leading in holiness (v. 19).
Now we have been set free from sin
And have become slaves to God, the benefit we reap leads to holiness,
And the result is eternal life (v. 22).
The gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (v. 23).

(As I meditate again on our church retired pastor’s sermon
that he preached during the Wednesday night prayer meeting yesterday)

Be careful not to be overestimated!

I should stop boasting
Because people may think more of me than is warranted
By what I do and say (2 Cor. 12:6)

Do I really ...?

Do I really
Experience Christ's power
That is made perfect in my weakness?
(2 Cor. 12:9)

Do I really
Boast all more gladly about my weaknesses? (v. 9)

Do I really
Know that I am strong
Then I am strong? (v. 10)

Am I
Content with my weaknesses
For Christ's sake? (v. 10)

We don't need to be afraid that the relationship will be broken.

We don't need to be afraid that the relationship will be broken.
The reason is because no one can separate us
From the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord
(Rom. 8:35, 39).

The church is suffering.

The church is suffering
Because the church leaders are abandoning God's command
And idolizing the money
(1 Kgs. 18:18).

Pride

Pride makes us blind.
Pride doesn't make us to examine ourselves
And to look at our own weaknesses and shortcomings.
Rather, pride makes us to bring out other person's weakness and shortcoming
And to compare ourselves with him/her
And thus make us to boast ourselves quietly
That we are better Christians than him/her.
(Cf. Rom. 2:19-20)

With proud heart ...

With proud heart (Isa. 16:6) ...

Wearing yourselves out in serving is useless (v. 12).
Coming to his sanctuary to pray is useless (v. 12).
Boasting is false (v. 6).

The Lord stops the voice of joy and gladness from the proud heart (v. 10).
And the Lord turns that joy and gladness into wail and moan (v. 7) and tears and weeping (v. 9).

The proud ...

The proud have no patience.
They provoke in their spirits.
But the humble have patience.
(Eccle. 7:8-9)

Church member counting?

We shouldn't be pleased in counting the church members ...? (2 Sam. 24:1-3)

A pastor who is afraid of being mocked by the church members?

Can we say that he is a true leader
If he disobeys God's voice
Because he is afraid of being mocked by the church members?
(cf.: Jere. 38:19-20)

The joy of fellowship

We Christians who have fellowship with the Lord
Have joy in our hearts
Because we have fellowship with our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ with His love (1 Jn. 1:1-4).

A horrible and shocking thing in the church ...

A horrible and shocking thing in the church is
The church members are love
That the pastors prophesy lies and rule by their own authority.
(Jere. 5:30-31).

The prosperous and powerful sinners ...

The purpose of the prosperous and powerful sinners in the church in the church is
Not to worship God
But to consider God as “Baal” and
For their own economic well-being and personal prosperity
(Cf. Zeph. 1:4-6).

(As I was reading Iain M. Duguid & Matthew P. Harmon's "Zephaniah, Haggai, Malachi" REFORMED EXPOSITORY COMMENTARY")

There are people in the church who should be silenced.

There are people in the church who should be silenced:
Rebellious people,
Empty talkers,
Deceivers,
Those who are pursuing dishonest gain,
Those who are upsetting whole families.
(Tit. 1:10-11)

My complaint in the church ...

Our complaint in the church
Can discouraged other brothers and sisters in Christ
(Num. 14:36; Deut. 1:28).

The reason is because
We refuse to believe in the Lord
And don't follow Him wholeheartedly
(Num. 14:11, 24).

One who makes great disturbance in the church?

Usually in the church,
There is one person who causes a great disturbance (Acts 19:23-24).
The main reason why s/he causes the great disturbance is
Because of love of money and greed (vv. 25, 27).
S/he makes a faction with people close to her/him or those who are related (v. 25)
And stir them up (21:27).
Based on thoughts that are unconfirmed (v. 29) and lies (18:13)
S/he slanders and attacks her/his pastor (v. 12)
And make the people to be furious (19:28).
Eventually, s/he creates a commotion in the church and they have disorderly gathering (19:40, 21:30).
So the people gather at that disorderly gathering
But they don't know for what reason they have come together
So the assembly is in confusion (19:32).

There may be conflicts because of gifts in the church.

There may be conflicts within the church because of gifts.

I think there are at least four reasons for this:

- (1) Because we forget that the gifts we have received are given to us by the Lord
“according to the grace,”
- (2) Because we don’t acknowledging the different gifts we receive,
- (3) Because we have gone too far in using our gifts,
- (4) Because we use our gifts in pride, and boast ourselves.

“We have different gifts, according to the grace given us.

If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. ...

Live in harmony with one another.

Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position.

Do not be conceited.”

(Rom. 12:6, 16)

What’s the use of being distracted with all the church service?

What’s the use of being distracted with all the church service

If we keep on complaining in dissatisfaction even to the Lord? (Lk. 10:40)

Isn’t it better to chose only one thing that the Lord says it’s necessary

Rather than worrying and being bothered about so many things? (vv. 41-42)

That one necessary thing is to seat at the Lord’s feet and listen to His word (v. 39).

The church must have these things.

In the church

There must be peace, being built up

And the fear of the Lord and the comfort of the Holy Spirit

(Acts 9:31).

We must edify the church ...

Although God gave us gifts to edify the church (1 Cor. 14:3, 4, 5, 12, 26)

How come we are edifying ourselves? (v. 4)

The joy of our salvation and a willing spirit

When we sin and are not repenting

We don't have the Lord's joy of salvation and a willing spirit.

(Ps. 51:12).

If you don't stand firm in your faith ...

If you don't stand firm in your faith
You will stand at all (Isa. 7:9).

The reason you aren't standing firm is
Because you don't believe firmly.

God who looks down from heaven

Just as from the point of view of the universe, the earth is extremely small,
I who live in this small earth, am smaller than an ant ...

How great is this grace and love of God,
God who is looking down on me from heaven
Who is much smaller than dust in Creator God's point of view
(Ps. 33:13-15)

God's love in causing us to be in need?

The reason why just God causes us to be in need
As a result of our sins is
So that we may realize our sins and repent.
It's God's love in causing us to be in need.

(As I meditate Judges chapter 7, especially 6).

To be in need ...

It's not bad to be in need ... (Lk. 15:14, 17)

Why not listen to advice?

The reason why a fool doesn't listen to advice is
Because his way seems right to him. (Prov. 12:15)

Give up my right?

We need to endure all things without using our right.
The purpose is so that we will cause no hindrance to the gospel of Christ
(1 Cor. 9:12).

Purpose to endure without using my right

We should endure all things without using our right
In front of those who criticize us
The purpose is so that we will cause no hindrance to the gospel of Christ (1 Cor. 9:12).

Now aren't we abusing our right without enduring all things
And causing hindrance to the gospel of Christ?

They should be honored

Shouldn't our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ who don't receive honor
Be honored at least in the church?
(1 Cor. 12:24)

Precious children of God ...

The precious children in the sight of God
Love God with all their lives.
They give thanks to God for His grace that never stops.
They obey all God's commands.

[Tried to apply 'Precious daughter-in-law' (Ruth 4:15) to "Precious children of God"]

Respect your wife

Husbands, respect your wives.
Then nothing will hinder your prayers
(1 Pet. 3:7).

Unbalanced self-examination

I personally think it is very important
To reflect myself in the spiritual mirror that is the Word of God
And to confront myself that is reflected in that mirror of the Word.

But my problem is that
I look at my reflection in the mirror of God's Word with my own eyes
Instead with they eyes of the Lord.

Here what I see with my own eyes means
I only see my own sinful image in the mirror of God's holy Word
And I suffer from extreme discouragement, guilt conscience, and sense of shame.

The limitation of looking at myself with my own eyes is that
More sins that are continually being exposed by the holy Word of God (Rom. 5:20).
This is wrong and twisted self-introspection.
The wrong self-reflection only looks at myself with my own eyes.
In other words, the wrong self-reflection
Makes me to look at only myself
And not Jesus Christ who died on the cross to take away all my sins and to forgive me.

The right self-examination is
To look at Jesus Christ who bore all my sins and died on the cross (Heb. 12:2).
Although I have to realize and acknowledge all the sins
That are being exposed continually by the holy Word of God,
I dwell more and more in God's abundant and increasing grace with assurance of God's forgiveness,
Trusting and relying on the Jesus Christ and His cross
As I confess and repent my sins (Rom. 5:20).
Therefore, I confess "I am what I am because of God's grace" (1 Cor. 15:10).

I no longer want to do the wrong and twisted self-introspection.
Rather, I want to have balanced and correct self-examination.
Therefore, I want to see myself with the eyes of the Lord.
In the eyes of the Lord, I want to see myself as precious and honor child of God
So that I will be able to love myself with His love (Isa. 43:4).

[Cf.: <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/dont-be-introspective-examine-yourself/>]

We should know our detestable practices ...

(Ezek. 16:2)

Although God made the Israelites' beauty perfect
So that their fame spread among the nations on account of their beauty (vv. 9-14)
The Israelites trusted in their beauty and used their fame to become a prostitute
And lavished their favors on anyone who passed by (v. 15).
They also took the fine jewelry God gave them
And made for themselves male idols and engaged in prostitution with them (v. 17).
And they took their embroidered clothes to put on them,
And they offered His oil, fragrant incense, the food He provided for them before them (vv. 18-19).
But their prostitution wasn't enough so they didn't stop here.
They took their sons and daughters and sacrificed them as food to the idols (vv. 20-21).
They build a mound for themselves and made a lofty, shrine in every public square (v. 24).
They offered their body with increasing promiscuity to anyone who passed by (v. 25).
They engaged in prostitution with the Egyptians, their lustful neighbors (v. 26),
And with the Assyrians too because they were insatiable (v. 28),
And with Babylonia, a land of merchants, but even with this they weren't satisfied (v. 29).
They were corrupted women who acted like a brazen prostitute when they did all these things (v. 30).
They were adulterous wife who preferred strangers to their own husband (v. 32).
Every prostitute receives a fee, but they gave gifts to all their lovers,
Bribing them to come to them from everywhere for their illicit favors (v. 33).
They weren't like other prostitutes
Because they didn't receive payment but rather they gave to them (v. 34).

But toward them, God said, "I will put a stop to your prostitution,
And you will no longer pay your lovers" (v. 41).
Although she had to bear the consequences of their lewdness and their detestable practices (v. 58),
God said, "Yet I will remember the covenant I made with you in the days of your youth,
And I will establish an everlasting covenant with you" (v. 60).
Although God had right to break the covenant that He made with the Israelites
since they broke the covenant with God first,
instead God said He would establish the everlasting covenant with them.
So they would know that 'God is the Lord' (v. 62).
God said He would make atonement for the Israelites for all they had done (v. 63).
How could God forgive a prostitute for doing so detestable things?
Now the church, His bride, is doing detestable things in the sight of the Bridegroom, Jesus.
Now we the Christians are acting as prostitutes.
Now we are not satisfied with Jesus, the Bridegroom

We keep trying to satisfy our own lust with the things of the world.
But since our lusts aren't satisfied, we are complaining in our dissatisfaction and disobeying God's Word.

The unrighteous things that we are not committing are indeed more detestable sins than the corrupted women.

The reason is because we want to satisfy our greed in addition to our lust.

That's why we are bold to do detestable things in the sight of God.

Nevertheless, the Lord, the Bridegroom, is faithful to the everlasting covenant that

He promises not to let us do any more detestable things.

And the Lord promises to forgive all our detestable sins.

The Lord promises to establish the bride Church as a glorious church (Mt. 16:18; Eph. 5:27).

When the day that Jesus, the Bridegroom, comes back to this world,
the bride Church will suddenly be transformed and will wear the glorious spiritual body
that will not decay and strong and will participate in the wedding of the Lamb (Rev. 19: 9).

Through the pain

We are not envious of the wicked prosperity

(Prov. 23:17; 24: 1, 19; Cf.: Ps. 73).

Rather, we share in the sufferings of the righteous (Phi. 3:10),

And experience God's presence through the sufferings (Gen. 39).

Even He makes that relationship to be far away?

Whether it's couple relationship or parents-children relationship, or whatever relationships,
If that relationship is closer than our relationship with God
Then God even makes that relationship to be far away
In order to make our relationship with Him closer.
That's how much God wants intimate relationship with Him (Cf. Gen.ch. 22).
Our Father God made us very close to Him
Even by making His begotten Son Jesus to be far away from Him on the cross.

I want to taste that joy.

Our instinct is to hate.
Our instincts are never forgiving.

But God is commanding us to live not according to our instinct,
But to forgive and love those who hate us (Lk. 6:37; Mt. 5:44).

We have no power to obey this word of God.
It is only God who gives that power.
'For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose' (Phil. 2:13).
God enables us to overcome our instinct and forgive and love those who hate us
By bringing forth in us the fruit of the Spirit, love (Gal. 5:22).
There is divine joy in forgiving and loving (Ps. 90:14).
I want to taste that joy.

Now is different from that time ...

When we were our old self

Our body was the body of sin and we were slaves to sin (Rom. 6:6).

At that time

We let sin reign in our mortal body

So that we obey its evil desires (v. 12).

At that time

We offered the parts of our body to sin,

As instrument of wickedness (v. 13).

We used to offer the parts of our body in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness (v. 19).

At that time

Sin was our master,

Because we were under the law (v. 14).

At that time

We were slaves to sin,

Which was leading us to death (v. 16).

In short

When we were controlled by the sinful nature,

The sinful passion aroused by the law were at work in our bodies,

So that we bore fruit for death (7:5).

But now

We are new creation (2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 2:15; Col. 3:10).

Now

We are not under law but under grace (Rom. 6:14, 15).

In order to redeem us under the law that we may receive the full rights of children
Through the crucified body of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was born under law (Gal. 4:4-5)
Now (Rom. 6:21, 22)
We also died to the law (7:4) and to sin (6:2-4).

Now
We are not slaves to sin who were free from the control of righteousness (v. 20)
But we have been set free from sins (v. 22)
And are slaves to obedience and to righteousness (vv. 16-18).

Now
Our old self was crucified with Jesus
So that the body of sin is done away with,
That we should no longer be slaves to sin (v. 6).
‘We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death
In order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father,
We too may live a new life’ (v. 4).

Now
By dying to what once bound us,
We have been released from the law
So that we serve in the new way of the Spirit (7:6).

Now
It is God who works in us to will and to act according to His good purpose (v. 18; Phil. 2:13).

In short,
Now that we have been set free from sin
And have become slaves to God,
The benefit we reap leads to holiness,
And the result is eternal life (Rom. 6:22)

[After listening to the sermon on Romans 7:1-6 by our church retired pastor yesterday in Wednesday
Night Prayer Meeting]

Why not repay the grace we received?

The reason we don't repay God's grace is
Because our hearts are proud (2 Chron 32:25).

Even after He has done good to you ...

The Lord has done good to us (Josh. 24:20)
Even though we have not labored (v. 13; Jon. 4:10).
But if we forsake the Lord and serve foreign gods,
Then He will turn and do us harm and consume us
Even after He has done good to us (v. 20).

We can trust him.

If he is honored in his hometown
and among his own relatives and his own household,
Then we can trust him (Cf. Mk. 6:4).

The reason we don't trust him?

The reason we don't trust him is
Because we are only thinking about his negative past
Instead of believing that the Lord began a good work in him
(Cf.: Acts 9:26; Phil. 1:6).

That person is crazy.

There is no crazy person,
Who says 'I was only joking' after he lied to me,
Who enjoys inflicting a fatal wound in my heart with deception.
That person is crazy.

"Like a madman who throws Firebrands, arrows and death,
So is the man who deceives his neighbor, And says, 'Was I not joking?'"
(Prov. 26:18-19).

The Lord who delivers him from crisis

There are people who are jealous of him.
Who keeps the Lord's commandments faithfully and
Thus who has done no wrong and is faultless,
So they try to put him in dangerous crisis
By making rules and regulations that he cannot keep.
But God whom he faithfully serves delivers him from that crisis (Cf. Daniel chap. 6).

God who turns the curse into a blessing ...

God turns the curse into a blessing
Because He loves us (Deut. 23:5).

Fear that his deeds will be exposed

Everyone who does evil hates the Light
Because he loves the darkness.
Since he loves the darkness,
He does not come to the Light.
The reason is because he has fear that his deeds will be exposed
(Jn. 3:19-20; Eph. 5:11, 13).

We don't aware that we have sinned ...

When we sin unintentionally and do what is forbidden in any of the Lord's commands,
We don't aware that we have sinned against God.
That's why it is a great grace to be able to realize our sin and regard it as sin.
In order not to waste God's grace
We must courageously face our sin
And humbly acknowledge and confess our sin before the holy God.
(Cf.: Lev. 4: 13, 14).

We shouldn't even go near the door of her house.

We must keep our way far from an adulteress

And do not go near the door of her house (Prov. 5:3, 8).

Otherwise, we will give our vigor to others and our years to one who is cruel (v. 9)

And will groan at the end of our lives (v. 11).

We should rejoice in the wife of our youth (v. 18).

Her breasts should satisfy us always, and we must be captivated by her love (v. 19).

Nevertheless, they still don't listen.

Although Moses clearly said to the Israelites

“This will not succeed!,”

“Do not go up, because the LORD is not with you. You will be defeated by your enemies,”

“Because you have turned away from the LORD,”

Nevertheless, they didn't listen to Moses (Num. 14:41-45).

Why didn't they listen to the Lord's servant like this?

Why don't you listen to the Lord's servant?

Nevertheless, are we still going to believe in God?

If we believe in God, not because of Jesus but because of material blessing, the blessing of children, the blessing of health and so on that we want and expect from God,

Then God may allow Satan to take away all those blessings (Job 1:9-12).

Nevertheless, are we still going to worship God

Without committing the sin of blaming on God? (vv. 20-22)

So we should be able to enjoy life.

In this world, all our days our work is pain and grief (Eccle. 2:23).

We can do nothing better than

To eat and drink and find satisfaction in our work (v. 24; 3:13, 22; 5:18; 8:15),

And to be happy and do good while we live (3:12).

This is our lot (v. 22; 5:18), is from the hand of God (2:24) and the gift of God (3:13).

So we should be able to enjoy life (8:15).

“Enjoy life with your wife, whom you love,

All the days of this meaningless life that God has given you under the sun—

All your meaningless days.

For this is your lot in life and in your toilsome labor under the sun” (9:9).

But those who are trapped in the truth ...

Those who are trapped in a situation (Exod. 14:3)

Are afraid and grumble

Because they are under the influence of circumstance (vv. 10-12).

But those who are trapped in the truth,

Are controlled by the Word of God

And hope by focusing on the Lord by faith (vv. 13-14, Ps. 43:5).

The wrong value

We have the wrong value.

The wrong value is not esteeming Jesus (Isa. 53:3).

The reason why we don't esteem Jesus is

Because we don't like sorrows and suffering (v. 3).

Jesus was a man of sorrow (v. 3).

And He was familiar with suffering (v. 3).

But we turn our face away from sorrow and suffering

Because we hate them.

It's because we are very used to joy, happiness, comfort and peace.

So we don't esteem Jesus.

Rather, we don't like Him and are rejecting Him.

It's because our wrong value is driven by the lust of flesh (1 Jn. 2:16).

Like when Eve saw the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye (Gen. 3:6),

The reason why the things that we see in this world are

Pleasing to our eyes and good for food in our wrong value point of view is

Because of the lust of flesh.

The lust of flesh causes us to forsake eternal value

And make us to choose the momentary value.

The lust of flesh makes us not to distinguish what is precious and what is insignificant.

As a result, we eat vain things that are good for food and pleasing to the eye

And thus we sin against God.

,

The wrong perspective

The wrong perspective we have is that
We are unable to see the beauty of Jesus (Isa. 53:2).
In other words, our wrong perspective is that
We don't see the beauty of Jesus
Who obeyed the Father God's will until death on the cross (Phil. 2:8).
We aren't attracted to Jesus' obedience.
That's we are disobeying the Lord.
And when we look at obedience from our disobedience perspective,
We cannot see the beauty of obedience.
Our wrong perspective can be understood better
If we think about the word that Eve saw that
The fruit of the tree was pleasing to the eye (Gen. 3:6).
Obviously from the point of obedience
The fruit of the tree shouldn't be pleasing in Eve's eyes.
But since the fruit of the tree was pleasing in her eyes,
There was ugly of disobedience than beauty of obedience.
She committed sin of disobedience to God's command
Because she was drawn by the lust of the eyes (1 Jn. 2:16).
The wrong perspective commits sin against God
By doing wrong things
As we are drawn to the lust of the eyes.

The wrong thought

We do the wrong thought (Isa. 53:4).

Our wrong thought is that

We think Jesus was stricken by God, smitten by Him and afflicted (v. 4)

Even though He was pierced and crushed for our transgression and our iniquities (v. 5).

Although Jesus clearly took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows (v. 4)

And suffered because of our transgressions and our iniquities (v. 5)

We think that Jesus was crucified on the cross

Because He was punished by God

Due to His sin of blaspheming God (Self-proclaiming that He is the Son of God)

And His sin of blaspheming the temple.

Obviously, His suffering is due to our transgressions and iniquities.

The root of our wrong thought is pride.

Pride twists our thoughts.

Pride makes us think ourselves wise.

So when Eve saw the fruit of the tree,

It was not only good for food and pleasing to the eyes

But also desirable for gaining wisdom (Gen. 3:6).

This is said by Apostle John as “the boastful pride of life” (1 Jn. 2:16).

This is not from the Father but from the world (v. 16).

The boastful pride of life makes us to do wrong thought and sin against God.

Do I want to be exalted by people that much?

It seems so sweet to be glorified by people.

When I get use to taste that sweetness,

I think I will try more to get respect and glory from more and more people.

If I get addicted to that taste, then I will become a slave to people rather than servant of God.

I imagine I get collapse by trying to anything

To be recognized and exalted by people as the slave of people.

I remember King Saul from the Old Testament.

Before he became a king,

He was once small in his own eyes (1 Sam. 15:17).

But after he became king of Israel and after he won the battle against the Amalekites,

He set up a monument in his own honor (v. 12).

Even as he disobeyed God's command (vv. 3, 8-9).

Saul didn't obey the Lord and pounced on the plunder and do evil in the eyes of the Lord (v. 19)

And have sinned against God (v. 30).

But he caught hold of the hem of Samuel's robe and asked him,

"But please honor me before the elders of my people and before Israel" (vv. 27, 30).

How ugly is this. Do I want to be exalted by people this much?

Do I want to be exalted by people the more I am exalted by people?

The greed of possession is dangerous.

But it seems like the desire for honor is very dangerous.

But what good is it to have glorious honor in the eyes of people?

What good is it to have glorious resume that a person read during my funeral service

Since I have to go back to dust.

Everything is meaningless and meaningless.

This isn't why God gave His begotten Son Jesus to die on the cross to save me,

Not just waste God's given time for me to live in this earth.

I should remember and meditate this word of Jesus:

"If I glorify myself, my glory means nothing. ..." (Jn. 8:54).

I shouldn't forget to pray like this: "Not to us, O LORD, not to us but to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness." (Ps. 115:1)

**We must spread everywhere
the fragrance of the knowledge of Christ.**

We Christians are the aroma of Christ
Among those who are being saved and those who are perishing.
Therefore, we must spread everywhere
The fragrance of the knowledge of Christ.
(2 Cor. 2:14-15)

Be filled up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions

I pray that
You may be filled with with the knowledge of His will
In all spiritual wisdom and understanding
(Col. 1:9).

I want to obey.
I want to be filled up in my flesh what is lacking in Christ's afflictions
For the sake of the Lord's church
According to God's will (v. 24).

‘The love of Christ’ and ‘The love of God’?

‘The love of Christ’ is ... (Rom. 8:35)

The love that He died on the cross (v. 34)

In order to receive all the punishment of our sins.

It is the love that He rose again (v. 34)

In order to justify us (4:25).

It is the love that the Lord Jesus Christ also interceding for us (8:34).

‘The love of God’ is ... (v. 39)

The love that He didn’t spare His own Son, but gave Him up for us” (v. 32).

‘The love of God’ and ‘The love of Christ’ is the love that saved us.

[After listening to our church retired pastor’s sermon]

A Christ’s letter, My letter

‘You are my letter.

I wrote you in my heart.’

You are a Christ’s letter.

The Spirit of the living God wrote you

On the tablet of my heart.’

(2 Cor. 3:2-3)

The Christian's beauty ...

The Christian's beauty is
To be obedient to the Lord
To the point of death
(Phil. 2:8; Isa. 53:2).

The Christian's grievous evil?

Although we who have already received
Every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ (Eph. 1:3),
If we cannot enjoy the blessing,
Then that is a grievous evil
(Eccl. 5:16, 19; 6:2).

Then you will be delivered

We must rid ourselves of all the idols
And return to the Lord with all our hearts.
We must commit ourselves to Him and serve Him.
Then the Lord will deliver us.
(1 Sam. 7:3)

Although I don't have that much, but what I have ...

What we need now is 200 denarii worth of bread
(a large amount of money equivalent to a worker's 200 days wage),
But we only have 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish.
When we think of it with our own understanding, we can never feed 5,000 men.
But when 2 fish and 5 loaves of bread were in Jesus' hands,
Jesus looked up to heaven and gave thanks
And told His disciples to distribute the loaves of bread and fish to the people.
Then they all ate and were satisfied
And 12 basketfuls of broken pieces of bread and fish were left over
(Mk. 6:30-44).

Although we don't have enough that we think we need it now,
But when we offer by faith whatever we have to the Lord,
Then the Lord will receive it, will give thanks to God
And will perform 2 fish 5 loaves miracle.

He was cursed for us ...

It's God's total grace (Eph. 2:8-10)
That we have received every spiritual blessing (1:3)
And became blessed (Deut. 33:29)
Because Jesus was cursed on the cross for us (Gal. 3:13-14).

(As I was reading Dennis E. Johnson's book "JOURNEYS WITH JESUS:
EVERY PATH IN THE BIBLE LEADS US TO CHRIST")

He who is “in unrelenting pain”

He is “in unrelenting pain” (Job 6:10)

Has agony, pains and sufferings that are “surely outweigh the sand of the seas” (v. 3)

That can’t be placed on the scales (v. 2).

He has lost his appetite so he refuses to touch it;

Such food makes him ill because it is tasteless food for him (vv. 6-7).

He can’t sustain his life anymore because he has no strength

And can’t be patient because he is without hope (v. 11; 7:6).

He has become powerless (6:13) and has suffered a long time,

And nights of misery has been assigned to him (7:3)

And his body is clothed with worms and scabs,

His skin is broken and festering (v. 5).

So his life is but a breath and his eyes will never see happiness again (v. 7).

Therefore he will not keep silent and will speak out in the anguish of his spirit;

He will complain in the bitterness of his soul (v. 11).

He tries to forget his pain even in bed but he suffers from nightmares (v. 13).

So he prefers strangling and death, rather than his body (v. 15).

So he said like this:

“I despise my life; I would not live forever. Let me alone; my days have no meaning” (v. 16).

But even in the meantime “What is man that you (the Lord) make so much of him,

That you (the Lord) give him so much attention” (v. 17).

The Lord never looks away from him (v. 19).

The Lord examines him every morning and tests him every moment (v. 18).

He who is “in unrelenting pain” (Job 6:10) thinks and feels that

The arrow of the Almighty are in him,

So God’s terrors are marshaled against him (v. 4).

He thinks that the Lord is frightening him with dreams

And is terrifying him with visions (7:14).

So he wants God to cut his life and to kill him (6:9).

But he makes an amazing confession:

“Then I would still have this consolation-- my joy in unrelenting pain—
that I had not denied the words of the Holy One” (v. 10).

How can he be comforted and rejoice even “in unrelenting pain”???

It is because “I have not denied the words of the Holy One” (v. 10).

What is God's comfort in the midst of extreme suffering?

God’s comfort that Jesus received on a cross that was like the valley of the shadow of death,

When He was in the midst of extreme suffering,

Which He was being forsaken by His own Father God was

Satisfying Father God by being obedient to His beloved Father

To the point of death on the cross.

(Ps. 22:1; 23:4; Isa. 53:11; Mt. 27:46)

God’s comfort that we can receive (even at the crossroads of life and death) in extreme suffering

Is to satisfy the Lord by obeying Him until death.

In other words, it is our comfort to satisfy the Lord.

May this comfort of God be with you brothers and sisters in Christ

Who are going through extreme suffering.

He should have restrained them.

A father who knows that his children are sinning against God should restrain them.

What was the result? (1 Sam. 3:13; 4:11)

Hasty heart

A foolish Christian is hasty in his heart to utter anything before God,

And he is quick to get angry (Eccle. 5:2; 7:9).

Compassion, devotion, contentment

Looking back this year

I am just grateful for God's "mercy" to such a great sinner like me (1 Tim. 1:13).

God has displayed His unlimited patience to me (v. 16).

When I think about God's great mercy and abundant grace (v. 14) in appointing me to His service (v. 12),

I want to devote myself more to the meditation of the Word of God and sharing it (4:13).

I want to be rich in the Word (6:17)

And be rich in good work that is willing to share my meditation of the Word (v. 18).

As I do so, I pray that I may be able to have contentment (v. 6).

I just want to be content with what I have such as food and clothing

Since I didn't bring anything into the world and I can take nothing out of it (vv. 7-8).

In this New Year

I want to be faithful in His service as I get strengthen from God's mercy.

And I want to devote myself more in meditating in the Word of God by His abundant grace.

And I want to enjoy sharing my meditation of His Word with others.

Most of all, I want be content only with my Lord.

A merciful Christian

"Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy." (Mt. 5:7)

A merciful Christian ...

1. He knows that God has been merciful to him (Ps. 59:17; 1 Pet. 2:10).
He gives thanks to God for His mercy that God blot out his transgression
even though he must be destroy forever because of his sins (Ps. 51:1).
2. He forgives those who have sinned against him (Lk. 17:4).
Since he believes that God has forgiven all of his sins in Jesus Christ,
he also forgives those who have sinned against him.
3. He has compassion on those who are suffering
with the affection of Jesus Christ (Mt. 9:36; 18:33; Phil. 1:8).
He resolutely rejects and hates the sins of those who suffer because of sin
But he is merciful to the sinner. So he helps and serves him with the love of Christ.

(As I was reading the Iain M. Duguid's book "Hero of Heroes")

We are appalled.

When we see or hear
Some things being done in the church,
We are appalled
(Eza. 9:3, 4).

We need to be afraid to receive our prayer answered.

I think we need to be afraid to receive our prayer answered.

In particular, when we pray with greedy and unbelief attitude (Ps. 78:18, 19)

And receive our prayer answered (v. 29),

We must know that it's God's grace, be thankful and repent our sin.

Nevertheless, if we still sin against God and don't believe in God's prayer answers

God will bring our days to an end in futility (vv. 32-33).

So we must be afraid to receive answers to our prayer that was offered in greed and unbelief.

Why is prayer answered?

The reason why we receive from God whatever we ask

Is because we keep His commandments

And do the things that are pleasing in His sight.

(1 Jn. 3:22).

Are we sharing prayer topics?

Under the name of sharing prayer topics

We shouldn't reveal others' secrets.

(Cf.: Prov. 11:13, 20:19)

During prayer I myself get transformed

During prayer

I myself get transformed.

(Acts 10:9-16; 11:4-10).

After prayer

There is a meeting that the Lord leads.

(10:17-23; 11:11-12)

When we obey the Lord's lead by faith

There is amazing work of the Lord in that meeting.

(10:23-48; 11:12-17)

When we start praying ...

How about going to God

As we proclaim who God is

When we start praying?

"Surely this is our God",

"This is the Lord" (Isa. 26:9)

Then what if we wait for God?

"for whom we have waited" (2x) (v. 9)

In the meantime,

What if we rejoice and be glad in His salvation? (v. 9)

How about changing our prayers?

Instead of keep on asking God

To take away my sufferings that I am going through (2 Cor. 12:8),

It may be better to ask God for His good will (Rom. 12:2)

In giving or allowing me to go through sufferings

And trust good God

That He will even use my sufferings for good

To us who love God,

To us who are called according to His purpose (8:28).

The habit of praying

It is very important to have the habit of praying according to God's will

Rather than praying according to my will,

Trusting that God knows what we need.

(Mt. 26:39)

As we pray ...

As we pray, let us not lose heart (Lk. 18:1).

Let us not give up and pray persistently in faith.

After Gideon's death ...

After Judge Gideon's death

The Israelites again played the harlot with the Baals,
Didn't remember the Lord their God,
And didn't show kindness to the household of Gideon
In accord with all the good that he had done to Israel.
(Judg. 8:33-35)

The lesson that the written Word of God gives us ...

The lesson that the written Word of God gives us is
That the Scriptures give us encouragement and hope
So that we may be able to persevere (Rom. 15:4).
The reason is that the God of the Scriptures is
The God of perseverance, the God of encouragement and the God of hope (vv. 5, 13).

Carried out all that was written about Him

Through they found no proper ground for a death,
Jesus died on the cross.
The Bible refers Jesus as
“they had carried out all that was written about him.”
(Acts 13:28-29)

Helper of joy

We work with you for your joy,
Because it is by faith you stand firm.
(2 Cor. 1:24).

We must learn even through long suffering.

Through long suffering
We must not rely on people
But must learn to truly rely on the Lord.
(Isa. 10:20)

Father God who think deeply

Not only God thinks deeply whenever He speaks against us,
Who are dear to Him and delightful children to Him
But also He will surely have mercy on us.
(Jere. 31:20).

"for nothing"?

Isn't it Satan's favorite

To fear God

Due to overflowing possessions?

Shouldn't we fear God "for nothing"? (Job 1:9-10)

Will be assured after recognize

The owner of the home and the church is the Lord.

The Lord rules over our homes and churches.

Our home and church will be assured to us after we recognize this truth.

(Cf.: Dan. 4:26).

I want to be broken by understanding.

I pray that the indwelling Holy Spirit (Rom. 5:5)

Makes us understand the Word of God.

I pray that the Spirit

Pierces my conscience (Acts 2:37) with the sword of the Spirit

That is the Word of God (Eph. 6:17),

Keeps breaking my hardening heart with the Word of God

That is like a hammer (Jere. 23:29),

Continues to melt my cold heart with the Word of god

That is like fire (v. 29).

"keep on the alert"

Jesus said "keep on the alert" four times (Mk. 13:33, 34, 35, 37).

The reason is because we don't know when the appointed time will come (v. 33).

Since we don't know when the Lord is coming,

We must be on the alert (v. 35).

Jesus said "If he comes suddenly,

Do not let him find you sleeping" (v. 36).

I really want to learn

One of the things we need to learn diligently is

The secret of being content.

In any and every circumstance

We have to learn the secret of being content (Phil. 4:11-12).

To do so we must be satisfied with the Lord alone.

Then even when we are rich,

We won't be greedy but content

And can use the abundance given by God's grace

For the glory of the Lord.

Also, when we are in need,

We won't be complaining

But thank the Lord for give us our daily bread.

So we can confess "I can do everything through him who gives me strength" (v. 13).

"false humility"

"false humility",

It is "inflated without cause by his fleshly mind" ...

(Col. 2:18)

Favoritism to the end?

Father Jacob showed favoritism to the end.

He loved Joseph among his twelve sons.

So not only he made a richly ornamented robe for Joseph (Gen. 37:3),

He also gave the portion of the Shechem land

More than his brothers (48:22).

God will bring it to an end

God will bring it to an end to those

Who don't humble their hearts

Even though they know the consequences of arrogant sins,

Who don't glorify God,

Who controls our breath and all of our ways,

But keep on exalting themselves.

(Cf.: Dan. 5:22-23, 26)

The sword should pierce even our own soul ...

The Word of God, the sword of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 6:17)

Should pierce even our own soul

So that the thoughts of our hearts should be revealed

(Lk. 2:35).

I am the letter of Christ

[Short Word Meditation (2)]

James Kim

I should ask myself the right questions!

I should ask myself the right questions:

1. What is the benefit of all my works? (Eccle. 1:3)
2. What does pleasure that I pursue accomplish? (2:2)
3. What do I gain by being wise? (v. 15)
4. What do I get for all the toil and anxious striving with which I labor? (v. 22)
5. Am I now striving for the things that will endure forever (3:14) with “eternity” in my heart? (v. 11)
6. Am I enjoying my work? (v. 22)

We shouldn't sell ourselves.

We shouldn't sell ourselves to greed and craving (1 Kgs. 21:20, 25).

We cannot afford ourselves.

We should understand deeply

That we cannot afford ourselves (Cf.: Lev. 14:32),

So that we can completely depend on God

As we feel completely helpless.

As a result, we have no choice but to confess:

“I love you, O Lord, my strength” (Ps. 18:1).

I myself think that I am very weak person ...

Why did God tell Gideon who was “the weakest” and “the least”

To “Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian’s hand”? (Judg. 6:14-15)

Why does the Lord telling a person who thinks that he is the weakest

To go and do the Lord’s work in his strength?

The reason why the Lord is telling us to to go and do the Lord’s work in our work is

Because maybe the Lord’s word “The Lord is with you, mighty warrior” is that strength? (v. 12)

‘I can’t forgive you until I die’?

Some people say, ‘I can’t forgive you until I die’,

But they must forgive before they die (Cf.: Lk. 23:34)

What if I run away just for me to live?

Some of us may attempt to run away in despair

When we cannot see any sign for us to escape a crisis

Even though we try and try so many times

And that crisis gets longer and longer.

But if we try to run away for us to live

Instead of being together with our community,

Then God may not fulfill His will

To save the whole community.

(Acts 27:9, 18, 20, 30-31)

They shouldn't be divided.

The parents shouldn't be divided in loving their children.

When Rebekah was pregnant,

The children struggled together within her (Gen. 25:21-22).

Then she said, "If it is so, why then am I this way?"

"So she went to inquire of the Lord" (v. 22)

The Lord said to her, "Two nations are in your womb;

And two peoples will be separated from your body ..." (v. 23).

But I think what God said "two people will be separated"

Can be applied to Rebekah and her husband Isaac

As their children Esau and Jacob born and were growing up:

"Now Isaac loved Esau, because he had a taste for game, but Rebekah loved Jacob" (v. 28).

Am I honorable in front of them?

Paul didn't refuse to die if he was a wrongdoer

And had committed anything worthy of death (Acts 25:11).

He had committed no offense (v. 8).

He had done no wrong to the Jews (v. 10),

Who had come down from Jerusalem and brought serious charges against him (v. 7).

Even if people sue me because they hate me and are hostile toward me,

If I haven't committed any injustice or sin to them,

Then in addition to my conscience, I will be honorable in front of them.

As “a letter of Christ” ...

How I am being read as “a letter of Christ”

To those who know me? (2 Cor. 3:3)

'I am not the person you think and expect.'

We must be free in the Lord.

Instead of hiding, we should reveal ourselves and said,

‘I am not the person you think and expect’ (Jn. 1:20).

We don’t have to live up to the wrong expectations of the people around us.

We only have to live as the Lord expects from us.

I want to walk on the water.

If the Lord calls me "Come", I want to walk on the water.

I want to obey the Lord's calling and first ‘get out of the boat’ by faith.

The reason is because I believe that

It is better to walk on the water where the Lord is standing

Than staying inside the boat comfortably without the Lord.

Even though I know that I will sink because I will become frightened by seeing the wind,

I still want to obey His calling and get out of the boat and walk on the water.

The reason is because I believe that if I cry out to the Lord “Lord, save me!”

Then the Lord will immediately stretch out His hand and will hold of me and will save me.

I no longer want to stay inside the boat without the Lord,

I rather walk on the water where the Lord is. (Mt. 14:24-32)

Which one am I fixing my eyes on?

Although with my physical eyes I fix on what is seen that is temporary,
With my eyes of faith, I fix on what is unseen that is eternal (2 Cor. 4:18).

We must fear God's silence.

We must no longer be bold in committing sins against God without any hesitation in our conscience
Because the sentence against an evil deed is not executed quickly (Eccle. 8:11).
The reason is because God will surely rebuke us in His time
And He will certainly accuse us to our face.
We must fear God's silence. (Ps. 50:21)

I want to confess like this before I die.

Like Joshua, before I die
I sincerely want to confess
To my beloved family and church members like this (Josh. 23:14):
'I know with all my heart and soul
That not one of all the good promises the Lord my God gave me has failed -
The promise to me, John 6:1-14
And the promise to the church, Matthew 16:18.

God who is for me

How much God will give or allow me all these things for me (1 Sam. 22:3) ...

As I think about these people in the Bible such as,

David who was running away from King Saul who was trying to kill him,

Jonah who disobeyed God's command,

Naomi who tasted the bitterness of her life,

Hannah who was bitter in spirit,

Gideon who was afraid, and etc,

This Bible verse came into my mind as a conclusion:

“He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all,
how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?” (Rom. 8:32)

Can I value someone who wants to harm me?

May the reason why I don't harm him

Even though I had opportunities to so is

Because not only that God forbids it, but also I value him ...? (1 Sam. 24:10)

The changes of people's thoughts toward me ...

When the islanders of Malta thought that Paul was “a murderer”

And then thought that he was “a god” (Acts 28:1, 4, 6)

I think the change of people's thoughts toward me aren't that important.

God who saved Naaman

Through Naaman, God had given victory to Aram (2 Kgs. 5:1).

As a result, Naaman became a great man in the sight of his master,
the king of Aram, and highly regarded (v. 1). But he had leprosy (v. 1).

“Now bands from Aram had gone out and had taken captive a young girl from Israel,
and she served Naaman's wife” (v. 2).

God used her to tell her master Naaman's wife

“If only my master would see the prophet who is in Samaria!
He would cure him of his leprosy” (v. 3).

As a result, Naaman went to Prophet Elisha (v. 9).

However, unlike what Naaman thought that Prophet Elisha would do for him (vv. 11-12)
Prophet Elisha sent a messenger and told Naaman,
“Go, wash yourself seven times in the Jordan,
and your flesh will be restored and you will be cleansed” (v. 10).

However, Naaman eventually obeyed what “the man of God had told him”,
And his flesh was restored and became clean like that of a young boy (v. 14).

As a result, Naaman knew that “there is no God in all the world except in Israel” (v. 15).
And he determined that he would never again make burnt offerings
and sacrifices to any other god but the Lord (v. 17).

God saved Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Aram.

God who made Naaman to save Aram saved not only Naaman's leprosy but also his soul.

[God who saved the Gentile Naaman in the Old Testament saved the Gentile Cornelius in the New Testament (Acts 10)].

How can I forgive a family member who has harmed me?

Although my instinct is to repay another with evil for evil
How come the Bible says to always seek after that which is good
For another and for all people (1 Thess. 5:15),
Including those who harm me for my sake?

How can we overcome evil with good? (Rom. 12:21)
How can we forgive those evil people?
How can we seek after that which is good for them? (1 Thess. 5:15)
How can this be possible?

Joseph in the Bible did so.
Not only did he sincerely forgive his older brothers who hated him and even tried to kill him,
He also comforted them and spoke kindly to them, took care of them and their children,
And he died at the age of 110 (Gen. 50:21, 26).
How was this possible?
It was because Joseph tasted God's goodness (Ps. 34:8)
That he was able to do good to his brothers (Eph. 2:10).
In other words, because Joseph understood the God's good will in which
Even though his older brothers meant evil against him, but God meant it for good
In order to bring about this result of preserving many people alive (Gen. 50:2),
That was why he was able to sincerely forgive his older brothers
And comforted them and spoke kindly to them and took care of them and their children.

Only when the Lord gives us understanding and faith to believe and know
That God intends it for good to accomplish His saving will
Even when those evil people intend to harm us,
Then we can forgive those who harm us and even who try to harm us,
Comfort them, take care of them and do good to them.
Let us long for this great grace of God.

My arrogance is ...

My arrogance is not listening to an advice of the mature believers who love me
And is hating their rebukes.
Furthermore, my arrogance is even hating them who have rebuked me.

The wise man not only loves them who rebuke him in love
But he also gets instruction and become wiser
(Prov. 9:8-9).

"the day of my distress"

May "the day of my distress" become "the day when I call" (Ps. 102:2).

If I know that I am what I am because of God's grace ...

If we are Christians who know that I am what I am because of God's grace,
Then we must labor for the Lord and His church.
We must labor even more than those who don't understand His grace.
If we don't labor and just say 'It is God's grace'
Then we are proving that God's grace toward us is vain
(1 Cor. 15:10).

The reason my discouragement turns into my hope ...

Affliction ... (Song 3:19)

Makes peace to go away from our hearts (v. 17).

Sometimes our affliction cut off our strengthen and hope (v. 18).

Surely our hearts can get downcast when we remember our afflictions (v. 20).

But how can we have hope when we recall to our mind? (v. 21)

How can our afflictions that cut off peace, strengthen and hope in our hearts

Be our hope when we call to our mind?

If we just look at our afflictions, they cannot be our hope.

But when we look at our God who gives or allows us the afflictions,

Then they can be turned to hope.

Our downcast can be turned to hope

When we understand that the Lord's great love and His great faithfulness toward us (vv. 22, 23)

In the midst of holy and just God disciplining us faithfully due to our unrepented sins.

My word and my works

My word should be upright and all my works should be done in faithfulness (Cf.: Ps. 33:4).

Will He not grant me my every desire?

Will the Lord, who gave me His promise Word, arrange and secure in every part

And "Will he not bring to fruition my salvation and grant me my every desire?" (2 Sam. 23:5)

My foolishness is ...

My foolishness is

Not knowing and disregarding

The future bitter consequence of my present wrong choice. (Prov. 5:3-5)

My foolishness is ...

My foolishness is

Not knowing my path is crooked. (Prov. 5:6)

Our foolishness is ...

Our foolishness is

Not keeping to a path far from opposite sex but getting close to her/him

Even though we know our weakness in fighting sexual temptation. (Prov. 5:8)

My foolishness is ...

My foolishness is

Regretting about experiencing the bitter results

Due to not listening and hating his discipline and correction at that time
(Prov. 5:11-14).

My faith

When I see my faith
I have nothing to say because it is terrible.

My prayer and expectation is
That my faith toward God becomes known to many people around me
So that they don't need to say anything about it. (1 Thess. 1:8)

The driving force of my life

The driving force of my life is only the love of Christ.
Since the love of Christ compels me (2 Cor. 5:14),
No matter what adversity and suffering, I no longer live for me
But for Jesus who died on the cross for me (Gal. 2:20).
Since the love of Christ, the driving force of my life, works powerfully in me,
I must be able to fulfill my mission and ministry faithfully and sacrificially
By the irresistible power and grace of God.
With attitude of have debt of love, I must fulfill it faithfully (Rom. 13:8).
That mission and ministry is to reconcile others to Him (2 Cor. 5:18)..
I must bear the responsibility of the ministry of reconciliation between my neighbors (v.18).
Also, as I look each soul in God's perspective,
I must reconcile each one of them who is created in God's image with God
Through the gospel of Christ.
This is the purpose of my life.

[Meditation of the Word of God given to us during the Word Revival in 2016]

What is my cross?

Maybe the cross that we have to bear is
The difficulties of our families and our lives
Due to loving the Lord
More than loving our families and our lives
(Lk. 14:26-27).

My foolishness is ...

My foolishness is
Making my heart and my ears close
So that I won't listen to God's word saying
"let him turn in here",
"proceed in the way of understanding"
(Prov. 9:4, 5, 16).

My weeping ...

My weeping
Can break
The other person's heart.
(Acts 21:13)

My death ...

Our death must reveal the glory of God (Jn. 11:4).

In addition, we must face death

That is beneficial to our family, relatives, church members and neighbors (vv. 50-52).

When they see my death?

Will there be people

Who may say 'Truly this man was the man of God!'

When they see my death?

(Mk. 15:39; 2 Kgs. 4:9)

My delight, my counselors

The Word of God is "my counselors" (Ps. 119:24).

God rebukes me when I am proud due to His Word

And when I am wander from His commandments (v. 21).

God makes me to treasure in my heart so that I may not sin against Him (v. 11).

The Word of God is "my delight" (v. 24).

God opens my eyes so that I may behold Wonderful things from God's law (v. 18).

That Wonderful things are that God faithfully fulfills His promises to me

So that I may taste God's goodness (v. 17).

Therefore, even when people slander me,

I meditate the Word of the Lord (v. 23).

“I am responsible”

David

Knew that he was responsible
For the death of the priest Ahimelech,
Who was anointed by God (1 Sam. 22:22).

Shouldn't we

Know that the Lord's servant is suffering
And “I am responsible” for it?

Shouldn't pastors

Know that the church members are suffering
And “I am responsible” for it?

"O my God, do not take me away in the midst of my days"

“For my days have been consumed in smoke ...” (Ps. 102:3),

“My days are like a lengthened shadow ...” (v. 11),

Even though God “has shortened my days” (v. 23),

I pray to God like this:

““O my God, do not take me away in the midst of my days,

Your years are throughout all generations” (v. 24).

It is better to be loved afterward.

Rather than flattering that person to be loved now
It's better to rebuke him and be loved afterward
(Prov. 28:23).

Discouragement, longing, hope!

When we are discouraged, let us long for our God and put our hope in Him (Ps. 43:2, 5, 11).

When I am in despair and disturbed in me ...

The reason why I am in despair and disturbed within me
Is because I think that God seems to have forgotten me and forsaken me
When my soul pants for Him and thirst for God.

At that time, I must go to God in prayer, proclaiming to my soul like this:

‘James,
Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me?
Hope in God,
For I shall again praise Him
For the help of His presence.’
(Ps. Chs. 42, 43).

We think that we are holier than others ...

Although we are continually provoking God to His face
By walking in the way which is not good, following our own thoughts,
We say like this to the people around us:
'Do not come near me,
For I am holier than you!'
(Isa. 65:2, 3, 5)

Why blame others?

We blame others to hide our own sins from the truth (Gen. 3:12-13).

We shouldn't take another's spouse.

We shouldn't covet our neighbor's possessions (Exod. 20:17).
If we take our neighbor's spouse to be our wife,
Then it is despising God, His Word
And doing evil in His sight.
(2 Sam. 12:9-10).

“his neighbor’s wife”

Do not desire your neighbor’s wife in your heart,
Do not go in to your neighbor’s wife,
And do not even touch her.
(Prov. 6:25, 29)

About 5,000 men

Jesus fed about 5,000 men
With five loaves and two fish (Lk. 9:13-14).

When Jesus’ apostles taught the people and proclaimed
The Jesus’ resurrection from the dead,
Those who had heard the message believed
And the number of the men came to be about 5,000
(Acts 4:1-4).

Husband/father’s responsibility

We the husbands shouldn’t be harsh with our wives.
We the fathers shouldn’t embitter our children.
(Col. 3:19, 21).

A woman not loved by her husband

Leah with weak eyes (Gen. 29:17) who was unloved by her husband Jacob (vv. 31, 33)
Was a woman with affliction (v. 32).
But God saw her unloved by Jacob and opened her womb
And gave her children as gifts (vv. 31-35).

God, who sees a woman unloved by her husband, sees her affliction (v. 32).
God gives heed to her, and endows her with a good gift (v. 20).

A wife not loved by her husband ...

Although Leah, who was unloved by her husband Jacob (Gen. 29:31),
Was buried in the cave that was in the field of Machpelah, which was before Mamre,
Rachael, who was loved by Jacob (29:18, 30),
Was buried on the way to Ephrah (that was, Bethlehem) (35:16-20).

Not ‘lower’ but ‘better’

The reason why we look others ‘lower’ than us is because our hearts are proud.
Those who are humble in heart regard others ‘better’ than themselves.
(Phil. 2:3)

I was lowered.

I was lowered because of my sin (Ps. 106:43).

My sin is being rebellious in my counsel (vv. 33, 43).

I mingled with the worldly people and learned their practices

And served their idols (vv. 35-36).

Therefore, I became unclean in my practices and played the harlot of their deeds (v. 39).

As a result,

I provoked Him to anger with my deeds and He disciplined me (vv. 29, 40).

And as a result of that discipline, I was lowered (v. 43).

God who states the case in order

God will reprove us.

God will state the case in order before our eyes (Ps. 50:21).

My stubbornness and unrepentant heart

Although God is leading me to repentance in His kindness,

I don't even realize it

And still committing sins against Him,

Not knowing that the kindness of God leads me to repentance ...

(Rom. 2:4)

I think there is only speck in my eyes.

Even though Jesus says “Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother’s eye,
But do not notice the log that is in your eye?” (Mt. 7:3)
We look at the log that is in our brother’s eyes
And think that there is only speck in our eyes.

When my will conflicts with the will of God ...

When my will conflicts with the will of God
I must submit myself to God’s will
And willingly be obedient to His will
By “praying very fervently” like Jesus did.
(Lk. 22:44)

“When my anxious thoughts multiply within me”

“When my anxious thoughts multiply within me” (Ps. 94:19)
The Lord didn’t abandon me nor forsake me (v. 14).
Rather, He helped me (v. 17).
When I said “My foot has slipped”,
His lovingkindness held me up (v. 18).
Eventually,
The Lord’s consolations delighted my soul (v. 19).

The evidence that my heart and conscience is defiled?

The evidence that my heart and conscience is defiled is that
I profess to know God
But by my deeds I am denying Him
(Tit. 1:15-16).

Sorrow and sadness that is good for my heart?

Let sorrow and sadness be good for my heart (Eccle. 7:3).
Sorrow and sadness that comes from keeping my end (death) in mind
Can be good for me (v. 2).

When sorrow in my heart lasts too long?

When sorrow in my heart lasts too long
Because I feel like the Lord has forgotten me forever and has hidden His face from me,
I have trusted in His lovingkindness
And my heart shall rejoice in His salvation.
(Ps. 13:1, 2, 5)

My heart's selfishness ...

My heart's selfishness causes my heart to turn toward worthless things (Ps. 119:36, 37).

When my heart is proud ...

When my heart is proud and my eyes are haughty

Then I will try myself with great matters or things to wonder for me (Ps. 131:1).

I must be very alert that my heart doesn't get hardened.

I must be very alert that my heart doesn't get hardened (Exod. 10:1, 20, etc.).

If God give me over, then my heart will certainly get hardened (Rom. 1:24, 26, 28).

My responsibility to be diligent is

To let the word of God that is like fire and a hammer (Jere. 23:29)

To melt and to break my heart.

I must continue to let the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God (Eph. 6:17)

To pierce my conscience (1 Sam. 24:5. 10; Acts 2:37).

Like this, I must break up my heart that is like "my fallow ground" (Hos. 10:12).

May the Spirit of God grant me "a new heart", obedient heart

By removing "the heart of stone" every day and every moment (Ezek. 36:26).

**I shouldn't rely on my own understanding,
I must trust in the Lord with all my heart.**

It was probably in 1989.

When I received discipleship training by a pastor for first time,

I learned that Proverbs 3:5-6 is the verse of assurance of guidance:

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding.

In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight.”

About 25 years later,

I mediated on this Bible verse again

And I learned that the biggest obstacle in trusting God with all my heart is

Leaning on my own understanding.

My instinct is to lean on my own understanding rather than trusting in the Lord.

But the Bible tells me to overcome my instinct

And trust in the Lord with all my heart.

How can I obey this word of God?

In particular, I acknowledge that

There certainly is great danger of being wise in my own eyes

By living according to my instinct that is to lean on my own understanding (v. 7).

I don't want to fall in this danger.

The reason is because if I am wise in my own eyes

Then not only that I will not trust in the Lord with all my heart

But also I cannot do so.

This is not a life of fearing God but doing evil (v. 7).

What a foolish life that is.

I won't lean on my own understanding.

I am thankfully accepting the things that don't happen

According to thought and plan and in my way and in my time.

The reason is because more I to that, the more I can rely on the Lord.

I hope and pray that I may trust in the Lord who fulfill His will in His time and in His way.

Who is the basis for my beliefs?

If the basis for our belief is our difficult situation
And ourselves who feel incompetent,
Then we can only say to the Lord,
'Lord, I can't do it.'

But if the basis for our belief is the promise word of God
And our Almighty God.
Then we can only say to the Lord,
'Lord, the Lord can do it through me.'

[As I meditate the 2 fish and 5 loaves miracle story in the four gospels]

The result of my unbelief choice?

Although it seems to me that
The path that I have chosen by leaning on my own understanding
Instead of trust in God with all my heart (Prov. 3:5-6)
May seems good to me,
In the end, the time will come for me to realize
How wrong the result of my unbelief choice is.
But the surprising thing in the midst of that is
God is merciful to me and gives me great grace.
(Cf.: the Book of Ruth).

I need to let them know my circumstances.

I need to encourage them
By letting them know my circumstances
(Col. 4:8).

God who knows my situation best

If someone who knows my situation best
He should think of me and show me grace.
But he didn't remember me,
But forgot me. (Gen. 40:14, 23)
Although I could have been very discouraged,
I put my trust and hope in God
Who knows my situation best.

After 2 years
God made the person who knew my situation
To remember my situation through some occasion.
So he granted my request (41:9-13).

As a result,
God not only delivered me
But He also exalted me (vv. 37-43).

The Word of God than my thought

We should be careful not to get angry
Because our pastor is not doing
As we thought
And as we expected.

The important things is
Not my thought but the Word of God
And my attitude in trying to obey His Word by faith
(Cf.: 2 Kgs. 5:10-11).

Some evidences that my faith is growing?

1. The closer I get to my holy God,
The more I become aware of my sins and how great sinner I am
(1 Tim. 1:15).
2. I have not choice but to admit
That I can only rely on the merit of Jesus Christ on the cross
(Gal. 1:4, 6:14).
3. I have deeper and greater understanding
That I am what I am because of God's grace
(Rom. 5:20; 1 Cor. 15:10).
4. I labor harder on the Lord's work with the power of grace
(1 Cor. 15:10).

The Pharisee in me

The Pharisee in me peeps

Not only whether that person is doing the thing that is not lawful on the Sabbath

But also whether he is sinning on the Sabbath.

But the Lord is the Lord of the Sabbath (Lk. 6:2, 5, 7).

This hope I have as an anchor of my soul

God who gave me His word of promise interposed with an oath

In order to show to me the promise of the unchangeableness of His purpose.

And God gave strong encouragement to me

So that I can take hold of the hope set before me who has taken refuge in Him.

This hope I have as an anchor of my soul

Is a hope both sure and steadfast (Heb. 6:17-19).

God sent a wasting disease among us.

Although God gave us our request in our intense craving

He sent a wasting disease among us (Ps. 106:14-15).

The reason is because

We forgot God our Savior (v. 21)

And we quickly forgot His great work of salvation (v. 13).

And because we didn't wait for His counsel (v. 13) and tempted God (v. 14)

God sent the wasting disease among us (v. 15).

When my soul fainted within me ...

When my soul fainted within me, I cried out to the Lord in my trouble (Ps. 107:5-6).
He humbled my heart with labor (v. 12) because I rebelled against the words of God (v. 11)
And because of my rebellious way and because of my iniquities (v. 17).
When there was none to help me (v. 12),
I cried out to the Lord in my trouble and my distresses (vv. 13, 19, 28).
Then God sent His word and healed me (v. 20), saved me out of my distresses (vv. 6, 13, 19, 20),
Brought me out of darkness and the shadow of death (vv. 14, 28),
led me also by a straight way (v. 7) And caused the storm to be still (v. 29).
God has satisfied the thirsty soul and has filled the hungry soul with what is good (v. 9).
Therefore, I will give thanks to the Lord
For His lovingkindness and for His wonders to me (vv. 8, 15, 21, 31).

I should focus on ‘God’s sufficient grace’ rather than ‘my thorn in the flesh’.

Although I have asked God to remove ‘my thorn in the flesh’ for countless years,
God says to me, “My grace is sufficient for you.”
Although I wanted ‘my thorn in the flesh’ to be removed,
The purpose that God have given it to me is to keep me from exalting myself.
If I hadn’t had the thorn in the flesh, how much more self-exalting I would be?
Starting from now, I want to focus on God’s sufficient grace
That He gives me in the thorn of my flesh
Rather than focusing on ‘my thorn in the flesh’.
And I want to enjoy humbly God’s sufficient grace.
I want to experience God’s power even more
By boasting about my weaknesses. (2 Cor. 12:7-9)

I want to live up to my name.

"Those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven,
and those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever." (Dan. 12:3).

This Bible verse is a word of God that means a lot to me.

The reason is because when my father gave me a Korean name when I was born is "Jee Woun"

And the meaning is 'The best (or number one) in wisdom.'

But when I meditated this Bible verse before,

I used to focus on "those who lead the many to righteousness."

However, as I was exercising a little while ago

And was memorizing Isaiah 58:10 for the church Memory Time

I got a new insight.

That new insight was

I must live my life in shining the light of Jesus

By giving myself to the hungry and

By satisfying the desire of the afflicted.

If I summarize my life in two words ...

When I look back on my life

I think I can summarize it in two words:

"Eliezer" and "Ebenezer":

"my God is help" ["Eliezer" (Exod. 18:4)]

'Thus far the Lord has helped me' ["Ebenezer" (1 Sam. 7:12)].

I need to know my place in life well.

I am not aware of the fact that I am not following my own standard
Even though I am judging others and even criticizing them by the same standard.
What is that?
Maybe the reason is because
I am not looking at myself humbly and diligently with the absolute truth of God.
As a result,
Since my heart is proud and I don't know my place
I judge and criticize others based on my own standard.
(Cf.: Rom. 2:1).

What is more important than my conviction?

An upright believer thinks based on the Word of God
Obeys His Word by not doing it if God forbids it
Even though he sees God's works in his own life
And has conviction that it is God's work,
And the faithful beloved people around him say to him
'This is God's given opportunity'.

The Word of God is more important than
My own conviction or what people say.
(Cf. 1 Sam. 24:4-7, 26:10-12)

When I think I'm trapped ...

When I think I'm trapped God receives His glory

By manifesting His power of salvation through judgment. (Exod. 14:3-4, 15-31)

When I called upon the Lord from my distress ...

When I called upon the Lord from my distress

The Lord answered me and set me in a large place (Ps. 118:5).

He set me free from fear (v. 6), from loneliness (v. 7) and from relying on men (vv. 8, 9).

The reason we are proud ...

The reason we are proud is not only because we don't diligently teach ourselves with the word of God

But rather we love to teach others without obeying His word. (Rom. 2:21)

Affliction and comfort that I've received ...

Affliction and comfort that I've received is for someone to be comforted and to receive salvation.

(2 Cor. 1:6).

God's hand is heavy ...

Although "my complaint is bitter" due to "his hand is heavy in spite of my groaning" (Job 23:2),

How about taking this as an opportunity to cry out to God for help (30:24) and

To fear God and "not do such things" anymore? (31:23)

When I think I'm suffering now ...

What should I do when I think I'm suffering now because of my sins?

I want to receive some lessons from Psalms 143 again.

David's spirit was overwhelmed within him and his heart was appalled within him (v. 4)

When the enemy was persecuting his soul (v. 3).

God had crushed his life (v. 3) and he lost hope and was in deep despair (v. 4).

At that time, he stretched out his hands to God and his soul longed for Him (v. 6).

In other words, David cried out to God in his prayer (v. 1).

How did he pray to God?

He remembered the days of long ago and meditated on all God's works

And considered what His hands had done (v. 5).

He made a small noise, repeatedly asking the Lord

To speak of all the things the Lord had done in his life in the past ["meditate" (v. 5)].

And because he trusted the Lord, he cried out to God,

"Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love" (v.8).

David wanted to hear the word of the Lord's love every morning (v. 8).

As he lifted up his soul to God, he prayed "Show me the way" (v. 8).

As he went to God for His protection, he prayed for God to rescue him from his enemies (v. 9).

He asked God to preserve his life for His name's sake and

To bring him out of trouble in His righteousness (v. 11).

As he did so, David prayed for God to silence his enemies in His unfailing love

And to destroy all his foes since he was the servant of the Lord (v. 12).

And surprisingly, David confessed "you are my God"

And prayed "Teach me to do your will" in the midst of that (v. 10).

He cried out to God "may your good Spirit lead me on level ground" (v. 10).

When my plan didn't go as I intended ...

When my plan didn't go as I intended and what I have purposed didn't stand,
I must ponder and meditate this word of God:
"The LORD Almighty has sworn, "Surely, as I have planned,
so it will be, and as I have purposed, so it will stand." (Isa. 14:24)

Few evidences that I am living a wrong Christian life ...

1. I am becoming (or seems to be) increasingly insensitive to sin (Eph. 4:19).
I don't regard sin as sin (Rom. 5:13).
2. I am becoming more and more tied to the sense of merit (Lk. 18:11-12).
I think about what I am doing for the Lord and His church
Rather than what the Lord is doing for me (Mt. 25:44).
3. I am becoming more and more proud (Prov. 21:4; Ezek. 28:5).
I like to reveal my own glory rather than the glory of God (Jn. 12:43).

Even through my writing ...

I shouldn't reveal my hate and lose my temper
Toward people were created in God's image
Not only through my words and actions but also even through my writing.
(Cf. Prov. 29:11)

When I was brought low ...

When I was brought low (Ps. 116:6),
When I am greatly afflicted (v. 10),
When I found distress and sorrow (v. 3),
Then I called upon the name of the Lord,
“O Lord, I beseech You, save my life!” (v. 4)

God, who is gracious and righteous and compassionate (v. 5),
Inclines His ear to me (v. 2) and hears my voice and supplications (v. 1)
And protects me and rescues my soul from death (v. 8) and saves me (v. 6).
Also, He rescues my eyes from tears and my feet from stumbling (v. 8).
As a result, my soul has returned to my rest (v. 7) by God’s grace.

Therefore,
I love the Lord (v. 1),
I shall call upon Him as long as I live (v. 2),
I shall walk before the Lord in the land of living (v. 9).

When we are in the pit of our lives

When we are in the pit of our lives,
From then on, the Lord exalts us gradually (Gen. ch. 39).

“I will call on him as long as I live”

In the midst of the life and death crisis, When I was in trouble and sorrow (Ps. 116:3, 8, 10),
When I was in great need (v. 6), When there were tears in my eyes, when my feet were stumbling (v. 8),
I called on the name of the Lord: “O Lord, save me!” (v. 4)
Then the Lord heard my voice and my cry for mercy (v. 1) and He saved me (v. 6).
The Lord delivered my soul from death, My eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling (v. 8).
Also, the Lord gave me rest and He had been good to me (v. 7).
Therefore, I love the Lord (v. 1). I call on Him as long as I live (v. 2).
I proclaim who God is: “The Lord is gracious and righteous; our God is full of compassion” (v. 5).
I will walk before the Lord in the land of living (v. 9).
I believed, now I am believing, and I will continually believe the Lord (v. 10).
I want to repay the Lord for all His goodness to me (v. 12).
I want to call on the name of the Lord with thanksgiving (vv. 13, 17).
I commit myself in fulfilling my vows to the Lord (vv. 14, 18).
And I want to have precious death in the sight of the Lord (v. 15).

‘Am I in the place of God?’

Jacob said to his wife Rachel, “Am I in the place of God ...?” (Gen. 30:2),
Jacob’s son Joseph said to his older brothers, “am I in God’s place?” (50:19).

Great sorrow and grief that I desperately need

My heart needs great sorrow and unceasing grief (Rom. 9:1).
I hope I can wish that I myself is accursed, separated from Christ (v. 3),
My prayers to God is for the salvation of my beloved ones (10:1).

Is there “The Lord Will Provide” in my life?

I received three lessons from Genesis 22:1-14:

1. I must obey God.
 - a. It is good to obey immediately.
 - b. I must obey God’s command by faith even though I don’t understand His commands.
 - c. I must remove wisely all the elements that interfere in obeying His commands.
 - d. Trust that there are blessings that God has prepared at the end of obedience.
 - e. Like this, obeying God is connected to “The Lord Will Provide”.
2. I must pass God’s test.
 - a. Although the purpose of Satan’s temptation is to destroy me,
the purpose of God’s test is for my own good.
 - b. The reason why there is the test of faith is for God to test the level of my faith.
 - c. I must overcome the trial of faith by faith and pass His test.
 - d. When I pass God’s test by obedience,
there is blessing of “The Lord Will Provide” at the end of the test.
 - e. Like this, God’s test is connected to “The Lord Will Provide”.
3. I must fear God.
 - a. Fearing God means living a God-centered and God-first life.
 - b. I must love God more who gave the gift of children
rather than loving the gift that is the children.
 - c. It is my confession that I love God more than my children
by immediately obeying God’s command and offering them to God by faith.
 - d. Like this, fearing God is connected to “The Lord Will Provide”.

We must serve with generous heart.

In order for the Lord's church to stand firm,
We must give up our own rights.
For the whole church's sake, in order to take care our church members,
Whatever right that we have and have enjoyed,
We should be able to transfer and to give up.
And we should serve one another as we imitate Jesus' humble mind (Phil. 2:5-8).
We must serve with generous heart (4:5).

When we face with such a great difficulty ...

When we face with such a great difficulty
Not only do we not have ability to handle it but we may not know what to do.
At that time, we should look only to the Lord.
And we must trust Him (2 Chron. 20:12, 20).

"glorify God in your body"

The Bible says, "glorify God in your body" (1 Cor. 6:20).
The reason is because our body is not our own, but we have been bought with a price.
The reason is because our body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in us, whom we have from God (vv. 19-20).
Therefore, we must flee immorality (v. 18).
This is because our body is not for immorality, but for the Lord (v. 13).
This is because our bodies are members of Christ and not the members of a prostitute (v. 15).

"Be careful"

If we don't be careful

Then we will be enticed to turn away and worship other gods and bow down to them.

Then the Lord's anger will burn against us,

And we will soon perish from the good land the Lord is giving us.

(Deut. 11:16-17)

"You do not want to leave too, do you?"

"From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him. You do not want to leave too, do you?" Jesus asked the Twelve. Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God." (Jn. 6:66-69)

1. When many of the disciples left Jesus and no longer followed Him,
I wonder how was Jesus' heart?
2. When Jesus said to His 12 disciples "You do not want to leave too, do you?",
I wonder how was Jesus' heart?
3. When we meditate on Peter's reply "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life",
I want to ask a question, 'Are you looking for a new church because of the Lord's Word of eternal life or because of fellowship with your brothers and sisters in Christ?'

"Peace be with you!"

When we close the door of our hearts
Because we are afraid of people,
And be alone by cutting off all the channels with those people,
The Lord comes near to us and speaks to us saying,
"Peace be with you!"
(Jn. 20:19, 21)

A wide door of service but a lot of adversity?

Although the Lord opened the door of effective service for us
If we go through that wide door
There will be many adversities
Due to many people who oppose us.
(1 Cor. 16:9).

Sometimes we fall ...

Although sometimes we fall we will not be hurled headlong
Because the Lord is the One who holds our hands (Ps. 37:17, 24).
Even though we fall seven times, we rise again (Prov. 24:16).
The reason is because God raises us up again.

We must express the overflowing love in our hearts

We need to let our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ know
That we have the overflowing love in our hearts.
One of the ways is to express our much affliction and anguish of our hearts
Through writings with many tears. (2 Cor. 2:4)

Because there is overflowing love ...

The reason why I have many tears
In much affliction and anguish of heart is
Because “the love which I have especially for you.” (2 Cor. 2:4)

Abundant grace, abundant good deed?

We must have an abundance for every good deed
With all grace abound to us.
(2 Cor. 9:8)

The more it overflows ...

The more the hardships overflow
The more comfort overflows as well.
(2 Cor. 1:5)

**'Although your end increased greatly,
But your later end should be decreased more greatly.'**

The reason why we like Job 8:7 –

“Though your beginning was insignificant, Yet your end will increase greatly”

Is because this word of God gives us hope.

For example, when a restaurant owner opens a restaurant

He holds onto that Bible verse and prays to God

Because I am sure he is hoping and longing

For the Lord to bless his restaurant business to be successful later

Even though the beginning of the business is insignificant.

But the problem is after the business has grown greatly.

In other words, big problem is that

The business owner doesn't have clear biblical purpose

Why the business should grow greatly.

Therefore, there is danger that the business owner may become proud and greedy.

At that time, I think, even though his end increased greatly,

his later end should be decreased more greatly.'

Only then he will look upon and rely on Almighty and powerful God.

“How languishing is your heart”

As Father God looks at us, His children,

He says, “How languishing is your heart” (Ezek. 16:30).

The reason is because Father God knows

That we are committing sins because we are weak.

What kinds of sins are we committing against God now?

A hot-tempered man and one easily angered

The Bible says,

“Do not make friends with a hot-tempered man,
do not associate with one easily angered”
(Prov. 22:24).

The reason is because

We may learn his ways and get ourselves ensnared (v. 25).

But what if that hot-tempered person and one easily angered
Is our spouses and our parents?
What should we do?

Who is better?

A poor man, who has discernment, who sees through him is better than
A rich man who is wise in his own eyes (Prov. 28:11).

Who is more?

Although the number of true disciples should be increasing (Acts 6:1, 7),
It seems like the number of carnal church members
Who is almost like unbelievers is increasing (Rom. 8:5, 8).

Who did more offering?

Regarding who did more offering,

It seems to us that a rich Christian who gave their offering out of their wealth.

But in God's perspective,

Those who gave all they have to live on in their poverty did more offering. (Lk. 21:1-4)

Who can be against us?

“who can be against us?”

Since God is for us! (Rom. 8:31)

“Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen?”

Since God justified us! (v. 33)

“Who is he that condemns?”

Since Jesus Christ, who died – more than that, who was raised to life –

Is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us! (v. 34)

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?” (v. 35)

“... anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (v. 39)

Who comforts those in any trouble?

It's not that we are comforting those in any trouble

But it is God who comfort them through us

As He comforts us in all our troubles.

(2 Cor. 1:3-4)

Who is the true God?

Although God is speaking to the Christians who are hesitating between God and Money
And who loves and serve two masters to choose between the two,
We are not answering Him a word.
Now we are in a cowardly silence.
No matter how many times we call on the name of Money”
There is no voice and no one answers.
Our idol Money is also silent.
But those Christians who rely on God pray to God and receive answer from Him.
Who is the true God? (Mt. 6:24; 1 Kgs. 18:21, 26, 29, 36-37).

“which of them was considered to be greatest”

One of the causes of contention in the church community is “which of them was considered to be greatest” (Lk. 22:24).

It is important who we meet.

Saul, who tried to take those who belonged to the Way as prisoners to Jerusalem
Met the resurrected Jesus and was taken as a prisoner of Jesus and commissioned
So that he transferred to Paul who suffered for the sake of the name of Jesus (Acts ch. 9).

It is important who we meet.
We must meet Jesus, be transformed,
Meet Jesus’ people and be built.

Who to obey?

The Holy Spirit-filled Christians know that
They must obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29).

To whom it is better to be exalted?

It is much better for Mordecai to be exalted by God, the King of kings
Rather than Haman to be exalted by King Ahasuerus.
(Esth. 3:1, 12-15; ch. 6; 8:2; 9:4; 10:2-3)

Whose deed should we focus on and live a Christian life?

It is very dangerous to live a Christian life by focusing on ourselves.
The reason is because
When we look at our good deeds,
Then we will depend on our own self-righteousness rather than God's righteousness,
And when we look at our evil deeds,
Then we will not depend on Jesus who shed the blood and died on the cross
But will be driven by guilt because of our unrighteousness.
Therefore, we must focus on what Jesus Christ did on the cross and live our Christian lives.
(As I was reading Romans 9:11)

"only when their eye is on you"?

We must not “do it, not only when their eye is on you and to with their favor”
But “with sincerity of heart” (Col. 3:22).

We need to open and close our eyes.

We need to open our eyes to the Lord,
And close our eyes to the world.
(Cf. 2 Kgs. 6:17-18).

We need to humble the pride of our hearts.

The reason why we don't return for the benefit we received
Is because our hearts are proud.
We need to humble the pride of our hearts.
(2 Chron. 32:25-26)

"as was His custom"

Jesus, "as was His custom" (Lk. 4:16)

Read (v. 16), taught (v. 31),

Went to a secluded place (v. 42) and prayed (5:16),

Preached the gospel (4:18, 43, 44).

There is no need to envy the income of the wicked.

"... The income of the wicked, punishment." (Prov. 10:16).

The more the income, the more the wicked commit sins?

Therefore, the increasing of the wicked's income

Is not a material blessing but a curse?

The "capable men"

The "capable men"

Fear God, trustworthy men

Who hate dishonest gain.

(Exod. 19:21).

“we will be able to comfort”

“God of all comfort,
Who comforts us all our affliction
So that we will be able to comfort
Those who are in any affliction.
(2 Cor. 1:3-4).

**You won't be forgotten
By the Lord.**

[Short Word Meditation (3)]

James Kim

God who takes away

If we no longer regard God's gifts to us as His grace
But gradually consider them as our own merit,
Then our hearts are already proud.
The result of that proud sin is
God takes away all our gifts from us.
(Cf. Dan. 5:18-20)

We need to prepare for the coming needy situation.

We should expect that in the future
We may experience very severe needy situation
That the former abundance will be unknown (Gen. 41:31).
Therefore, we should prepare for the coming needy situation when we are in abundance (v. 36).
This is a lesson that is stuck in my conscience.

Different. It's such a difference.

God's system of measuring is different from our system of measuring (Judg. 7:1-7),
God's perspective is different from our perspective (16:7),
God's thoughts are such a difference than our thoughts (Isa. 55:8-9).

We should never offer false worship again ...

Be repeatedly hardening our hearts
And disobeying God's Word
(Exod. 7:13, 22; 8:15, 19, 32; 9:7, 12, 34; 10:1, 20, 27; 11:10),
We are dealing deceitfully
In terms of worshiping God (8:29).

Closed mind, open mouth

A fool has closed mind.
He is a selfish person who only knows nothing but himself.
But the mouth of the fool is open
And he delights only in revealing his own mind. (Prov. 18:2)

We must run!

A runner is running with clear purpose.
And that purpose is to win a race in order to receive the prize.
So he focuses on the goal line
And runs his best in direction of the goal line (2 Cor. 9:24-27).
Now we are running the spiritual race.

What kind of Christian are you?

How can you see the “Sodom and Gomorrah”

In where the exceedingly wicked men and sinners against the Lord lived

As “the garden of the Lord”?

And how can you equate “the land of Egypt” with “the garden of the Lord”

(Gen. 13:10, 13).

What kind of person Lot was ...?

How can you see this world that is like “Sodom and Gomorrah” that the Lord will destroy

As “the garden of the Lord”?

What kind of Christian are you?

You will not be forgotten by the Lord!

'O James,

You will not be forgotten by the Lord' (Isa. 44:21).

How about putting your own name

And proclaim to yourself in faith and pray to God?

The enthusiasm you want to help ...

The prepared enthusiasm you want to help

Those who are in need

Can stir up most of them (2 Cor. 9:2).

The reason why you will be certainly rescue?

The reason why you will be certainly rescued in the midst of disaster is
Because you have trusted in God. (Jere. 39:15-18)

It's me, not you.

Moses and Aaron said to the Israelites
Who were against Moses and Aaron and contended them because there is no water
“Listen now, you rebels” (Num. 20:2-3, 10).
But God said to Moses and Aaron
“because you rebelled against My command at the waters of Meribah” (v. 24).

Nathan said to David “There were two men in one city, the one rich and the other poor.
"The rich man had a great many flocks and herds.
"But the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb Which he bought and nourished;
And it grew up together with him and his children.
It would eat of his bread and drink of his cup and lie in his bosom,
And was like a daughter to him. Now a traveler came to the rich man,
And he was unwilling to take from his own flock or his own herd,
To prepare for the wayfarer who had come to him;
Rather he took the poor man's ewe lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him”
(2 Sam. 12:1-4).
“Then David's anger burned greatly against the man, and he said to Nathan,
As the LORD lives, surely the man who has done this deserves to die” (v. 5).
Then Nathan said to David, “You are the man!” (v. 7)

We may think that those people are rebels and
Don't think that we are the ones who are rebelling against God's word.
But God says to us, “you rebelled against My command” (Num. 20:24),
“You are the man!” (2 Sam. 12:7)

God who raises adversaries

When we sin against God and don't repent, God raises adversaries to us. (1 Kgs. 11:23-27)

Therefore, through our adversaries

We must make it an opportunity to acknowledge and turn back from our sins.

\

To a better reality ...

Although our situation seems to be worsen in our perspective,

God even uses that situation and eventually leads us to a better reality. (Cf. Dan. 1:15, 20; 2:46-49)

He is a more dangerous person.

He is a more dangerous person who hides his hate emotion in any form and deceives other people

(Ex. Absalom) Than a person who is not good at hiding his hate emotion

But express it in any form. (Ex. Cain, Esau, Joseph's older brothers, King Saul)

I no longer want to be a pastor Who does something horrible.

I must not strengthen the hands of my church members to go out into the world and to go astray

And to commit sins more boldly without being conscience-stricken

By preaching the false comfort and encouragement sermon

Instead of preaching the message of repentance from sins and turn to God

When they go out into the world and commit sins against God. (Cf. Jere. 23:13-14)

I should no longer live like this.

People can see only my actions.

So I can certainly prove to them that I am a right evangelist

By my action as I please them.

So I can try to show them that I am doing everything right through my action.

I can even make my way right in my own eyes (Prov. 21:2).

As I do so, I can live opposite to the gospel that I preach to them in my heart.

I can pretend to live a holy life in front of them.

But I can never pretend to live a holy life before God.

The reason is because God is searching my heart.

This is what the Bible says:

“Since I know, O my God, that You try the heart and delight in uprightness ...”(1 Chron. 29:17),

“But You know me, O LORD; You see me;

And You examine my heart's attitude toward You ...” (Jere. 12:3),

“...For the righteous God tries the hearts and minds” (Ps. 7:9).

Do I really believe these words of truth?

If I truly believe these words, can I continue living like this?

Shouldn't I be devoted to cultivating my heart before God rather than my actions before people?

Why are you James so conscious of people?

Why don't you fear God?

I can't imagine how countless sins that I am committing sins against God in my heart

Than to sin with my words and actions.

But what are you doing, James?

I no longer want to live a religious life in front of people.

I want to live a life of faith before God.

I no longer want to throw away my conscience in order to please people.

I want to please God who searches my conscience and my heart.

I want to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord (Col. 1:10).

I want to be recognized as 'a man who pleases God' (Heb. 11:5).

If I truly please God, then I will be approved by people as well (Rom. 14:18).

When I am not able to bear the burden alone ...

"I am not able to bear the burden of you alone",

"How can I alone bear the load and burden of you and your strife?" (Deut. 1:9, 12).

There is a time when I have to acknowledge

In front of God and in front of people that I am not able to bear the burden alone.

At that time, I feel my helplessness and powerless deeply.

Then God sends me some people who can bear the burden together with me (vv. 13-15).

“because it is too burdensome for me”

If there is no joy in the heart but trouble,

Not only that we cannot understand God's grace but we also ask God "Why?" questions.

Since we no longer are able to bear the burden that is too heavy for us,

We may pray to God, "So if You are going to deal thus with me, please kill me at once,

if I have found favor in Your sight, and do not let me see my wretchedness."

(Cf. Num. 11:10-15)

We have to use the gifts to edify the church.

When we use God's given gracious gifts in serving the church and see its fruits,

There is danger that we turn it to our own merits.

If it becomes an opportunity to reveal our own self-righteousness

Then we will not be able to edify the church but we will build our own pride.

(Cf. 1 Cor. 14:12)

We are just God's tools!

Tools are just tools!

We are God's tools.

Tools have nothing to boast on their own, but only the Lord.

Tools do not do what they want, but only what the Lord wants.

(Cf. Isa. 10:15)

It can be an opportunity for our testimony.

When we go through great difficulties for Jesus' name's sake,

Those great difficulties can be an opportunity for our testimony

(Lk. 21:12-13)

When we want to run away ...

Like Jonah,

There is time when we want to run away from God's given mission.

At that time,

Jonah's God, our God rebukes us in love even through a worm that has been faithful in its mission

So that eventually He enables us to fulfill our mission.

(Jon. 1:3; 4:7)

God's command that we cannot understand

God's command may not be understood by our mind.
How could God tell Elijah to go to the brook Cherith
And "you will drink of the brook"
When there was no rain?
Obviously, "after a while" that brook would dry up.
(1 Kgs. 17:1-7)

God's command is to be obeyed with loving heart toward God,
And not after we understand it with our head.

The salvation of God that cannot be understood at all

God's salvation may not be understood by our mind at all.
How could God save Elijah who was hiding at the brook Cherith when there was no rain
By telling him to go to Zarephath and commanded a widow,
Who only had a little bread cake for a meal to eat" with her son and die,
Instead of a rich widow who could support him?
We cannot understand it at all.
(1 Kgs. 17:8-12)

So we have to anticipate that God's salvation
Can be done outside of our expectation.
We must believe that our Savior God will save us
According to His will, His plan and His way.

The work of God that I cannot understand at all

Sometimes we cannot understand God's work with out intellect at all.

How could God allow a son of the widow of Zarephath,

Who experienced God's miracle,

To go through the crisis of death

Just by obeying the word of Elijah, God's servant?

(1 Kgs. 17:13-24)

After experiencing the miracle of God,

Shouldn't there be at least no disaster

Even if there is no bigger miracle?

Maybe God wants to remind us our sins even through that kind of crisis (v. 18).

Maybe to that extent, we cannot think our sins without crisis in our lives.

Maybe God wants us to cry out to Him through that kind of crisis (vv. 19-21).

Maybe to that extent, we don't cry out to God without crisis in our lives.

Maybe through that kind of crisis God is making us to realize

That God is answering our prayers and

That the servant of God and the word of God is the truth (vv. 22-24).

Rather than seeking knowledge to make money ...

It's better to seek the knowledge of wisdom

Rather than to seek the knowledge of making money.

The reason is because wisdom and not money preserves the lives of its possessors

(Eccle. 7:12).

Intention of God's guidance of leading The people around and to shut them in?

When I look back on my life, God didn't lead me to a short cut way as I prayed and expected
But led me around to a long way (Exod. 13:17-18).
Also God led me to a situation where I couldn't find any solution to my problems,
In a sense I felt like I was trapped, whether I looked at north, south, east and west (14:3).
When I think about why God led me so, Maybe it is because God wanted to to stand firm
And to see the deliverance of the Lord would bring me (vv. 13-14).

It's good that east and west is very close. Haha.

'As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us' (Ps. 103:12).
But God is making us the east very close to the west in sharing His love.
In the hearts of brothers and sisters who are sharing the love of God,
The east and the west are very close.

We must proclaim the Word with two convictions.

We must not proclaim the Word of God only
With conviction of the power of the Word (Jere. 23:29).
We must also proclaim the Word
With conviction that God's sovereign will will be fulfilled.

Two kinds of people

There are two kinds of people:
Those who are "unworthy of eternal life" and
Those who are "appointed to eternal life" (Acts 13:46, 48).

Even in fearful situation

Even in fearful situation, Those Christians who cry out to God
in faith as they trust in God Will taste the joy of salvation and of victory. (2 Chron. 20:1-30)

When we are afraid

When we are afraid, we must put our trust in God. (Ps. 56:3)
When we are afraid, we must pray to God.
We must seek God's grace (v. 1).
We must seek God's help (v. 9).
When we are afraid, we must praise the word of God (vv. 4, 10).
We must praise God by faith,
Knowing that God's promised word will be fulfilled (Cf. Acts 16:25).
When we are afraid, we must rely on God with assurance of salvation (Ps. 56:13).
We must rely on Him as we determine to keep what we have vowed to God (v. 12).

God who delivers us in fear

God told the Israelites,
Who became very frightened, cried out to the Lord
And grumbled against Moses, the servant of God,
"Do not fear! Stand by and see the salvation of the LORD
which He will accomplish for you today."
And he told them, "the Egyptians whom you have seen today,
you will never see them again forever" (Exod. 14:10-14).
God, who hears our cry out when we are in fear and are complaining,
Delivers us and even removes the objects of our fear before us.

We have no choice but to fear.

If we don't know who Jesus is, that means we don't have faith.

And if we don't have faith, then we have no choice but to fear in a critical situation.

(Lk. 8:22-25).

God who actualized what he was afraid of?

Although the king of Egypt tried to deal wisely with the Israelites

Because he and the Egyptians were dread that

The Israelites multiplied and the more they spread out,

And that they might depart from the land of Egypt (Exod. 1:10, 12),

But God actualized what the Egyptian king was afraid of through Moses (3:9-10)

By bringing the Israelites out of the land of Egypt (12:31).

Hardened heart?

The heart that cannot realize the wonderful things the Lord has done is bound to become hardened.

And the hardened heart is utterly astonished by another amazing thing the Lord has done.

(Cf.: Mk. 6:51-52)

It is one of the two.

It is one of the two.

Whether it is to keep on looking at a woman

Whom we shouldn't look in the lust of the eyes (1 Jn. 2:16)

Without refusing what our eyes desire (Eccle. 2:10)

Or it is to make a covenant with our eyes and not to gaze at a virgin (Job 31:1).

It is one of the two. We have to control our eyes and not control by our eyes.

It is one of the two.

It is one of the two.

The treasure in our hearts is whether “God” or “wealth”.

That means if we treasure God in our hearts, then we are considering God as our Lord,

But if we treasure wealth in our hearts, then we are considering wealth as our master.

If we worry about what we will eat or what we will drink and what we will put on,

Then it means that food and clothing are more important than our lives and bodies in our hearts,

And if food and clothing are more important than our lives and bodies mean

We value wealth more than God in our hearts.

And if we value wealth more than God, it means we are despising God.

After all, it means that we now love wealth and hate God (Mt. 6:21, 24, 25).

We shouldn’t be like this. We must love God and hate wealth.

We must devote to God and despise the wealth. Our treasure is our Lord Jesus Christ.

Only the Lord Jesus Christ should be in our hearts.

Therefore, we must not worry about our lives, as to what we will eat,

what we will drink and what we will put on.

In Jesus’ heart, we are His treasure. We are in His heart.

That’s why Jesus gave His life and His body on the cross for us.

“He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all,
how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?” (Rom. 8:32).

It is one of the two.

It is one of the two.

Whether it is to keep on looking at a woman

Whom we shouldn’t look in the lust of the eyes (1 Jn. 2:16)

Without refusing what our eyes desire (Eccle. 2:10)

Or it is to make a covenant with our eyes and not to gaze at a virgin (Job 31:1).

It is one of the two. We have to control our eyes and not control by our eyes.

(As I was reading Eugene Peter’s “As Kingfishers Catch Fire”)

We must hear, learn and observe ...

We must hear the word of God, Learn to fear God,
And carefully observe all the words of God. (Deut. 31:9-13)

A wise Christian with an understanding heart ...

A wise Christian with an understanding heart ... (1 Kgs. 3:9)
Listens to sound doctrine and doesn't suit his own desire
and listen to what his itching ears want to hear (2 Tim. 4:3).
The wise Christian hears God's words through God's servant
And he is cut to the quick.
So he repents his sins to God according to the pastor's counsel (Acts 2:37-38),
Instead of becoming a pastor-killer who hates that servant of God (7:54),
He is noble-minded man who has a noble spirit.
He receives the word of God with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily
to see whether these things are so (Acts 17:11).
He is like a tree firmly planted by streams of water,
Which yields its fruit in its season (Ps. 1:1).
He has very good receptive capacity of the word of God.
At the same time, he filters and listens to His word well
In a balanced manner with the receptive capacity of the word of God. (Acts 17:10-15)

Pay no attention.

Although the word of God is the truth,
Satan sees the word of the truth as a lie
And make us not to pay attention to the word.
(Cf. Exod. 5:9)

If we don't listen, He won't listen.

If we don't listen to God's command,
Then God won't listen to our prayer.
(Deut. 1:26, 43, 45)

The earthly Christians?

Although we have received every spiritual blessing
In the heavenly places in Christ (Eph. 1:3),
We Christians who seek only the earthly blessings
Are not setting our mind on the things above
But on the things that are on earth (Col. 3:2),
And are the earthly rather than the heavenly. (Cf. 1 Cor. 15:48)

The days are evil ...

Even though the days are evil,
Are we not being foolish as to get drunk with wine that is dissipation
And not making the most of our time...?
(Eph. 5:16-18)

We must leave and return

We must leave the lie and return to the truth
So that we may enjoy true freedom.
(Cf. Jn. 8:32)

We must turn away.

We must turn away from those who deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting
By their smooth and flattering speech.
(Rom. 16:17-18)

God who blocks their intention?

When the Lord's servant,
Whom the Lord loves, chooses, has saved, and has given a mission
And who tries to fulfill the Lord's will,
Is on the crossroads of life and death
By those who try to kill him,
The Lord even uses a non-believer
To block their intention to kill him
And saves His servant.
(Act 27:42-43)

The young people who made up their minds

God gives grace to those young people who made up their minds
That they would not defile themselves (Dan. 1:8ff.).
God grants them favor and compassion in the sight of unbelievers (v. 9).
God gives them knowledge and intelligence
So that they are found ten times better than the unbelievers (vv. 17, 20).
But a crisis can come to them. It could be a life-threatening crisis (2:12-13).
But this crisis is an opportunity for them.

1. It is an opportunity to receive God's grace.

King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon didn't give "time" to the magicians, the conjurers,
the sorcerers and the Chaldeans (v. 2) to declare his dream and its interpretation (v. 6).
He thought that they were bargaining for time (v. 8).
But he gave "time" to Daniel (v. 16).
Why did King Nebuchadnezzar who didn't give time to all his "wise men" (v. 13)
But gave time to the foreigner Hebrew Daniel? (v. 16)
Would it be possible if God didn't intervene and help Daniel
To find favor with King Nebuchadnezzar?

2. It is an opportunity to receive our prayers answered from God and thus to praise God.

When time was given to Daniel, he went to his three friends
And asked them to pray to God (vv. 17-18).
Then God who answered their prayer revealed the mystery to Daniel in a night vision (v. 19).
And God gave him "wisdom and power" (vv. 20, 21, 23).
As a result, Daniel was able to tell King Nebuchadnezzar
his dream and its interpretation (vv. 25-45).
As a result, Daniel was able to praise God (vv. 19, 20, 23).

3. It is an opportunity to be raised and exalted by God.

Daniel told King Nebuchadnezzar his dream and its interpretation
with wisdom and power that God gave him.

Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face and did homage to Daniel (v. 46).

And he said to Daniel, “Surely your God is a God of gods and a Lord of kings
and a revealer of mysteries, since you have been able to reveal this mystery” (v. 47).

Then the king promoted Daniel and gave him many great gifts,

and he made him rule over the whole province of Babylon

and chief prefect over all the wise men of Babylon (v. 48).

Also, he appointed Daniel’s three friends over the administration of the province of Babylon
upon his request (v. 49).

Eventually, God raised and exalted Daniel and his three friends through King Nebuchadnezzar.

God gives grace to the young people who made up their minds.

God gives grace to them even through the crisis they face

And eventually exalt them in this world.

God must have His purpose of gathering ...

When David was running away from King Saul,

“Everyone who was in distress, and everyone who was in debt,

And everyone who was discontented gathered to him”

And it was about 400 men with David (1 Sam. 22:1-2).

God makes or allows people to gather around us

When we are struggling and in difficulties.

What’s His purpose?

**The Lord who binds up the
brokenhearted**
[Short Word Meditation (4)]

James Kim

The Roman centurion's faith

The Roman centurion's faith was ... (Lk. 7:1-10):

1. Faith that transcended the nation
 - a. As a Gentile, he loved the Jewish people so he built them their synagogue (v. 5).
2. Faith that transcended the environment, situation and status
 - a. Despite being in a position of Roman centurion which he could be arrogant, he was humble (v. 7).
3. Faith that transcended the problem of time and space
 - a. He asked Jesus "... but just say the word, and my servant will be healed" (v. 7).

“you son of the devil”

The son of the devil is full of all deceit and fraud,
The enemy of all righteousness,
Doesn't cease to make crooked the straight ways of the Lord,
And seeks to turn the Christians away from the faith
(Acts 13:8, 10)

It may not be as pleasant

It may not be as pleasant as having more income than what we desire in the imaginations of our hearts.
The reason is because our hearts may be proud and we will speak from on high.
(Ps. 73:6-8)

We should know with our heart and will.

We should know in all our hearts and in all our souls
That not one word of all the good words
Which the Lord our God spoke concerning we has failed,
All have been fulfilled for us,
Not one of them has failed.
(Josh. 23:14)

Obedience because He gave heart and thought

It's very interesting how God works.
During this week Morning Prayer meeting,
I read and meditated on the Books of First and Second Chronicles.

- (1) Obedience of Prophet Elijah,
- (2) Obedience of the widow of Zarephath,
- (3) Obedience of Obadiah,
- (4) Service of a precious woman

And actually when I called the couple of women in the church
Who helped my father for his mission work and said 'Thank you' to them,
Both of them said that God gave them hearts and thoughts
So they obeyed Him. Haha.
Our God is wonderful God.

Through all this, What God is saying to me is
When He gives me heart and thought like those two women
I must obey the Lord.

Heart and body separately

My heart wants to act like Joseph who feared God
But my body fall into temptation like Samson
And committing the sins of covering the glory of God
And giving occasions to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme
(2 Sam. 12:14).
Satan is discouraging me and making my spiritual strength to be exhausted
By constantly stimulating my weaknesses such as
the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life (1 Jn. 2:16)
and making me to sin against God.

Keep the saying in mind

Even though we don't understand well
What our loved one is saying,
We keep the saying in mind and ponder the saying in our heart.
(Gen. 37:11; Lk. 1:66, 2:19).

Sadness of heart to sad face ...

Although we are very much afraid, sadness of our hearts can be manifested in our sad faces.
The reason is because we can receive favor from other person
When the good hand of our God is upon us.
(Neh. 2:1-9)

Don't take seriously!

We shouldn't take seriously all words which are spoken to us (Eccle. 7:21).

We should treasure in our hearts.

Although we cannot understand the word which the Lord has said,
We should treasure His word in our hearts. (Lk. 2:50, 51)

My heart should be light

My heart should be heavy when I commit sins against God (Ps. 32:4)
But after repentance of sins my heart should be light.

Heart that is not steadfast toward Him

Those whose hearts aren't steadfast toward the Lord
And those who aren't faithful in His covenant (Ps. 78:37)
Don't keep His covenant, refuse to walk in His law
And forget His deeds and His miracles that He has shown them (vv. 10-11).
They still continued to sin and rebel against Him (v. 17).
And in their heart they put God to test and they spoke against God (vv. 18-19).
They satisfy their desire (v. 30)
And still sin and doesn't believe in His wonderful works (v. 32).

Pierce to the heart

There should be piercing to our hearts when we hear “the sword of the Spirit”
That is the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ (Eph. 6:17; Acts 2:37; 7:54).
Like those 3,000 people who heard the Peter’s sermon and were pierced to the heart,
Said to Peter “Brethren, what shall we do?” (2:37),
Repented their sins and were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of their sins (v. 38),
We must repent our sins by hearing the word of God through a pastor
And by our hearts being pierced by His word.
But for some reason, we are like the Jews who were cut to the quick and gnashed their teeth at Stephen
After they heard his message (7:54) and stoned him to death (v. 58),
We are stoning our pastor with our words out of anger and complaining
Because he has proclaimed the word of God to us.

My conscience should be bothered ...

We should know that the Lord forbids we lift our hands against the Lord’s anointed
And our conscience should be bothered when we disobey Him. (1 Sam. 24:5-6)

If you don’t want to acknowledge God any longer?

Even though you know God (Rom. 1:19) but don’t want to acknowledge God any longer,
God will give you over to depraved mind to do those things which are not proper, such as
“being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy,
murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips” (vv. 28-29)

I don’t need to take the word seriously.

Even though I can hear people saying all the words about me,
I don't need to take all the words seriously (Eccle. 7:21).
Then I won't hear false rumors about me.

He who conceal hatred in his heart and slanders

He who conceals hatred in his heart and slanders
Is a fool who has lying lips.
(Prov. 10:18)

Let us reflect our hearts.

Just as in water face reflects face, so the heart of man reflects man (Prov. 27:19).
And in order to reflect our hearts to each other,
We must open our hearts to each other and honestly and purely share the story of our hearts
So that we may empathize and sympathize with each other and show the Lord's love to each other.
Then we cannot help but to give thanks to God
For having one mind and one heart in the Lord
As we love each other with His love.

They stir up and poison each other's mind.

Those unbelievers who refuse to believe
Stir up each other in any way possible
So that they poison their minds against Christians who believe in Jesus.
(Cf. Acts 14:2)

Even we saw the distress of his soul?

Even we saw the distress of his soul, yet we didn't listen;
Maybe that's why this distress has come upon us ...
(Gen. 42:21)

The motives of the heart?

What if the motive of the heart in listening to the Lord's servant about faith in Christ Jesus
Is to receive money from him?
What if the motive is to give hard time for the Lord's servant
In order to earn the church members' hearts?
(Acts 24:24-27)

Playing the harlot in following after our own hearts and eyes

In order to prevent from playing the harlot
In following after our own hearts and eyes
We must remember all the commandments of the Lord and do do them.
(Num. 15:39)

Even through the brokenness of the heart

Even through brokenness of our hearts
The Lord is trying to lay hold of our hearts.
(Ezek. 14:5)

Restraining of the heart

Of course we should restrain from eating desire for food and in our thoughts
But above all, we must restrain our hearts.
I think restraining of the heart is keeping contentment of the heart
By resisting any kind of temptation of covetousness.
(Cf. Prov. 23:4)

“The arrogance of your heart”

If our hearts are arrogant (Obd. 1:3),
Then not only that there is no understanding (v. 7)
But also we don't realize that we are deceiving ourselves (v. 3).

Our hearts became proud.

Although God has perfected our beauty (Ezek. 27:4)
Our hearts became proud on account of our beauty (28:17).
Although God has given us power to make wealth (Deut. 8:18)
We think that our power and the strength of our hands made us this wealth (v. 17).
And because of our wealth our hearts has grown proud (Ezek. 28:5).

Our hearts should be generous.

If we are wealthy but our hearts aren't generous,
Then there will be quarrel.
But if we have generous hearts with wealth,
Then we can make and live in peace.
(Gen. 13:1-8)

“our hearts melted”

This is what a harlot Rahab said to two spies whom Joshua sent secretly to Jericho:

“... all the inhabitants of the land have melted away before you. ...

When we heard it, our hearts melted and no courage remained in any man any longer.”

[Reason: It was because Rahab and all the inhabitants of Jericho heard

how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea before the Israelites when they came out of Egypt

and what the Israelites did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan] (Josh. 2:9-11)

The hearts of all the kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan to the west,

And of all the kings of the Canaanites who were by the sea

melted and there was no spirit in them any longer.

[Reason: It was because they heard how the Lord had dried up the waters of the Jordan

before the sons of Israel until they had crossed (5:1)]

The hearts of the Israelites melted and became as water.

[Reason: It was because they lost the war against the men of Ai due to Achan's sin] (7:5)

“men of depraved mind”

Those people of depraved mind deprive the truth (1 Tim. 6:5)

And oppose the truth (2 Tim. 3:8).

The Lord who binds up the brokenhearted

Lord, send me to bring good news to the afflicted

And use me to bind up the brokenhearted and to proclaim freedom to captives

(Isa. 61:1).

It hurts my heart.

When my beloved brother in Christ whom I trust
Says something that I don't understand
After he has heard falsehood about me from someone,
It hurts my heart not because what he said to me
But because he has trusted me only this much. (Cf. Prov. 29:12)

“For the heart of this people has become dull”

This people cannot understand even though they hear,
Cannot perceive even though they keep on seeing
Because their heart has become dull.
They hear with their ears but they cannot understand with their heart. (Acts 28:26-27)

The upright in heart

He who is upright in the sight of God is the upright in heart.
The upright in heart takes refuge in the Lord.
Even though his foundation seems like being destroyed by the fatal temptation and violence of the wicked,
he goes up to His holy temple and looks to the Lord's throne in heaven.
The reason is because he knows that His eyes behold and His eyelids test the upright.
The righteous God hates the wicked and the one who loves violence
So he will judge them and rain snares upon them.
But He loves righteousness.
So He will make the upright to behold His face. (Ps. 11)

The wise of heart

The wise of heart fears God,
receives God's commands and keeps them.
(Prov. 10:8; Eccle. 12:13)

I want my heart to be wise.

Those who are wise in heart receive God's commands.
That means my heart is foolish
Because I am not receiving His commands.
(Prov. 10:8)

Those who are wise in heart ...

Those who are wise in heart
Receive God's commands,
Walk in integrity
And walk securely.
(Prov. 10:8-9)

The Christians whose heart is pure ...

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8).

The Christians whose heart is pure ...

1. Pursue the purity of the body.
2. Know that no one can say "I have cleansed my heart, I am pure from my sin" (Prov. 20:9).
3. Believe not only that all of their sins are forgiven
by the blood of Jesus Christ on the cross but also that they have been purified.
4. Cleanse themselves from the things come from the heart and defile them such as,
"evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders" (Mt. 15:18-19)
And from the deeds of the flesh such as, "immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery,
enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying,
drunkenness, carousing, and things like these" (Gal. 5:19-21).
They pray to God, "Create in me a clean heart, O God,
And renew a steadfast spirit within me" (Ps. 51:10).
They keep their way pure by keeping it according to God's word (Ps. 119:9).
5. Live before the Lord whose eyes are too pure to approve evil (Hab. 1:13).
They clean themselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit,
perfecting holiness in the fear of God (2 Cor. 7:1).
6. Experience God's presence.

[As I was reading Iain M. Duguid's book " Hero of Heroes"]

Like a mother eagle ...

Like a mother eagle that stirs up its nest and let its young eagle to fall,
Sometime the Lord shakes our complacent comfort and causes us to fall .
Then like the mother eagle that hovers over its young
And then spreads its wings and carries the young eagle on its pinions
Before the young eagle hits the ground,
The Lord rescues us and carries us
Right before we crash and hit the ground
Even though we try our best to spread our wings and to fly against falling gravity.
The Lord carries us and walks with us when we are having the most difficult time.
(Deut. 32:11)

Like a mother eagle ...

God finds His people in a desert and encircles them,
Carries them and guards them as the pupil of His eye.
And God stirs up our comfortable home like a mother eagle that stirs up its nest.
He keeps watching over us from above when we are falling
And catches us with His wings and carries us
Like the mother eagle that hovers over its young which is falling from its nest,
And spreads its wings and carries the young.
The Lord who is with us alone guides us.
(Deut. 32:9-12)

Even if it looks like the garden of the Lord ...

Even if it looks like the garden of the Lord

Because “it is well-watered everywhere” and plentiful (Gen. 13:10)

We should keep in mind that it is not the garden of the Lord but Sodom and Gomorrah (v. 10)

If the people who live there are wicked exceedingly and sinners against the Lord (v. 13).

If we choose a place like Sodom and Gomorrah by relying on our own understanding (Prov. 3:5)

We may live comfortably and abundantly

But our righteous soul will be tormented day after day (2 Pet. 2:8).

A blind end drama into a reverse drama!

No matter how Satan tries to write a blind end drama,

God writes a reverse drama of salvation.

(As I think about how God wrote the reverse drama of salvation by using Esther and Mordecai to deliver the Jews out of Haman who was writing the blind end drama in the Book of Esther)

A leader's heavy responsibilities

A leader's responsibilities are heavy.

I am experiencing the need to have strength to take those responsibilities every day,
whether home or in the church.

I want to quietly trust God (Isa. 30:15) who is my strength (Ps. 18:1).

The manna faith

The manna faith is
Believing the true Manna in the covenant of Father God
Who is the bread of life from above (Jn. 6:48),
The Son of God Jesus Christ,
Obeying the Lord's word in thanksgiving by the guidance of the Holy Spirit,
Especially sharing the bread of life that is Jesus Christ and His gospel to neighbors.

Meeting is not a coincidence.

Even though Joseph didn't sin, he was imprisoned under a false accusation (Gen. 39:19-23).
And in the jail Joseph met the cupbearer and the baker for the king of Egypt (40:1-4).
Was it coincidence that those who had sinned and Joseph who didn't sin met in the jail?
Never.
It was God's sovereign will that God led them to meet at that place and at that time.
The purpose was that God made Joseph to interpret their dreams (vv. 12-15),
the chief cupbearer was restored (v. 21) and he introduced Joseph to the king of Egypt who has two
dreams,
so that eventually God delivered Joseph out of the jail,
made him to interpret the Egyptian king's dreams
and then raised him to be in charge of the whole land of Egypt (ch. 41).

Our meeting may take place in a situation that is not as good as we see it.
But even in such a bad situation,
God can make us to meet good people even though we don't want it or even expect it.
God can give us good encounters even in bad situations
In order to accomplish His will of salvation.

If the result of my wrong relationship ...

What should we do with my wrong relationship

If the consequences of that wrong relationship have the adverse effects

Not only on our children but also on our grandchildren?

King Jehoshaphat of Judah had wrong relationship.

He had a relationship with the wicked King Ahab of Israel

by all allying himself by marriage with Ahab (2 Chron. 18:1; 19:2).

King Jehoshaphat married his son Jehoram with the daughter of King Ahab (21:6).

As a result, King Jehoram walked in the way of the kings of Israel.

In other words, he did evil in the sight of the Lord (v. 6).

He made high places in the mountains of Judah,

and caused the inhabitants of Jerusalem to play the harlot and led Judah astray (v. 11).

Not only that, he also killed his brothers, his own family, who were better than him (v. 13).

It didn't end here.

Because of the wrong relationship that King Jehoshaphat made,

Not only his son Jehoram did evil in the sight of the Lord (v. 6)

But also his grandson Ahaziah walked in the ways of the house of Ahab (22:3).

King Ahaziah seemed to be forced to do so

Because his mother [Jehoram's wife who was Ahab's daughter (21:6)] was his counselor

to do wickedly (22:3).

"He did evil in the sight of the LORD like the house of Ahab,

for they were his counselors after the death of his father, to his destruction" (v. 4).

The consequences of the wrong relationship that King Jehoshaphat made with King Ahab

Not only had the adverse effects on his son Jehoram

But also his grandson Ahaziah.

There seems to be no law that this wouldn't happen to us.

If you are well-built and handsome like Joseph ...

If you are well-built and handsome like Joseph,
even a (lustful) married woman will take notice of you
and will tempt you (Genesis 39:6-7, 10).

"If we ..."

“If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness,
we lie and do not practice the truth” (1 Jn. 1:6).

“If we say that we have not sinned,
we make Him a liar and His word is not in us” (v. 10).

“If we say that we have no sin,
we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us” (v. 8).

“If we confess our sins,
He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (v. 9).

If we have real faith ...

How can we know whether our faith is real or fake?

We will know if we take various trials.

If we have genuine faith,

Then we have assurance of salvation and hope of salvation

Even though we have been distressed by various trials (1 Pet. 1:3-6).

And we will continue to love Him and believe in Him even though we have not seen Him (v. 8).

Therefore, we greatly rejoice

Even though for a little while we have been distressed by various trials (vv. 6, 8; Jam. 1:2).

This faith of ours is more precious than gold which is perishable 1 Pet. 1:7).

When Jesus Christ comes back,

There will be praise and glory and honor for us who have real faith (v. 7).

The dissatisfied heart

The dissatisfied heart pursues meaningless things (Eccle. 5:10, 11).

There are many ...

It isn't always good to have many ... (Deut. 17:16-17)

“You have sown much, but harvest little”

If we don't live the Lord-centered life
And without living the Lord's church-centered life,
However much we have sown and look for much,
The harvest will be little. (Hag. 1:2, 4, 6, 9)

Love only with word and tongue ...?

If we don't love in deed and truth but only with word and tongue,
Then we won't know that we are of the truth
And we won't assure our heart before the Lord.
(1 Jn. 3:18-19)

I am hesitating to obey His word.

It seems like the Lord is telling me,
'Go and meet him and pray for him.'
But I am hesitating to obey His word
Because I have heard a lot of bad stories about him from several people.
(Cf. Acts 9:10-14)

Distorting the word of God, blinding the minds?

We shouldn't distort the word of God.

We shouldn't let our minds to become blinded. (2 Cor. 4:2, 4)

Reasons for obeying the Word

Rather than submitting to the Word of God in fear of God's wrath,

We must obey the Word for conscience' sake (Rom. 13:5).

But it seems like there is no fear and our conscience is paralyzed.

Have you ever weep and rejoiced because of the Word?

Have you ever weep because of the Word of God? (Neh. 8:9)

Have you ever rejoiced greatly

because you understood the words that had been made known to you? (v. 12)

We should fear the word of the Lord.

Those who fear the word of the Lord pay regard to the word of the Lord and obey it.

But those who don't fear the Lord's word pay no regard to the Lord's word and disobey it.

(Exod. 9:20-21)

We must listen to the Word and be separated from them.

Too much things are mixed.

Although we must have God's Word-centered thoughts,
There are too many worldly and humanistic thoughts in our minds.

Although we must have pure faith toward the Lord,
There are too many worldly and miscellaneous things are mixed even in our faith.

Although we must be content with the Lord only,
We are mixed with so many worldly and lustful people in this world.
Therefore, we are falling into various forms of temptations of covetousness
And are sinning against God.

We must listen to the Word of God and be separated from the mixed people,
mixed things and mixed thoughts (Cf. Neh. 13:3).
I look forward to the true revival of the Word.

The people who hear the Word can be divided.

When a pastor boldly proclaims the word of God's grace with reliance upon the Lord,
The people who hear the Word can be divided (Acts 14:3-4).
Those who are "appointed to eternal life" believe.
And they rejoice and glorify the word of the Lord (13:48).
And they follow the Lord and the pastor whom He has raised (14:4).
But those who don't consider themselves worthy of eternal life reject the Word of God (13:46).
And they who refuse to believe stir up the church members
And poison their minds against the pastor (14:2, 4).

The reason why we don't understand the Word even though we listen

The reason why we don't understand the Word of God even though we listen to it
Is because we listen with disobedient heart. (Mt. 13:4, 19)

The false leaders who peddle the Word

Too many church leaders are peddling the word of God (2 Cor. 2:17, 4:2).
The false teachers who distort the truth of the gospel and spread the false teachings,
Are selling the false gospel for their own good and are doing business in the church.

We must not do that. We must not peddle the word of God.
We must speak before God with sincerity (2:17).
And we must set forth the truth of the gospel plainly (4:2).
We must shine the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ (v. 4).

My reflection in the mirror of the Word?

Just as I can't see myself clearly if the mirror is cloudy,
I can't realize my sins if I don't know the Word of God, the spiritual mirror, well (Rom. 7:7).
So I want to meditate the word of God diligently.
And I want to diligently reflect myself in the mirror of the word of God (Jan. 1:22-25).
Therefore, I want to acknowledge and confess my sins to God as the Holy Spirit works in my heart
So that I may be able to obey His word by the help of the Spirit.
My earnestly desire in to imitate Jesus at least little bit before I die
When I see myself in the spiritual mirror of the word of God.

[After I heard the sermon from our church retired pastor during the Wednesday night prayer meeting]

We must taste the sweetness of the Word.

It is much better to taste the sweetness of the word of the Lord
Than to taste the bitterness of the false world.
(Ps. 119:103)

Why there is no fruit of the Word

The reason why there is no fruit of the Word of God is
Because “the worry of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word”
(Mt. 13:22).

Are you offended?

We regard God’s word as offensive (Jere. 6:10).
In other words, the word of God is offensive.
The reason is because the word of God reproaches us.
As a result, we refuse to hear the offensive word of God.
And we continue to do what we do.
The more we do that, our hearts are getting hardened and hardened.
With stiff necked, we don’t pay attention to His word anymore.
There must be consequence of our actions of regarding the word of God as offensive.

The word that is sown on good soil ...

The word that is sown on good soil

Hears the word and receives it with joy (Mk. 4:16, 20).

And when trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they don't fall away (v. 17).

Therefore, they are fruitful

And are victorious in fight against the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things (v.19).

When there are many words ...

"When there are many words, transgression is unavoidable,

But he who restrains his lips is wise." (Prov. 10:19)

He should have said it, but he struck it.

God commanded Moses to speak to the rock before the eyes of the Israelites (Num. 20:8).

But Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod (v. 11).

God said to Moses, "Because you have not believed Me,

To treat Me as holy in the sight of the sons of Israel ..." (v. 12).

Nevertheless, God proved Himself holy among them (v. 13).

The more we taste it ...

The more we taste the goodness of God (Ps. 34:8)

The more we will dislike the taste of the Satan's evilness.

I shouldn't desire his delicacies.

No matter how delicious the food is,

I shouldn't desire that delicious food

Because his heart is not with me.

(Prov. 23:6-7)

If we forget, we are mistaken!

If we forget "the grace of God that I am what I am"

We are mistaken for my merit.

If we forget, we are mistaken!

(Cf. 1 Cor. 15:10)

They can be considered heavy burdens to those who are entrusted

Moses, who heard all the greedy Israelites weeping for meat
(Num. 11:4, 34)

Felt that the Lord had been so hard on him
By laying the heavy burden of the Israelites on him (vv. 11, 14)
So that he could carry them in his bosom to the land
Which the Lord swore to their fathers (v. 12).
Since Moses alone wasn't able to carry all the Israelites,
Because it was too burdensome for him
He asked the Lord to kill him at once
So that he might not see his wretchedness (vv. 14-15).

The people whom the Lord entrusted to us can be too burdensome to us
When they mix up with greedy people in this world (v. 4)
And keep on complaining and weeping (vv. 5-6).
At that time, we can try to evade our responsibilities
Since we cannot afford them anymore.

Heart is more important than beauty

Beautiful of form and face Rachel (Gen. 29:17),

Even though she was beautiful of form and face, her heart wasn't beautiful.

How can we know this?

1. Rachel became jealous of her older sister Leah when she saw that she bore her husband Jacob no children (30:1). She didn't regard her unloved sister Leah as an object of love, but a competition (v. 8).
2. Rachel said to her husband Jacob, "Give me children, or else I die" (v. 1) even though it was God who gave the fruit of the womb (v. 2).
3. Rachel considered taking Leah's husband as a small matter (v. 15). And she regarded Jacob as small [or lightly (?)] because she let Leah to hire him with Leah's son's mandrakes (v. 16).
4. Rachel stole the household idols that were her father's (31:19). And she even hid it from her husband Jacob (v. 32). She also lied to her father Leban (v. 35).
5. Rachel was a greedy woman. We can know this by looking at her father Leban's household idols that she stole (v. 19). Leban's household idols were the idols that the people in the ancient Mesopotamia served and there were types of family guardian deities and the objects of worship. In addition, the household idols were passed on as a legacy from one generation to the next, showing that the idols were used for inheritance. That was why Rachel stole her father Leban's household idols because of her greed regarding her father's inheritance (Internet).
6. And for some reason, I think there were some foreign gods in Jacob's house because of Rachel (35:4). The reason I think this way is because Rachel would have grown up seeing the household idols, the idols her father Leban served, and also she stole them and brought them into Jacob's house.

I don't understand with my head, but with my heart ...

With my head,

I totally cannot understand God's guidance.

I can't understand why God is leading us to a situation where we are trapped.

But with my heart,

I hope and pray that I can have assurance of God's guidance (Cf. Prov. 3:5-6).

I want to completely trust in God

Who didn't spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all (Rom. 8:32).

God's command that cannot be understood with my head?

Although even Israelites didn't listen to Moses

On account of their despondency and cruel bondage,

The Lord spoke to Moses, saying,

"Go, tell Pharaoh king of Egypt to let the sons of Israel go out of his land" (Exod. 6:9-11).

Moses' response:

"Behold, the sons of Israel have not listened to me;

how then will Pharaoh listen to me, for I am unskilled in speech?" (v. 12)

If I rely on my own understanding, I cannot obey God's command.

"in regard to food or drink" ...

We shouldn't let anybody to judge us "in regard to food or drink"

(Col. 2:16).

Let us eat, drink and enjoy.

I think eating, drinking and enjoying in the Lord with beloved ones is glorifying God. (1 Cor. 10:31)

Let's believe in the Lord who goes before us and move forward.

Was it really good to say that

“Let us send men before us, that they may search out the land for us” (Deut. 1:22-23)

Was it really good that Moses took twelve men, one man for each tribe? (v. 23)

(What would have happened if only Joshua and Caleb were chosen to spy out the land of Canaan?)

Wouldn't it better not to send the 12 spies to the land of Canaan

But just to believe in the Lord who was going before the Israelites (vv. 30, 33)

And to move forward?

First, I have to live by keeping the word myself ...

Before I exhort my fellow brothers and sisters in Christ in sound doctrine

And refute those who contradict, first, I must keep the word of God and His teaching. (Tit. 1:9)

People to stay away

People to stay away: Liars (Jn. 8:44) and gossipers (Prov. 26:20)

A person to be close: S/he who is truthful and faithful (Rev. 17:14)

And doesn't stumble in what s/he says (Jam. 3:2)

“He is like the beasts that perish”

Without understanding, he is like the beasts that perish (Ps. 49:12, 20).

He who trusts in his wealth and boasts in the abundance of his riches is a fool (vv. 6, 10, 13).

Since the redemption of his soul is costly, he should cease trying forever (v. 8).

He will not live eternally but will die (v. 9). He will leave his wealth to other (vv. 10, 17).

A discerning and wise man ...

A discerning and wise man prepares for the coming years of famine of life

When he is in the years of abundance. (Gen. 41:33-36)

God who causes all things to work together for good

God even causes the consequences of my sins, that is even my sufferings,

To work together for good (Rom. 8:28) for me (Ps. 119:71)

And teaches me to do His will (143:10) and fulfills His promise to me

So that I may experience His presence (Job 42:5).

Every weight and the sin

Since Jesus took every heavy sin on the cross and die for us

We can lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us

And run with patience the race that is set before us.

(Heb. 12:1-2)

A liar who is well spoken by everyone

A person who lies whenever he opens his mouth,
Who distorts the truth and speaks lie so that people like to hear him,
So that he is well spoken by them,
The Bible says “Woe to you when all men speak well of you,” the liar.
(Lk. 6:26)

God of comfort

God of all comfort comforts us in all our affliction.
This comfort of God is effective in the patient enduring of any kind of affliction.
Thus we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction
With the comfort with which ourselves are comforted by God.
(2 Cor. 1:3-7)

All that is in our hearts?

No matter how much we love the person
We don't need to tell all that is in our hearts.
(Judg. 16:17)

Moses

The name “Moses” means “to draw out” (of water) (Exod. 2:10).

Moses thought that he saved his brethren by killing an Egyptian

When he saw the Egyptian beating “a Hebrew, one of his brethren” (vv. 11-12).

And he tried to deliver the man who had no fault

When he saw two Hebrews were fighting with each other

And said to the offender, “Why are you striking your companion?” (v. 13)

But the offender said to Moses,

“Who made you a prince or a judge over us?

Are you intending to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?” (v. 14)

So Moses was afraid that the matter had become known (v. 14)

so he fled and settled in the land of Midian (v. 15).

The one who tried to deliver was now a fugitive.

In that land of Midian (v. 15) Moses delivered seven daughters (v. 16)

from the hand of the shepherds (v. 19).

Moses, who couldn’t deliver his brethren from the Egyptian,

delivered the Midian women in the land of Midian.

God called Moses at Horeb, the mountain of God (3:1), gave him mission (v. 9) and delivered him .

God delivered him from doubt (4:1ff).

God delivered him from helplessness (vv. 10ff).

God delivered him from disobedience (vv. 13ff).

Then God delivered the Israelites from Egypt through Moses.

Then God saved us, His people, through Jesus who is the true Moses,
from Egypt that is the kingdom of Satan.

And God still uses us, Jesus’ disciples, to save God’s chosen people in this world
who have not yet entered the kingdom of God.

When Jesus Christ comes back, He will surely lead all of us, God’s people,
to the true Promised Land, Heaven.

A pastor-killer?

Although King Saul's guards weren't willing to put forth their hands
to attack the priests of the Lord (22:17),
Doeg the Edomite, the chief of Saul's shepherds (21:7)
attacked the 85 priests and killed them without any hesitation (22:18).

There still seems to be few pastor-killers like Doeg.
They don't hesitate to slander, criticize, or even condemn the Lord's servants.
That's how much they don't fear God.

The pastor must preach boldly.

When the pastor must preach boldly with reliance upon the Lord,
The listeners can be divided into two groups (Acts 14:3-4).

Those who "had been appointed to eternal life" will believe
And they will rejoice and glorify the word of the Lord (13:48).
And they will follow the Lord and His servant, the pastor (14:4).

But those who are "unworthy of eternal life" will repudiate the word of God (13:46).
And they, who don't believe, will stir up the minds of the church members
And will embitter them against the pastor (14:2, 4).

Authority given to the pastors?

The authority that the Lord gave to the pastors

Is to build the saints up (2 Cor.10:8).

The pastors should help the saints' faith to grow (v. 15).

After all, the authority that the Lord gave to the pastors is the authority of the Word.

Pastors must preach two things to the saints:

We, the pastors, must preach two things to the saints (2 Cor. 4:5):

1. We must not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord,
2. We must preach ourselves as the Lord's bond-servants for Jesus' sake.

But now maybe we are preaching not Christ Jesus as Lord but ourselves

Maybe we are pouring out our hearts that want to be the lord over the saints and/or

Maybe we are emphasizing that we should be served by the saints

With the illusion that we have become their lord.

Church members who consider their pastors as wind

The church-goers who don't have the Word of God in them

Don't acknowledge God and consider the pastors as wind.

They say, "He will do nothing! No harm will come to us" (Jere. 5:12-13).

Pastors' overuse of their power?

The pastors' overuse of their power are giving the world to ridicule them. (Cf. Neh. 5:7-9)

How would she feel when she hears it from her pastor?

Imagine a pastor said to a sister in Christ who is greatly distressed,
Praying to the Lord, weeping bitterly, thinking that she is drunk,
'How long will you make yourself drunk? Put away your beer from you'? (1 Sam. 1:9-14)
How would she feel when she hears that word from her pastor?

Pastor's calling

Go! Speak! Don't be afraid! (Jere. 1:7-8, 17)

The stubborn church members

The stubborn Israelites quickly turned aside from the way which God commanded them
And made a molten image for themselves.

To them, God told Moses to go quickly (Deut. 9:12-13, 16).

The stubborn church members quickly turn aside from the word of the Lord
And worship the idol of wealth for themselves.

Giving up my right as a pastor?

As a pastor who is sowing “spiritual things” in my church saints,
Am I not using all my right such as “material things” but endure all things
So that I “will cause no hindrance to the gospel of Christ”
But “I may win more” that is, “I may by all means save some”?
(1 Cor. 9:11-12, 18-22)

In the pastor’s heart ...

In the pastor’s heart, there is daily pressure on him of concern for all the churches.
(2 Cor. 11:28)

Secretly hiding and sinning?

Why aren't we stop sinning secretly and hiding from others?
Why are we disobeying God's commands
Even though we confess our love to God with our lips through praises and prayers?
Why are we living our Christian life
As we are bound by human teachings and traditions rather than by His Word? (Isa. 29:13)
Why are we keep on doing sinful things that are done in a dark place? (v. 15)
Why are we boldly commit sins against God and against people (Eccle. 8:11)
Thinking that even God is not watching us and He doesn't know what we do secretly
Since we deeply hide our deeds (Isa. 29:15).
But how come we aren't fearing God
That He will expose our unfruitful deeds of darkness (Eph. 5:11)
When we fear people that they will found out about what we are doing secretly in a hidden place?
The reason is because we don't truly fear God (Isa. 29:13).
The Bible says "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil" (Prov. 8:13).
If we truly fear God, we must hate evil and keep evil far away.
If we truly fear God, we will no longer hide our sins
But acknowledge our sins and abandon them
When the Holy Spirit makes us to realize our sins (28:13).

Isn't the heart already back to the world Even though the body is in the church?

The reason why God didn't lead the Israelites
By the way of the land of Philistines, even though it was near,
But let them around the way of the wilderness to the Red Sea
Was because "The people might change their minds when they see war, and return to Egypt"
(Exod. 13:17-18).
It seems that their hearts were already back to Egypt
Even though their bodies were in the wilderness (14:11-12; 16:3; 17:3; 32:1, 4, 8).

I shouldn't ignore him.

In love with a brother in Christ, I know I shouldn't ignore him but ... (Deut. 22:1-4)

I always thought I couldn't ...

All along, I always thought I couldn't do it

But God said, 'I will do it'.

At that time, I confessed, 'Amen, I believe that the Lord will do it'.

But as 'my time' passes,

I began to say to myself again 'I can't'.

I couldn't wait for 'God's time' anymore.

Now I can't believe what God said, 'I will do it'.

So I decided to do it 'my way' and moved onto action.

Then I got 'what I want'.

So now I have confidence that I can do it too.

But that wasn't 'what God wanted'.

I couldn't wait for 'God's time'.

I couldn't believe what God said, 'I will do it'.

Nevertheless, God did as He said 'I will do it' in His time.

The reason is because

"God is not a man, that He should lie";

Rather He is God who surely does what He has spoken.

(Num. 23:19)

Helpless Christians

If we don't live holy and separated life in this world
But mix ourselves with the people in this world and have mixed faith
Then we have no choice but to be helpless Christians.
(Hos. 7:8-9)

Incompetence, helplessness, ineligibility

Pastors need to realize thoroughly
How incompetent, helpless and ineligible they are
Even through adversity and crisis.

Being dishonored

Even Jesus was dishonored, then of course I should be dishonored too. Haha (Jn. 8:49)

Truth or anger?

He who speaks truth tells what is right
But a fool's anger is known at once.
(Prov. 12:16-17)

What am I boasting about?

I want to boast the power of Christ and let that power dwell in me
By gladly boasting about my weaknesses.
(2 Cor. 12:9)

What are we looking at?

We must look at the eternal things which are not seen
Rather than the temporal things which are seen.
(2 Cor. 4:18)

What is different?

Satan made Paul and Silas to be put into the inner prison (Acts 16:24).

God cast Jonah into the deep (Jon. 2:3).

What is different?

While God's purpose for Jonah was to make disobedient Jonah

To offer prayer of thanksgiving in his affliction (vv. 1-2)

And to confess that "Salvation is from the Lord" (v. 9),

Satan's purpose for Paul and Silas was to make them

Not to proclaim "the way of salvation" (Acts 16:17).

Nevertheless, God who was in control of the Satan's work

Not only delivered Paul and Silas from the inner prison (vv. 24, 26)

When they prayed and sang hymns of praise to God (v. 25),

But also saved the jailer who tried to kill himself (v. 27)

And he and all his household were baptized (vv. 31-34).

Our God is the God of salvation!

What is better?

It is much better to give something to drink to our neighbor with God's love (Mt. 25:34-40)

Than to "give all my possessions to feed the poor"

And to surrender our bodies to be burned with His love (1 Cor. 13:3).

What is better?

It is better for us to handle the heavy task with those who we trust
Rather than to try to handle it well by ourselves. (Exod. 18:18, 22)

What is beneficial, what is harmful?

We need to be concerned about our health because it is the body that God gave us as a gift.
As stewards of the Lord, we must faithfully manage our health.
In order to do that, we first need to know and separate
what is beneficial and what is harmful to our bodies.
Then we must abstain what is harmful and hold fast to what is beneficial to our bodies.

Likewise, we must be very concern about our spiritual health.
And we must be responsible for managing our spiritual health faithfully.
In order to do that, we first need to know and separate
what is beneficial and what is harmful to our spiritual health.
Then we must hold fast what is beneficial and abstain what is harmful
As we count them as rubbish (Phil. 3:7-8).
We must do this for “the sake of Christ” (v. 7).

“But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good;
abstain from every form of evil.”
(1 Thess. 5:21-22)

What are you hoping for the fulfillment?

The false and the foolish prophets prophesize from their own inspiration,
By seeing falsehood and lying divination
And make people to hope for the fulfillment of their word (Ezek. 13:2,3, 6).
What are you hoping for the fulfillment?

What goes up to God?

Since our cry for help due to hard work goes up to God (Exod. 2:23)
Won't our wickedness go up before God as well?
(Jon. 1:2)

Even though I know it's useless ...

Why can't I turn away
Even though I know it's useless and futile
If I persist in doing evil, I will be swept away.
(1 Sam. 12:21, 25)

In silence

This Monday morning, the phrase “in silence” came into my mind.
I thought about I should fulfill the mission that the Lord gave me “in silence”.
More than that, I thought about I should gaze “in silence”
How the Lord is faithfully fulfilling His promises to such unfaithful sinner like me.
(Gen. 24:21)

If we are fearful and anxious about the future ...

If we are fearful and anxious about the future situation that hasn't happened yet,
Then it can be hard not only to ourselves but to the loved ones around us.
We must not lean on our own understanding but trust our sovereign God. (Prov. 3:5-6)
And we must walk by faith and not by sight. (2 Cor. 5:7)

Since God's salvation in the future has already been done in his trusting heart

He who has the steadfast of mind trusts in “an everlasting Rock”, the Lord forever (Isa. 26:3, 4).
And since God's salvation in the future has already been done
in his trusting heart as he waits for God of salvation,
he will rejoice and be glad in His salvation (25:9).

The sluggard

The sluggard doesn't have ability to evaluate himself.

Therefore, he overestimates himself. He thinks he is wise. He is proud (Prov. 26:16).

As a result, he will fall into his own trap (28:10).

The foolish rich ...

The foolish rich trusts in his wealth (Ps. 49:6, 13).

He boasts in the abundance of his riches (v. 6).

His inner thought is that he should live on eternally (v. 9) and his house is forever (v. 11).

He cannot redeem his brother (v. 7). He cannot redeem his own soul (v. 8).

He will see that he will leave his wealth to others (v. 10).

He is like the beast that perishes (vv. 12, 20).

A foolish man ...

A foolish man blames on others, even God

When he goes through the consequence of his wrong choice

Instead of trying to be responsible for what he chooses to do (Prov. 19:3).

The reason is because the foolish man has lost the ability to turn the responsibility to himself.

A fool

A fool has closed mind so he only knows himself.

And since he is selfish, he opens his mouth

And delights in airing his own opinions.

(Prov. 18:2)

Honor is not fitting for a fool.

Honoring a fool who is wise in his own eyes

(for example, entrusting an important position in the church)

Is like tying a stone in a sling and isn't fitting.

(Prov. 26:1, 8 12)

[What would happen if we try to put a stone in the sling while we are trying to throw the stone?

What would happen if we entrust the important position?]

The mind of fools ...

The minds of fools set the minds on the beginning instead of the ending

And have useless sorrow instead of godly sorrow.

(Eccle. 7:1-4; 2 Cor. 7:10)

The lips of a fool vs. the tongue of the wise

While the lips of a fool speak harsh word and crush the other person's spirit
The tongue of the wise heals the wound.
(Prov. 15:1, 4)

Let us pray for forgiveness in advance.

At least I want the one who did me wrong realize what he did wrong to me
Even though he doesn't ask me for forgiveness.
But Jesus prayed to Father God in heaven on the cross,
"Father, forgive them" (Lk. 23:34),
His people, the Jews, who exclaimed 'Crucify Jesus'
And who didn't know how great their sins were.

The Spirit-filled deacon Stephen prayed, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them!",
The Jews who were stoning him (Acts 7:60).

Both of them forgave in advance those who didn't realize their sins.

If we realize that the Lord has forgiven our many sins in advance,
Then we can offer prayer for forgiveness in advance for those who did wrong to us
Even though they don't realize what they did wrong to us.

Even though she was beautiful ...

Although beautiful of form and face Rachel (Gen. 29:17) loved by Jacob,
The second son of beautiful mother Rebekah (26:7)
More than her older sister Leah whose eyes were weak (29:17),
She didn't have a child.
So she became jealous of her sister Leah,
She wanted Jacob to be in the place of God
And said to him, "Give me children, or else I die" (30:1, 2)
Even though Rachel was beautiful, she was a woman with jealousy and fierce temperament
Instead of having good character.

God's grace in making us low

We should thank God because it is God's grace that He makes us low (Ezek. 29:14-15)
So that we can solely depend on God
And never again to be confident of ourselves
And don't remind our sin (v. 16).

Hateful heart, but slippery lips?

I shouldn't become a person who covers my hateful heart without changing my face
And use my slippery lips to speak a honeyed word
That covers my own evil heart. (Prov. 26:23)

Those who hated are now afraid of being hated

Joseph's ten older brothers, who hated Joseph when he was 17 years old (Gen. 37:2-4).
Were afraid that Joseph might bear a grudge against them and might pay them back in full,
Thinking that Joseph might hate them after their father Jacob died
When Joseph was 56 years old (50:15, 19).

[Cf. #1: Joseph had two dreams when he was 17 years old
And became a prime minister of Egypt when he was 30 years old.
And when he was 39 years old (7 years of harvest + 2 years of famine),
he revealed himself to his brothers.
Then he brought his father Jacob and all his families from the land of Canaan to Egypt.
Jacob lived 17 more years in Egypt and died at the age of 147 (47:27).
Therefore, Joseph's age was 56 years old (39 years old + 17 years) when his father Jacob died.]

Cf. #2: Jacob spent 17 years with Joseph, the oldest son of his beloved wife Rachel
(Joseph was 17 years old) and met Joseph when he was 130 years old
and lived 17 more years in Egypt with Joseph until his death at the age of 147].

Believe and obey

Those who believe in Jesus, the Son of God, have eternal life
And those who have eternal life experience heaven
By obeying Jesus' twofold command (Love God & Love neighbors). (Jn. 3:36)

Therefore, in order to achieve heaven in our heart, in our family and in our church,
We must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and obey His twofold command.

Let's remember that faith without obedience is dead faith (Jam. 2:26)
And obedience without faith is meaningless obedience.

Some will believe, but some won't

When we teach concerning our hope Jesus Christ with all openness, unhindered
Some will be persuaded and believe but some won't believe. (Acts 28:20, 23, 24, 31)

The relationship between faith and joy

Progress of faith is progress of joy! (Phil. 1:25)

Those who pray by faith ...

Those who pray earnestly to God by faith believe that
God will send "a heavy shower" even seeing "a cloud as small as man's hand"
(1 Kgs. 18:44, 45)

When we suffer because of our faith ...

When we suffer because of our faith in Jesus, our consolation is
That we suffer with Christ (Rom. 8:17)
And that no one can separate us from the love of Christ (vv. 35, 39).

We must see it with the eyes of faith.

Although with our physical eyes,
It is well watered everywhere in Sodom and Gomorrah, that looked like “the garden of the Lord”,
There are God’s promises to be fulfilled in future
In the garden of the Lord that we see with the eyes of faith
With our eyes of faith, the garden of the Lord. (Gen. 13:10, 14-17)

"the same spirit of faith"

We who have the same spirit of faith speak because we believe and act in faith. (2 Cor 4:13; 5:7)

The testing of faith

Endurance must be produced through the testing of our faith. (Jam. 1:3)

He who has strong faith ...

Those who have strong faith in the church should love those who have weak faith and edify them.
They shouldn’t be proud, thinking that they know something
and boast about their knowledge (1 Cor. 8:1-2).
Also those who have strong faith shouldn’t become a stumbling block
to those who have weak faith by their liberty (v. 9).
They shouldn’t sin against those who have weak faith by wounding their conscience (v. 12).
It is to “sin against Christ” (v. 12).

We who are strong ought to bear The weaknesses of those without strengthen.

How can we who are strong bear the weaknesses of those without strengthen
Please them for their good, to their edification?
(Rom. 15:1-2)

First, we should accept those who are weak in faith, just as Christ also accepted us (v. 7).
Also, we must not pass judgement and condemn those who are weak in faith (2:1).

And we shouldn't look down and pass judgement
on disputable matters with those who are weak in faith (14:1, 3).

We should please those who are weak in faith for their good,
To build them up (15:2).

We should give them hope
Through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures (v. 4).

Therefore we who are strong in faith and those who are weak in faith
Should have a spirit of unity among ourselves as we follow Christ Jesus (v. 5).

As a result,
We should glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ
With one heart and mouth (v. 6).

Those who are mature in faith ...

Those who are mature in faith don't cause those who are weak in faith to stumble
(1 Cor. 8:13).

Those who are mature in faith try not to be a hindrance to those who are weak in faith.

Those who are mature in faith don't use their right but endure all things
So that they won't cause no hindrance to the gospel of Christ (9:12).

A mature person of faith ...

As a person well suited for running the race of faith
A mature person of faith knows the law of God
And runs the race of faith according to that law.
(Phil. 3:15)

“their unbelief and hardness of heart”

Our unbelief and hardness of heart that the Lord reproaches
Don't believe the word of God.
(Mk. 16:14)

Without faith, we cannot obey God's command.

Without faith, we cannot obey God's command.

God commanded Abram to go forth from his country Ur (Gen. 12:1; cf.: 11:28).

And God gave him the word of His promise (12:2-3).

Abram believed in His promise word and went forth from his country Ur (v. 4).

We must go forth with faith.

Even if it looks comfortable, familiar and good to us,

We must leave by faith if the Lord commands us to leave.

By faith, Abram left Ur in following the word of God

And went into the land of Canaan as God showed him (v. 5).

However, when he went into the land of Canaan there was famine instead of harvest (v. 10).

He could complain to God, 'God, why didn't You let me stay at my country Ur.

Why did you command to leave Ur and go into the land of Canaan where there is famine?'

But Abram didn't complain to God.

There are many times we cannot understand about God's guidance with our understanding.

That's why we disobey God's command by relying on our own understanding and not trusting God (Prov. 3:5).

In disbelief, we disobey God's command of 'Leave and go'.

As a result, we aren't experiencing the promise of God's blessing.

Without faith, we cannot follow God's Word.

If we look at the attitude of treating those whose faith is weak ...

He who thinks that his faith is strong
But who doesn't accept those whose faith is weak
But passes judgement on disputable matters
Is not a mature in faith.
(Cf.: Rom. 14:1-3)

Evidence that faith is growing?

Evidence that our faith is growing is
That in the community (the church)
Our love toward each other is enriched.
(1 Thess. 1:3)

What is faith?

Faith is hope
That God will surely fulfill the promise that He gave to us
Even in the midst of very pessimistic circumstances.
(Cf. Heb. 11:1-3)

Faith that Hopes Against All Hope

[Short Word Meditation (5)]

James Kim

Faith that hopes against all hope

Faith that hopes against all hope believes and be persuaded
That God has power to do what He has promised,
Without wavering through unbelief
Even in the fact of humanly impossible situation. (Rom. 4:18-21)

“false doctrines” that are contrary to “sound teaching”

We, the Bible teachers, must not teach “false doctrines”
that are contrary to “sound doctrine” (1 Tim. 1:3, 10).
If we teach “false doctrines”, then those who learn from us will turn aside to “fruitless discussion” (v. 6)
And will “not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ,
and with the doctrine conforming to godliness” (6:3).
And they will have “a form of godliness” but deny “its power” (2 Tim. 3:5).
If they pay attention to “false doctrines” (1 Tim. 1:4) and advocate them (6:3),
Then they are conceit and understand nothing (v. 4).
And this will give rise to mere speculation rather than furthering the administration of God (1:4).
In other words, they will pay attention to false doctrines and will have a morbid interest in controversial
questions and “disputes about words, out of which arise envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions,
and constant friction between men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, who suppose that
godliness is a means of gain” (6:4-5).
Isn’t our church like this?

We the Bible teachers must teach the “sound doctrine”.
We must teach the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the doctrine conforming to godliness (6:3).
This is “according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God,
with which I (we) have been entrusted” (1:11).
And “the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith” (v. 5).

If we don't learn "sound doctrine" well ...

If we Christians don't learn "sound doctrine" well (Tit. 2:1),
Then we can't be sound in speech (v. 8) and can't live sound life.

Because we aren't agreeing to the sound words ...

If we don't agree with "sound words",
"those of our Lord Jesus Christ,
and with the doctrine conforming to godliness" (1 Tim. 6:3)
then we will hold to "a form of godliness"
but will deny its power (2 Tim. 3:5)
and will suppose that godliness is a means of gain (1 Tim. 6:5).

With good judgment, we have to make a right decision and act ...

In the church, those who have strong faith and those who have weak faith
Shouldn't judge and criticize each other without respecting each other's conscience
And condemn each other, thinking that they are irresponsible.
Instead, they should make a right decision with good judgment and act
By positively thinking about how to overcome each other's differences and by serving each other
So that they may keep the unity of the church.

(Rom 14:13)

I am like a Pharisee

I am like a Pharisee

Who don't know that I am a sinner

But know that other person is a 'sinner'.

Although outwardly I am with that 'sinner'

In my heart, I am keeping the 'sinner' far away.

(Lk. 7:36-48)

Applause rather than persecution

"Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ will be persecuted" (2 Tim. 3:12).

But now we like to be applauded rather than persecuted.

God will surely deliver us.

The God of salvation

Who delivered us in the past when we were burdened excessively,

beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of life,

Is delivering us even in the midst of life's greatest crisis,

Which seems that we have the sentence of death within ourselves now,

Will surely deliver us from so great a peril of death in the future.

(2 Cor. 1:10).

Our God of salvation is the same yesterday and today and forever.

(Heb. 13:8)

“He is able to humble those who walk in pride.”

Our ‘Towel of Babel’

That is thinking that ‘I did it with my own strength and power’

Will surely fall.

The Lord will surely humble us when we walk in pride.

(Cf. Dan. 4:30, 37)

God will surely make them to return!

The God of covenant

Will surely make the children of covenant

To return to the Promised Land.

(Cf. Gen. 31:3; 32:9)

**“blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of
what had been spoken to her by the Lord.”**

Zacharias and Elizabeth, the parents of John the Baptist,
Were both righteous in the sight of God (Lk. 1:5-6).
They walked blamelessly in all the commandments and requirements of the Lord (v. 6).
But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren,
And they were both advanced in years (v. 7).

Nevertheless, they didn't give up and kept praying to God (v. 13).
And they received the answer of their prayer from God.
The angel appeared to Zacharias and said to him:
“your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will give him the name John” (v. 13).

Why didn't God give a child to the righteous couple until they got old
who have been obeying all the commands of God without any fault?
Why did God promise to give them the child when they were old?
Why did God give Isaac to Abraham when he was 100 years old
Even though He promised him the child when Abraham was 75 years old?
(Gen. 15:5, 21:2-3)
Why isn't God fulfilling His promises to each one of us,
That He gave to each one of us?

There are two lessons to learn:

First, don't give up and ask God (Lk. 1:13, 18:1).
Second, believe that God will surely fulfill His promises to us (1:45).

“And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment
of what had been spoken to her by the Lord.” (Lk. 1:45)

God will surely bring us back!

Although God hides His face from us for a little while
Because of our wickedness
He eventually will bring to us health and healing
And will reveal to us an abundance of peace and truth.
God will surely bring us back and will rebuild us as we were at first.
He will cleanse us from all our iniquity by which we have sinned against Him
And He will pardon all our iniquities by which we have sinned against Him.
We Christians will be to Him a name of joy, praise and glory before all the nations of the earth.
All the nations will hear of all the good that He does for us
And they will fear and tremble because of all the good and all the peace that God makes for us.
(Jere. 33:4-9)

I need to know how to pay back the love I received.

I must not forget a person who has given me love when I was having the most difficult time.
So when I get better off, I need to show my love to the person who gave me love.

When the Lord used me to help someone in trouble,
I should try not to be burden to him
When he tries to help me
When his situation got better from his hardships and difficulties.

(2 Sam. 19:31-39)

Betrayal

If a bride has an affair with a man other than her bridegroom,
Then the bridegroom is forced to feel betrayed by his bride who has an affair.
Because the Israelites worshiped their idols other than God,
Their God felt betrayed by them (Ezek. 14:5).
Jesus, the Bridegroom, feels betrayal
As He see His bride, the Church, idolized Money and serve it rather than Jesus.
Nevertheless, the Bridegroom Jesus is calling us, making us to confess and repent our sins
Because He wants to forgive our sins.
And Jesus recapturing the hearts of His people, who have all deserted Him for their idols (v. 5).

“a stubborn and rebellious heart”

The church members with “a stubborn and rebellious heart” don’t realize
That their iniquities have turned good things from the Lord away
And their sins have withheld good from them.
(Jere. 5:23-25)

We shouldn't fall into a behind coordinator's trap ...

When we look at the story of the Israelites
Who played the harlot with the daughters of Moab
And sacrificed to their gods and ate and bowed down to their gods in Numbers 25,
It seems that the story has nothing to do with Balaam in Numbers chapters 22-24.

But when we look at Number 31,
The Scriptures say that the people who made the Israelites to commit sins against God
in the matter of Peor were the Midianite women “through the counsel of Balaam” (31:15-16).

But in Revelations 2:14,
The Scriptures says “... because you have there some who hold the teaching of Balaam,
who kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel,
to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit acts of immorality.”

Behind the matter of Peor, where the Israelites played the harlot and worshiped the idols,
There was the counsel of Balaam. Balaam was a stumbling block to Israel.
He was a behind coordinator.

Eventually Balaam was killed with the sword
As God commanded Moses to take full vengeance for the sons of Israel on the Midianites.
(Num. 31:2, 7-8)

Don't forsake your spouse.

We must not forsake our spouse.

We must know that it is evil and bitter for us to forsake our spouse. (Jere. 2:19)

I want to learn the love that forsakes.

The heart of Father God who loves us until forsaking His only begotten Son Jesus Christ on the cross,

The heart of Jesus Christ who loves us until being forsaken by His beloved Father God on the cross

As He cried out to God, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (Mt. 27:46)

The indwelling Holy Spirit enables us to understand little by little

The heart of Father God and the heart of the Son Jesus

And imitate the heart of the Lord.

Despite being rejected ...

Despite being rejected by the Israelites

Who asked for a king to judge them even though God was their king,

God listened to their voice (1 Sam. 8:5-9).

The Son of God Jesus obeyed the Word of Father God even death on a cross (Phil. 2:8)

While he was being forsaken by His own Father God (Mt. 27:46).

Also, Jesus was crucified and died

As the Israelite wanted (Lk. 23:23).

When we feel like we were forsaken ...

When we are born and being raised,
There is pain when we are forsaken by the most important people, our parents.
When we are grown up and get married,
There is pain when we are forsaken by our beloved spouse.
When we are old,
There is pain when we are forsaken by our children.
In this life on earth,
There is pain being forsaken by our loved ones.
Even the pain of being forsaken by our loved ones is hard and painful to endure,
How painful will it be when we feel
That we have been forsaken by the Lord of love?
(Judg. 6:3; Ps. 22:1)

God will multiply

God will multiply the disciples of Jesus Christ and the Lord's servants who serve the Lord.
(Jere. 33:22)

But the more they are multiplying, the more they are sinning against God.
So God will change their glory into shame.
(Hos. 4:6-7)

When they grow large, increase and multiply ...

The land of Canaan was “a good land” (Deut. 8:7, 10)

And “a land where bread will not be scarce” (v. 9).

When the Israelites would enter that land,

They would lack nothing (v. 9) and would eat and be satisfied

And would build fine houses and would settle down (v. 12).

And there their herds and flocks would grow large and their silver and gold would increase

And all they had would be multiplied (v. 13).

But at that time, God was concerned about their heart would become proud

And they would forget the Lord their God (v. 14).

Perhaps, it would have been better for the Israelites to stay in “the vast and dreadful desert” (v. 14).

It seems so easy for our hearts to be proud when we grow large, increase and multiply.

When they multiply?

When the worldly members in the church multiply,

The more their sins will fill the church and the world. (Cf. Gen. 6: 1, 5)

Lay aside the old self!

We must lay aside our old self.

Even though we once walked in the old self, now we must put them all aside.

We must lay aside to “immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.”

(Col. 3:5-9)

Thing that shouldn't change and thing that should be changed

We should be able to clearly distinguish between the thing that shouldn't change and the thing that should change:

The gospel of Christ must never change (Gal. 1:7).

But our life that isn't worthy of His gospel must be changed (Phil. 1:27).

Unchanging hard appearance

The one whose hard appearance is still unchanged is because of his own folly (Eccle. 8:1).

Will be changed

When we deny ourselves and take up our own cross and follow Jesus (Mt. 16:24)

Our hearts will be changed into the heart of Jesus Christ (Phil. 1:8).

More important than being healed ...?

More important than being healed is the receive forgiven of my sins

Which is the cause of my sickness.

If I continue to commit the same sin even after I got healed,

Then the worse may happen to me (Jn. 5:14).

We who are sick need the doctor Jesus.

What God wants from us is mercy.

However, what we want to give to God is worship (Mt. 9:13).

And our worship to God is

Worship without obedience to the Word of God (1 Sam. 15:22),

And without mercy that God wants from us (Mt. 9:13).

Our life without mercy is like that of a Pharisee.

We think that we are healthy (v. 12).

We are seeking to justify by law (Gal.5:4).

That's why we think that we don't need the doctor Jesus (Mt. 9:12).

That's why don't understand why Jesus reclined at the table in the house
with "many tax collectors and sinners" (vv. 10-11).

The reason is because we think we are different from them (Lk. 18:11)

And we exalt ourselves (v. 14)

And with a spiritual sense of superiority and view others with contempt (v. 9)

We who aren't compassionate to "many tax collectors and sinners"
whom the Lord is compassionate

But emphasize the worship to God,

are the ones who are sick (Mt. 9:10, 12).

We must realize that we are the ones who are sick

And we need Jesus (v. 12).

"For My own sake, for My own sake, I will act"

Our Lord God teaches us to profit,
Who leads us in the way we should go (Isa. 48:17).
But we don't pay attention to God's commandments and disobey His commandments (v. 18).
But for the sake of His name, He delays His wrath (v. 9).
And for His praise, God restrains it for us in order not to cut us off (v. 9).
Instead, God tests us and refines us, who are disobedient to God
who sin and not repent our sins, in the furnace of affliction (v. 10).
God says, "For My own sake, for My own sake, I will act" (v. 11).

God sees, hears and is concerned

God certainly sees our sufferings, hears our cries and are concerned about our sufferings.
Therefore, God comes to us and delivers us. (Exod. 3:7-8)

A man with the same heart as Boaz

Ruth's mother-in-law, Naomi said like this to Ruth about Boaz's heart towards Ruth:
"Wait, my daughter, until you know how the matter turns out;
for the man will not rest until he has settled it today." (Ruth 3:18)

I think it's a great blessing to have a man like Boaz as a friend in the Lord.

An artificial way is starting to show

When I can no longer endure by faith and hold on to the word of promise that God has given me
Then I keep on trying to solve my problems in an artificial way that I can see with my own eyes.
(Cf. Gen. 16:1-2)

Let us live by faith and not by sight.

If we live by sight (2 Cor. 5:7), then we will loose heart (4:16).
The reason is because our outer man is decaying (v. 16; Cf. 5:1, 4).
If we look at the things which are seen (4:18) then we will groan and are burdened (5:2, 4)
due to our light and momentary affliction (4:17). That's why we must live by faith (5:7).
Although we are wasting away outwardly, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day (4:16).
Also, our light and momentary affliction will produce for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all
comparison (v. 17). When the earthly tent which is our house is torn down, we have a building from God,
a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens (5:1).
So "while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen"
Because "the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal" (4:18).
And we long to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven (5:2).
When we are clothed with our dwelling from heaven, our mortal will be swallowed up by life (v. 4).
God who prepared us for this very purpose gave us the Spirit as a pledge (v. 5).
Therefore we are always live with good courage (v. 6).
So "we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the
Lord. Therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him" (vv. 8-
9). Let us live by faith and not by sight (v. 7).

We must not see and take her.

We must not see a beautiful married woman (2 Sam. 11:2). We shouldn't inquire about her (v. 3).
We must not take her from her husband (12:9).

Blessed is the man ...

Blessed is the man who delights in the law of the Lord (Ps. 1:2).

His delight is to hear the word of the Lord's unfailing love (143:8).

Therefore, he waits for the word of the Lord (130:5) and runs toward it (119:32).

And he obeys the word, trembles and doesn't sin (4:4) while walking the path of righteous.

He treasures His word in his heart (119:11) and keeps his way pure (v. 9).

He wins the spiritual battle with the Word of God.

Therefore, he makes the Word of God his possession (v. 56).

Blessed in the man who keeps the Word of God.

Blessed is the man who doesn't rely on people in any persecution and adversity

But rely on the Lord as he hopes in Him.

In fearful situation, he waits in silence for God only (62:5) when no one can help him.

He casts all his cares upon Him.

And he cries out to the God of salvation who saves him.

He prays urgently to God, 'come quickly, O my God, to help me' (71:12).

He confesses "But I am in prayer" and humbly asks his desire to the Lord (109:4).

In doing so, he commits himself to prayer as he says "I will awaken the dawn" (57:8; 108:2).

The reason he does so is because his hope is always in the Lord (39:7).

The reason is because he firmly believes that God will surely listen and hears the voice of his prayer (66:19).

Therefore, he determines that "I will call on him as long as I live" (116:2).

Blessed man commits himself to pray to God as long as he lives

Because he understands God's great love in answering his prayers

And God's abundant grace in forgiving his sins.

Blessed man gives thanks to God wholeheartedly (9:1; 11:1; 138:1).

He gives thanks to God because of His saving love and grace

By not refusing the desire of the humble (10:17) but listening and delivering him.

And he gives thanks to God for lifting up his head (3:3; 110:7)

and had dealt with him according to his righteousness (18:20)

He gives thanks to God for giving strengthen and power to him (68:35).
He is so grateful to the Lord because His love endures forever (136:8, 9, 14, 15, 16).
He knows that God's thoughts toward him is too numerous to count (40:5).
He gives thanks to God for making his suffering beneficial to him,
Enabling him to experience His strengthen in his weakness, and for sustaining him (54:4; 119:116).
Blessed man who gives thanks to God like this doesn't and can't forget all God's benefits (103:2).
Therefore, he confesses to the Lord:
"I love You, O Lord, my strength" (18:1).

Blessed man makes God the greatest joy.
For him, God is his joy and his delight (43:4).
He dwells in the presence of God in fellowship with the God of his exceeding joy.
And he is satisfied with the Lord alone and rejoices by the Lord
Who has made him the head of the nations (18:43).
He gives thanks to God because of God's unchanging eternal love,
Having countless thoughts towards him,
Pleasing with his prosperity,
Strengthening his way,
Strengthens him,
Guiding him until death (48:14).

Therefore he praises God with thanksgiving.
He is committed to give thanks to God wholeheartedly and praise Him forever.

Blessed man praise the Lord until his last breath (150:6).

Adversity than blessing

It is much better to receive adversity from God (Job 2:10)
Than receive disguised blessing from Satan.

The qualification of a preacher is not coming from ourselves.

As the Lord reproached his disciples for their unbelief and hardness of heart,
He told them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.” (Mk. 16:14-15)
The qualification of a preacher isn’t coming from ourselves,
But our qualification is from God. (2 Cor. 3:5)

"the hope of the gospel" & "the hope of glory"

We should continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast,
And not moved away from “the hope of the gospel” and “the hope of glory”,
Which is Christ in you. (Col. 1:23, 27)

Blessed?

Mary was a blessed woman. The reason is because she believed that there would be a fulfillment of what had been spoken to her by the Lord (Lk. 1:45).

What the Lord said to her was that the virgin Mary (v. 27) would conceive in her womb and bore a son, and she should name Him Jesus (v. 31).

It was the word that the Holy Spirit would come upon her,
and the power of the Most High would overshadow her,

And for that reason the holy Child should be called the Son of God (v. 35).

The holy Child’s name is “Jesus” and He would be great, would be called the Son of the Most High;
“and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end” (vv. 32-33).

Mary believed and prayed that there would be a fulfillment of what had been spoken to her by the Lord (vv. 38, 45). Are we blessed in the sight of the Lord?

The blessed man

He whose delight is in the law of the Lord
and who meditates on his law day and night is the blessed man (Ps. 1:2).
This blessed man doesn't walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners
Or sit in the seat of mockers (v.1).
The blessed man bears fruits and whatever he does prospers (v. 3).

"an example"

The Old Testament Israelites who were destroyed in the wilderness
as "an example" for us and our instruction,
Upon the ends of the ages have come
so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved (1 Cor. 10:5, 6, 11).
We shouldn't be idolaters (v. 7). We must not act immorality (v. 8).
We shouldn't try the Lord (v. 9). And we shouldn't grumble (v. 10).

We need an example.

Not only that we need an example of salvation but also we need an example of destruction.
(1 Cor. 10:5-11)

Kind word, tender heart?

As love of God, God allures us and brings us into the wilderness and speaks kindly to us
When we sin and don't repent (Hos. 2:14).

Our hearts should become tender when we listen to the Word of God
So that we may humble ourselves before God and wept and repent (2 Chron. 22:19).

The reason why we force ourselves to sin?

The reason why we force ourselves to disobey God's commandments (1 Sam. 13:12-23) is
Because the sword of the Spirit (Eph. 6:17) is not sharp but dull (1 Sam. 13:21).

For children who fight with their parents' inheritance

When children fight with their parents' inheritance, they must remember this word of Jesus:
"Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed;
for not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions."
(Lk. 12:13-15)

The parent's heart

The parent's heart is to be afraid that harm might come to their beloved child (Gen. 42:4).

The couple's quarrel is ...

Most of the time, the couple's quarrel starts with something very small and gets bigger and bigger.

"Starting a quarrel is like breaching a dam" (Prov. 17:14).

When the water starts to leak from the dam, we need to stop the leaking the dam quickly.

The couple must drop the matter before a dispute breaks out (v. 14).

Why don't they drop the matter? It is because of their desires that battle within them (Jam. 4:1).

There is lust in these desires that battle within us (v. 2).

If that lust is not being satisfied, then we have no choice but to become peace-breakers

By disobeying God's commands in discontent and complaint.

The couple who are driven by these desires are the ones who love a quarrel

And the ones who raise their door for destruction (Prov. 17:19).

We must repent.

The married couples should do as they do to the Lord.

The husband loves his wife because he loves the Lord,

Even his wife isn't lovely, even he doesn't like her and hates her.

The wife respects her husband because she respects the Lord,

Even her husband isn't respectable, even she doesn't like her and hates her.

(Eph. 5:33)

The Father's heart

The Father's heart is not sparing His own Son. (Rom. 8:32)

Instead of trying to get rich ...

We should strive to walk in our integrity, rather than trying to get rich. (Prov. 19:1, 28:6)

We don't have enough, outrageously lacking.

Thinking numerically, it's impossible that God's promise to us can be fulfilled.

With our power, we don't have enough, outrageously lacking
to make that impossible thing to happen (Num. 11:21-22).

God's word to us is "Is the LORD'S power limited?"

Now you shall see whether My word will come true for you or not" (v. 23).

It seems that not lacking in anything is not necessarily a good thing.

A place called "Laish" in Judges 18 lacked nothing

And the people in that land were living in safety, unsuspecting, secure and prosperous (v. 7).

It was a spacious land that lacks nothing whatever (v. 10).

However, the Danites set up for themselves the idols and worshiped them (v. 30).

It seems that not lacking in anything is not necessarily a good thing.

In order for those who want to get rich not to wander away from the faith ...

In order for those who want to get rich not to wander away from the faith,
They should know that their desires can be harmful, covetousness can deceive them,
And be alert not to fall into temptation of loving money when they make more money.
They must have heart of contentment which is a means of great gain for their godliness.
(1 Tim. 6:6-10)

“A fool always loses his temper”

A fool always loses his temper, but a wise man holds it back. (Prov. 29:11)

We need to control our anger

Instead of manifesting our foolishness by giving full vent to our anger,
It is better to control our anger and demonstrate our wisdom.
(Prov. 29:11)

We must express our concern clearly with clear purpose.

With our concern and clear purpose in helping our children to continue to fear God,
We can be misunderstood by our families while we try to work out our clear purpose carefully.
Then we must express our concern clearly with clear purpose
So that when our families hear our words, it can please them. (Josh. 22:24-30)

Blessing without discernment

Aren't we, the pastors, blessing so many people without discernment? (Gen. 27:23)

Let us not boast beyond our measure.

Let us not boast beyond our measure (2 Cor. 11:13, 15). Let us boast in the Lord (v. 17).
Let us become Jesus' disciples whom the Lord commends (v. 18)
Instead we commend ourselves (vv. 12, 18).

We must not go too far.

We must not go too far in our thoughts, in our words, and in our actions.
(Num. 16:3, 7)

I shouldn't go too far.

Without knowing that I went too far in trying to set myself above the another person,
I told that person that he went too far. (Num. 16:3, 7)

What could be the start of a dispute ...

What could be the beginning of a dispute,
Let's make it a chance of harmony and unity in the Lord
(As I meditated on Joshua 22)

In order not to have an affair ...

In order not to have an affair, we must keep a path far away from any person beside our spouse
(Prov. 5:8), Especially if that person has potential to break into the gap in our relationship with our spouse.

We must guard ourselves from covetousness (Exod. 20:17).

If we have covetousness, we won't be captivated by our spouse' love (Prov. 5:19),

But we will keep on looking at another person (Eccle. 1:8)

and will think about her/him and listen to her/him. We must forgive each other (Col. 3:13).

As the Lord forgives us, we must forgive and accept our spouses.

If we don't and refuse to forgive each other, then we won't be satisfied with our spouses and our complaints will increase so that our relationship will get worse and worse.

Then in the end, we are likely to be interested in other person than our spouses.

We must not choose the comfortable way of solving our marital problem such as, just pass or leave them alone, Rather than trying very hard to resolve that problems in the Lord.

Justifying our disobedience?

When Prophet Jonah was disobeying God's command and was fleeing to Tarshish
And went down to Joppa, he found a ship which was going to Tarshish (Jonah 1:2-3).
I think Jonah could justify his disobedience
By saying 'This is God's will for me to go to Joppa'
When he found the ship that was going to Tarshish.
.

The unbelievers are more terrified Than the disobedient pastor?

The servant of God, Prophet Jonah, wasn't terrified
When he was disobeying God's command and running away from the Lord.
But the unbelievers Gentile sailors were terrified
When they found out that Jonah was running away from the Lord.
(Jonah 1:3, 10)

Need to obey even after being insulted by the disobedient people ...

He who obeys the Lord can be insulted by the disobedient people.

This is extremely reasonable and natural.

We need to get used to it. (Cf. Mt. 27:39, 44)

God who makes the word more certain through unbelievers

Our God makes His word of promise more certain even through unbelievers.

God told Gideon “Surely I will be with you, and you shall defeat Midian as one man” (Judg. 6:16).

In other words, God promised Gideon that He would deliver Israel through Gideon (v. 36).

More specifically, God told Gideon

"I will deliver you with the 300 men who lapped and will give the Midianites into your hands" (7:7).

Nevertheless, it seemed that Gideon couldn't believe His promise word completely,

And had no conviction of victory in the war against Midian (vv. 10-11).

But he was able to believe His promised word and to have assurance of victory (deliverance)

After he obeyed God and went down against the Midian camp with Purah, his servant,

And heard a man relating a dream to his friend and its interpretation (vv. 13-15).

[This reminds me how God reminded Jonah His command
even through the unbeliever Gentile captain (Jonah 1:2, 6)].

He didn't pity on whom he supposed to pity.

David didn't pity his loyal soldier Uriah who he supposed to pity (2 Sam. 12:6).

But when his child that Uriah's wife had borne to David became ill

(one of the consequences of his sins) (v. 15),

he fasted and wept and asked God for his grace (v. 22).

Am I not like David and not being pity on whom God pity

But keep on asking gracious God in tears for pity on my beloved family members who are sick?

To such sinner like me, God has been gracious and pity on me.

I want to imitate Father God's heart in giving His one and only Son.

And I want to have pity on whom God has pity on with His heart.

I want to be in pain with those who are in pain and weep with those who weep (Rom. 12:15)

with affection of Jesus Christ (Phil. 1:8).

‘O Lord, give me a heart to pity one soul with Your heart.’

The false pastors who love the wages of unrighteousness

Balaam ,

Who loved “the wages of unrighteousness”

(2 Pet. 2:15),

Judas Iscariot,

Who sold Jesus with “the price of his wickedness”

(Acts 1:18),

The false pastors,

Who love the wages of unrighteousness and make the Lord’s church “a robber’s den”

(Mt. 21:13; Mk. 11:17; Lk. 19:46)

Complaining because of discomfort?

Just because I’m in discomfort (Jonah 4:6), that doesn’t mean I can complain.

In particular, we shouldn’t be angry at God (v. 9).

When we are grown fat, thick, and sleek ...?

When God’s blessings make us fat, thick, and sleek,

We will forsake God who made us

And will scorn the Rock of our salvation.

(Deut. 32:15)

Though the tree doesn't have leaves and fruits ...

Once when my father-in-law was able to walk little bit
he watered a tree in the backyard of his house.

At that time, I carried the water hose behind him, followed him,
and helped him to water the tree.

But the tree had no fruit and no leaves on the branches.

But my father-in-law still watered the tree.

I think about the Lord's love.

The Lord is keep on watering such sinner like me

Even though I am like the tree without fruits and leaves.

I think about why.

Today in the morning, I meditated on Hebrews 12:2-3:

“Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith,
who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame,
and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men,
so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.”

The Son of God Jesus Christ, who obeyed the Father God's will till death (Phil. 2:8)

Endured the cross (Heb. 12:2).

Although He came to His own, they didn't receive Him (Jn. 1:11).

Instead His people, who were disobedient and rebellious, shouted “Crucify! Crucify!” (19:6).

But on the cross, Jesus prayed for them, “Father, forgive them,
for they do not know what they are doing” (Lk. 23:34).

How could Jesus forgive them?

How could Jesus endure the cross for us?

“... who for the joy set before him endured the cross ...” (Heb. 12:2).

Jesus was able to endure the cross because He had the joy set before Him.

What was that joy?

Wasn't it the joy to save us whom the Father God loves

and chose before the creation? (Eph. 1:4)

Wasn't it the joy of forgiving all our sins and of accepting us? (Eph. 1:7; Col. 3:13)

Wasn't it the joy of making us, who were once the enemy of God,

the children of God? (Rom. 5:10; 8:21)

Wasn't it the joy of making us to live with the Lord forever in Heaven?

I remember the word of Habakkuk 3:17-18:

“Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines,

though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food,

though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls,

yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will be joyful in God my Savior.”

Even if I don't know God's will for me ...

What's more important than knowing what God's will for me is

Believing that God's will for me is "good, acceptable, and perfect" (Rom. 12:2).

Even if I don't know God's will for me

I am comforted by the fact that I am in God's sovereign good, acceptable and perfect will.

A person with irrational anger

Don't get close to those who are easily angry (Prov. 12:16).

Keep away from those who have been angry for a long time with distorted thoughts (2 Sam. 13).
Don't ever meet a person with irrational anger (Prov.17:12).

The children of light

We are the children of light who have fellowship with God.
And we who have fellowship with God walk in the Light.
We who walk in the Light don't lie but practice the truth. (1 Jn. 1:5-7)

God is Light

God who is Light exposes our sins when we don't walk in the Light but in the darkness.
At that time, when we say that we have no sin, then we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us.
But if we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins
And to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 Jn. 1:5-9)

We must not fill our stomach with plunder.

We must not go along with those who fill their stomach with plunder
And shouldn't set our feet on their paths (Prov. 1:13, 15).
As stolen water is sweet (9:17), we must not give in to Satan's enticement (1:10)

Satan's enticement is to steal other church members and fill my church.

But we must not become pastors who fill the Lord's church by stealing them.

And we must not go along with church member-stealing pastors.

The people in this perverse and crooked generation

This is perverse and crooked generation (Deut. 32:5).

The people of this generation are foolish and unwise (v. 6).

They lack in counsel and there is no understanding in them (v. 28).

They cannot discern their end (v. 29).

**Let's Walk Faithfully
In Silence of Trust
[Short Word Meditation (6)]**

James Kim

Is it better to live or to die?

The righteous who are saved by the grace of God is better to die than to live.

The reason is because for to them to live is Christ and to die is gain.

The reason is because they desire to depart and be with Christ which is better by far (Phil. 1:21-23).

However, the wicked who have not yet been saved are better off living than dying.

The reason is because it is better for them to be physically alive than to die forever

So that they may receive the grace of God's salvation and have eternal life (1 Tim. 2:4).

The Gospel and a life in a manner worthy of the gospel that were proclaimed by Apostle Paul and Apostle John?

The Gospel of Jesus Christ that was proclaimed by Apostle Paul was

Concerning "His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh,
who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead,
according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom 1:3-4),

That "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,
and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures"
(1 Cor. 15:3-4).

And Apostle Paul said, "Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ" (Phil. 1:27).

The Gospel of Jesus Christ that was proclaimed by Apostle John was

Concerning the Word of life which was from the beginning (Jesus' divinity),
"The life appeared" that is "the eternal life" (Jesus' humanity) (1 Jn. 1:1-2).

And a life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ is

To live like the children of God who is the light and in Him there is no darkness at all (v. 5).
The life as the children of light is to hate lies and live by the truth (v. 6) as those who have eternal life (v. 2), love their brothers (2:9) and live righteous life (3:12).

Apostle Peter

Although Peter said, “Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You” (Mt. 26:35),
he denied Jesus three times (vv. 70, 72, 74).

“And Peter remembered the word which Jesus had said, ‘Before a rooster crows,
you will deny Me three times.’ And he went out and wept bitterly” (v. 75).

We should not trust ourselves too much.

We shouldn’t be self-confident. We shouldn’t be prideful.

We need to be thoroughly broken. Our pride needs to be thoroughly broken.

We need to thoroughly hate ourselves.

We need to fully realize how weak we are.

In doing so, we will have no choice but to rely on the Lord alone.

In doing so, we will have no choice but to trust the Lord.

Apostle Peter, who followed Jesus who was being taken away at a distance (Lk. 22:54),
Denied Him three times (vv. 55-60) and a rooster crowed (v. 60).

Then the Lord turned and looked at Peter (v. 61).

Why did Jesus turn and look at Peter? What did Jesus see?

Did He see Peter who said, “Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You”? (Mt. 26:35)

Did He see Peter who denied Him three times?

Or did Jesus see a fisher of men? (4:19)

Jesus did discipleship (?) to Peter, who used to be a fisherman (v. 18),
as he took him around for 3 years in order to make him a fisher of men.

But Peter, who had been trained for discipleship for 3 years,
said to his fellow apostles “I am going to fishing” (Jn. 21:3),
even after he saw the empty tomb of Jesus who was arose from the dead (20:6-7)
and saw the resurrected Lord who appeared to the disciples twice (vv. 19-29).

To this Peter, the resurrected Lord appeared third time (v. 14)

And asked him ‘Do you love Me?’ three times
And gave him a mission, “Tend My lambs”, “Shepherd My sheep”
and “Tend My sheep” (vv. 15-17).

Sarah’s doubt, my doubt

Sarah, Abraham’s wife, did doubt.
She doubted about God’s promise to her husband Abraham
“So shall your descendants be” (Rom. 4:18).

The reason she doubted it is because she believed her reality
That she could see clearly with her eyes
Rather than the unseen future hope.
Here, the reality that she saw was “the deadness of Sarah’s womb”
(Of course her husband’s body was as good as dead as well) (v. 19),
And the unseen future hope was what God promised to Abraham
That is, his descendants would become numerous like stars in the sky.

So Sarah couldn’t endure by faith for 25 years
until her husband Abraham turned 100 years old
Since he received God’s promise when he was 75 years old.
So when Abraham was 86 years old, 11 years after he received God’s promise,
Sarah made Abraham to sleep with her servant Hagar and Hagar gave birth to Ishmael.
Sarah couldn’t wait. She became impatient.
It seems that she was driven by impetuosity.
She tried to fulfill God’s promise in her own power.

I reflect my doubt in Sarah’s doubt.

(As I was reading Lydia Brownback’s “LEGACY OF FAITH:
From Women of the Bible to Women of Today”)

We should not try to be special to the people.

We should not try to be special to the people.

The reason is that we are already special in God's sight.

“Since you are precious in My sight, Since you are honored and I love you, ...” (Isa. 43:4).

We are already special in God's sight

Through the death of the cross and resurrection of

God's begotten precious and honored Son Jesus Christ whom God loves.

Therefore, we should make Jesus our precious treasure

And we must live our lives of boasting Jesus Christ alone.

The reason why we exalt ourselves in front of people ...

The reason why we exalt ourselves in front of people is

Because we believe that we are righteous

(Lk. 18:9, 14).

The basis for this belief is our own works (vv. 11-12).

As a result, we view others with contempt (v. 9)

And we put distance with them whom we consider as 'sinners' (v. 11).

We differentiate from them and boast ourselves that 'I am better than him/her (v. 11).
If we do so, then we cannot be justified by God (v. 14).

Receiving attention from people

The Spirit-filled Christians pay attention to dying souls (Acts 3:4).
They think it's strange that people are paying attention to them because of their power or piety (v. 12).
Instead, they make people to pay attention to Jesus (4:10-12).
Also the Spirit-filled Christians don't pay attention to themselves.
They pay attention to the Lord only.

Without the hardships and trouble that people suffer ...

It's easy to become proud for those whose wealth is keep on increasing
Without the hardships and troubles.
Their eyes bulges from fatness,
And they speak in their arrogance.
(Ps. 73:5-8, 12)

Inducing and stirring up people

Not only Satan secretly induces people to speak blasphemous words against Christians
But also stirs up the people and persecute us.
(Acts 6:11-14)

What brings joy to the heart

What brings joy to the heart is
Loving the Word of God and even accepting suffering with humble heart.
(Prov. 27:7, Yun-sun Park)

The number of people doesn't matter.

The Lord is not restrained to save by many or by few.
(1 Sam. 14:6)

Rejoicing dries up from people.

Rejoicing dries up from people.

Joy and delight has been cut off in the temple of our God.

Even the flocks of sheep suffer.

(Joel 1:12, 16, 18)

What is man that God is mindful

Like a lot of dust when the sun shines

When God's holy light shines

We see our sins more than dust.

In doing so, we have no choice but to look at Jesus

Who bore all our sins and died on the cross.

As a result, we see ourselves from God's point of view.

Then our confession is this:

“what is man that you are mindful of him,

the son of man that you care for him?”

(Ps. 8:4)

Love is ...

Love is sending. (Jn. 3:16; 1 Jn. 4:10)

"labor of love"

Those Christians who has received God's chosen love to such sinners like them

Can't help but do the labor of love.

That labor of love is to impart “the gospel of God” and “our own lives”
To those who have become very dear to them.
(1 Thess. 1:3, 4; 2:8)

Why discipline of love is useless

Father God disciplines us in love when we we sin and don’t repent.
But His discipline of love is useless is
Because we are accepting no chastening from Him.
(Jere. 2:30)

Love is better than riches.

God’s unfailing love is better than trusting in the abundance of our riches.
The reason is because all the riches will disappear
But God’s unfailing love lasts forever.
(Ps. 52:1, 7, 8)

The one who does not love ...

The one who doesn’t love

But just saying that “God is love”

Doesn’t know God.

(1 Jn. 4:8)

**What you do to your pastor’s wife,
you are doing it to the pastor.**

As you serve your church with passion that isn’t based on the right truth,

You may not be satisfied with your pastor.

So you may complaint to his wife instead of him

Which is you are complaining to your pastor.

Even though you know it and you are still doing it

Can make your pastor’s heart very angry. (Cf. Acts 26:14-15)

It seems raising the children didn’t go according to Samuel’s plan.

Samuel, a great servant of the Lord who was judge, prophet and priest,

Had two sons who didn’t walk in his ways,

But turned aside after dishonest gain and took bribes and perverted justice (1 Sam. 8:3).

As a result, the Israelites asked Samuel to appoint a king for them

to judge them “like all the nations” (v. 5).

Samuel was born through the earnest prayers of his mother Hannah (1:20).

After he was weaned, he was dedicated to the Lord (vv. 22-28) and ministered to the Lord (2:11).

I am sure he prayed for his two sons and tried to raise them according to the word of God.

But it seems like it didn’t go according to his plan.

You are being deceived by Satan.

Those who are being deceived by Satan don't forgive a person
Who has caused them sorrow
So that they don't affirm God's love. (2 Cor. 2:5-11)

What Satan does ...

Satan comes and takes away the word from our hearts,
So that we won't believe and be saved (Lk. 8:12).

Satan makes us to betray Jesus
When we hear and receive the word of God with joy
By making us not to be rooted firmly in His word
And make us to fall away in time of temptation (v. 13).

Satan brings no fruit to maturity
By making us to be choked with worries and riches and pleasure of this life (v. 14).

But the Lord makes us to bear fruit with perseverance
By making us to hear His word in an honest and good heart,
And hold it fast (v. 15).

Satan

Satan made Peter to set his mind not on God's interest but on man's (Mt. 16:23).

Satan filled the hearts of Ananias and Sapphira
And made them to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back some of the price of the land

(Acts 5:1-3).

Satan deceives our hearts.

Satan deceives our hearts. Satan deceives us so that our minds can be led astray
From the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ. (2 Cor. 11:3)

Satan's work vs. The Lord's work?

Satan tries to make us not to believe the word of God that we have heard and be saved.
Satan makes us to betray through temptations
and to bring no fruit to maturity with worries and riches and pleasure of this life.
But the Lord makes us to hear the word of God and to keep it
So that we may bear fruit with perseverance.
(Lk. 8:12-15)

Satan's strategy is to besiege us and make us trapped.

Satan's strategy is to besiege us (1 Sam. 23:8; 24:26).
Satan makes us trapped (23:7; Cf. Exod. 14:3).

Not only did Satan put Joseph into the jail (Gen. 39:20)
he also made Peter (Acts 12:4, 5) and Paul and Silas to be put into prison (16:23, 24).

Although Satan make us trapped,
Our God delivers us from the trapped situation.
The reason is because our God who loves us is God of salvation.

Even though we felt the sentence of death

“Indeed, in our hearts we felt the sentence of death.
But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead.
He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us.
On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us” (2 Cor. 1:9-10).

Tongue like a sharp razor

The tongue like a sharp razor loves all words that devour (Ps. 52:2, 4).

A hired pastor?

A pastor who is hired by a man who lives a superstitious religious life (Judg. 18:4),
Gets pay by him (17:10) and has become to him like one of his sons (v. 11).
The pastor has agreed to to ministry with that man (v. 11).
But when some people from the mega church come to the pastor
And ask him a very tempting question,
“Is it better for you to be a pastor to the church of one man,
Or to be pastor to the mega church?” (18;19).

Then the pastor's heart is glad, and he takes his own idol
and go among the people from the mega church (v. 20).
Is this pastor true shepherd or a hired pastor?

The church members who are counseled by a hired pastor?

The church members who are counseled by a hired pastor
Asks the pastor to inquire of God whether their way on which they are going
will be prosperous or not (Judg. 18:5).
The pastor says to them, "Go in peace; your way which you are going has the Lord's approval" (v. 6).
So they do what the pastor has said and they think that their way is prosperous
Because what they have seen a place is very good (v. 9), quiet and secure (v. 7),
And it's a spacious place where there is no lack of anything that is on the earth (vv. 7, 10).
So the church members have conviction that God has given it into their hand (v. 10).
Isn't this really a blind pastor guiding the blind people? (Mt. 15:14)

Why we have the sentence of death within ourselves?

The reason why we have the sentence of death within ourselves is
So that we will not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead (2 Cor. 1:8-9)

When we despaired even of life ...

When we are burdened excessively, beyond our strength,
So that we despaired even of life, when we have the sentence of death with ourselves,
We must believe that God's will is for us to trust in God who raises the dead
Instead of trusting in ourselves.

And we must believe that our Savior God who delivered us in the past from so great a peril of death,
Will not only delivers us in the present crisis but also will deliver us in the future as well
(2 Cor. 1:8-10).

When we despaired even of life ...

We must know that the the reason why we have the sentence of death within ourselves is
So that we will not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead (2 Cor. 1:8-9).
When we trust in God, we must hope that
God who delivered us in the past
will deliver us not only in this present but also in the future (v. 10).

And we should ask our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ
To join in helping us through their prayers (v. 11).

To live

In order to establish our actions firmly in the word of the Lord,
We must open our mouths wide and panted.
Look at Psalms 119:131 – “I opened my mouth wide and panted, For I longed for Your commandments.”
This is like breathing because a person will die if he doesn’t breathe air.
Likewise the psalmist longed for God’s commandments if he would die (Park, Yun-sun).
That’s how much we should yearn for the word of the Lord.
We should open our mouth wide and panted for longing the Word of God.
We need to know that we will die without eating the word of God.

So in order to live, we must long for the word of God.
We must seek His word with sense of survival.

Murderous jealousy

When King Saul began to look at David with jealous eyes (1 Sam. 28: 9), he was afraid of David.
The reason is because he knew that the Lord had left him and was with David (v. 12).
So he sent David away from him (v. 13).
Because the Lord with with David, he had great success in everything he did.
And when Saul saw how successful David was, he was afraid of him (vv. 14-15).
When he saw all Israel and Judah loved David (v. 16)
and even his own daughter Michal loved David (vv. 20, 28),
He became still more afraid of David, and he remained his enemy the rest of his days (v. 29).
That was why Saul tried to kill an innocent man like David for no reason (19:5).

Jealousy makes us to dislike and even hate someone for no reason.
It makes us to be distanced from him/her.
It even makes us to want to kill him/her and actually makes us to try to murder him/her.
And jealousy actually makes us to kill him/her.
This is 'Murderous jealousy.'

Even it costs him a lot

An authoritarian pastor who abuses God-given divine authority for himself
Doesn't and even can't think that he is stealing from his church members
Who are saying to him, 'I give it to the pastor.'
However, a humble pastor who uses God-given divine authority for His flocks
whom God has entrusted to him

Uses what the church members give to him for His flocks
Even it costs him a lot
(Cf. 1 Chron. 21:18-27).

Situation, reaction, fact

1. Situation: What is your situation now?

The situation that the people of Judah encountered during the days of Prophet Jeremiah was “the drought”/“famine”, “the sword”, “pestilence” (Jere. 14:1, 12, 15-16, 18), “distress” (v. 8), they were “crushed” “with a sorely infected wound” (v. 17).

2. Reaction: What is your reaction to your situation?

The reaction that the people of Judah during the days of Prophet Jeremiah was “mourning” (v. 2), their eyes flow down with tears night and day (v. 17), “languish” and “the cry” (v. 2), “shame” (vv. 3, 4), humiliation (v. 3) and “terror” (v. 19) ...

However, the Lord was “like a stranger” (v. 8), “like a mighty man who cannot save” (v. 9), seemed like He rejected and forsook Judah (vv. 9, 19), “loathed Zion” (v. 19), stricken Judah so that they were beyond healing (v. 19), seemed like He despised Judah (v. 21) ...

3. Fact (Truth): What truth are you holding onto by faith?

But the fact (truth) is that your God is your Hope (v. 8), “Savior in time of distress” (v. 8), “act of Your name’s sake” (v. 7).

Therefore you should hope in your God (v. 22).

And you shouldn’t love to wander and you should keep your feet in check (v. 10).

You should know our wickedness (v. 20) and confess your iniquities (v. 7).

And you should repent of your ways (15:7).

In doing so, you should fast and cry out to God (14:12, cf. 15:11).

You should remember God’s covenant with you (v. 21)

and cry out to God as you hold onto His promise word.

Then God will restore you (16:15), will forgive you and save you.

The Word rather than a situation ...

Lord, help me to be influenced by the Word of God rather than a situation

And help me to be led by His promised Word rather than the situation.

(Cf.: Josh. 14:6-15)

When we see things getting worse and worse ...

When we see things getting worse and worse, we can get discouraged.

Especially when we see and think rationally that 'This is humanly impossible'

Then we can even be in despair.

What should we do in this situation?

These days I think about Abraham's faith again and again.

I am struggling to let the Scripture Romans 4:18-21 to speak to my soul.

In other words, I am asking God for the faith that believes in hope against all hope (v. 18).

I am determined to believe the promise words of God in hope

As I look upon the Lord, my Hope, by faith

Even in the humanly hopeless situation.

Without becoming weak in faith, I want to give glory to God

By growing strong in faith without wavering in unbelief (vv. 19-20).

So I pray to God:

'Dad Father God, help me to be fully persuaded that God has power to do what He has promised,

That is Matthew 16:18 (regarding Victory Presbyterian Church) and John 6:1-15 (regarding me).

["being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised" (Rom. 4:21)].

In Jesus' Name I pray. Amen.'

Some lessons that I received through four funerals in The New Year 2019

1. Mrs. Jung Sook Yoo: Grace

When I think Mrs. Jung Sook Yoo, I think about her favorite hymn, "Amazing Grace". She used to be lost, but she was found when she started coming to our church and accepted Jesus Christ as her Savior and Lord and had eternal life. She knew the depth, width and height of the grace of God's salvation. So when she was in a nursing home, she really wanted to come to church and worship God with thanksgiving in her heart. When I think about Mrs. Yoo, not only that the word "grace" came to my mind but also 1 Corinthians 15:10 – "But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me."

2. Elder Richard Oh: Peace

My father-in-law Elder Richard Oh loved to sing the hymn "When peace, like a river, attendeth my way". When I thought about this hymn, I asked myself first time last Friday during the Morning Prayer, "How can he sing 'When peace like a river attendeth my way When sorrows like sea billows roll Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say It is well, it is well with my soul' when my father-in-law was suffering so much that I can't imagine until he passed away?" How could he sing "When peace like a river attendeth my way" when he was suffering? How could he enjoy singing "It is well with my soul"? When I think about him who died peacefully in the Lord, not only the word "peace" comes to my mind but also Philippians 4:6-7: "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

3. My junior high school friend Pastor Rubin's mother and

4. Pastor Narmandach from True Love Church in Mongolia: Love.

When I entered this New Year 2019, I had privilege to preside Mrs. Jung Sook Lee's graveyard service on January 4, Friday and then one week later on January 11, I presided my father-in-law Elder Richard Oh's graveyard service in the same cemetery. Between those two funeral services, I attended my junior high school friend Pastor Rubin's mother's funeral on Monday January 7 with another junior high school friend named Glen. When we sat down on the chairs in the church, the thought came into my mind that Glen lost his mother and his youngest son last year and I lost my father-in-law and Mrs. Jung Sook Yoo who loved me very much. It was little bit a queer sensation that we were both attending our friend Pastor Rubin's mother's funeral service. But the precious grace that I received during Pastor's Rubin's mother's funeral service was that I was challenged by what she did until she passed away. I heard that she posted 1 Corinthians 13 on her room wall and her grandchildren's pictures and she kept praying for them. Since this New Year's motto is to love one another (Jn. 15:12), I planned to sing the Korean gospel song 'Love is always patience' as an offering song, her life challenged me to not only sing that offering song but also to live a life loving one another starting from my family.

Last Monday when I was working out, I found out through Facebook that Pastor Narmandach (25 years old) from True Love Church in Mongolia passed away. I couldn't believe it. I still remember when I went to Mongolia about 4 years ago, I have memory that I played basketball with him and had lunch together as well. I heard that Pastor Narmandach passed away when he was sitting on a sofa during a break at the united churches seminar. So, I watched articles, photos, and videos that I uploaded frequently on the Mongolian True Love Church Facebook every day for the past week. I was sad when I saw the picture of his grave. When I think about the True Love Church pastor, his wife and the whole church members, my heart went out to them and I had been praying for them. The heart that God had been giving me through Pastor Narmandach was to pray for his three prayer requests that he asked me and my church to pray for. The first prayer request doesn't apply it because he passed away. His second prayer request is to pray for his non-believer relatives. The third prayer request is to pray for True Love Church. So I also encouraged my church members to pray for his two prayer requests. But what really made me to think was that when I looked at the writings of the True Love church members' on the church Facebook about Pastor Narmandah, I saw a consistent memory about him. And the consistent memory was that they all felt love from Pastor Narmandah. The challenge this gives me is 'What kind of consistent memory will people have when I die?' I was challenged to live the rest of my life to love my neighbors before the Lord. Through Pastor Rubin and Pastor Narmandah, I received six lessons from 1 Corinthians 13:

- (1) Love is patient (v. 4),
- (2) Love doesn't take into account a wrong suffered (v. 5),
- (3) Love endures all things (v. 7),
- (4) Love is kind (v. 4),
- (5) Love doesn't seek its own (v. 5)
- (6) Love hopes all things (v. 7).

Think

Let's not think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think.

Let's think so as to have sound judgment. (Rom. 12:3)

"I never expected ..."

Father Jacob thought that his most beloved son Joseph was dead for 22 years

(Joseph was hated by his older brothers when he was 17 years old and was sold to some Midianite traders and then to Potiphar, an Egyptian officer of Pharaoh, and then he was put in charge of the whole land of Egypt, and then met his father Jacob when he was 39 years old, the second year of the famine).

But Jacob heard that Joseph was alive and he was put in charge of the whole land of Egypt from his other sons. And this is what he said: "... It is enough; my son Joseph is still alive. I will go and see him before I die" (Gen. 45:28).

And after Jacob met Joseph face to face in Egypt, this is what he said to him:

"... Now let me die, since I have seen your face, that you are still alive" (46:30).

And before he blessed Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, this is what he said to Joseph:

"... I never expected to see your face, and behold, God has let me see your children as well" (48:11).

This reminds me Ephesians 3:20 –

“Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us.”

"The fruit of their plans"

If we obey the Lord's command "Where the good way is, and walk in it",
We will find rest for our souls.

But if we say to the Lord "We will not listen" and reject His command,
Then the fruit of our plans is that they will be stumbling blocks before us
And will be disaster on us. (Jere. 6:16-21)

Let's slow down our thoughts

Those who are quick in thinking need to slow down their thoughts.
How about stop thinking for a moment and quietly think about Jesus.

"... In quietness and trust is your strength ..." (Isa. 30:15).

God who does unexpected things

God does unexpected good things for us that overflow. (Gen. 48:11)

The redemption of our soul is costly.

Since the redemption of our soul is costly

Even we who trust in our wealth should cease trying forever (Ps. 49:6-8).

But God redeemed us (v. 15).

In redeeming us, God paid the greatest price of his own Son

Jesus Christ to die on the cross (Col. 1:14).

But how can we serve both God and wealth? (Mt. 6:24)

How can we devote to both his Son Jesus and wealth?

Even in the midst of a life crisis

Even in the midst of a life crisis, let us not forget the word of God

We must not stray from that word.

We must make the word of God our eternal heritage.

The reason is because the word of God is the joy of our hearts. (Ps. 119:109-111)

The secret to survival

The secret to survival is to follow the Lord in faith. (Num. 14:24, 38)

The worries of life

Our hearts will be weighed down with the worries of life. (Lk. 21:34)

We have fellowship with one another.

In order for us to have fellowship with Him who is in the Light,

We must walk in the Light.

If we walk in the darkness, we don't have fellowship with Him.

We are lying and aren't practicing the truth. (1 Jn. 1:6-7)

Confess your sins to one another?

"Therefore, confess your sins to one another, ..." (Jam. 5:16).

1. Are we obeying this word of God?
2. How should we obey this word?
3. What should we do when we confess our sins in the church community and other members are tempted or it isn't edifying to them?

To be at peace with one another

Jesus said, "Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another." (Mk. 9:50).

In order to be at peace with one another, we must have ...

1. Self-sacrifice (Mk. 9:50)
 - a. As if the salt had to melt
2. Self-denial (8:34)
 - a. Must think about the work of God, not the work of man
3. Humility (9:34-37)
 - a. Proud people can't be peace with each other
4. Serving (9:41)

- a. Serve our neighbors with the power of God, and be faithful to small things

What to mix and what not to mix?

The reason why the Word of God doesn't profit us is

Because the Word that we have heard isn't mixed by faith (Heb. 4:2).

As saints, we shouldn't mingle with the people of the word

But the church leaders have been foremost in this unfaithfulness (Ezra 9:2).

We must separate ourselves without mingling.

We must separate ourselves from those who do detestable things and not mingle with them.

(Ezra 9:1-2)

Let us not be discouraged in doing good.

We can be misunderstood and even be criticized instead of be complemented
even though we did good.

But we don't have to be discouraged.

The reason is that we are doing good to other

because there is thanksgiving and love in our hearts

Due to God's abundant grace and what He has done for us,

Not because we want to be understood and be complemented.

“But as for you, brethren, do not grow weary of doing good” (2 Thess. 3:13).

The good Shepherd Lord ...

The good shepherd Lord calls His own sheep by name
And His sheep hear only His voice and follow Him. (Jn. 10:3, 4)

Mary Magdalene, who was standing outside the tomb weeping,
Didn't know that it was Jesus who was standing behind her.
She thought he was the gardener.
But when He said to her, “Mary!”
Then she knew He was “Rabboni!” (“Teacher”) (20:11-16)

God's gracious hand, our good work

When God's gracious hand is upon us
We can be strengthened and put our hands to the good work. (Neh. 2:18)

Good influence

I think Moses, the great leader of Israel, was influenced by his father-in-law Jethro.
The good influence that he got from Jethro was humility (Exod. 18:11, Num. 12:3)
And wisdom in fearing God and truthfulness (Exod. 18:21).

While meditating on this, I came to think of my both side parents (my parents and my wife's parents).

And I hope and pray that I can have good influence on my wife and my three children too.

The Lord is with the upright.

Although Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, helped the wicked Ahab, king of Israel,
The Lord was with the upright.
(2 Chron. 18; 19:2, 11; Cf. 20:35)

Serve and die

I just need to die after I serve according to God's will in this generation. (Acts 13:36)

The Bible says ...

The Bible says, "Do not speak evil about the ruler of your people."
(Acts 23:5)

The secret to success in the Bible is ...

1. God with us (Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23)
2. Obeying God's commands (Josh. 1:8; 1 Kgs. 2:3)

3. Seeking God (2 Chron. 26:5)

What is the prosperity (success) in the Bible?

I think the prosperity (success) in the Bible (Gen. 45:4-8; 50:20) is that
God to fulfill His good will (Rom. 12:2), causing all things to work together for good (8:28)
Even in the midst of a lot of adversity and suffering (Gen. 39)
That is incomprehensible to our reason.

The Bible tells us to love our enemies.

Our enemies hate us, curse us, insult us, and strike our cheek.
But the Bible tells us to love our enemies.
The Bible says to do good to those who hate us, bless those who curse us,
Pray for those who mistreat us, and offer him the other cheek when he hits us on the cheek.
(Lk. 6:27-29)

Although they search the Scriptures ...

Although they search the Scriptures because they think that in them they have eternal life
They don't go to Jesus about whom the Scriptures testify
And they don't have the love of God in themselves.
They don't seek the glory that is from the one and only God
But they receive glory from one another
And they don't believe in Jesus and don't receive Him.

(Jn. 5:39-44)

When similar words come out while reading the Bible ...

Abram and his nephew Lot could not live together in Canaan, the Promised Land.

The reason was because their possessions were so great (Gen. 13: 6).

So Lot left Canaan (vv. 9-11).

Jacob and Esau could not live together in Canaan, the Promised Land.

The reason was because their property had become too great for them to live together, and the land where they sojourned could not sustain them because of their livestock” (36:7).

So Esau left the land of Canaan (v. 6).

As we read the Bible, similar words come out.

I think it is necessary to meditate those similar words together.

When I meditated on those two words above,

I thought about this question: ‘Why did Lot and Esau left the land of Canaan

And Abram and Jacob stayed in the land of Canaan?’

When I did so, Genesis chapter 12 came into my mind.

The land of Canaan was the land which God show to Abram (12:1).

And the land of Canaan is the land that God promised to give to the descendants of Abram (v. 7).

That was why God placed Abram

with whom He made covenant and his descendant Jacob in the land of Canaan.

And I think God blessed Lot and Esau abundantly and made them to leave the land of Canaan.

When I apply these words to ourselves,

I believe that God has saved us, His chosen and covenant people, through Jesus Christ,

In order to place us in the true Promised Land, the new heaven and new earth, new Jerusalem.

The Biblical view of success?

The Biblical view of success is (Gen. 39:2, 3, 23) that
God is with us (vv. 2, 3, 21, 23), God making us to be found favor in another person's sight (vv. 4, 21),
God exalting us [God exalted Joseph to be an overseer over Potiphar's house (v. 4),
To be in charge all the prisoners in the jail (v. 22) and in charge of the whole land of Egypt (41:41)],
And fulfilling God's will (45:5, 7).

The saints are ...

1. Those who are called by God's name (Jere. 14:9; 15:16),
2. Those who have concern for God's holy name as God has concern for His holy name (Ezek. 36:21),
3. Those who are jealous for God's holy name (39:25),
4. Those who have compassion on all the people (v. 25),
5. Those who don't let God's holy name to be profaned (v. 7).

"Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints." (Ps. 116:15)

People who serve the saints

We should acknowledge those who not only are devoted themselves for ministry to the saints
but actually ministering to us and are refreshing our spirits.
We should obey them as well.

(1 Cor. 16:15-18)

A false pastor who makes the hearts of the saints harden?

A false pastor, who seeks the well-being of the saints who need to turn away from sin and repent rather than harm as a result of their sins, is making their hearts harden.

(Cf. : Jere. 38:4)

The perseverance of the saints

The perseverance of the saints is to keep the commandments of God and faith in Jesus.

(Rev. 15:12)

The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is with us forever (Jn. 14:16).

The Holy Spirit abides with us and is in us (v. 17).

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth (v. 17; 15:26).

The Holy Spirit teaches us all things, and brings to our remembrance all that Jesus said to us (14:26).

The Holy Spirit testifies about Jesus (15:26).

The Holy Spirit convicts the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment (16:8).

The Holy Spirit guides us into all the truth (v. 13).

The Holy Spirit glorifies the Lord Jesus (v. 14).

When we obey the guidance of the Holy Spirit ...

When we obey and don't doubt about what the Holy Spirit says

There is precious understanding about God. (Acts 10:19-20, 34-35)

There is liberty where the Spirit of the Lord is.

There is liberty where the Spirit of the Lord is because through the Spirit of the Lord

We behold the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image for glory to glory.

(2 Cor. 3:17-18)

The Christians with the dull sword of the Holy Spirit ...

If we don't sharpen a dull sword, then we must exert more strength (Eccle. 10:10).

Likewise, the Christians with the dull sword of the Holy Spirit,

the Word of God (Eph. 6:17) must exert more strength in their Christian life.

In other words, the Christians whose mind is not being sharpened by His word,

They have no choice but to live with their own strength instead of the God's strength.

As a result, they will become spiritually insensitive

And will dwell in confusion due to the lack of spiritual discernment.

And they will wander from this way and that way, not knowing where to go.

But the Christians whose mind is keep on being sharpened by the word of God

have spiritual sensitivity and spiritual discernment.

But only they are sensitive to the guidance of the Holy Spirit,

They are able to discern which door the Holy Spirit closes and which door He opens.

Therefore, they boldly proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ

in obedience to the guidance of the Spirit of Jesus.

When the sword of the Holy Spirit is dull ...

In spiritual warfare, I think Satan is attaching us

When we don't have our weapon, the sword of the Holy Spirit (the Word of God)

Or even when we have it is dull. (1 Sam. 13:21)

.

Let us make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit.

There are three types of people in the church community:

(1) peace-maker, (2) peace-breaker, (3) peace-keeper.

We should not be peace-breakers. Instead, we must be peacekeepers. We must be peacemakers.

There must be peace in the church community.

As members of the community,

we must make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit (Eph. 4:3).

In order to do so, we must be completely humble and gentle (v. 2).

And we must be patient, bearing with one another in love (v. 2).

Why aren't we bearing one another? Why aren't we forgiving each other?

If we are becoming those who break the peace of the community

because of hate, pride and impatience,

Then we will never be able to please God.

In order to please Him, we must love each other.

We must be completely humble, gentle, forgive each other

and show tolerance for one another in love.

As God has forgiven me and tolerated such sinner like me,

We must forgive and tolerate each other sincerely.

In doing so, we will be able to keep the peace of the community.

Let's love each other with the affection of Jesus Christ (Phil. 1:8).

In the spirit-filled heart ...

There are praise, thanksgiving and obedience

In the heart of a Christian who is filled with the Holy Spirit.

(Eph. 5:18-21)

Those who are filled with the Holy Spirit are those who are filled with the Word.

To those who are filled with the Holy Spirit are those who are filled with the Word

Receive the Word of God not only in word

but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction (1 Thess. 1:5).

And those who are filled with the Holy Spirit

receive the word of God "with the joy of the Holy Spirit" (v. 6).

They accept the word of God not as the word of men,

But for what it really is, the word of God (2:13).

Therefore, the word of God performs its work in them who believe (v. 13).

Only the Scripture!

[Those who are fill with the Word of God year for His Word
and have good receptivity of His Word.]

Sexual seduction

When the naive young man who lacks judgment takes the way to her house,
She comes to meet him, dressed as a harlot and cunning of heart
with the hidden intention (Prov. 7:7, 8, 10).

Her hidden intention was to set up the trap so that he maybe unfaithful to his marriage.
In other words, her true intention was to make many men to break the covenant
they made when they got married (Park Yun-sun).

With this hidden intention, she entices and seduces him

With her many persuasions and her flattering lips (v. 21).

Here the word “seduction” comes from Latin and its literal meaning is “to lead astray”.

It means ‘to lead in the wrong direction’, ‘to deceive’ or ‘to corrupt’.

When this word is used in negatively regarding temptation and enticement

It makes a person to cause sexual excitement

so that he may make a choice that leads him to fall and be corrupted (Wikipedia).

Then how does the harlot seduce the naive young man

with lack of judgement to fall and be corrupted?

There are at least three:

(1) The harlot seduces the naive young man with visual.

(v. 10 – “And behold, a woman comes to meet him, Dressed as a harlot and cunning of heart”)

(2) The harlot seduces the naive young man with physical touching.

(v. 13 – “So she seizes him and kisses him ...”).

(3) The harlot seduces the naive young man with words.

(v. 21 – “With her many persuasions she entices him; With her flattering lips she seduces him”).

Even now Satan is tempting the naive people like me to fall and to be corrupted.

Satan is enticing my sexual weakness so that I may commit adultery in my heart (Mt. 5:28).

As a result, Satan makes my spiritual strengthen to be exhausted.

What does it mean to fall in sexual temptation?

When we are sexually tempted and fall in sexual temptation may mean that

We are under the Lord's wrath. (Prov. 22:14)

Why is the Lord's wrath upon us?

Isn't it because foolishness is bound up in our hearts? (v. 15)

“Oh, that one of you would shut the temple doors ...”

God says “Oh, that one of you would shut the temple doors”

So that we would not offer useless worship to Him. (Mal. 1:10)

At the end of the age

At the end of the age when Jesus will come back,

Many of us who are Christians will be deceived, will be hated and will hate each other.

(Mt. 24:3-5, 9, 10)

We Christians who sin more than the people in this world

We Christians who sin more than the people in this world don't pay attention to His Word.

As a result, we receive God's discipline and suffer.

And through suffering, we humble ourselves and cry out to God.

When God hear our supplication and restore us

Then we knew that the Lord is God. (2 Chron. 33:9-13)

We who are worse than the world

Not only that we Christians are not living up to the God's standard

But also we are more unruly than the people in this world

By being conform to the standards of this world. (Ezek. 5:7)

Harmony with the world but disharmony in the church

As we live in this dirty and ugly sinful world

we as God's holy people suppose to cast out all the evils of dirty and ugly form,

And seek the holiness of God. But we aren't.

Rather, we are being polluted by dirty and ugly sins because we are following

As a result, we aren't living our lives apart from the world,

and are unable to be the light and salt of the world.

We are getting fingered by the people in this world. What is the problem?

It is because we aren't being separated from the world.

The true church of God is being separated from this world.

But now we the church is in harmony with the world and disharmony in the church.

This is the work of Satan.

Satan is exchanging everything (Rom.1:23).

Satan is making church to be in disharmony and to be harmony with the world.

Rather than lacking nothing worldly ...

It is much better to live in poor neighborhood, living in difficulties and lacking this and that worldly
And confess 'I shall not be in need because the Lord is my Shepherd' (Ps. 23:1) and serve Him
Than to live in rich neighborhood that lacks nothing whatever, living in safety and are prosperous
And worship wealth. (Judg. 18:7, 9, 10, 30-31)

Is it very good that there is no lack in the world?

If we live in the world that is "very good" (Judg. 18:9) because we lack nothing (vv. 7, 10)
and we live in safety and peacefully, unsuspecting and secure (vv. 7, 27)
then we may worship idols (vv. 30-31).

The worldly Christians

The worldly Christians have faith that is like mere infants in Christ.
They don't have firmness but waviness.

(1 Cor. 3:1, 11)

The wall to be built, the wall to be broken down

The wall must be firmly and thickly built around the church

In order to divide between the holy and the profane (Ezek. 42:20; 43:8).

The wall of the church must be built firmly and thickly

so that the worldly waves cannot enter the church.

However, the wall seems to have already been broken down.

The walls must be broken inside the church.

We must break the walls that are being blocked between brothers and sisters in Christ

With the precious blood, the gospel and the love of Jesus Christ on the cross (Eph. 2:13-14).

We must destroy any kinds of walls within our hearts such as,

the wall of hatred toward one another, the wall of preconception or any kind of sinful wall with the gospel and the love of Jesus Christ.

However, it seems that these walls are already being built very high firmly.

The people who are worse than an ox and a donkey

Those who don't know and understand the Lord are worse than an ox and a donkey. (Isa. 1:3)

God's time when our hope is gone

The Almighty God waits until we who are nervous to realize and acknowledge how helpless and powerless we are.

For example, God waited until Abraham no longer was able to have a child and was against all hope (Rom. 4:18-19). He also waited Martha's brother Lazarus to die so that it was impossible for Martha and her sister Mary to have hope for their brother to live (Jn. 11:11, 27, 40, 44-45).

In God's time, when we have no hope, God manifests His glory

By hearing our cry out or fulfilling His promise to us

So that we may believe in Him more firmly.

Fearing God because everything we have?

Why does God leave everything we have in Satan's hands?

Maybe it's because God wants to test us whether we fear God or not

Because everything that God has given us. (Job 1:10-12)

Relationship between possession and dwelling together?

It's better to dwell together even if we have less possession

than splitting because we have a lot of possession. (Cf.: Gen. 13:6ff)

We should avoid hasty conclusion carefully.

The Lord said to Samuel, 'God, I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have selected a king for Myself among his sons' (1 Sam. 16:1), "You shall invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for Me the one whom I designate to you" (v. 3).

But when Samuel saw Eliab, Jesse's firstborn son, he thought and misjudged that "Surely the Lord's anointed is before Him" (v. 6). Even though the Lord clearly told Samuel "... the one whom I designate to you" (v. 3) and He didn't designate Eliab, Samuel misjudged that Eliab was the one whom the Lord wanted him to anoint.

Eliab misjudged David and "Eliab's anger burned against David and he said, 'Why have you come down? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your insolence and the wickedness of your heart; for you have come down in order to see the battle'" (17:28).

As I think about Samuel's and Eliab's misjudgment, I thought about what caused our wrong judgement. One of the causes is that I think it's a reckless judgment about the other person.

In the case of Samuel, even though God clearly told him "the one whom I designate to you" (v. 3), Samuel couldn't wait until He designated to him.

In the case of Eliab, he made hasty conclusion without listening to what his youngest brother David said because David was obeying what his father Jesse said to him (vv. 17-18).

We should avoid hasty conclusion carefully.

Quick

Instead of being quick to quarrel (Prov. 20:3), I want to be quick to forgive (19:11).

A way to be perished quickly?

A way to be perished quickly (Josh. 23:16) is not clinging to the Lord (v. 8),
Not clinging to the rest of the unbelievers and intermarry with them and associate with them (v. 12),
But to mention the name of their gods, or to swear by them or serve them or bow down to them (v. 7)
And transgress the covenant of the Lord which He commands us (v. 16).

Need to discern economic loss

There is beneficial loss for me. It is to regain spiritual property, even though there is loss of rich
Or God will turn our loss of rich to spiritual blessing to me (Ruth ch. 4). But there is also useless loss for
me. It is unnecessary or useless loss by meddling in a quarrel not my own (Prov. 26:17).
I should be able to discern even loss with spiritual discernment.

A pure Christian

I pray that that the Lord to remove all my impurities in me even through the furnace of affliction (Isa. 48:10) and make me a pure Christian. I pray that the Lord to refine my heart (Prov. 17:3) and remove everything that defiles me (Mt. 15:18-19). Lord, I am seeking pure heart.

May the Lord thoroughly purge away my dross and remove all my impurities (Isa. 1:25) through the furnace of sufferings and make me pure like a gold. Lord, I am seeking pure gold like faith.

May the Lord purify me with His pure Word (Prov. 30:5; Cf.: Ps. 12:6).

I pray that I may become “a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work” (2 Tim. 2:21).

The path of obedience

It can be lonely to walk the path of obedience.

The reason is because no one may understand you fully that you are walking the path of obedience.

Even your beloved family and relatives may not understand you.

But we must still walk that lonely path of obedience by just looking at the Lord until the end

Because the Lord has commanded us and it's the Lord's will.

That's what Abraham the father of faith did.

When God tested him and said to him, “Take now your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you” Abraham obeyed by faith (Gen. 22:1-3).

He rose early in the morning and obeyed God's command by going to the place of which God had told him (vv. 3-4) and he even stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son Isaac (v. 10).

Was Sarah, Abraham's wife, aware of his obedience?

If she did, could she understand her husband's obedience with her own understanding?

Not only Sarah, if Abraham relied on his own understanding, then he couldn't obey God's command.

The reason is because with their own understanding, they couldn't understand God's command.

Did Isaac understand this obedience of his father Abraham?

He asked his father Abraham like this:

“Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?” (v. 7)

This was how father Abraham replied:

“God will provide for Himself the lamb for the burnt offering, my son” (v. 8).

But why my father Abraham built the altar and arranged the wood, and bound me and laid me on the altar, on top of the wood? Why did he stretch out his hand and took the knife to slay me? (vv. 9-10)

In Isaac's point of view, could he understand his father Abraham's behavior? I am sure he couldn't.

How can we fully understand the will of our Heavenly Father with our own understanding?

Never. We cannot fully understand His will.

The Lord's will is not to be understood but to obey.

And in obeying his will, of course we want to be understood by our beloved family.

But we may not be understood by them either. Rather, they may misunderstand us.

But we must still obey the Lord's command faithfully as we look only to the Lord.

The reason is because that's why Jesus did.

Jesus obeyed Heavenly Father's will until his death on the cross (Phil. 2:8).

He wasn't welcomed by His people (Jn. 1:11). Rather, He was rejected by them (Mt. 13:57).

Jesus obeyed the Heavenly Father's will until He was crucified (Jn. 19:6).

Jesus, who learned obedience from the things which He suffered (Heb. 5:8), said to His disciples,

"If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me"
(Lk. 9:23).

Will you obey this word of the Lord by faith?

Will you faithfully walk the path of obedience of the cross by just looking at the Lord?

Will you walk in faith to the end as you rely on Father God

Even though your beloved family may not understand you but misunderstand you?

The path of obedience

Although Prophet Jonah went down to Joppa, went down to a ship,
went down into it, and even went down all the way into the deep sea
in disobedience to the Lord's command (Jonah 1: 1-3, 15).

Jesus came down to this earth in obedience to Heavenly Father,
came down even to wear the human body,
came down to taking the form of a bond-servant (Phil. 2:7),
came down to the death on the cross, the tree of curse,
and eventually went down to Hades.

(As I was reading Louis Berkhof's "Systematic Theology")

We are blessed when we obey?

After the sons of Israel did all the word
according to all that "the Lord had commanded Moses"
(This phrase appears 18 times in Exodus 39-49)
Moses blessed them (Exod. 39:42-43).

Despite the numerous times of disobeying what the Lord had commanded me,
I am still receiving God's abundant blessings.
The reason is because Jesus obeyed the Father God's will
until death on the cross.
(Phil. 2:8)

Would they able to obey?

How did the Israelites hear in the time of Exodus when God commanded them,
"You shall not do what is done in the land of Egypt where you lived
(for around 400 years from Jacob and his sons),
nor are you to do what is done in the land of Canaan where I am bringing you;
you shall not walk in their statutes"? (Lev. 18:3)

Although God clearly commanded them
"you do not practice any of the abominable customs which have been practiced before you" (v. 30),
Did the Israelites really obey this command of God?
Although God commanded them,

“You are to perform My judgments and keep My statutes” (v. 4),
Did the Israelites obey that command?

Test in obedience?

Jacob had two great fearful situations for him to overcome in obeying God’s command
“Return to the land of your fathers and to your relatives” in faith (Gen. 31:3).

The first great fearful situation was his father-in-law Leban pursuing him (v. 23).
Jacob was afraid that Leban might take his two daughters Leah and Rachel from him by force (v. 31).
In that fear, Jacob fled without telling Leban
after he saw Leban’s attitude wasn’t friendly toward him anymore (vv. 2, 5).
When Leban found out about it on the third day that Jacob had fled,
he took his kinsmen with him and pursued Jacob a distance of 7 days’ journey (vv. 22-23).
Leban had power to harm Jacob (v. 29).
What a fearful situation.
But God came to Laban in a dream of the night and said to him,
“Be careful that you do not speak to Jacob either good or bad” (v. 24).
Eventually as God promised to Jacob that He would be with him (v.3)
even in that fearful situation (vv. 5, 42)
And He stopped Laban and didn’t allow him to harm Jacob (v. 7).

The second great fearful situation was
his older brother Esau was coming to meet Jacob with 400 people (32:6).
When Jacob heard that news, he was greatly afraid and distressed (v. 7).
He feared that Esau would come and attack him and the mothers with the children (v. 11).
So Jacob cried out to God:
“Deliver me, I pray, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau” (v. 11).
Eventually, God saw Jacob’s affliction and the toil of his hands (31:42)
He delivered Jacob from Esau.

I want to learn the Heavenly Father's heart through obedience.

When God commanded Prophet Jonah to "Go ...", Jonah disobeyed (Jon. 1:2-3).

The reason was because Jonah didn't have compassion heart toward the people in Nineveh (4:11).

When God commanded Prophet Hosea to "Go, take to yourself a wife of harlotry and have children of harlotry", he obeyed (Hos. 1:2-3).

The reason why God commanded like this to Hosea was

To teach Hosea God's heart toward the Israelites who were committing spiritual adultery.

I think God told His Son Jesus to 'God, take to yourself a wife of harlotry, the Church.

So Jesus obeyed the word of Heavenly Father until his death on the cross (Phil. 2:8).

We must also obey the Lord's command to go and take to ourselves a spouse of harlotry and have children of harlotry and love them in order to learn our Father God's heart toward us.

When there is relief ...

When I see that there is relief, I harden my heart and don't listen to God. (Cf.: Exod. 8:15)

Idol worshipers vs. God worshipers

Idol worshipers forfeit the grace that can be theirs and worship

and cling to worthless idols that are like breath that are empty and vain.

However, God worshipers go to God and worship Him with thanksgiving

By treasuring God's covenant grace in their hearts.
(Jonah 2:8-9)

Rather than covering it up yourself ...

Rather than trying to cover my sin up for myself
It is much better for my gracious and merciful God to cover it up
As I rely on the blood of Jesus Christ on the cross and repent my sin. (Cf. David)

I need to know that I cannot go unnoticed ...

I need to know that I can't go unnoticed before the Lord
and come trembling and fall at His feet ... (Lk. 8:47)

I deceived myself.

I said what was true with my lips but I didn't act upon it.
After all, I deceived myself. (Jere. 42:6, 20, 21)

Bring suffering upon ourselves?

Of course, it is God's grace to participate in Christ's suffering (Phil. 1:29)
But going through meaningless suffering that we bring upon ourselves

Isn't God's grace but self-inflicted suffering in our own foolishness.
(Prov. 22:3)

We should be very careful to love the Lord our God.

We should be very careful to love the Lord our God (Josh. 23:11).
We should be careful to obey the Word of God without turning aside to the right or to the left (v. 6).
We shouldn't associate and get close to the worldly people around us
And set up our own snares and traps for us (vv. 12-13).
We must only hold fast to the Lord our God (v. 8).

We should be very careful to love the Lord our God.

We should be very careful to love the Lord our God.
We shouldn't ally ourselves with the worldly people and live in conformity with them.
Otherwise, they will become our snares, traps, whips on our backs and thorns in our eyes
And we will be disciplined by God (Josh. 23:11-13).

We should be very careful to love our God.

We should be very careful to love our God (Josh. 23:11).
In other words, we should hold fast to our God (v. 8)

And be careful to obey all that is written in the Scripture (v. 6).

If we don't, then we will go close to the world and commit sins against God.

A fool who considers himself wise

A fool who considers himself wise in his own eyes is indeed his foolishness.

There is no hope for him. (Prov. 26:5, 12)

He who considers himself wise ...

He who considers himself wise (Prov. 3:7, 26:12) likes to teach others the Word of God

But doesn't teach himself (Rom. 2:21).

There is no hope for such man (Prov. 26:12).

“I will become even more undignified than this”

The great joy in our hearts due to God's grace and love

Makes us to celebrate before the Lord

Even we become more undignified than this and are humiliated in our own eyes.

(2 Sam. 6:12-22)

We shouldn't sin at the cost of our lives ...

Maybe we are sinning at the cost of our lives. (Num. 16:38)

Envy and hate

If we envy, we quarrel (Gen. 26:14, 20).

If we hate, we send him (v. 27).

We even try to kill him if we hate him (27:41).

Mount Sinai and Mount Calvary

On Mount Sinai, God commanded Moses to go to the Israelites and consecrate them
And put limits for them around the mountain so that they might not be put to death.
(Exod. 19:10, 12)

On Mount Calvary, Jesus died on the cross in order to cleanse us and to make us live forever
And destroy the boundary with God.
(Heb. 9:22; Eph. 2:14)

The church shouldn't have any attraction.

Although Jesus Christ had no beauty or majesty to attract people to Him,
Nothing in His appearance that people should desire Him (Isa. 53:2)
But His church is now trying to draw the attention of this world

By pursuing its' own beauty.

That's why the church is filled with carnal Christians.

King Solomon, whose beginning was increasing greatly but whose ending was insignificant?

One of the Bible verses that is well known to us Christians is Job 8:7 –

“Though your beginning was insignificant, Yet your end will increase greatly.”

But when I think about King Solomon, I think his beginning was increasing greatly

But his ending was insignificant.

The reason I think this way is because King Solomon loved many foreign women

along with the daughter of Pharaoh and he let them turn his heart away (1 Kgs. 11:1-4),

even though he received his name “Jedidiah” (mean ‘loved by God’) (2 Sam. 12:25)

and “a wise and discerning heart” and “both riches and honor” from God (1 Kgs. 3:12-13).

He didn't keep God's covenant and His statutes (v. 11), his heart was turned away from the Lord (v. 9)

and did what was evil in the sight of the Lord by worshiping idols (vv. 5-6).

How could he, who was loved by the Lord and followed Him at the beginning,

Loved the foreign women who served idols and worshiped the foreign idols?

Trials to test

As long as I can accept “various trials” as ‘the testing of my faith’

so that I can let endurance to have its perfect result ... (Jam. 1:1-4)

Obedience even through tests

God gives us difficult tests in our lives

in order to make us not to rely on our own understanding and to disobey God's commands but to trust in God and to live our lives of obedience to Him. (Gen. 22; Prov.3:5-6)

Trust and meditation

Those Christians who trust God meditate His Word day and night.

The more they meditate His Word, the more they cannot help but to trust God.

(Cf.: Ps. 1, Jere. 17)

I will walk faithfully with silence of trust.

In hearing God's Word and obeying Him in His presence,

I want to walk faithfully with silence of trust as I worship God with thanksgiving,

Believing and assuring that God will accomplish His promised Word in His time and in His way,

Toward the eternal promised Kingdom of God.

[After hearing the Word of God of Joshua 6:8-14 during the first day of 2019 Fall Revival meeting]

Even our close friends we trust

Even our close friends in whom we trust and share our hearts and lives can be against us and attack us.

Then we can fall. But our friends cannot win over us.

The reason is because we know that our Lord is pleased with us

and He will uphold us in our integrity.

(Ps. 41:9-12)

Have faith in the Lord!

If we have faith in the Lord even in the midst of a great crisis, we will be upheld.

If we have faith in His servants, then we will be successful. (2 Chron. 20:20)

We can't trust him.

We can't trust him who is hunger for riches and power. (Cf.: Prov. 28:20)

(As I was reading George M. Schwab's "The Book of Proverbs")

The Church of the Bride must be a pure virgin.

The Church of the Bride must be a pure virgin to be presented to "one husband" Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 11:2).

The pure virgin Church must have purity of devotion to Christ (v. 3).

But Satan is constantly deceiving the Church by his craftiness to go astray

From the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ (v. 3).

Satan is preaching “another Jesus”
and trying to make us to receive “a different spirit” and “a different gospel” (v. 4).

Hasten and don’t delay.

When I consider my ways and realize that I am far from the Word of God
I must turn my steps to His Word.
I must be hasten and not delay to obey His commands. (Ps. 119:59-60)

The Christian life

It is extremely normal that the more we live Christian life,
The more we become aware of and deepen our sense of sin (1 Tim. 1:15).
It is very natural that the more we live Christian life,
The more we become conscious of God’s grace and less our sense of merit
(1 Cor. 15:10; Lk. 17:10).
The more we live Christian life, the more we become humble.

Look at Apostle Paul:

1. “For I am the least of the apostles ...” (1 Cor. 15:9).
2. “To me, the very least of all saints ...” (Eph. 3:8).
3. “...sinners, among whom I am foremost of all” (1 Tim. 1:15).

Some evidences that I am living wrong Christian life:

1. I am (or It seems I am) becoming increasingly insensitive to sin (Eph. 4:19).
I don’t regard sin as sin (Rom. 5:13).
2. I am becoming more and more tied to merit (Lk. 18:11-12).

I think more of what I do for the Lord and His church rather than what He does for me (Mt. 25:44).

3. I am becoming more and more proud (Prov. 21:4; Ezek. 28:5).

I like to reveal my own glory rather than the glory of God (Jn. 12:43).

One thing that is essential in the life of faith

One thing that is essential in the life of faith,

The one thing we must do so that we are completely immersed is to meditate on the Word of God.

When we meditate on the Word we need to keep our composure.

The reason is because we can't meditate on His Word properly with impatient mind.

We should enjoy meditating the Word of God without rushing (Ps. 1:3).

(As I am reading Eugene Peterson's "As Kingfishers Catch Fire")

Laziness of faith

Laziness of faith is matter of heart. The problem of heart is that we lack the understanding of God's love.

(Cf. Prov. 24:30)

(As I am reading George M. Schwab's "The Book of Proverbs")

Even on the downhill path of faith

"If I should say, "My foot has slipped," Your lovingkindness, O LORD, will hold me up.

When my anxious thoughts multiply within me, Your consolations delight my soul" (Ps. 94:18-19).

When I am going down on a slide rather than up, when I am anxious,

When my heart is in great pain that it refuses to be comforted,
I experience deeply God's eternal love holding me.
I give thanks to God because the Lord's comfort makes my heart rejoice
And makes me to praise Him and exalts His name on high.

What is faith?

Faith is putting complete trust in the Lord and enjoying peace of heart in steadfast of mind.
(Isa. 26:3)

Our actual life ...

Although we say we want to follow Jesus closer with our lips (Mt. 16:24)
Our actual life is following Jesus at a distance (Lk. 22:54).

The steps of righteous that do not slip

The steps of righteous don't slip. The reason is his mouth utters wisdom, his tongue speaks justice,
And the law of his God is in his heart. (Ps. 37:30-31)

We have to take it seriously!

When righteousness and justice aren't practiced in the church

The hearts of the righteous will suffer with deep wounds.

Then the righteous and just Judge the Lord, who is the head of the church,
will rebuke, give warning and discipline His church in love.

Before we receive His discipline, we should take His rebuke and warning seriously in fear of God.

The poor in spirit Christians ...

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Mt. 5:3)

The poor in spirit Christians ...

1. Know themselves that they are sinners.
They know that they are chief sinners.
2. Acknowledge that there is nothing good in themselves.
They know that they cannot do good by themselves.
They acknowledge that the indwelling Holy Spirit does good works in and through them.
3. Know that they cannot save by their own good deeds.
They acknowledge that they are saved by only what Jesus has done on the cross.
They believe that they are saved only by God's grace.
4. Rely on God completely.
They don't rely on their own understanding but trust in God.
They pray to God always.
5. Are humble.
They don't boast themselves and seek their own glory.
They only boast the Lord and live for His glory.

[As I read Iain M. Duguid's "Hero of Heroes"]

The Christian whose mind is steadfast

The Christian whose mind is steadfast trust in the Lord forever.

The reason is because the Lord is the Rock eternal.

The Lord will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast. (Isa. 26:3-4)

The righteous in severe suffering

The righteous who is in severe suffering can envy the wicked

When he sees the wicked who is prosperous. (Ps. 73:3, 14, 16)

Thought that is oppressive to us?

Each one of us may have questions that we think and ponder enough to be in pain.

For example, the psalmist Asaph had thought 'Why the wicked are prosperous when the righteous are suffering?'

And this thought was oppressive to him (Ps. 73:16).

He realized the answer to that question when he entered the sanctuary of God (v. 17).

"the stumbling block of the cross"

Trying to be justified by keeping law is to be fallen from grace

And preaching like that is “the stumbling block of the cross” (Gal. 5:4, 11).

“a vessel for the smith” ... “the furnace of affliction”

The Lord has tested us in “the furnace of affliction” (Isa. 48:10)

In order to “Take away the dross from the silver” and to make us “a vessel for the smith” (Prov. 25:4).

A Fruitful Christian

[Short Word Meditation (7)]

James Kim

“the valley of Achor”

"the valley of Achor" (Josh. 7:24, 26), It means ‘the valley of trouble’.

Joshua and the Israelites were troubled.

They were troubled because they lost the war against Ai

Even though they won the war against Jericho.

The reason was that a man named Achan coveted (7:21) all that was in Jericho that belonged to the Lord (6:17) and he took some of the things under the ban and had both stolen and put them among his things (7:11).

This is transgression against God’s covenant which God commanded the Israelites And the Israelites had sinned (vv. 1, 11).

Although God clearly commanded the Israelites,

“But as for you, only keep yourselves from the things under the ban, so that you do not covet them and take some of the things under the ban, and make the camp of Israel accursed and bring trouble on it” (6:18)

Achan coveted “the spoil a beautiful mantle from Shinar and two hundred shekels of silver and a bar of gold fifty shekels in weight” (7:21).

As a result, God wasn’t with the Israelites and thus they couldn’t stand before their enemies (vv. 12, 13)

And lost the war against the men of Ai (vv. 4-5).

So the hearts of the Israelites melted, became as water (v. 5) and they were troubled (v. 25).

This is what God said to them:

“I will not be with you anymore unless you destroy the things under the ban from your midst” (v. 12),

“There are things under the ban in your midst, O Israel.

You cannot stand before your enemies

until you have removed the things under the ban from your midst” (v. 13).

So all the Israelites took Achan, who had transgressed the covenant of the Lord

And had committed a disgraceful thing in Israel (vv. 15, 18),

With “the silver, the mantle, the bar of gold, his sons, his daughters,
his oxen, his donkeys, his sheep, his tent and all that belonged to him
and they brought them up to the valley of Achor” (v. 24).

And “all Israel stoned them with stones; and they burned them with fire
after they had stoned them with stones”

and they raised over him a great heap of stones” (vv. 25-26).

Then the Lord turned from the fierceness of His anger (v. 26).

"Achor's Valley, or desolate waste, There we'd bear the Gospel You gave,
Carry love through streets like Sodom's Anywhere, to seek and to save!"

(Hymn “Call'd of God, We Honor the Call” v. 2)

Generously giving ...

Generously giving means no matter how much I value something
I give to another without valuing it anymore.
(Deut. 15:10)

God who didn't spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all (Rom. 8:32).
That's how much God values us.

When a wife complains ...

When a wife complains, her husband usually thinks that ‘Here goes again.

She is complaining again’ and he doesn’t like it.

From his logical point of view, what she says doesn’t make sense to him.

Not only that, he thinks that ‘She complains even though I love her that much’

And he gets angry at her.

He even gets discouraged because he can’t understand her and doesn’t know what to do to her.

That’s why we husbands don’t listen to our wives’ complaints and look away.

As a result, dissatisfaction inevitably builds up in her heart.

What should we do?

Husbands!

We should listen to our wives’ complaints.

The reason is because even God listened to the Israelites’ complaints (Exod. 16:9, 12).

And we need to understand what our wives’ dissatisfaction is even through their complaints.

Then we should love our wives with the Lord’s love

So that they would be satisfied in the Lord (Cf. v. 12ff).

We should clarify “Not” and “Yes”

NO covetousness, YES zeal (Acts 20:33-34).

“because of your beauty”

We must guard hearts from becoming proud because of our beauty. (Cf. Ezek. 28:17)

We are nothing

We shouldn't be mistaken that we have become something.

We are nothing. (1 Cor. 3:7)

Because I have no right ...

No matter how a person who shows me grace and love misunderstands me and say something to me because someone has slandered me in front of him

I must accept whatever he says to me

Because I have no right that I should complain anymore to him.

(Cf. 2 Sam. 19:24-30)

It is no avail.

It is no avail that we serve the Lord and His church as we wear ourselves out (Isa. 16:12) with overweening pride (v. 6).

It is no avail to go to the temple and pray (v. 6).

Our boastings are empty (v. 6).

God has put an end to the shouting in joy and gladness (v. 10) that comes out of the prideful heart.

And God turns that joy and gladness into lament and grieve (v. 7)

and weeps and tears (v. 9).

There is no profit ...

Although there is no profit, some people are exchanging their lives with money.

(Mk. 8:36-37)

Father David

As we celebrate Father's Sunday, I want to think about what father David said to his son Solomon based on 1 Chronicles 28:9-10 and to receive three lessons how we as parents can be good examples to our children:

First, father David said to his son Solomon, "know the God of your father" (v. 9).

The reason why David said like this is because

He wanted to pass down the right knowledge of God to Solomon.

And that right knowledge is 'My God is covenant God.'

Therefore, David wanted his son Solomon to succeed in all that he did and wherever he turned (1 Kgs. 2:3).

Second, father David said to his son Solomon,

'Serve the God of your father with a whole heart and a willing mind' (1 Chron. 28:9).

Father David not only wanted Solomon to receive the blessing of success from God

But also to keep that blessing. And the secret was to serve the Lord.

Third, father David said to his son Solomon,

'He has chosen you to be courageous and act in building a house for the sanctuary' (v. 10).

The reason why David said like this to Solomon was

Because Solomon was still young and inexperienced

and the work of building the Lord's temple was great (29:1).

The service that God the Father values is ...

The service that God the Father values is to service the Lord (Jn. 12:26)

In a way to full the ministry which we received from the Lord Jesus

And to finish our course in testifying solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God

In which we don't consider our lives of any account as dear to ourselves (Acts 20:24).

What is the Father God's heart?

What is Father God's heart toward me? (Lam. 3:33)

When I am being afflicted by the rod of His wrath (v. 1),

And when I was walking and dwelling in darkness (vv. 2, 6),

"He has besieged me and surrounded me with bitterness and hardship" (v. 5),

"He has walled me in so I cannot escape; he has weighed me down with chains" (v. 7),

"He has barred my way with blocks of stone" (v. 9),

"I have been deprived of peace" (v. 17).

When "I say, 'My splendor is gone and all that I had hoped from the LORD' (v. 18)

And "I thought I was about to be cut off" (v. 54),

"I called on your name, O Lord, from the depths of the pit" (v.55).

But even when I call out or cry for help, He shuts out my prayers (v. 8).

What is the heart of Father God who does this to me? (v. 33)

What was the heart of Father God toward His begotten Son Jesus Christ?

When Jesus was receiving holy and just God's wrath on the cross and was suffering,

He cried out to Father God, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Mt. 27:46)

God rejected the Jesus' prayer.

What was the heart of Father God who did this to His begotten Son?

The father's heart?

What was father Jacob's heart when his daughter Dinah was raped by Shechem, the son of Hamor the Hivite, the prince of the land? (Gen. 34:1-5)

Shechem told Jacob and Jacob's sons, "Let me find favor in your eyes" (v. 11).

How was Jacob's heart then?

Maybe he thought about when he wanted to find favor in his older brother Esau's eyes? (33:8, 10, 15)

Jacob's sons lied to Shechem and Shechem's father Hamor and tried to make them circumcised (34:14-17).

How was Jacob's heart then?

Maybe he thought about when he lied to his father Isaac in order to receive Esau's blessing from Isaac? (ch. 27)

When Jacob's sons lied, Shechem didn't delay to do the thing, Because he was delighted with Jacob's daughter Dinah (34:19).

How was Jacob's heart then?

Maybe he thought about when he served seven years for Rachel because of his love for her

And it seemed to him but a few days? (29:20)

What was the heart of father Jacob?

When his older brother Esau asked him "Who are these with you?"

This was what Jacob said,

"The children whom God has graciously given your servant" (33:5).

The father's heart must be a heart that knows the grace of God.

King Abimelech vs. King David?

Abimelech king of the Philistines didn't sin
Even though he saw "Isaac was caressing his wife Rebekah"
And called him and said, "Behold, certainly she is your wife!
How then did you say, 'She is my sister'? ...
What is this you have done to us? One of the people might easily have lain with your wife,
and you would have brought guilt upon us" (Gen. 26:8-10).

However, David king of Judah sinned and had done what was evil in the sight of the Lord
When he saw very beautiful in appearance Bathsheba, the wife of the loyal soldier Uriah,
bathing and laid with her and when she was pregnant,
David tried to cover it up even by killing Uriah (2 Sam. 11).

King Abimelech and King Pharaoh?

Abimelech king of the Philistines told Isaac,
Who was blessed by the Lord and thus became rich, continued to grow richer
Until he became very wealthy to "Go away from us, for you are too powerful for us" (Gen. 26:12-16).

Pharaoh king of Egypt told Moses and Aaron,
"Rise up, get out from among my people, both you and the sons of Israel" (Exod. 12:29, 31)
After the tenth plague of all the firstborn in the land of Egypt were dead
While the sons of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly
and multiplied and became exceedingly mighty (1:7)
As the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham,
"Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs,
where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years.

But I will also judge the nation whom they will serve,
and afterward they will come out with many possessions” (Gen. 15:13-14).

"Do you not yet understand?"

Jesus is also saying to us, “Do you not yet understand?” (Mk. 8:17, 21)

The reason is because we don’t yet understand due to a hardened heart (v. 17)

When Jesus “did not say to beware of the leaven of bread,

But of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees” (Mt. 16:12) as warning (Mk. 8:15).

They thought that Jesus was talking about “the fact they they had no bread” (v. 16).

We must understand. We must hear the Jesus’ warning and understand.

We must beware of formalism, hypocrisy of Pharisees

And secularism and materialism of Sadducees.

“yet now there is hope”

Yet now there is hope for us because we have an opportunity to repent our sins. (Ezra 10:2-3)

Flattering is spreading a net

If we flatter our neighbor instead of rebuking him when my neighbor is sinning,

It is spreading a net for our feet and is snaring by our own sin (Prov. 29:5, 6).

The flattering Satan

When we are in trouble and afflictions,

Satan, who is like a dog moving its tail, makes us to compromise with sins and to take a comfortable path. (Park Yun-sun) (1 Thess. 3:3)

"Let me hear You lovingkindness in the morning"

"Let me hear Your lovingkindness in the morning; For I trust in You;
Teach me the way in which I should walk; For to You I lift up my soul" (Ps. 143:8).

Now as I was working on our church program 'The Bible Q & A' section,
Psalms 143:8 came to my mind.

Actually God's great grace in my life of faith is that
The Lord is letting me hear His lovingkindness in the morning.
The Morning Prayer meeting has been great help and strength to me.
Especially when I meditate on the sermons that I have preached during the Morning Prayer meeting
And write down my own meditations after the Morning Prayer meeting,
It really helps me and greatly strengthens me in my spiritual walk with the Lord.
The reason is because the Lord is letting me to hear the words of His lovingkindness.
And the Lord enables me to rely and trust in Him and guides me the way I should go
Through those words that He speaks to my heart.
Therefore, even at this moment
I receive the precious word of Psalms 143:8 and offer my soul to the Lord.

"the wounds of a friend"

The true friendship in the Lord is to humbly receive the wounds of a friend. (Prov. 27:6)

Joy in pain?

The reason our hearts are in pain is
Not because the things that we are suffering
But because we think that God is silent when we cry out to Him
And He is hiding His face from us.

But even when our hearts are in pain, we Christians rejoice
Because we trust in the Lord.
Since we have firm faith in the Lord that
He will fulfill His promise to us in His time and in His way,
We give thanks to God and praise Him in faith as we rejoice in the Lord. (Ps. 13)

(As I read Mark D. Futato's "The Book of Psalms")

"their talk will spread like gangrene"

The worldly and empty talks that will spread like gangrene make us to go astray from the truth.
They are useless, make us to quarrel, and destroy faith of some and only ruin those who listen.
(2 Tim. 2:14, 16-18)

“As the proverb of the ancients says, ‘Out of the wicked comes forth wickedness’”

There was the ancient proverb that says, “Out of the wicked comes forth wickedness” (1 Sam. 24:13).

Although David dealt well with King Saul, King Saul dealt wickedly with David (v. 17).
Although David dealt well with Nabal, who was “a worthless man” (25:17) and “Fool” (v. 25),
Nabal paid him back evil for good (v. 21).

The church goers who are skilled in doing evil

Those who are foolish don't know God in the sight of God
And they are skilled in doing evil but they don't know how to do good (Jere. 4:22).

Those church goers who don't know how to do good but are skilled in doing evil
Are fools who don't really know God.

The soul of the wicked

The soul of the wicked which desires evil cannot be found favor in his neighbor's eyes. (Prov. 21:10)

The income of the wicked ...

The income of the wicked is more than their heart could wish
and they increase in riches (Ps. 73:7, 12).
But their ill-gotten gains don't profit (Prov. 10:2)
and the income of the wicked brings them punishment (v. 16).

The prosperity of the wicked, the suffering of the righteous?

The prosperity of the wicked is sin (Prov. 21:4). The suffering of the righteous is grace (Phil. 1:29).

The prosperity of the wicked is sin.

The prosperity of the wicked is sin (Prov. 21:4).

Then what about jealousy of the prosperity of the wicked? (Ps. 73:3)

Those who make other to grumble by spreading a bad report

Those who don't believe in God's promise and are spreading a bad report about their church

So that most of the church members grumble against the pastor the Lord's servant will meet disaster.

(Cf. Num. 14:36-37)

A man with evil eyes vs. A man with good eyes

A stingy man in the sight of God is a man with evil eyes (Prov. 23:6).

The reason is because the stingy man is eager to get rich (28:22).

We must not crave his delicacies (23:6).

A generous man in the sight of God is a man with good eyes.

The reason is because the generous man shares his food with the poor (22:9).

We should share the table with him.

The wicked rich ...

The wicked rich save theirs but not the poor's (2 Sam. 12:4).

The result of wicked thoughts?

If we don't listen diligently to the word of God,
Then our hearts and our thoughts will be bound to have evil thoughts to sin
according to our old sinful nature. When the wicked thoughts stay in us for a long time,
The result of that wicked thought is disaster. (Jere. 4:14)

The wicked

The wicked watches in secret for his victims (Ps. 10:8).
In his arrogance the wicked man hunts down the weak (v. 2).
He lies in wait to catch the helpless and drags them off in his net (v. 9).
They collapse and fall under his strength (v. 10).
The wicked boasts of his heart's desire and is greedy (v. 3).
His mouth is full of curses and deceit and oppression
and under his tongue is mischief and wickedness (v. 7).
The wicked doesn't seek Him and all his thoughts are, "There is no God" (v. 4).
He says to himself, "God has forgotten; He has hidden His face; He will never see it " (v. 11).
He says to himself, "I will not be moved;
Throughout all generations I will not be in adversity" (v. 6).

The reason to be courageous

Due to the dangerous circumstance in which there may be damage and great loss (Acts 27:9-10),
All hope of our being saved was gradually abandoned (v. 20).

But Apostle Paul kept his courage and told the people who were with him

“I urge you to keep up your courage” (vv. 22, 25).

It was because Paul believed that God would turn out exactly as he had been told (vv. 24-25).

Knwoing it, would I be able to die in peace?

Would I be able to die in peace, knowing, like Abraham, that God promised

My descendants will be strangers in a land that isn't theirs,

where they will be enslaved and oppressed 400 years

And God will judge the nation whom they will serve,

and afterward they will come out with many possessions? (Gen. 15:13-15)

The Christians who mourn ...

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted." (Mt. 5:4).

The Christians who mourn ...

1. Weep and mourn for their sins (Joel 2:12).

They confess and repent their sins when the Holy Spirit works mightily
as their sins are being exposed through the God's holy presence
in their intimate fellowship with God
(Mt. 12:41; Rom. 2:4; 2 Cor. 7:10).

2. Weep and mourn for the sins of their families (Job 1:5) and of their churches (Rev. 2:5, 22; 3:3).

They confess and repent their sins of not receiving God as the Lord of their families and of their
churches, rejecting the Lord's control and not being submissive to His authoritative Word and not
be able to experience God's presence in their family and church.

3. Weep and mourn for the sins of their nations (Ezek. 18:30; Mt. 12:41; Acts 13:24).

They confess and repent the sins of their nations not fearing God and being rebellious to Him.

As a result, the Christians who mourn receive the comfort of the Holy Spirit.

[As I am reading Iain M. Duguid's "Hero of Heroes"]

You will inherit the promises.

Be diligent. Realize the full assurance of hope until the end.

Do be sluggish. Believe. Be patience.

Then you will inherit the promises. (Heb. 6:11-12)

What is "the day of the Lord" for those in darkness?

Although "the day of the Lord" is the day of destruction for those in darkness which will come just like a thief in the night, they are saying "Peace and safety!" (1 Thess. 5:2-4)

How can we thank God?

David, who said to Abiathar "I am responsible for the death of your father's whole family" (1 Sam. 22:22), gave thanks to God (Ps. 52:9) even though he had brought about the death of Abiathar's father Ahimelech the priest and eighty-five men who were the linen ephod (v. 18).

I don't understand this. I don't understand how David was able to give thanks to God?

If I was David, I think I would feel very guilty.

So I am wondering: 'How could David give thanks to God in that kind of circumstance?'

Maybe the reason is because David was relying on God's lovingkindness (Ps. 52:8)

And maybe the reason is because he trusted in the lovingkindness of God (v. 8).

How can we bear fruit?

How can we bear fruit?

When we hear the word of God, we should immediately receive it with joy

and let it firmly rooted in ourselves so that when affliction or persecution arises because of the world, we don't immediately fall away but endure

and should prevent the worries of the world, the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things to enter in and choke the word but bear fruit, thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold.

(Mk. 4:15-20)

How can we thank God in such circumstance?

In order to give thanks and praise God in fearful circumstance,

We must be controlled by God rather than the fearful circumstance

And we must have complete trust in God of salvation rather than fear in our hearts.

(2 Chron. 20:18-21)

How can we always thank God in prayer?

How can we always thank God in prayer for our loved ones?

Apostle Paul thanked God in all his remembrance of the Philippian church saints,

Whom he loved with affection of Jesus Christ (Phil. 1:3, 8).

In order for us to always give thanks to God as we pray for our loved ones

whom we love we affection of Jesus Christ,
we must look at them by faith what God has been doing in their lives
instead of look at them with our own physical eyes and see their offense
[“He who covers over an offense promotes love” (Prov. 17:9)] (1 Thess. 1:3).

How was Samson deceived?

I thought about how Samson was deceived by Delilah (Judg. 16):

1. First, Samson didn’t know who was behind Delilah.
Samson didn’t know that the lords of the Philistines were the ones who told Delilah,
“Entice him (Samson), and see where his great strength lies and how we may overpower him
that we may bind him to afflict him. Then we will each give you eleven hundred pieces of silver”
(Judg. 16:5).
2. Then, we see Samson getting closer to the truth as he was lying to Delilah three times (vv. 6-17).
When he lied to her third time, he mentioned about his hair (v. 13).
3. And then Samson’s soul was annoyed to death when Delilah pressed him daily with her words (v. 16).
This reminded me the Potiphar’s wife who seduced Joseph every day (Gen. 39:10).
Joseph didn’t listen to her to lie beside her or be with her (v. 10).
But Samson not only told Delilah all that was in his heart he also slept on her knees
(Judg. 16:18-19).
How could he sleep on her knees after telling her that his strength was from his hair?

How could he speak tenderly to her?

How could Shechem spoke tenderly to Jacob's daughter Dinah
After he took her and violated her? (Gen. 34:2-3)

How could God love him?

How could God love Solomon who was born from the woman
Whom David committed adultery in covetousness and took her from her husband
Even by killing him? (2 Sam 12:24-25)

How should we read the Bible?

Those Christians who read the Bible with willingness to do God's will
Hear His voice through His Word and obeys His voice in faith
And thus experience God's presence. (Cf. Jn. 7:17)

How and why did God send him before them?

How did God send Joseph to Egypt before his families? (Ps. 105:17)
Did God even use Joseph's father Jacob who favored Joseph among his sons
and Joseph's older brothers who hated him? (Gen. 37:3, 4)
Did God use them even by making Joseph to have two dreams and then hated by them? (vv. 5-12)
God even uses the result of our sinful choice of free will to fulfill the promise and dream
that He gave to us (Cf. Rom. 8:28)

Why did God send Joseph to Egypt before his families?
He did so because He wanted to save their lives by a great deliverance
and preserve for them a remnant on earth

(Gen. 45:5, 7, 50:20)

“For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 1:6)

How should we pray for our children?

The important thing when praying to Heavenly Father for your children to succeed is that we the parents should know the secret of biblical success and pray in faith to God humbly.

The secret of biblical success is that God with us (Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23; 1 Chron. 22:11) and obeying God’s commandments (Josh. 1:7-9).

At the same time, what we need to know is why our children need to succeed, that is the purpose of their success, when we pray to God.

The purpose of success is to fulfill God’s will (Gen. 45:5, 7).

In other words, when we pray for our children

we must know the secret of biblical success and the purpose of success.

And we should pray to God in faith.

How could he spoke well?

Even though his father Saul told Jonathan to kill David (1 Sam. 19:1)

Jonathan spoke well of David (v. 4) in whom he greatly delighted (v. 1).

How should we worship God?

Instructions on how to worship God through 5 burnt offerings in Leviticus 1-5:

1. First, the purpose of God's salvation is to make us to worship God (Exodus)
2. Come into church door with thanksgiving in our hearts (Psalms)
3. Worship God with attitude of offering everything to Him (Burn offering, Lev. Ch. 1)
(Because God has already given us Jesus Christ and every spiritual blessing in Him)
4. Worship God with attitude of determination in participating in Jesus' suffering
(Grain offering, Lev. Ch. 2) [Because participating in Jesus' suffering is God's grace (Phil. 1:29)]
5. Worship God as we live a life of peacemaker since through Jesus Christ's death our relationship with God (vertical relationship) and our relationship with each other (horizontal relationship) are reconciled (Peace offering, Lev. Ch. 3) (We are both peace-makers and peace-keepers)
6. Worship God as we ask God for forgiveness since all our sins are already forgiven by God through the death of Jesus Christ on the cross (Sin offering, Lev. Ch. 4)
7. Worship God after we ask others who we have sinned for forgiveness and compensate them
(Guilt offering, Lev. Ch. 5)

How does God make us to imitate Jesus?

God, who is the potter, makes us to imitate Jesus
by making us to receive the Word of God even in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit
and enables us to obey it. (1 Thess. 1:6)

How can we trust in the Lord?

We can trust in the Lord (Prov. 22:19)

when we pay attention and listen to the word of God of wisdom (v. 17)
and keep it in our hearts (v. 18).

The reason why we cannot trust in the Lord is

Because we aren't keeping His word in our hearts.

The reason why we cannot keep His word in our heart is

Because even though we hear the word, the worry of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth
choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful (Mt. 13:22).

God who leads us from difficulty to great difficulty?

Why does God lead us to great difficulty when we ask Him

to remove difficulty and expect Him to answer our prayer according to our expectation?

Why does God let us to be in greater difficulty

instead of answering our prayer according to our expectation?

Why does God lead us from a crisis to even to greater crisis of life and death situation?

Maybe God's purpose is for us to realize and to acknowledge

not only our weakness but also our inability and powerless thoroughly

through greater crisis, if not crisis,

so that we may hear His voice (His promise word),
completely trust in the Lord who is truthful, faithful and almighty Savior, obey His word
so that He can manifest His power of salvation of love.

(Cf. Josh. 10:8; 11:6ff)

Even if greater difficulty comes upon us ...

Even if we face more difficulty from our current difficulty, God's message is the same:

“... do not fear ...” (Josh. 10:8, 11:6).

The reason why we shouldn't fear any difficulties is because God is with us.

It is because Immanuel God will deliver us from all these difficulties (chs. 10, 11).

Reason for falling into foolish and harmful desire

The reason why we fall into foolish and harmful desire is

Because we don't have heart of contentment and don't know that

“we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either.”

That's why in covetousness we are trying to get rich by loving money. (1 Tim. 6:6-10)

We must turn away from a path of foolishness.

Even though God wants us to turn away from a path of foolishness

that we've been walking on and to walk on a path of wisdom,
Satan not only tempts us to keep on walking that path of foolishness
But also tempts those who are walking on the straight path to turn to the path of foolishness.
(Prov. 9:13-18)

Because he is a fool ...

He is a fool who shouldn't love her whom he violated forcefully
after listening to his friend who was a very shrewd man.
He did the foolish thing that he shouldn't suppose to do. (2 Sam. 13:1-14)

The naive

The naive (Prov. 7:7), who passes through the street near an adulteress' corner
and takes the way to her house (v. 8) in the twilight, in the evening (v. 9)
like a bird hastens to the snare (v. 23), is tempted by her who dressed as a harlot (v. 10)
and who entices him with her many persuasions and with her flattering lips (v. 21)
and then follows her as an ox goes to the slaughter or as one in fetters to the discipline of a fool (v. 22).

The believers like infants

The believers like infants (Mt. 11:25), who are innocent and simple and
Who long for "the pure milk of the word" (1 Pet. 2:2) that isn't mixed,
Experience God's presence (v. 3) by listening to the gospel of Jesus Christ with their hearts

And believe in His death and resurrection.

Therefore, there is this confession in their hearts and on their lips:

“Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, My lips will praise You.”

(Ps. 63:3)

We should put our childish ways behind us.

We shouldn't still be in childish level of Christian faith when we look at our Christian life

Even though our church life age is adult.

We must become a man and put our childish ways behind us. (1 Cor. 13:11)

Maybe the way we choose ...

Maybe the way we choose that seems to make us abundant

Can be the shortcut to be in needy. (Cf. Gen. 13:10)

"Will He not indeed make it grow?"

Since God “has made an everlasting covenant with me, ordered in all things, and secured;

For all my salvation and all my desire, will He not indeed make it grow?”

(2 Sam. 23:5)

Why I practice the very evil that I don't want?

Although the Lord's law should be my delight (Ps. 119:77).

Why I delight in practicing the very evil that I don't want? (Rom.7:19)

Ridiculous superstitious faith?

I think it is ridiculous superstitious faith that

One interprets the truth, the absolute principle of faith,

however he wants and apply it whatever he likes

And wants to receive blessing from God. (Judg. 17)

We should not distort the Scripture.

When we see people who say that they search

and study the Scripture intently but distort it (2 Pet. 3:16)

By interpreting the Scripture believe it however they want,

I think there should be a frame for viewing the Scripture.

And that frame is the sound doctrine

and I think that sound doctrine is the frame of Reformed theology.

Of course, being even in that frame of Reformed theology can be dangerous

Because that theology isn't the Scripture but the interpretation of it.

But I think it's dangerous to interpret the Scripture however we want

outside of that frame of Reformed theology.

Loss in order to gain

In order to gain the most valuable thing, we have to loss everything else that has no value.
(Phil. 3:7-8)

In order to gain ...

In order to gain, we must loss (Phil. 3:8). We cannot gain everything.
That is greed and pride.

Sad on face, sadness of heart

When we see our beloved brothers/sisters in Christ are in trouble,
There should be sadness of heart and sad on our face (Neh. 2:2, 3, 17).
Thus, we should remember them and pray for them.
And by doing so,
we should experience the gracious hand of our God upon us (vv. 4-5, 8, 18).

The Christians who are obstinate

We Christians who are a rebellious people are obstinate and stubborn
And we don't want to listen to the word of God. (Ezek. 2:3-4, 7)

We don't realize how great grace it is.

We are asking God in return, "if the Lord is with us,
why then has all this happened to us?" (Judg. 6:13)
Without understanding our sins
but only knowing the consequence of our sins that we are going through.
But here is at least one very important fact that we don't realizing.
It is the fact that God is with such people like us
who are going through the consequence of our sins.
In other words, we don't realize how great grace it is
for holy God to be with such unholy sinners like us.

We should not despise ...

Those who believe in Jesus, like the children who humble themselves,
Not only shouldn't despise "one of these little ones"
But also shouldn't cause them to stumble.
(Mt. 18:6, 10)

God who raised Elijah again

Elijah, who obeyed the word of God “Go, show yourself to Ahab ...” (1 Kgs.18:1, 2, 15)

met Ahab through Obadiah (v. 16)

And this is what Ahab said to Elihah: “Is this you, you troubler of Israel?” (v. 17)

Then Elijah boldly said like this to Ahab:

“I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father's house have,
because you have forsaken the commandments of the LORD and you have followed the Baals.

Now then send and gather to me all Israel at Mount Carmel,
together with 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of the Asherah,
who eat at Jezebel's table” (vv. 18-19).

Then when Elijah prayed to God at Mouth Carmel, “O LORD, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel,
today let it be known that You are God in Israel and that I am Your servant and I have done all these
things at Your word. Answer me, O LORD, answer me, that this people may know that You, O LORD,
are God, and that You have turned their heart back again” (vv. 36-37),

he received answer of his prayer from God (v. 38).

At that time, when all the people who were hesitating between God and Baal (v. 21)
saw the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt offering and the wood and the stones
and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench (v. 38),
this is what they said: “The LORD, He is God; the LORD, He is God” (v. 39).

Then Elijah said to them, “Seize the prophets of Baal, do not let one of them escape”,
They did so and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there (v. 40).

But when Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah and said, “So may the gods do to me and even more,
if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time” (19:2),

Elijah was afraid and arose and ran for his life (v. 3).

And he went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree;
And he requested for himself that he might die, and said,

“It is enough; now, O LORD, take my life, for I am not better than my fathers” (v. 4).

And he was very zealous for the Lord (vv. 10, 14) ran for his life (v. 3) and went to Horeb, the mountain of God (v. 8) since he thought that “the sons of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars and killed Your prophets with the sword And I alone am left, and they seek my life, to take it away” (vv. 10, 14).

The word of God came to Elijah who came to a cave and lodged there (v. 9).

And he went out of the cave at God's command and experienced God's presence (vv. 11-12).

Then Elijah is again commissioned by God (vv. 15-17).

Elijah, who thought that everybody died expect him, received the God's promise word that God left 7,000 in Israel, all the knees that had not bowed to Baal and every mouth that had not kissed him (v. 18).

Like this, God who gave Elijah, the one who was afraid, physically exhausted and asked God to take his life, raised him again

by not only giving him His word of promise but also allowing him to experience His presence.

As a result, Elijah again obeyed the word of God (21:17-18) and went down to see Ahab

Who had gone down to take possession of the vineyard of Naboth (v. 20).

Ahab said to Elijah: “Have you found me, O my enemy?” (v. 20)

And Elijah answered boldly: “I have found you,

because you have sold yourself to do evil in the sight of the LORD” (v. 20).

Behold, I will bring evil upon you, and will utterly sweep you away,

and will cut off from Ahab every male, both bond and free in Israel;

and I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat,

and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, because of the provocation with

which you have provoked Me to anger, and because you have made Israel sin.

Of Jezebel also has the LORD spoken, saying, "The dogs will eat Jezebel in the district of Jezreel."

The one belonging to Ahab, who dies in the city, the dogs will eat,

and the one who dies in the field the birds of heaven will eat" (vv. 20-24).

In this way, God raised Elijah again and enable him to speak boldly to King Ahab.

Our God is the God who raises us again, who are in despair!

God of Elijah

Like Peter who saw the wind and became frightened and began to sink (Mt. 14:30),
Elijah also was afraid and ran for his life when Jezebel threatened to kill him (1 Kgs. 19:2-3).

It was Elijah, who obeyed the word of God and went to the brook Cherith (vv. 3, 5)
Even though he knew that the brook would dry up because there would be no rain in the land (v. 7)
As he told King Ahab “surely there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word” (v. 1),
And obeyed the word of God, “I have commanded a widow there to provide for you” (v. 9)
and went to Zarephath (v. 10) where he met a widow who only had a handful of flour in the bowl and a
little oil in the jar and who was going to eat and die after she prepared for her and her son (v. 12),
And witnessed God revived the life of the child (v. 22) when he cried out to God (v. 21)
who “became sick; and his sickness was so severe that there was no breath left in him” (v. 17),
And told King Ahab, who tried to kill him (18:10),
“I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father’s house have” (v. 18),
And won the battle against the 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of the Asherah
on Mount Carmel (vv. 19-40),
And experienced a heavy shower (v. 45) when he crouched down on the earth, put his face between his
knees (v. 42) and prayed to God persistently (v. 43),
But ran away after he heard the threatening message of Jezebel (19:2-3).
He went into the wilderness and sat down under a juniper tree and requested for himself
that he might die and fell asleep (vv. 4-5).
Then the angel touched him twice and said to Elijah “Arise, eat, because the journey is too great for you”
(vv. 5, 7).
So Elijah arose and ate and drank and went in the strength of that food 40 days and 40 nights to Horeb,
the mountain of God (v. 8).
And there he experience God’s presence (vv. 9-18).
Eventually, God raised Elijah again and gave him a mission (v.v. 15-18).

The God of Elijah raises us again when we are weak and fall.

The God of Elijah is faithful God who fulfills His mission through His chosen servant.

Eliezer, Ebenezer

“Eliezer” (Meaning: “my God is help”) (Exod. 18:4),

“Ebenezer” (Meaning: “stone of help”) (1 Sam. 7:12).

God helped me and saved me.

I came here thus far because of God’s help.

We should be different to different people.

In order to save some we need know how to be different to different people.

For example, we need to become weak so that we may win the weak.

(1 Cor. 9:20-22)

We need to know to be like water

Because the water can make any kind of shape when it is poured into any shape of cup.

“The Lord Will Provide” faith

Only those who believe that the Lord will provide
will be able to enjoy the blessing of the Lord will provide.
(Gen. 22:8, 14)

"... just as the Lord had commanded Moses"

The Israelites did just as the Lord had commanded Moses
(Exod. 39:1, 5, 7, 21, 26, 29, 31, 32, 42; 40:19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 32).

“And Moses examined all the work and behold, they had done it, just as the Lord had commanded,
This they had done. So Moses blessed them” (v. 43).

1. We must obey the Lord’s commands.
2. We must listen to the Lord’s commands through the Lord’s servants..
And the Lord’s servants must deliver the Lord’s commands to the Lord’s people.
3. If we obey the Lord’s commands to the end and finish everything, then the Lord will bless us.

“the Lord’s anointed”

David was conscience-stricken for having cut off a corner of King Saul’s robe
when he was running away from him
Because “The Lord forbid that I should do such a thing to my master,
the Lord’s anointed” (1 Sam. 24:4-6).

King David didn’t kill Shimei who was from the same clan as Saul’s family
Even though Shimei cursed King David, the Lord’s anointed, and should be put to death for this
(2 Sam. 16:5-13; 19:21-23).

But David didn't consider Shimei innocent (1 Kgs. 2:9).

Like “the garden of the Lord”, so what?

When we look at it with our own eyes, it looks like “the garden of the Lord.” So what?

We are tormented in our righteous souls.

(Gen. 13:10; 2 Pet. 2:7-8)

"As the command of the Lord" ...

“As the command of the Lord” the sons of Israel remained camped (“two days or a month or a year”),

Set out and kept the Lord's charge. (Num. 9:18-23)

In giving offering ...

In giving offering to God, we should give cheerfully what we have decided in our hearts to give,

Not reluctantly or under compulsion, and be ready to give. (2 Cor. 9:1-7)

The weary and the faint

God wants to bring us back and to bless us.

He who guides us and is with us, refreshes the weary and satisfies the faint.
God give us sweet sleep.
(Jere. 31:23-26)

A fruitful Christian

If you are a Christian who continues to bear fruit in your life of faith,
There is no need to worry about the drought of faith. (Cf. Jer. 17: 8)

Fruitless zeal?

We can be discouraged if we don't see any fruit
Even though we have been working zealously for the Lord.
(Cf.: 1 Kgs. 19:10, 14)

Even if the situation is worrisome ...

The reason we don't worry about tomorrow (Mt. 6:34; Lk. 12:22; Phil. 4:6)

Even though the situation that we are in is worrisome (Mk. 4:19) is
Because we cast all our anxiety on Him who cares for us (1 Pet. 5:7).

Until the day we will be brought into the glorious freedom ...

There is no condemnation for us who are in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:1).
The reason is because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life [“God’s law” (7:22, 25),
“a law of faith” (3:27)] has set us free from the law of sin and of death (8:2; cf. 7:23, 25).

We are free from the law of sin (7:23, 25; 8:2).
We are free from slaves of sin (6:6, 16-18).
We are free from death (6:23; 8:2).

Now we have eternal life (6:22, 23).
Now we are slaves of righteousness (v. 18).
Now we are enslaved to God (v. 22).

Therefore, now we must live according to God’s will (Ps. 40:8).
Therefore, we must first seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness (Mt. 6:33).
Therefore, now we must live like those who have eternal life b obeying Jesus’ twofold command
(Lk. 10:27).

Until the day we will be brought into the glorious freedom (8:21)
Let’s live according to the Lord’s will in loving God and loving our neighbors
like truly free men and women of God.

Eternal life and love in him ...

“Anyone who hates his brother” and “If anyone has material possessions

and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him”,
there is no eternal life and love of God in him.
(1 Jn. 3:15, 17)

A rich man who is only interested in eternal life?

The great rich people who keep the commandments of God,
Who are storing treasures in this earth instead of heaven,
Are interested in eternal life but don't live like people who have eternal life
By not loving their neighbors as themselves
By not sharing their wealth with the poor.
It is very hard for them to enter the kingdom of God.
(Lk. 18:18-25)

"all who were appointed for eternal life"?

The Jews who didn't consider themselves worthy of eternal life
rejected the word of God (Acts 13:46).
They rejected the word of God saying that
'Everyone who believes in Jesus Christ is justified' (v. 39).
They believed that they could be justified by the law of Moses (v. 39).
But the Gentiles who were appointed for eternal life believed (v. 48) the word of God saying,
'Through Jesus Christ everyone who believes is justified' (v. 39).
Those who don't consider themselves worthy of eternal life believe that
They can be justified by their own effort, good deeds, being good or good works.
But those who are appointed for eternal life believe that

‘Everyone who believes in Jesus Christ is saved.’

What is eternal life?

“This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God,
and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.”

(Jn. 17:3)

Knowing God the Father and Jesus the Son is to obey the word of God the Father and of Jesus
And bear the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23).

Living in the Lord (1 Jn. 2:6) is to remain in His love (v. 5) by obeying His word.

Eternal life is knowing the Lord.

Eternal life is living in the Lord.

Eternal life is obeying the Lord’s word.

Eternal life is remain in the Lord’s love.

There is full of love and joy in eternal life.

What is eternal life? (2)

There is something we should keep in mind.

We should remember that when we believe in Jesus, we have eternal life

And that eternal life isn't just life in heaven forever.

It is because we are partially enjoying eternal life in this earth right now.

The place where the word "eternal life" appears intensively is the Gospel of John.

The word "eternal life" in Greek is "zoe" (life) plus "aionion" (eternal).

In other words, the word "eternal life" has two meanings literally (Internet):

This means, first of all, "life that lasts endlessly" in time,

Second, qualitatively means "a divine life different from human life."

Therefore, the term "eternal life" includes both the meaning of the eternal life in time,

And divine life that we enjoy in God.

In particular, when we look at the Gospel of John, the term "eternal life" means

'the eternal blessings that we will enjoy in the future' as in the Synoptic Gospel

but more than that it emphasizes the blessings of the present.

The Gospel of John says that those who believe in the Lord have eternal life,

And that the blessing of eternal life can be enjoyed even in present reality in the Lord.

Then what are the blessings of eternal life that we enjoy in present?

They are the blessings of the afterlife that we receive in sharing intimate fellowship

with eternal God and His Son Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit (J. 17:3).

A typical example is to participate in God's divine character.

In other words, the blessing of eternal life that we now partially enjoy in the present reality

is to imitate Jesus Christ in the sanctification of the Holy Spirit.

Another, the blessing of eternal life that we now enjoy partially is love.

When we love our God and our neighbors with the love of God

that has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit,

we partially taste the joy of heaven.

Also, the blessing of eternal life is peace.

Although we live in the world without peace,

We who believe in Jesus partially enjoy the blessing of eternal life, that is peace,
While living in this world.

Because God loves us with eternal love ...

When we are disciplined by God in our sufferings due to our great guilt and many sins
God gives us grace in the wilderness. Because God loves us with eternal love,
He leads us and builds us up again with loving-kindness. (Jere. 30:11-15; 31:2-4)

We must partially enjoy eternal life in this world.

I think eternal life should be enjoyed in this world now,
Not only in the coming world in heaven.
In other world, even though eternal life will be fully enjoyed in heaven
It should be partially enjoyed in this world as well.
How can we partially enjoy eternal life in this world?
We can do so by living in the Lord (1 Jn. 2:6) and obey His word
So that His love can be truly made complete in us (v. 5)
And thus His joy may be made full in us (Jn. 15:11).

The death of eternal life??

How can we understand the death of Jesus Christ, the God of “eternal life”? (Cf. 1 Jn. 1:2)

Our spiritual specs?

The reason why we are now still claiming the right of our spiritual specs in the church
Is because we still don't know the greatest value of knowing our Lord Jesus Christ. (Phil. 3:8)

Our spiritual detector?

Like there are smoke detectors in the building there are spiritual detectors in us.
The problem is that our spiritual detectors are not working properly (Cf.: Obad. 1:7).

Isn't the "spiritual blood vessel" clogged ...

Two of the people I met yesterday had a serious problem with a blood vessel.
One person had blood clots in the blood vessels, so it seemed to be enough to have heart attack
And another person actually had a small brain hemorrhage.
I remembered these two brothers this morning, and at the same time, the words of Matthew 13:22.
“And the one on whom seed was sown among the thorns, this is the man who hears the word,
and the worry of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.”
As I was meditating this word, I thought about “spiritual blood vessel”.
The Bible says that the reason why the spiritual blood vessels is blocked
is because of “the worry of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth”.
Isn't the spiritual blood vessel clogged
because of the worry of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth?
Then, if the spiritual blood line is clogged,
can a heart attack come to the love of the heart toward the Lord?
Could spiritual brain hemorrhage come to the knowledge of the head of the Lord?

The spiritual children ...

The spiritual children “tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming” (Eph. 4:14).

Spiritual love vs. Physical love?

Those who live in accordance with the Spirit (Rom. 8:5) obey the twofold command of Jesus

That is love God and love neighbors with the fruit of the Spirit, love (Gal. 5:22).

They love their neighbors with God’s love.

This love is spiritual love, and never physical love.

But the problem is our neighbors receive our spiritual love

Not as spiritual love of God in the Lord according to the Spirit but as physical love.

Soul salvation is God’s joy, our joy

God’s joy must be my joy.

I must do what God is pleased with in the heart of God the Father.

I must devote myself to the salvation of the soul (preaching the gospel).

I must become a fisher of men who catches the followers of Jesus.

I must obey Jesus’ Great Commission.

By doing so, when a dying soul returns to the Lord,

The joy of God in heaven will be my joy.

"this hope as an anchor for the soul"

This hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure,
enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain (Heb. 6:19).
Jesus who went before us and has entered on our behalf
is this hope as an anchor for our soul (v. 20).
This hope Jesus promised “Yes, I am coming quickly” (Rev. 22:20) to us,
the heirs of the promise (Heb. 6:17).
Since the Lord, who cannot lie (v. 18) made the unchanging nature
of His purpose very clear to us of what was promised and confirmed it with an oath (v. 17),
He will certainly come quickly (Rev. 22:20).
Therefore, with this hope we must set an anchor for our soul (v. 19) on the Lord
and His promise word that He is coming quickly,
we should confess “Amen Come, Lord Jesus” (Rev. 20:20) and should head toward that heaven
as we consider the captain Lord’s ship as our refuge and great encouragement (Heb. 6:18).

<Hymn “With Christ as My Pilot”>

(v. 3 & chorus) “If Jesus but speak, in His voice of great pow'r, The billows must sleep
and be still from that hour, And I, at the brightness of dawning, shall be, With Jesus, my Pilot,
safe over the sea. I nothing can fear! I nothing can dread! For Jesus keeps watch here,
and by Him I'm led. My seas may be rough, but when voy'ges are past,
My haven of hope will be heaven at last.”

I didn't understand the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Although Jesus was speaking of the temple of His body when He said “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up”, the Jews thought that Jesus was talking about the Jerusalem temple (Jn. 2:19-21). Although Jesus was talking about His death and resurrection, the Jews didn't understand that gospel.

As a result, they firmly believed that Jesus should be cursed by God and die on the cross because He had spoken blasphemy about the temple.

.We must proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Having obtained help from God, we stand to this day testifying and proclaim
The gospel of Jesus Christ even though people may try to put us to death
When we have preached that “they should repent and turn to God
and prove their repentance by their deeds” (Acts 26:20-23).

Jesus and Paul

The Roman Pilate couldn't find any basis for charge against Jesus to kill him
So he said “I find no basis for a charge against this man” (Lk. 23:4, 14-15, 22).
So he tried to release Jesus (vv. 16, 20).
But the Jews kept shouting, “Crucify him! Crucify him!” (vv. 21, 23)
The Romans examined Paul and wanted to release him,
because he wasn't guilty of any crime deserving death.
But the Jews objected (Acts 28:18-19).

Jesus is sighting deeply in His spirit.

Jesus is sighting deeply in His spirit (Mk. 8:12).
The reason is because an evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign (Mt. 16:4)
and we, like the Pharisees, seek from Him a sign from heaven (Mk. 8:11).
Maybe the reason Jesus is sighting deeply in His spirit is

because we aren't satisfied with Jesus' death on the cross and rose again after three days (Cf. v. 31) which the sign of the prophet Jonah points to (Mt. 12:39) and still seek after the sign?

What Peter did Jesus see?

Apostle Peter followed Jesus who was being taken away at a distance (Lk. 22:54).

When he denied Jesus three times, the rooster crowed (vv. 55-60)

and the Lord turned and looked straight at Peter (v. 61).

Why did Jesus turn and see Peter? What Peter did Jesus see?

Did He see Peter who said to Him, "Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You"? (Mt. 26:35)

Did He see Peter who denied Him three times?

Or did Jesus see Peter who would become fishers of men in the future? (Mt. 4:19)

Who is Jesus?

Apostle Peter was able to confess, by the revelation of Heavenly Father, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God (Mt. 16:16-17).

After meeting the Lord Jesus on the road to Damascus,

He proclaimed that Jesus is Christ and the Son of God (Acts 9:5, 20, 22).

Peter who followed Jesus at a distance

The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter who denied Jesus three times followed Jesus at a distance when Jesus was taken away (Lk. 25:61).

I think about Jesus' heart when He was looking straight at Peter.

I also think about Peter's heart when he had eye contact with Jesus.
Even like that, I want to follow Jesus.

Even to hate Jesus?

Does God love us so much that He hated His begotten Son Jesus? (Cf.: Rom. 9:13)

What does it mean to believe in Jesus?

The lesson that the one who persecuted Christians before he believed in Jesus Christ
But who became the one who was persecuted after he believed in Jesus Christ is that
Believing in Jesus Christ is to participate in His suffering. (Phil. 3:10)

What it means to believe in Jesus?

- (1) God loves you.
- (2) You are chosen by God.
- (3) God called you.
- (4) God regenerated you (Regeneration).

(5) God converted you (Repentance and Faith).

**Because of my daughter-in-law (son-in-law)
who doesn't believe in Jesus ...**

Don't you have grief because of your unbeliever daughter-in-law (son-in-law) (Gen. 26:34)

And you are tired of living and "what good will my life be to me?" (27:46)

The pastor who imitates Jesus ...

The pastor who imitates Jesus keeps silent even "certain worthless men" despise him. (1 Sam. 10:27)

I want to be a person who reminds Jesus.

In order to comfort our brothers and sisters in adversity

and to stand firm in the faith and not to be shaken,

We need to remind the brothers and sisters in Christ the Jesus' teaching

and the gospel of Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 4:17; 1 Thess. 3:2).

We need to remind them Jesus.

In order to do so, we must first imitate Jesus

by hearing and obeying the teaching and the gospel of Jesus Christ
And by living in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ (Phil. 1:27).

We are dishonoring Jesus.

We who boast Jesus are dishonoring Jesus by disobeying Jesus' twofold command (Cf. Rom. 2:23).

He who truly knows Jesus

Anyone who says he knows Jesus but doesn't do what He commands is a liar and the truth isn't in him.
He who truly knows Jesus obeys His word. God's love is truly made complete in him
He who truly knows Jesus walks as Jesus did. (1 Jn. 2:3-6)

How should we who live between Jesus' "incarnation" and "advent" live?

How should we who live between Jesus' "incarnation" and "advent" live?
God the Father who sent His begotten Son Jesus into the world at Jesus' first coming
will send Him again at His second coming.
Only begotten Son Jesus who was sent obeyed the sender Father God until death on the cross.
And the Lord sent us to this world.
We who are sent by the Lord must obey the will of the Lord who sent us.
"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father

and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Mt. 28:19-20).

Jesus’ command, Paul’s neighbor love

While Jesus commands us, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Mt. 22:39), Apostle Paul’s neighbor love is, “we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength and not just please ourselves” and “to please his neighbor for his good, to his edification” (Rom. 15:1-2).

Participating in Jesus’ suffering? (1)

Jesus’ disciples who participate in Jesus’ suffering are despised and abandoned by people (Isa. 53:3).

Participating in Jesus’ suffering? (2)

Participating in Jesus' suffering means not to be esteemed
Even though we are esteemed by God. (Isa. 53:3)

Heavenly Father who didn't listen to Jesus

Heavenly Father always listened to Jesus (Jn. 11:42).
But Heavenly Father didn't listen to His beloved Son Jesus, when he cried out to God,
"My God, my God what have You forsaken me?" (Mk. 15:34).

Jesus' prayer of forgiveness

On the cross, Jesus prayed to God, "Father, forgive them,
for they do not know what they are doing" (Lk. 23:34),
For the Jews who crucified Jesus on the cross (v. 23),
which meant He was cursed by God (Dt. 21:23; Gal. 3:13)
Even though He was innocent and without sin (Lk. 23:4, 14-16, 22).

Jesus' disciples ...

Jesus' disciples obey His word. When they obey they experience miracles.

They realize that they are sinners and Jesus is the Lord. They discard everything and follow Jesus. The Lord made them fishes of men who save people (Lk. 5:1-11).

Jesus' special prayer

Jesus offered special prayer at Gethsemane
when His soul was overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death.
He prayed to Father God, "Abba, Father, everything is possible for you.
Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what You will." (Mk. 4:32-36)

There is a special prayer that I would like to pray "to Abba Father" (v. 36).
The special prayer is to offer my life to Him as I fulfill the mission that the Lord has given me.
I want to give my life to the Lord in the extreme pain, suffering and sorrow of my heart.
I want to offer special prayer to Abba Father, desperately wanting only the Lord's will be done.

4 lessons that I received this morning

1. Don't be angry but be patient and patient (Prov. 12:16).
2. Don't gossip but control my lips (keep quiet) (11:12-13).
3. I need to check if there is hate in my heart. 'Love covers over all wrongs' (10:12, 18).
4. I want to make other person's rebuke beneficial to me (9:7-9).

“How long will you harbor wicked thoughts?”

The sins of the expressed acts, the sins that people know but I don't know,
The sins of the expressed acts, the sins that people know and I also know,
The sins that I want to hide, the sins that I only know and don't want anyone to know,
The sins that I hide, the secret sins that I only know,
The sins of thoughts that are hidden, the sins I have committed numerous times in the realm of thought,
The sins of evil thoughts, the evil sins that I am committing in the sight of God in the realm of thoughts,
The sins of evil thoughts, the sins that I harbor for long time in the realm of thoughts.

Today the Lord says to me, “How long will you harbor wicked thoughts? (Jere. 4:14)

If I harbor wicked thoughts for long, then I will be skilled in doing evil

but I won't know how to do good (v. 22).

I will become foolish and senseless man,

who has eyes but doesn't see who has ears but doesn't hear (5:21).

I won't fear God anymore (v. 22).

I will have stubborn and rebellious heart and will turn aside and will go astray (v. 23).

My wrongdoings will keep God's blessings away and my sins will deprive me of good (v. 25).

Furthermore, I will love the false gospel of the false pastors

who are like wind and the word isn't in them (v. 13)

[“a different gospel” (2 Cor. 11:4; Gal. 1:6-9)]

and the pastors who rule by their own authority (Jere. 5:31).

Therefore, this is what God saying:

“Should I not punish them for this?

“Should I not avenge myself on such a nation as this?” (vv. 9, 29)

Only Jesus!

I only want to see Jesus (Lk. 9:36).

It leads only to evil.

We must refrain from anger and must turn from wrath

because of those who do evil succeed in their ways.

If not, then it leads only to evil.

We must be still before the Lord and wait patiently for Him.

(Ps. 37:7-8)

Rather now we ...

Even though we must leave sin and focus on the truth of the Lord,

Rather, now we are leaving the truth of the Lord and focusing on our sins.

(Dan. 9:5, 13)

Rather, we should fear God ...

When the Israelites who went out boldly saw the Egyptians behind them,

They became very frightened because they thought that they would be killed
by the Egyptians in the wilderness.

That is because that was how much they really wanted to live (Exod. 14:8-12).

But when they said “Would that we had died by the Lord’s hand in the land of Egypt” (16:3)

because of the meat in the wilderness of Sin (v. 1),
it seems like the Israelites weren't afraid of being killed by the hand of God
but were very afraid of being killed by the hands of the Egyptians.

The gentle Christians

"Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth" (Mt. 5:5).

The gentle Christians ...

1. Know themselves by knowing God.
2. Don't think more than they suppose to.
3. Are humble.
4. Receive criticism but not defensive.
5. Quickly acknowledge their own mistake, weakness and wrongdoing.
6. Confront their own wrongdoing boldly.
7. Know not only that they are sinners but God's children who receive God's great love.
8. Endure the difficulties that come upon them in order to manifest God's glory and His greatness.

Those who want to be complete

Those who want to be complete know what they still lack. (Mt. 19:20, 21)

The parents of noble character who have right value ...

The parents of noble character who have right value pray for their beloved children's future spouses who have noble character which is worth far more than rubies:

During the Wednesday night prayer meeting a little while ago,
I thought about Ruth who was a woman of noble character (Ruth 3:11).
After I preached one thing about who are the Christians of noble character
and we have prayer time together.
That one thing is that the Christians of noble character seek God's grace.
This is what the Moabite woman Ruth said to Boaz as she bowed down with her face to the ground:
"Why have I found such favor in your eyes that you notice me--a foreigner?" (2:10)
And then she said to him, "May I continue to find favor in your eyes, my lord" (v. 13)
Ruth couldn't understand why Boaz was gracious to her and she was very grateful for that grace.
At the same time, she wanted to continue to find favor from Boaz.
This is a woman of noble character who longs for grace.

I want to be a Christian of noble character.
I want to know and long for God's grace more and more.
Those Christians who know and long for God's grace humble themselves before God
And worship Him, confessing that
"Why have I found such favor in your eyes that you notice me" – a great sinner?

I think it's natural for those Christians who get to know God's grace that
They cannot understand with their reason why God gives grace to such sinners like them
And they aren't able to handle that grace in their hearts.
Just as grace abounded all the more where sin is increased (Rom. 5:20),
The more I realize my sins in depth on my journey of faith

God's grace to such chief sinner like me (1 Tim. 1:15) will be abounded all the more.

I want to swim in the sea of that grace.

Even though there are wave and storm of dangers

such as crisis, suffering and pain on the surface of that sea of grace,

I pray for the Lord to change my heart to be like Jesus' heart (Phil. 1:8)

like the pearl oyster that makes pearls under the deep sea

even in the midst of wave and storm of dangers.

Therefore, as I confess like Paul, "I am what I am because of God's grace"

I want to work harder than others, yet not I, but the grace of God that is with me (1 Cor. 15:10).

But not I but Christ who lives in me (Gal. 2:20).

And after I have done all that the Lord has commanded with the power of God's grace,

I would like to humbly confess: 'I am unworthy servant, I have only done my duty' (Lk. 17:10).

I want to be such Christian of noble character first. So I pray.

And I and my wife as couple should become Christians of noble character.

As we do so, we must pray for our children so that they may become Christian of noble character.

Then our children will pray and seek their future spouse of noble character

as they live their Christian life of noble character.

The reason is because a spouse of noble character is worth far more than rubies (Prov. 31:10).

Right judgment ... Determination ... Action

If we've made right judgement with the biblical mind that this is God's will

And then determined to do His will that is put into action,

We should do it.

We shouldn't let the loud voices of people to win
And do what they want us to do.
(Cf. Lk. 23:4, 15, 22-25)

The harden hearts

Just as the Holy Spirit says, "Today if you hear His voice"
We must not harden our hearts (Heb. 3:7-8).

The harden hearts are hardened by the deceitfulness of sin (v. 13),
Are testing God (vv. 8, 9), are provoking God (v. 15),
Are going astray in our hearts and not knowing God's ways (v. 10),
Are unbelieving hearts (vv. 12, 19) and evil hearts (v. 12) that are disobedient (v. 18; 4:6).

Why didn't the result come out as I prayed and expected?

Why didn't the result come out as I prayed and expected?
I must look back on my heart through the fruits of my prayer (Mt. 7:17).

The reason why the result come out as I prayed and expected is
Because I am asking God with wrong motives (Jam. 4:3).

Even though I thought I prayed to God wisely (Exod. 1:10)
In the midst of fear and dread (v. 12) which is reaction to the situation I encountered,

It wasn't sought by God's wisdom.
I asked God not according to the Lord's will but my will.
(Cf. Mt. 26:39).

Why are we unfruitful?

The reasons why we aren't fruitful are
Even though we hear the word of God
Satan immediately comes and takes away the word which has been sown in us,
We immediately receive it with joy
But since we have no firm root in us, but it lasts only a short time,
We quickly fall away when trouble or persecution comes because of the word,
Even though we hear the word of God
The worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in
And choke the word, making it unfruitful. (Mk. 4:14-19)

I don't understand why she married such a man.

I don't understand well. Why did Abigail, an intelligent and beautiful woman, marry Nabal
Who was very wealthy but was harsh and evil in his dealings and fool?
(1 Sam. 25:2-3, 25)

Why have they quickly turned aside from the way?

After I worshiped God and turned around, I cannot remember the word of God that I heard.
When I leave the church and go back to my home and into the world,
Then I quickly turn aside from the word of God and commit sins against God.
(Cf. Deut. 9:12, 16)

Why are you serving the Lord that hard?

What are you hope to attain,
as you earnestly serve the Lord night and day? (Acts 26:7)
Why are you thinking to yourselves
that you have to do many things? (v. 9)
Is it because you believe
that you can be saved by your human efforts and deeds?
Aren't we saved only by faith in Jesus Christ
and what He has done on the cross?
We are serving the Lord and do the Lord's work hard
Because we are saved by believing in Jesus Christ
through the grace of God.

Why do I stumble over the word of the Lord?

Why do I stumble over the word of the Lord? (Jn. 6:61)
The reason the word of the Lord is a stumbling block to me is my unbelief.

(As I was reading John MacArthur's "Unashamed of the Gospel")

Why was Naomi very bitter?

The reason why Naomi told the women in Bethlehem, "Don't call me Naomi .. Call me Mara"
Was not only because she went away full but she came back empty (Ruth 1:20-21)
But also her husband and two sons died (vv. 3, 5).
This means that she couldn't have any grandson to succeed her husband.
I think that was why Naomi told those women to call her Mara.
I think that was why after the women said to Naomi, "Praise be to the LORD,
who this day has not left you without a kinsman-redeemer. ...
He will renew your life and sustain you in your old age. ..." (vv. 14-15),
they said "Naomi has a son" (even though he was Naomi's grandson) and named him "Obed" (v. 17).
"And Naomi took the child, laid him in her lap and cared for him" (v. 16).

Why do we insist on our will?

God relented (Jon. 3:10).
When He saw the people of Nineveh turned from their wicked way,
Then God relented concerning the calamity which He had declared He would bring upon them (v. 10).
But it greatly displeased Jonah and he became angry (4:1).
He was so angry that he wanted to die (v. 3).
The reason was because Jonah insisted on his will even though God relented.
What was Jonah's will? It was "Yet forty days and Nineveh will be overthrown" (3:4).

That was why Jonah went out from the city, sat east of it and made a shelter for himself and sat under it in the shade until he could see what would happen in the city (4:5).

What did he expect to see? It was the overthrow of Nineveh (3:4).

Why do I pray to God with our lips, 'Not my will but Your will be done'

But with our hearts we insist on our will?

Why are you embracing the bosom of another woman?

Even though you must rejoice in the wife of your youth,

let her breasts satisfy you at all times

and be exhilarated always with her love,

why are you exhilarating with an adulteress and embracing the bosom of another woman?

(Prov. 5:18-20)

Why are you filled with jealousy?

Those who don't believe in Jesus and live a true life of faith

But just attend the church regularly and is accustomed to religious ceremonies,

Are filled with jealousy.

(Acts 5:17)

Why my faith is not standing firm?

The reason why my faith isn't growing and standing firm is
Because there is no suffering or affliction that is beneficial to my faith.
(Ps. 119:67, 71)

**Why didn't they skin the burnt offering and burn it
and give it to the priest?
(Lev. 1:6, 7:8)**

Maybe the reasons are because ...

1. There is symbolic meaning of judging a sinner.
 - a. When Israel/Judah was invaded by foreign enemy soldiers (another meaning of the word "skin") they stripped the Israelites of their clothes (Ezek. 16:39, 23:26; Micah 2:8)
 - b. Joseph's older brothers stripped Joseph of his tunic (Gen. 37:23)
 - c. They stripped Aaron of his garments before he died (due to Israel's past sins) (Num. 20:26, 28).
 - (1) Jesus, who is true Aaron and the righteous high priest, was punished by God for all our sins?
2. There is symbolic meaning of victory in fighting against sin.
 - a. When the war was won, the dead or those killed were stripped (1 Sam. 31:8; 1 Chron. 10:8)
 - (1) Jesus, who is the high priest, was offered on the cross as the sin offering and won the battle against sins?
3. There is symbolic meaning of loving a sinner.
 - a. Jonathan took off his outer garment to David, whom he loved more than his life (1 Sam. 18:4).
 - (1) Jesus, the righteous high priest, loved such sinners like us more than His own life.
4. Interesting observations:
 - a. Before Jesus was crucified, they stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him (Mt. 27:28).

And after they had mocked Him, they took the scarlet robe off Him and put His own garments back on Him (v. 31).

(1) When they had crucified Him, they divided up His garments among themselves by casting lots (v. 35).

Why does a person change?

Why does a person change?

Laban, Rebekah's older brother, was a giver at first and obeyed God (Gen. 24:31-34, 50-51).

But Jacob's father-in-law Laban later became a greedy man (31:7, 14-16, 41-43).

What is the cause?

I think the cause is written in Genesis 30:27, 30:

“But Laban said to him, ‘If now it pleases you, stay with me;

I have divined that the LORD has blessed me on your account.’ ...

For you had little before I came and it has increased to a multitude,

and the LORD has blessed you wherever I turned.”

In other words, I think the reason why Laban changed was because his possessions flourished.

To be more precise, I think the reason Laban changed was

because he didn't have faith and character to humbly enjoy God's given material blessings through Jacob.

Those who don't transform consistently in the Lord

are forced to change through the richness of their wealth.

Why does Satan stop us?

Apostle Paul made every effort to see the Thessalonica church's saints

out of his intense longing (1 Thess. 2:17).

But Satan stopped him (v. 18). What was the reason?

Maybe the reason was Satan tried to make them to bring no fruit to maturity,

fall away, and not to be saved (Lk. 8:12-14)

when the Thessalonica church saints, who welcomed the message with the joy given

by the Holy Spirit (1 Thess. 1:6) were being persecuted and suffering (2:14).

"do you not teach yourself?"

“you, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself?

You who preach that one shall not steal, do you steal?” (Rom. 2:21).

Attitude of learning is more important than attitude of teaching.

We the pastors must teach ourselves before we teach our church members.

We must diligently examine ourselves in the Word of God, the spiritual mirror
(self-reflection, self-examination).

A good learner is a good teacher.

Why does God destroy all that we rely on?

Creator God sent famine even in a land flowing with milk and honey,

the land of Canaan (Deut. 6:3; 11:9; 26:8, 15, etc)

and destroyed all the supplies of food of Jacob and his children (Ps. 105:16).

Why did God do that?

Maybe God wants us to rely only on Him?

In order to fulfill His promise to Abraham? (Gen. 12:7)

In order to move Jacob and his family to Egypt

and to make them multiply? (Exod. 1:7, 12, 20)

As a result, in order to deliver the Israelites from Egypt through Moses

and lead them to wilderness?

In order to lead them to the land of Canaan through Joshua after Moses's death
and give the land to them?

What maybe God's purpose of destroying all that we rely on

Through many different kind of "famine" in our lives?

**Even though I don't know what God's will is no matter how much I
think and why these painful things are happening in my life ...**

Even though I don't know what God's will is no matter how much I think

And why these painful things are happening in my life (1 San. 22:3),

I know for sure that all these things that God gives or allows me to go through is for my own good

And He will fulfill His will toward me through all these things.

Therefore, I will live by faith today and tomorrow and not by sight (2 Cor. 5:7).

Why have people changed?

Leban, Jacob's mother's brother, knew that the Lord had blessed him on Jacob's account (Gen. 30:27).

Jacob also knew that Lebanon had little before he came and it had increased to a multitude (v. 30).

And Jacob knew that the Lord had blessed Lebanon wherever he turned (v. 30).

However, when Jacob was at Lebanon's house for 20 years (31:41),

He noticed that Lebanon's attitude toward him wasn't what it had been (v. 2).

And he heard that Lebanon's sons were saying, "Jacob has taken everything our father owned and has
gained all this wealth from what belonged to our father" (v. 1).

Why did Lebanon and his sons changed? Why couldn't Lebanon treat Jacob as before?

Even though Lebanon knew that God had blessed him through Jacob, why didn't he treat Jacob as before?

Why did Lebanon's sons think that Jacob had taken everything from their father owned

and had gained all his wealth from what belonged to their father
instead of thinking that God had blessed their father through Jacob?
Was it because Jacob “grew exceedingly prosperous and came to own large flocks,
and maidservants and menservants, and camels and donkeys”? (30:43)

I think God used all these things in order to make Jacob to go back
to the land of his fathers and to his relatives (31:3; cf. v.13).

Why do we justify ourselves?

Do we need to justify ourselves? (Lk. 10:29)
if we have the right biblical knowledge [Ex.: Jesus’ twofold command (v. 27)]
and do the right deed [Ex. Love our neighbors and be compassionate toward them (vv. 30-37)],
why do we need to justify ourselves?
What do we do with just the right knowledge and the lips that say the right word?
Jesus is saying to us, “Go and do likewise” (v. 37).

Why didn’t he rebuke and discipline his son?

Even though father David knew that his son Amnon had done great evil to his stepsister Tamar,
He was furious but didn’t rebuke and discipline Amnon in love.
As a result, Absalom, Tamar’s older brother, hated Amnon
and eventually revenged on him 2 years later (2 Sam. 13:21ff.).
Why didn’t David rebuke and discipline Amnon who did greater evil to Tamar?
Maybe was it because of David’s great sin of sleeping with the married woman Bathsheba

and intentionally kill her husband in order to cover her pregnancy?

Why did God ...?

The unbeliever sailors did the Lord's will more than the disobedient prophet Jonah (Jonah 1:14).
And even though the unbeliever sailors had compassion on the disobedient prophet Jonah (v. 13),
Jonah didn't have compassion on Nineveh, in which there were more than 120,000 persons who didn't
know the difference between their right and left hand (4:11).

What Jonah was compassion on was the plant that delivered him from discomfort (v. 6)
For which he didn't work and which he didn't cause to grow,
Which came up overnight and perished overnight (v. 10).
Why did God have compassion on the prophet Jonah
who didn't have God's heart and who didn't obey God's will?

Why did God ...?

Why does God answer us out of the storm when we ask Him (Job 38:1; 40:6)

In the midst of great pain and suffering due to a mighty wind and storm in our lives

Such as our beloved family members' death (1:19; 9:17).

Why did God lead the people around by the desert road that was far?

Why did God lead the Israelites around by the desert road

even though there was shorter way which was the road through the Philistine country?

(Exod. 13:17-18)

I think there are at least three reasons:

1. In order for God to gain glory for Himself through Pharaoh and all his army, and the Egyptians would know that He is the Lord (14:4),
2. In order to give the Israelites the words of the covenant – the Ten Commandments (ch. 20; 34:28),
3. In order “to humble you and to test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands. He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your fathers had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD” (Deut. 8:2-3).

When I think of these three reasons,

God didn't only lead the Israelites around by the desert road that was far

but also God is leading the church of God, that is those who believe in Jesus Christ, around by the desert road that is far.

And the reason why God is leading us like that is because He wants to humble us

so that we may obey the Lord's twofold command of “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind” and “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Mt. 22:36-40).

Then why does God want us to live in obedience to the twofold commands of Jesus
by leading us to the desert-like world
in order to lead us to the true Promised Land that is Heaven?
The purpose is to receive glory from us by making us to be heavenly citizens (Phil. 3:20)
and to enter into Heaven.

Why does God test us?

Why did God test Abraham?

Why did God say to Abraham, “Take your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love,
and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering
on one of the mountains I will tell you about” (Gen. 22:1-2).

The reason was because God wanted to know Abraham’s heart.

More specifically, God was trying to find out if Abraham kept God's command or not.

The basis of this was that God made the Israelites walk in the wilderness in the Exodus.

The purpose that God made them to walk in the wilderness was to humble them
and to test them in order to know what was in their hearts,
whether or not they would keep His commands (Deut. 8:2).

Abraham passed the God’s test. In other word, Abraham obeyed God’s command.

At God's command, he took Isaac to Mount Moriah and tried to offer him as a burnt offering.

At that time, the angel of the Lord caused Abraham to stop (Gen. 22:11-12a) and said to him,
“Now I know that you fear God,

because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son” (v. 12b).

God knew Abraham’s heart. God knew that Abraham feared God.

Those who fear God obey God's commands.

Abraham obeyed God’s command in love for God

even though he didn’t understand His command because he feared God.

God tests us in order to know our hearts.

But Satan tempts us.

The purpose of Satan's temptation is to destroy us.

In other words, the purpose that Satan is tempting us is to make us to be cursed by disobeying covenant God's command (First Adam).

But God tests us.

The purpose is to make us to overcome temptation and to obey His command so that we may be blessed (Last Adam Jesus).

Why is God leading us this way?

When Abram obeyed the Lord and went, even though he didn't know where he was going (Heb. 11:8), He arrived at the land of Canaan (Gen. 12:4-5).

Why did God lead him to the land of Canaan where there was a famine? (v. 10)
Couldn't He lead him to the rich land?

The Christians who follow God's word, obey His guidance by faith
And don't insist on the rich land as they think and expect.

Why is God doing this to us?

God makes us to be very happy by providing "a vine" in our lives that eases our discomfort.

Then God makes our happiness to be chewed away by providing “a worm”.
Then God provides “a scorching east wind”
And makes us to grow faint and even makes us wanting to die.

Why is God doing this to us?
What is God’s will?
Maybe God’s will is to take away from us what we are very pleased with
So that we may learn what God’s heart is and what He is compassion on.
(Jonah 4:6-11)

Why is it that ...?

Why is it that our riches increase when our faith shakes and our spiritual life regress?
(Cf. Ps. 62:3,4, 10)

It is Satan’s strategy.
The purpose of Satan is to make us to serve both God and wealth (Mt. 6:24)
And eventually to make us to rely more on wealth than God.
The purpose of Satan is to make us to love money and hate God.

“For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil.
Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith
and pierced themselves with many griefs.”
(1 Tim. 6:10)

Why was it a raven and a poor widow?

Not only God ordered the ravens to feed the prophet Elijah
But also He commanded a widow in Zarephath of Sidon,
Who had only a handful of flour in a jar and a little oil in a jug
To have a last meal for herself and her son and die, to supply him with food
(1 Kgs. 17:3, 9, 12).

Why did God command the ravens and the poor widow to supply the prophet Elijah?

We don't easily ...

We don't easily humble ourselves before God (Exod. 10:3).

Opportunity of loneliness?

The loneliness we experience in life is
probably more than just finding the community of the Lord we want.
It may be an opportunity for us to listen to God's tender voice that we need to hear. (Hos. 2:14)

The pain of being ignored

When a loved one doesn't help me and not even listens to me when I desperately need help
And even be far away from me,
I will feel ignored and will be very painful.

Then how much more when I feel like God is forsaking me, not helping me,
And is so far from the words of my groaning. (Ps. 22:1)

We who are hypocrites

We who are hypocrites emphasize our tradition that nullifies the word of God
And honor Him with our lips but our hearts are far from Him. (Mt. 15:5-8)

Even God gives us what we ask for ...

Even if God doesn't give us what we asked for, we have nothing to say.
The reason is because "We have sinned, even as our fathers did
and we have done wrong and acted wickedly" (Ps. 106:6).
When our fathers were in Egypt, they gave no thought to God's miracles.
They didn't remember God's many kindnesses, and they rebelled by the Red Sea (v. 7).
Nevertheless, God saved them for His name's sake (v. 8)
By rebuking the Red Sea to be dried up and led them through the depths as through a desert (v. 9).
And God covered their enemies with water so not one of them survived (v. 11).
But they soon forgot what God had done and didn't wait for His counsel (v. 13).
And they put God to the test in the desert as they gave in to their craving (v. 14).
Nevertheless, God gave them what they asked for (v. 15).
But God sent a wasting disease upon them (v. 15).

I am afraid that God answers my prayer with greedy desire and without any repentance.
The reason is because that answer of my prayer can be "the graves of lust"
(the meaning of "Kibroth Hattaavah") (Num. 11:34)

Why Jonah disobeyed?

Why did the prophet Jonah disobey God's command and ran away to Joppa instead of going to Nineveh?
(Jon. 1:1-2)

Why did Jonah tell the Gentile sailors to throw him into the sea? (v. 12)

I think Jonah wanted Nineveh to be destroyed so much that if he was thrown into the sea and die,
Then the people of Nineveh wouldn't be warned and they wouldn't give opportunity to repent.

I think Jonah believed that Assyria, the enemy of Israel, should be destroyed in order for his people, the
Israelites, might live. But I think God's heart was for the people of Nineveh to repent so that His people,
the Israelites, also repent.

(As I was reading BRYAN D. ESTELLE's "THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JONAH: Salvation
Through JUDGMENT AND MERCY")

Joseph and Jesus?

Although the cupbearer and the baker of the king of Egypt were in jail because they offended their
master, the king of Egypt (Gen. 40:1), Joseph was in the same jail even though he had done nothing to
deserve it (v. 15; ch. 39).

And the warden told righteous Joseph to serve the cupbearer and the baker of the king of Egypt because
they were the most important prisoners to him (39:23; 40:6ff).

Although we had no choice but to die in God's wrath as the punishment of our sins because we sinned
against the holy God, Jesus who was without sin, took our sins instead and received all the wrath of God
and was crucified on the cross for the punishment of our sins.

Since God honors such sinners like us the most, He made the righteous Jesus to serve us even to the death
on the cross.

(As I was reading Iain M. Duguid's "LIVING IN THE LIGHT OF THE INEXTINGUISHABLE HOPE")

God's plan and will for Joseph (1)

Since God loved Joseph, He was fulfilling His plan and will toward Joseph
Even though he was hated by his older brothers because he was more loved by his father Jacob than his brothers, and because he had two dreams and told his brothers about those dreams (Gen. 37:3-5).
That plan and will was for Joseph to be sold to Potiphar, one of Pharaoh's officials,
the captain of the guard (vv. 12-36).

Are you experiencing Heavenly Father's love despite being hated by your own family members?
How can you believe that God's plan and will for you is fulfilling despite being hated by your own family members?
Would you still believe God completely even God's plan and will for you is to live far away from your beloved family? Would you still believe that God's will is good and acceptable and perfect? (Rom. 12:2)

God's plan and will for Joseph (2)

Although Joseph was sold as a slave to Potiphar, an Egyptian and the captain of the guard,
And was forced to be separated from his beloved family and became the slave in the foreign country,
He prospered because the Lord was with Joseph (Gen. 39:1-2).
Even his master, Potiphar, an unbeliever, said saw that the Lord was with Joseph
And that the Lord gave him success in everything he did (v. 3).
Since Joseph found favor in his master's eyes,
he became his attendant and Potiphar put Joseph in charge of his household,
and he entrusted to his care everything he owned (v. 4).
As a result, from that time onward, God blessed the household of Potiphar because of Joseph (v. 5).
Why did God do that?
What was God's plan and will for Joseph?

Even in lonely situations where you can't be with your loved ones, God is with you.
Even if your loved ones hate you and forsake you God loves you and is always with you.
And God makes you prosperous.
God even make a non-believer around you to see
that God makes you to be prosperous by being with you.
And God exalts you by making you to be found favor in the non-believer's eyes.
Also, God blesses that non-believer's household or business for your sake.

Why does God do that?

What is God's plan and will for you?

Even if we don't know fully what His will is,

We must believe that God's will is always "good and acceptable and perfect" (Rom. 12:2).

God's plan and will for Joseph (3)

Joseph, who was well-built and handsome, refused when his master's wife took notice of Joseph and said, "Come to bed with me!" (Gen. 39:6-8)
The reason was because his master Potiphar had withheld nothing from Joseph except Potiphar's wife (v. 9).

Joseph was loyal to his master.

The greater reason was because Joseph feared God:

"How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?"

But Potiphar's wife spoke to Joseph day after day to bed with her (v. 10).

But Joseph refused to go to bed with her or even be with her (v. 10).

But one day, when Joseph went to his master's house to work,

And none of the household servants was inside except the master's wife (v. 11).

Maybe she told the servants not to be there so that she could be alone with Joseph.

Maybe she was determined to go bed with him.

When she caught him by his cloak and said, "Come to bed with me!",

Joseph left his cloak and ran out of the house (vv. 12-13).

Joseph, who feared God, not only kept himself far away from her who was tempting him

But also ran away from the temptation to be alone with her.

What was the result?

He was falsely accused and was put into prison,

the place where the king's prisoners were confined (v. 20).

Why did God just look at it happened like that?

Why did God allow Joseph to be falsely accused and imprisoned?

What was God's plan and will for Joseph?

What should we do when more and greater temptations come closer to us than before

As we keep on trying to shun evil in the fear of the Lord (Job 28:28).

What should we do when we are struggling with sexual temptations every day and every moment?

What should we do when our weak flesh keeps heading for those temptations

even when our hearts want to run far away from them?

Obviously, God made Joseph to be found favor in his master Potiphar's eyes (Gen. 39:4).

Why not then God let or allow Potiphar's wife to tempt Joseph every day?

Why did God let Joseph to be imprisoned by her two false witnesses and accusations (vv. 14, 17-18)

even though Joseph, in fear of God, tried to refuse her sexual temptations twice?

In the midst of it, God was fulfilling His plan and will for Joseph.

That plan and will of God was for Joseph

to meet the cupbearer and the baker of the king of Egypt (40:1, 9-15).

Why didn't God make Joseph to meet them in the king's palace where King Pharaoh was

Instead of in the prison?

It's hard to understand with our own mind and reason.

It's hard to understand why God helped Joseph,

who had two dreams and thus was hated more by his older brothers,

to interpret the dreams of the cupbearer and the baker.

But eventually God made Joseph to meet the king of Egypt

by helping Joseph to interpret their dreams (41:9ff).

But it's hard to understand why God made Joseph to meet the king of Egypt

"When two years had passed" (v. 1).

If God let Joseph to meet the king of Egypt right away instead of 2 years later,

Then Joseph didn't have to suffer for 2 more years.

It's amazing to see how God had worked in which He made the king of Egypt to dream (v. 1),

Like the cupbearer, and made no one to interpret his dream but only Joseph to interpret it.

How can we who dwell in this lowly earth can fully comprehend God's higher thoughts that's

like the heavens (Isa. 55:9).

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding.
In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight.”
(Prov. 3:5-6)

God’s plan and will for Joseph (4)

Joseph, who could no longer control himself before all his attendants,
Cried out, “Have everyone leave my presence!” and made himself known to his brothers (Gen. 45:1).
He wept so loudly (v. 2).

This is what Joseph said to his brothers:

“... I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt!

And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here,
because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you. ...

But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth
and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So then, it was not you who sent me here, but God. ...”
(vv. 4-5, 7-8).

Joseph learned God’s plan and will.

He understood God’s plan and will

Why God made him to dream twice at the age of 17 (37:6-11) when he was 39 years old

[Pharaoh put Joseph in charge of the whole land of Egypt when he was 30 years old (41:46) +
7 years of harvest (vv. 29, 47) + 2 years of famine (45:6) = 39 years old),

Why God allowed Joseph to be hated by his older brothers (37:4, 8) and was sold to Egypt (vv. 27-36),

Why God let him be falsely accused and put him into jail (39:14-23),

Why God helped him to interpret the cupbearer’s dream (ch. 40)

and then 2 years later to interpret the dream of the king of Egypt (ch. 41),

Therefore why God not only raised him to be in charge of Potiphar's household (39:4)
And then to be in charge of all those held in the prison (v. 22)
and then eventually to be in charge of the whole land of Egypt (41:41).
That will of God is to save lives and to preserve a remnant on earth by a great deliverance (45:5, 7).

God allowed Joseph to go through all those hardships from when he was 17 years old to 39 years old
such as, he was hated by his older brothers and his brothers even tried to kill him
and then they sold him with money, he was falsely accused by his master's wife and then imprisoned,
in order to save and to preserve their lives and their children's lives on earth.

Joseph, who learned the grand plan and will of God, told his brothers,
"it was not you who sent me here, but God" (v. 8).

Apparently the older brothers sold Joseph but Joseph said God sent him to Egypt.

And the purpose why God sent him ahead of his brothers
was "to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance" (v. 7).
Joseph, who dreamed when he was 17 but didn't know the meaning of that dream until the age of 39,
Then after 22 years later, he learned God's will.

Joseph didn't know God's plan and will for 22 years.
He suffered for 13 years from the age of 17 to becoming the prime minister of Egypt at the age of 30.
In the meantime, there is no record in the Bible that Joseph blamed God and complained.
He didn't sin against God either by lips or by action.
How could this be possible?

It was because he trusted in God with all his heart and didn't rely on his understanding (Prov. 3:5-6).
It was because Joseph trusted that God's will toward him
was always good, acceptable and perfect (Rom. 12:2).
Through this kind of person of faith, God fulfills His plan and will.

God's plan and will for Joseph (5)

Joseph's father Jacob, who lived 130 years of few and difficult pilgrimage (Gen. 47:8-9),

Lived in Egypt 17 years and the years of his life were 147 (v. 28).

When the time drew near for him to die, he said to Joseph not to bury him in Egypt

but to carry him out of Egypt and bury him where his fathers were buried (vv. 29-30).

When he was ill, he blessed Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh (ch. 48)

And then he called for his sons and spoke to them and died (ch. 49).

Then Joseph got permission from Pharaoh the king of Egypt

and buried his father Jacob in a graveyard in the land of Canaan as he swore to Jacob (49:4-14).

Joseph, who lamented for his father Jacob for 7 day period (50:10)

returned to Egypt together with his brothers after he buried his father (v. 14).

But after Jacob died (vv. 19, 21), Joseph's brothers were afraid and said,

"What if Joseph holds a grudge against us and pays us back for all the wrongs we did to him?" (v. 15)

So they sent word to Joseph, saying, "Your father left these instructions before he died:

'This is what you are to say to Joseph: I ask you to forgive your brothers the sins
and the wrongs they committed in treating you so badly.'

Now please forgive the sins of the servants of the God of your father" (vv. 16-17).

When their message came to him, Joseph wept (v. 17).

Jesus wept too (Jn. 11:35).

Why did Joseph weep? Why did he weep when he received the message from his brothers?
Did he weep because his brothers made that words and lied to him
even though their father Jacob didn't say it?
Did he weep for pity when he thought of his brothers who feared him?
Did he weep because his brothers were asking him for forgiveness even though he already did so?
Joseph, who mourned for seven days for his father Jacob, wept again because of his brothers.
He wept for his brothers who didn't even shed tears of repentance.

We must shed tears of repentance.
We must repent of our sins of hating our brothers and sisters and of jealousy.
We must repent of the sins that we caused them to suffer greatly.
We must repent of our sins of not being in peace with our brothers and sisters.
We must repent of our sins that we have seriously hurt our parents' hearts.
We must repent our great sins against God.

We must shed tears of forgiveness.
We must forgive our brothers and sisters.
We must forgive our parents.

Joseph already forgave his brothers.
That was why when his brothers came and threw themselves down before him and said,
"We are your slaves" (v. 18) this is what Joseph said to them:
"Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God? You intended to harm me,
but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.
So then, don't be afraid. I will provide for you and your children" (vv. 19-21).
And he assured them and spoke kindly to them (v. 21).

How could Joseph forgive his brothers? It was because he tasted God's goodness (Ps. 34:8).
Joseph was able to forgive his brothers because he experienced God's goodness when
His brothers intended to harm him, but God intended it for good to accomplish His good will
(Gen. 50:20).

This is true forgiveness.
True forgiveness is possible when we experience God's goodness.
Even if our brothers, sisters or parents intentionally harass us, hurt us and cause us to cry many times,

We can forgive them when we experience our good God who even causes all those things to accomplish His good will (Cf. Rom. 8:28).

True forgiveness includes passive forgiveness and active forgiveness.

Passive forgiveness is not to hate them anymore.

Active forgiveness is to love them more than before. It is to supply, to give and to speak kindly to them.

Heavenly Father actively forgave us in Jesus Christ.

Heavenly Father gave us eternal love, eternal life, eternal hope, heaven citizenship.

He sent us the Comforter, the Holy Spirit. Heavenly Father has made us precious and precious children.

Hallelujah!

God who listens to prayers given even in craving?

Even when we test God in our craving, God gives us what we ask for.

But He sends “a wasting disease” upon us. (Ps. 106:14-15)

Is the health of our soul important or the abundance of wealth?

The shepherds who have no understanding are greedy

The shepherds, who are like the dogs that are greedy and aren't satisfied,

Do whatever they can to seek only their own interests, and have no understanding.

(Isa. 56:11)

“going after the lusts of your own hearts and eyes”

When we go after the lusts of our own hearts and eyes, then we will prostitute ourselves (Num. 15:29).
["the lust of the eyes" (1 Jn. 2:16)]

A greedy man

A greedy man stirs up dissension. (Prov. 28:25)

A greedy man

A greedy man believes in himself rather than trust in God.
He stirs up dissension with others and doesn't reconcile with them.
He is a fool in the sight of God (Prov. 28:25-26).

Even if I am insulted, I shouldn't retaliate.

Jesus was insulted but He didn't retaliate (1 Pet. 2:23).
The Bible says, "Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing" (3:9).
Why is it so difficult to obey these words in human relationship like Jesus.
I need to have the tolerance to receive everything
such as, people's insult, the words that ignore me and hurt me and so on.
But I am saying the things that the other person is saying so.
I want to be Jesus' disciple who is able to bless them at least in my heart.
'Heavenly Father, please help me.'

Job 23:10

“But He knows the way I take; When He has tried me, I shall come forth as gold.” (Job 23:10).

1. Although I don't know the way I am taking now and I will take in the future at all, the fact that the Lord knows the way I take gives me comfort and hope.
2. I can endure any pain and suffering because I believe that the Lord is trying me through my pain and suffering.
3. When I think about the fact and hope that I will come forth as gold after the Lord tries me in the blast furnace of suffering, I can pray, expect and wait by faith.

The key point of the Book of Job?

“Then Satan answered the LORD, "Does Job fear God for nothing?" (Job 1:9)

It is interesting that the key point of the Book of Job is not “suffering of Job” but “righteousness of Job”.

Job's friends said that Job was suffering because of his sin;

But Job thought that he was suffering because God is unfair.

But the Bible says that Job suffered neither because God is unfair nor Job's sin.

The Bible says that Job suffered because Satan said to the Lord,

“Does Job fear God for nothing?” (v. 9).

In other words, Satan said that there was clear reason why Job feared God.

The reason is that Job feared God because of the blessings of children and/or of wealth that he received from God.

But the conclusion is that Job didn't sin nor did he blame God in fearing God (v. 22)

Even though Satan attacked Job's children and wealth (so he suffered) with the permission of God's sovereign will.

But Satan was wrong.

Job feared God for no reason.

Even now Satan is tempting us to fear God and serve Him

because of the blessings that we have received from God.

The only reason why we fear God and serve Him is because of Jesus.

We who have been saved by God's grace because what Jesus has done on the cross

Don't fear God and serve Him for some reason.

We aren't fearing God and serving Him

because of the blessings of the children and of wealth.

It is only because of Jesus!

[As I am reading John H. Walton & Tremper Longman III's "How to Read Job"]

Don't rebuke but forgive

Why are we rebuking those who already have repented of their sins.

Rather, we must forgive them. (Lk. 17:3)

We Christians ...

We Christians should know enough to refuse evil and choose good (Isa. 7:15-16).

We Christians should examine everything carefully and hold fast to that which is good and abstain from every form of evil (1 Thess. 5:21-22).

We Christians ...

We Christians live and move and exist in the Lord (Acts 17:28).

We Christians ...

We Christians should do our best to do be upright
so that no one can find any fault in us (1 Sam. 29:3, 6).

A serious sin of the Christians

We Christians who are hypocrites pretend that there is no plank in our own eyes
as we are aware of people's eyes.
This is a serious sin that deceives God and ourselves.
(Cf. Mt. 7:6; Bible commentary)

The Christian gatherings

Among the Christian gatherings,
there are gatherings that aren't for the better but for the worse (1 Cor. 11:17).
In these gatherings, there are divisions and factions (vv. 18-19).
In addition to these gatherings, we are doing evil.
Therefore, this is what God says about these gatherings:
"I cannot endure" (Isa. 1:13).

“You turn things around!”

We Christians are turning things around.

We think “Who sees us?” or “Who knows us?”

Even though we are deeply hiding our plans from the Lord and our deeds are done in dark place.

(Isa. 29:15-16)

We husbands ...

If we husbands aren't rejoicing in the wife of our youth,

Don't know how loving and graceful she is, aren't letting her breasts satisfy us at all times,

And aren't exhilarated always with her love,

Then we may be exhilarated with another woman and embrace her bosom (Prov. 5:18-20).

Those who turn our hearts away?

We must not love a nonbeliever boy/girl friend or spouse

who turn our hearts away from the Lord and His church more than God. (1 Kgs. 11:1-9)

We pastors ...

We pastors shouldn't use deception, nor should we distort the word of God.
On the contrary, we must set forth the truth plainly
So that there is no cause for stumbling in us before God and everyone. (2 Cor. 4:2)

We pastors shouldn't peddle the word of God for profit.

We pastors shouldn't peddle the word of God for profit.
On the contrary, in Christ, we should speak before God with sincerity, like men sent from God.
(2 Cor. 2:17)

Because of the pastors' greed ...

Because of the pastors' greed, God's flocks are hurting.
Because of the pastors' pride, God's flocks are leaving the church.
Because of the pastors' sins, God's holy name is being profaned.
(Ezek. 36:20, 39:7, 43:8)

We must think about our own death.

We who are living should keep in mind that the end of every man is death (Eccle. 7:2).
We should go to funerals rather than weddings and think about our own death.
As we think about the end of life,
We must ponder how we can live the rest of our lives to please the Lord.
One day the time will come for us to get off at the end of our life trains.

'Come, Lord Jesus' (Maranatha)

Apostle Paul who loved Jesus said, “Maranatha” (1 Cor. 16:22) and

Apostle John said, “... Come, Lord Jesus” (Rev. 22:20).

Jesus said, “Yes, I am coming quickly” (v. 20).

Therefore, we who love the Lord should be able to say “Maranatha”.

Will any of us shut the church door?

God wants the church door close.

The purpose is so that we may not uselessly offer worship to Him (Mal. 1:10).

We who don't know God's love (v. 2), don't honor Him and respect Him (v. 6) and defiling Him (v. 7)

Are uselessly offering worship to God. Will any of us shut the church door? (v. 10)

"... we ..."

When we look at the miracle where Jesus fed 5,000 men with 2 fish and 5 barley loaves miracle, Jesus already knew what He was intending to do (Jn. 6:6).

Nevertheless, Jesus told Philip “Where are we to buy bread, so that these may eat? (v. 5)

Here, I meditated on “we” that Jesus said. In the midst of this, I got couple of insights:

1. Among “us” (v. 5) was Philip who said “not .. enough” (v. 7), and Andrew said "... but how far will they go among so many?” (v. 9) In one word, they both said ‘We can’t.’ But among the “us”, Jesus already had in mind what He was going to do (v. 6). In other words, ‘I can’t, the Lord can’.
2. Although ‘I can’t, but the Lord can’ Jesus use 2 fish and 5 barley loaves of a boy whom Andrew brought and did 2 fish and 5 barley loaves miracle.
The lesson this fact teaches me is that even though I have little and I cannot do much and so on, I must offer whatever I have to the Lord just as I am.
The reason is because Jesus used the boy’s 2 fish and 5 barley loaves even though He is almighty God who didn’t have to use those 2 fish and 5 barley loaves.
And when we think of the fact that Andrew has found the boy among the 5,000 men and brought him to Jesus, we can’t help thinking about our responsibility.

There is no test we can't afford.

There is no test we can't afford.

The reason is because our faithful God doesn’t allow us to be tempted beyond what we are able. Furthermore, with the temptation He will provide the way of escape also, so that we will be able to endure it. (1 Cor. 10:13)

The reason why we must strong and courageous is because ...

1. God gave us the word of His promise (Josh. 1:3),
2. God is always with us (v. 5),
3. God commands us to be strong and courageous (v. 9).

What we should be surprised with ...

What we should be surprised with is not the unexpected adversity and pain in our lives
But even in that adversity and pain the fact that we aren't repenting our sins, not obeying the word of God
and not returning to Him (Hag. 2:17).

[As I am reading Iain M. Duguid & Matthew P. Harmon's "Zephaniah, Haggai, Malachi"]

If we plan iniquity in our hearts ...

If we plan iniquity in our hearts (Mic. 2:1)
The Lord plans disaster against us (v. 3).

What we say and what the Lord says?

We remarks about how the church building is adorned with beautiful stones
and with gifts dedicated to God,
The Lord says "Watch out that you are not deceived" regarding fake Jesus and fake gospel
Since "As for what you see here, the time will come when not one stone will be left on another, every one
of them will be thrown down. (Lk. 21:5-9)

**The great blessings we want to receive,
The great blessing God wants to give**

Usually we Christians regard material blessing as the great blessing that God gives to us (Lk. 5:6).
But I think material blessing is a small blessing among the many blessings that God give us.
[“power to make wealth” (Deut. 8:18) is greater blessing than material blessing.
Material blessing is only a tool to receive greater blessings.]

The great blessing God wants to give us is repentance
through realizing that God is God and we are sinners (Lk. 5:8).
[Who considers the blessing of repentance greater than the material blessing?]

Therefore, the greatest blessing God gives us is that
God calls us and gives us a mission and fulfills His will through us (v. 10).
[Blessed are the Christians who understand that this blessing is
greater and much precious than the material blessing.]

Our view of ‘bad place’ and ‘very good place’.

In our view of bad place, there is no this, no that and so on (Num. 20:5).
In other words, in our view of bad place, we feel a lot of thing that are lacking.
That’s why in bad place, we fall on our faces and cry out to God (v. 6).
Then God hears our cry out in that bad place and speaks to us (vv. 7-8).
But we aren’t obeying that word of God in faith and manifesting God’s holiness (v. 12).
Nevertheless, in that bad place, God even hears our voice of resentment and fills our needs (v. 11).
Isn’t this God’s grace?
In our view of bad place is the place where we experience God’s grace!
In our view of very good place (Judg. 18:9)
Is the place where people who are in it living in security (v. 7) and
there is no lack of anything that is on the earth (v. 10).
In our view of very good place, the people live in quiet and secure (v. 27).
That’s why we don’t feel the need to pray to God.
Therefore in the end, we commit the sin of serving idols in that very good place (v. 30).
In our view of very good place is a place where we commit sin of idolatry.

Even if it looks a terrible place to us ...

When we think that God is leading us a terrible place to us (Num. 20:5)

We must kneel down and pray to God (v. 6).

In doing so, God will speak to us (vv. 7-8).

When we humbly obey His word by faith,

God will change that terrible place to the place full of God's grace (v. 11).

It seems he is in very difficult situation.

It seems Joseph was in very difficult situation (Gen. 40:14).

He didn't do anything wrong but he was unfairly accused and imprisoned (39:11-23).

When we look at the situation that Joseph was in, he could have been very angry.

But he didn't. Instead after he interpreted the cupbearer's dream,

he asked him to mention him to Pharaoh and get him out of the imprisoned situation when it goes well with him (40:1-22).

But the cupbearer forgot about Joseph for 2 years (40:23-41:1).

It seems to us that Joseph was in very discouraging situation because he was in prison

Even though he didn't do anything wrong

And he can think that 2 years have been wasted (41:1).

However, God knew the Joseph's situation best.

He knew that Joseph was badly framed and imprisoned.

And God knew that Joseph had been in prison for two years.

But God never wasted those 2 years.

God was working on toward His will of salvation.

In His provision, He was working in Joseph's life
in order to save the lives of Joseph's brothers and their children and descendants
(45:7-8; 50:20-21).

Who should we imitate?

The one whom we should imitate is the one whose character is proven
Through tests and refinement.
(Cf. Phil. 2:22)

Few evidences that we aren't living right Christian life?

We can know that we aren't living right Christian life by looking at following 3 things:

1. I am becoming increasingly insensitive to sin (Eph. 4:19).
I don't regard sin as sin (Rom. 5:13).
2. I am more and more tied to my own merit (Lk. 18: 11-12).
I think more about what I do for the Lord and His church instead of what He does for me (Mt. 25:44).
3. I am becoming more and more proud (Prov. 21:4; Ezek. 28:5).
I like to reveal my own glory rather than God's glory (Jn. 12:43).

Who we care about, who God cares about?

There seem to be times when God asks someone we care or love very much.
I think the reason is because God wants us to understand His great love

of not even sparing His own Son Jesus Christ but gave Him up for us all (Rom. 8:32).
Therefore in order for us to understand God's great love of caring us
even by not sparing His own Son Jesus Christ but gave Him up for us all,
we must humbly offer whoever or whatever He asks of us.

God who cuts off the things that we rely on

When we don't listen to God's word and disobey it and sin against God,
God cuts off the things that we rely on and makes us to be in need
So that in anxiety we will be appalled with one another and waste away in our iniquity. (Ezek. 4:16-17)

When we are getting weaker ...

We can be discouraged when we are getting weaker.
Especially when we are caught up with the thought 'This is my responsibility. This is my fault',
We can surely be discouraged.
What should we do at these times?

Let's hold on to Psalms 109:4b – "... but I am a man of prayer."
Because there is only God to rely on, let's kneel down before Him and cry out to Abba Father.
Let's cling to Him humbly and constantly.
Then our indwelling Holy Spirit will restore and revive our discouraged souls
By reminding us the living and active Word of God
And powerfully working in us.

If we serve the Lord ...

If we serve the Lord, then Father God will honor us. (Jn. 12:26)

When God is with us ...

When God is with us, we can be prosperous.

We will be exalted even by people and it will be pleasing in the sight of all the people.

We will be loved by them and our names will be highly esteemed.

But at the same time, there may be people who are jealous, afraid of us, and will our enemy continually.

(1 Sam. 18:5, 9, 12-16, 20, 28-30)

The salvation we expect from praying to God is ...?

The salvation (salvation) we expect from praying to God is a change to a better situation.

But the salvation that God gives us leads us to an impossible situation

in which we can't even save ourselves. What is the reason?

Maybe God wants to make us to look only at God and solely trust in Him.

Maybe God wants us to realize our sins and turn away from them.

Perhaps the reason is that God wants us to obey His commands.

[As I was listening to Pastor Kyung won Kim's sermon, 'God's way, Jonah's way'

and thought about Jonah's expectation of salvation when he was thrown into the sea (Jon. 1:15).

Maybe his expectation of salvation was not to be inside the great fish (v. 17, 2:9)

but to be delivered directly to the land (2:10)]

The reason we praise God is ...

The reason why we praise God (2 Chron. 20:19) isn't
because we have no problems, no sufferings and everything is going well and we are in peace.
We praise God with thanksgiving in our hearts even in the midst of great difficulties and sufferings is
Because we are experiencing God's eternal love (v. 21).
How can we experience God's eternal love even in the midst of great difficulties and sufferings?
As we know our helplessness and powerless through the great difficulties and sufferings
and don't know what to do (v. 12) we cry out to God as we look at only God.
And when God answers our prayer and receive His promise word, we experience God's eternal love.
Then we can praise God with thanksgiving in our hearts.
The amazing power and work of praise is that when we start praising God (v. 22) in faith (v. 20)
God is fulfilling His promise word of our answered prayer (vv. 22-24).
Hallelujah!

Our prayers and confession

Like the psalmist, we should pray to God,
“Not to us, O Lord, not to us but Your name be the glory” (Ps. 115:1).
Also, when we do all the things which are commanded
We should say, “We are unworthy slaves;
we have done only that which we ought to have done.” (Lk. 17:10)

In order for us to set out ...

In order for us to set out to the place of which the Lord said, “I will give it to you”,
We must know where we should camp in the wilderness (Num. 10:29, 31).
In order for us to set out to the eternal heaven that is promised by God,
We must know how to rest on the Sabbath.

We are just tools.

We are just tools.

As a tool of the Lord, we must thank the Lord if He uses us and even if He doesn't use us.

We should be very grateful for the fact that we as His tools are in the hands of the Lord.

We must be humble after being used by the Lord as a tool.

We should be grateful that God has used us.

And we should confess that we are unworthy servants (Lk. 17:10).

We should glorify only God.

We should not practice.

We shouldn't defile ourselves by practicing any of the abominable customs of this world.

(Lev. 18:30)

We must to know with all our hearts and souls.

We must know with all our hearts and souls.

We must know with all our hearts and all our souls that

Not one word of all the good words which the Lord our God spoke concerning we have failed;

All have been fulfilled for us, not one of them has failed. (Josh. 23:14)

We worry ahead, God solves first

Even though we worry ahead, but God goes before us and solves the problem that we are worried about.
(Cf. Deut. 1:30, 33)

We should be ashamed and embarrassed.

Those who tremble at the words of God on account of their unfaithfulness, should confess
That “O my God, I am ashamed and embarrassed to lift up my face to You.” (Ezra 9:4-6)

We are not of the world.

The Holy Spirit is sanctifying we who aren't of this world in the truth, the word of God.
(Jn. 17:16-17)

We refuse to be ashamed.

As we call to God, we have done evil things and have had our way (Jere. 3:4-5).
As we do so, we refuse to be ashamed.
The reason is because we have a harlot's forehead (v. 3).

“Be on your guard!”

Our consciousness structure is changing too quickly.
And the change is it's getting too far from the Word of God.
We must be on our guard (Lk. 17:3).

We must abandon evil and do good.

We shouldn't be overcome by evil, but should overcome evil with good (Rom. 12:21).
We should suffer for doing what is right rather than for doing what is wrong.
It's God's will (1 Pet. 3:17).
Although our soul is forlorn when other people repay us evil for good (Ps. 35:12),
We must not grow weary of doing good (2 Thess. 3:13).
We must depart from evil and do good and must seek peace and pursue it (Ps. 34:14).

What example are we setting?

What example are we setting?
Is it an example of Christ (1 Cor. 11:1) or setting our hearts on evil things
Such as being idolaters, sexual immorality, testing the Lord or grumbling? (10:5-11)

What should we think?

What should we think of our ancestor of faith Abraham
Who lied about his wife in order to be safe and to preserve his life? (Gen. 12:13)

What should we do?

We who have mixed ourselves with the world (Hos. 7:8) don't know that

The people in this world devour our strength (v. 9).

Nevertheless we don't return to God because of our pride (v. 10).

We have become like a silly dove, without sense and rely on the things other than God (v. 11).

But God still wants to redeem us even though we keep on sinning against Him (v. 13).

He trains and strengthens our arms (v. 15). What should we do?

Even if we forget, God remembers.

We didn't remember the Lord's great love for us (Ps. 106:7).

We forgot the great love of the Lord (51:12).

We left our first love (Rev. 2:4).

We quickly forgot His works (Ps. 106:13).

Rather, we craved intensely and tempted God (v. 14).

As a result, God sent a wasting disease among us (v. 15).

At the end, we even forgot our Savior God (v. 21).

Nevertheless, God remembers His covenant with us for our sake.

And He continues to give us His great love to us (v. 45).

Therefore we pray to God:

"Remember me, O LORD, in Your favor toward Your people" (v. 4).

We should not be proud.

Although Apostle Peter said, “Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You” (Mt. 26:35),
He denied Jesus three times (vv. 70, 72, 74).

And he remembered the word which Jesus had said,
"Before a rooster crows, you will deny Me three times."

So he went out and wept bitterly (v. 75).

We shouldn't trust ourselves too much.

We shouldn't be over confidence. We shouldn't be proud.

We need to be crumbled. Our pride needs to be broken thoroughly.

We even need to hate ourselves thoroughly.

We need to thoroughly realize how weak we are.

In doing so, we will have no choice but to rely on the Lord alone.

In doing so, we will have no choice but to trust Him.

We secretly sin, God makes me know wisdom in the hidden part

Despite our secret sins against the holy God,

God who is full of grace and mercy rebukes our secret sins
and makes us know wisdom in the hidden part (Ps. 51:6).

What is the wisdom that God makes us know in the hidden part?

I think there are two things:

1. The Lord desires truth in the innermost being (v. 6)
2. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit and a contrite heart (v. 17).

We should also be familiar with asking God.

In order for us to win the spiritual battle, we shouldn't only be familiar with the Word of God,
But also we should be familiar with asking God.
In other words, we should be familiar in crying out to God.
To that extent, we must become people who trust God.
In other words, we should put our trust in Him (Ps. 22:4).
Because we trust God, we should cry out to Him.
Then God will hear us (77:1), He will surely hear our cry (Exod. 22:23).
And God will answer our prayer (Ps. 3:4, 86:7, 120:1).
God will give us victory (1 Cor. 15:57).

We are led by the Spirit of God.

[Romans 8:12-17]

We are led by the Spirit of God.

Look at Romans 8:14 – “For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.”
Before we believed in Jesus, we were walking according to the flesh (vv. 4, 5).
But after we believed in Jesus, we are according to the Spirit (vv. 4, 5).
In other words, we are led by the Holy Spirit.
The Holy Spirit is our guide.
Our good Shepherd Lord (Ps. 23:1) is our Holy Spirit
And the Holy Spirit makes us lie down in green pastures and leads us beside quiet waters (v. 2).
Also, the Holy Spirit guides us even though we walk through the valley of shadow of death (v. 4).
The Holy Spirit dwells in us, moves our hearts and leads us.

The Holy Spirit led Paul.
The Holy Spirit forbade Paul from speakin the word in Asia (Acts 16:6),
And didn't permit him to go into Bithynia (v. 7).
However, the Holy Spirit led Paul to Macedonia, Europe (vv. 9-12).
The Holy Spirit who led Paul in this way is also leading us.
And we who are being led by the Spirit of God are "sons of God" (Rom. 8:14).
The Spirit of God is leading us to the way of righteousness and to heaven.
Therefore, we must be led by the Holy Spirit.

We have received "a spirit of adoption."

Look at Romans 8:15 – "For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again,
but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, 'Abba! Father!'"
We no longer have a spirit of slavery.
Therefore, we shouldn't live according to the flesh.
Rather, we must live according to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
The reason is because we have received the spirit of adoption.
We have authority of sons of God.
And the sons can cry out, "Abba Father!"
That was what the Son of God Jesus did (Mk. 14:36).
As He trusted and relied on Father God, He prayed "Abba! Father!"
All things are possible for You; remove this cup from Me; yet not what I will, but what You will" (v. 36).
We too should cry out to our 'Dad Father', "yet not I will, but what You will".
As we are sons of God, we are also "heirs" (Rom. 8:17).
We are "heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ" (v. 17).
Father God gave us inheritance.
Therefore, in order to be glorified with Him, we should suffer with Him (v. 17).

[This is a summary of our church retired pastor.]

We must repent.

I was shocked when I watched the Korean news at 9:00 in the evening.

I saw one of the churches in conflict with the pastor's supporters and the pastor's opposition group,

In which one group was trying to break in to the church main gate that was locked by chain by a long log.

How could they do such a thing?

Nevertheless, we aren't ashamed of doing such unrighteous thing (Ps. 119:6).

We lost the righteous judgments (v. 7).

Now, we face a crisis of integrity (v. 7).

We must repent. We must get rid of all unrighteousness (v. 3).

All evil must be removed from the church.

The church as Jesus' Bride must prepare to meet Jesus the Bridegroom as His radiant church (Eph. 5:27).

The value of our existence

The value of our existence is not based on the fruits of our actions,

It is based on the fruit of the precious action of Jesus.

Therefore we have nothing to boast about ourselves but only the Lord.

(1 Cor. 1:31; 3:21)

Those who are against us ...

Those who are against us are furious and very angry and mock us.

They are despising us, insulting us, stir up trouble against us and plot together with evil intention.

We must aware of their plot and God will frustrate it.
(Neh. 4:1, 4, 8, 15)

God who keeps us from sinning against Him

God kept Abimelech, who sent and took Sarah because he thought that Abraham's wife Sarah was his sister but hadn't come near her and who did this in the integrity of his heart and the innocence of his hands, from sinning against Him (Gen. 20:1-6).
God keeps those who have done this in the integrity of their hearts and the innocence of their hands from sinning against Him.

God who makes us lowly

God made the nation of Egypt, which the Israelites relied on, lowly (Ezek. 29:14, 15).
There are at least two reasons for this:

1. The reason was to show Egypt God's righteousness. God made the country lowly because Egypt was proud (29:3, 9; 30:6, 18; 31:10, 14).
2. The reason was to give God's grace and mercy by judging Egypt so that Egypt would no longer be a source of confidence for the people of Israel but would be a reminder of their sin in turning to her for help (29:16).

Lessons to learn:

God loves us so much that He makes the things that we rely on more than God lowly. Thus, God makes us not to rely on it anymore. The purpose of doing so is to make us depend only on God.

And the purpose of God is to make us look at God alone.

Although God forgives our sins and doesn't remember them anymore, we often remember our sins.

To solve that problem, God makes the thing that we depend on more than God lowly.
God also makes us lowly when we are proud. Thus, the Lord makes us low (30:6).
Therefore, God makes us humbly rely on God alone.

Heavenly Father's heart for us

Heavenly Father's heart wants to forgive our sins
Even to the point of wanting His begotten Son Jesus to be crushed (Isa. 53:10).
Heavenly Father's heart is pleased to forgive our sins and save us
Even to the point of being pleased with His begotten Son Jesus to die on the cross (vv. 10, 12).
Heavenly Father's heart is pleased and satisfied to save us
Even to the point of satisfying His begotten Son Jesus' death on the cross (v. 11).

Only we don't know ...

Even unbelievers know that we the believers are being disciplined by God
Because we have disobeyed God's word and committed sins against Him.
But only we don't know ... (Jere. 39:3)

God who reminds us His command again

God even used the unbeliever captain to remind disobedient Jonah His command.
["Arise ... " (1:2), "... Get up ..." (1:6)].
Our God reminds us His command again even through unbeliever.

“not from ourselves”

We must know that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves.
(2 Cor. 4:7)

We still have hope.

We still have hope (Ezra 10:2).

So let us follow the counsel of the Lord and of those who tremble at the commandment of our God (v. 3)

And make confession to the Lord God.

And let us do our duty, that is to separate ourselves from all the sinful things of the world (vv. 11, 12).

Our holiness is ...

Our holiness is a necessary condition for achieving peace (Phil. 4:6-9) (Commentary).

Our arrogance and consequence?

Now we Christians are so arrogant. That's why even though there is immorality of such a kind as doesn't exist even among the unbelievers in this world.

But we are so arrogant that we don't even mourn (1 Cor. 5:1-2).

Offering defiled body and mind?

Offering our defiled body and mind while worshiping God is
Evil in the sight of God, despising the worship of God and His name. (Mal. 1:6-8)

We must be different.

We must be different.
We must be different from those who didn't believe in God,
put Him to the test and have not listen to His voice
even after seeing God's glory and His signs
We must be like Caleb who has followed God fully.
(Num. 14:11, 22-24)

Those who turn our hearts?

The Lord has said that we shouldn't associate with those who will surely turn our hearts away from
following the Lord fully and from keeping God's commands and do evil in the sight of God,
nor should they associate with us. (1 Kgs. 11:1-10)

God who satisfies our hearts

God will turn our mourning into joy and will comfort us and give us joy for our sorrow.
God will make us satisfy with His goodness. (Jere. 31:13-14)

Love that fully satisfies our hearts

Our hearts cannot be satisfied with any love in this world.

Our hearts can be completely satisfied only by the eternal love of the Lord (Ps. 90:14).

The reason is because God has set eternity in our hearts (Eccle. 3:11).

Our longing for eternity can be satisfied only by the eternal love of the Lord.

Our adequacy is from God.

Adequacy from ourselves is not complete. We will be dissatisfied again.

Our adequacy is only from God (2 Cor. 3:5)

We must not rely on our understanding.

Those wised Christians who have wrote the God's commands on the tablet of their hearts and keep them
Trust God with all their hearts (Prov. 3:5-6).

Here the word 'Trust God with all their hearts' refers to the 'exclusive trust.'

This kind of trust is 'Childish confidence' (Park Yun-sun).

Believe in God like a child with simplicity of trust in relying on Him completely
is trusting God with all our hearts (Park).

In order to trust God with childlike trust, we must not rely on our own understanding.

The more we rely on our own understanding, we cannot trust God with simple heart like the child.

Our foolishness

Our foolishness is our hearts rage against the Lord
even though we have ruined our way and are suffering as a result. (Prov. 19:3)

For our faith

The Lord who is always for us answers our prayer slowly so that we may believe (Jn. 11:6, 15).

He will curse our blessings.

If we don't take the word of God to heart to give honor to His name,
Then the Lord will curse our blessings. (Mal. 2:2)

God who also uses our disobedience

God made the unbelieving captain and the sailors to call on the Lord (Jon. 1:14)
By manifesting His power even through disobedient Jonah.
As a result, God made them to do according to His will (v. 14)
And enabled them to fear the Lord and to offer a sacrifice to Him and made vows (v. 16).
Surprisingly, God even uses our disobedience to save the soul!

Our love ...

Our love for God is like a morning cloud and like the dew which goes away early. (Hos. 6:4)

We have to think about our thoughts.

When we think about what we are thinking, we can know little bit about our own spiritual condition.

If we worry about this or that, or have anxieties,

Then my spiritual condition is in weakness (Cf. Ps. 77:7-10)

Our sorrow is hopeful sorrow.

We can surely be sad when we think about our loved ones who passed away in the Lord.

But to us who believe in Jesus' death and resurrection, our sorrow is hopeful sorrow.

That hope is that God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus.

(1 Thess. 4:13-14)

Who is our trust?

We must know that there is no basis for trusting ourselves.

God is the only object of our trust.

The reason why we only trust God is because He is "my salvation" and "my hope" (Ps. 62:1, 5).

Even on our journey of faith ...

Saul gave approval to Stephen's death (Acts 8:1).

King Herod had James put to death with the sword and proceeded to seize Peter also (12:2, 4).

Stronger adversaries: From Saul to King Herod.

More important people (?): Stephen to James (and Peter).

It seems that “a great persecution” that was broke out against the church because of Stephen’s death grew even bigger (8:1).

There will be more difficulties and persecutions in our journey of faith.

And our adversaries can become stronger people.

The lives of the more important people around us may lose their lives or can be persecuted.

In order to keep our souls ...

In order to keep our souls, of course, we have to seek God’s protection.

But we also have responsibility to keep His commandments and not to be careless of conduct.

(Prov. 19:16)

Our priority, God's priority

Although we ask God to heal our sickness, God wants to forgive our sins first.

(Lk. 5:17-20)

Our proud confidence

Our proud confidence is to conduct ourselves in the holiness and sincerity that are from God

Toward brothers and sisters in the Lord. (2 Cor. 1:12)

When our sins are many

When our sins are many our foes have become our masters and our enemies are at ease.
And there is grief because of our many sins. (Lam. 1:5)

“what credit is that to you?”

What credit is that to us?

We give credit to a person who loves those who love him/her.

We give credit to him/her who does good to those who is good to him/her.

We give credit to him/her who lends to those from whom he/she expects to receive.

Even sinners are doing this too.

We should give credit to the person, who loves his /her enemies, does good and lends,
expecting nothing in return.

And we should give credit to the person who is kind to ungrateful and evil. (Lk. 6:32-35)

For our good

God is commanding us today for our good, but we are choosing the path of misery. (Deut. 10:13)

For our transgressions and our iniquities...

When we hear from news that the court ruling is death penalty,

we think that a person has committed the crime of death penalty.

I am sure no one will think that the person will receive death penalty because of their own sins.

The Jews did at the time of Jesus. They thought that Jesus deserved to die on the cross.

They thought that Jesus should be cursed by God and be crucified
because of his sin of blaspheming God and the temple.
But Jesus, without sin, died on the cross for our transgressions and our iniquities. (Isa. 53:5)

The fools and the wise

The fools don't fear God. They don't know they are doing evil and offering worship to God.
In front of God, they are hasty in word or impulsive in thought to bring up a matter in the presence of God.
They aren't fulfilling a vow to God by making excuse that it was mistake.
They have many cares, many dreams and many meaningless words.
But the wise fears God.
He goes into the temple of God, gets closer to Him and listens to His words.
He makes his words be few.
He surely fulfills his vow to God. (Eccle. 5:1-7)

Tears of grumbling

Tears of grumbling may be despising God. (Num. 11:4, 10, 13, 20)

The voice of grumbling

Heavenly Father who even hears and answers our voice of grumbling ... (Exod. 16 : 9)

Love even enemies?

Joseph told his brothers when he was 39 years old
(at the age of 30, he was put in charge of the whole land of Egypt + 7 years of harvest
+ 2nd year of famine revealing that he was Joseph and told them God's will = 39 years old)
not only that he was Joseph but also God's will of sending him to Egypt ahead of his brothers:
"... for God sent me before you to preserve life",
"God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant in the earth ..." (Gen. 45:5, 7).
And until he died at the age of 110 (50:22), for 71 years,
Joseph provided for his older brothers who hated him, tried to kill him and sold him
and their little ones (v. 21).
When I thought about Joseph's life and death, he reminded me Jesus.
Jesus, who loved us and wanted to forgive all our sins and thus died on the cross
In order to save the lives of such sinners like us who were enemies of God (Rom. 5:8, 10),
Commanded us "But I say to you, love your enemies
and pray for those who persecute you" (Mt. 5:44).
Although my instinct is not to love my enemies but to hate them and revenge on them,
But through God who is at work in me, both to will and to work for His good pleasure (Phil. 2:13)
I want to love my enemies like Jesus and Joseph.

The reason is selfish gain in our hearts.

The reason why we turn our eyes away from seeing wonderful things in the Lord's word to worthless things is because our hearts toward the Lord's word are turned toward selfish gain. (Ps. 119:18, 36-37)

The reason I was given a list of choices with no choice ...

The reason I was given a list of choices with no choice or no option is
Because it may be the result of my sin. (2 Sam. 24:13)

What should we do in our critical situation?

If we cannot overcome fear in our critical situation (1 Sam. 13:6-7)

By fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith (Heb. 12:2)

And with assurance of deliverance,

Then we will be caught up in the critical situation

and will be driven by the situation instead of by faith

And commit sins against God. (1 Sam. 13:8-14)

Thanksgiving prayer even in a crisis?

The reason why we can be courageous and offer thanksgiving prayer to God

even in a crisis situation that seem hopeless is

because we believe that God will fulfill the promised word that He gave to us. (Acts 27:9-37)

Even if we go into a crisis situation ...

When we obey God's command by faith even if we go into a crisis situation,

That crisis situation can be an opportunity to witness the glory of God. (1 Kgs. 18)

The crisis is ...

The crisis is a good opportunity to learn God's law (Ps. 94:12).

When we learn God's word in the crisis, we can enjoy relief that God gives
By letting His word to control and guide our hearts (v. 13).
God supports us with His love when we are in the crisis (v. 18).
And when anxiety is great within me, God's consolation brings joy to our souls (v. 19).

What is crisis?

Crisis in our lives can be an opportunity to realize at least two things.
First of all, we can realize through crisis that we cannot save ourselves from crisis.
Second, we can realize through crisis that only God can save us (Jonah 2:9).
When we realize these two things in crisis by the grace of God
We can believe that crisis is really a good opportunity to receive God's deliverance.
Therefore, through crisis in our lives,
we can experience God's saving love deeper, wider and higher. (Eph. 3:18-19)

God exalts us through crisis

God exalts God's people in crisis (Dan. Ch. 2, esp. vv. 48-49) more and more (ch. 3, esp. v. 30).

Comfort

The comfort that we pray and expect can be different from the comfort that God gives us. (Jere. 46:28)

Comfort is effective in the patient enduring.

God's comfort through us is effective in the patient enduring. (2 Cor. 1:3-6)

When we have no choice but to refuse comfort

When we weep in sorrow and refuse to be comforted by everyone,
God comforts us with future hope of our salvation. (Jere. 31:15-17)

I want to be clothed with power from on high.

May God open my mind to understand the Scripture.

May the gospel of Jesus Christ and repentance for forgiveness of sins can be proclaimed in His name to all the nations. May He clothed me with power from on high (Lk. 24:45-49)

Gift of encouragement?

It seems like the Lord gave me gift of encouragement. (Rom. 12:8)

Hypocrisy and hypocrite

We can speak kindly to others outwardly even though we hate them in our hearts.
This is hypocrisy.

The hypocrite can speak smoothly with his lips to others and can please them
Even though he has evil heart toward them.
He can pretend his evil heart with very warm words of love. (Prov. 26:23)

If we hate hypocrisy, we can make wrong judgments.

If we hate hypocrisy of the hypocrite, then we have tendency not to hear
even the right word from the mouth of the hypocrite.
But Jesus said to “all they [“The scribes and the Pharisees” (Mt. 23:2)] tell you, do and observe,
But do not do according to their deeds” (v. 3).
As a result, we cannot distinguish between hypocrite's wrong actions and right words,
And make wrong judgments by losing our balance of judgment.
We must make good judgement.
By wise discernment, we should listen the right word from the hypocrite and keep it
Even though we must hate their hypocrisy and shouldn't imitate their actions.

Even hypocrites ...

Even if our parents (pastors, teachers) are hypocrites,
We the children (church members, students) should do and keep the right words they say
Even though we must not do according to their deeds. (Mt. 23:3)

Hypocritical prayers and tears?

I think a person who hides his feeling of hate with flattering words
In spite of the fact that that feeling toward another person should be expressed

is a very scary person

Furthermore, the person who can hide his hate feeling with tears is very dangerous person.

We must not be deceived by his flattering words and tears.

In particular, we must stop deceiving ourselves before God with our own hypocritical prayers and tears.

(Cf. Prov. 26:25)

He slept with a married woman.

He slept with a married woman. When he heard that she was pregnant, he tried to cover it up by making her husband to go down to his house twice so that the husband could sleep with his wife and her pregnant baby was the couple's and not his own. He even made him drunk and tried to make her husband to go down to his house so that the husband could sleep with her. But the plan failed.

Eventually, he even planned to kill the husband and actually killed him.

He did evil in the sight of God. (2 Sam. 11:5-27)

'The one who seeks the profit of others' or 'the one who causes others to stumble'?

We shouldn't be the ones who cause others to stumble.

Rather, we should be the ones who seek the profit of others.

The purpose is so that they may be saved. (1 Cor. 10:32-33)

Profitable sadness

King Solomon says, "Sorrow is better than laughter" (Eccle. 7:3).

Our face should be sad.

The reason is that our hearts can be made good by being sad on our face.

How can our hearts be good?

It is because godly sorrow makes us to repent our sins and gives us laughter and joy at the end.

In other words, godly sorrow enables us to enjoy the grace of restoration by receiving forgiveness of our sins.

Therefore, we should be thankful whether we are sad or happy.

The reason is because God, in His sovereignty, makes us to confess and repent our sins even through sorrow.

When we confess and repent our sins, we can receive true joy that God gives to us.

In the end, God makes us beautiful by fulfilling His purpose when cry or laugh.

"Those controlled by the sinful nature" ...

"Those controlled by the sinful nature" (Rom. 8:8) are

"Those who live according to the sinful nature" and have their minds set on what that nature desires (v. 5).

"The mind of sinful man is death" (v. 6).

The sinful mind is hostile to God (v. 7).

"It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so" (v. 7).

"Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God" (v. 8).

If they live according to the sinful nature, they will die (v. 13).

But we live in accordance with the Spirit (v. 5).

Therefore, our minds should set on what the Spirit desires (v. 5).

We must be ruled by the Holy Spirit

And we must live under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
We must bear the fruit of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23).

As we live accordance of the Holy Spirit, if we live according to the sinful nature and
Have our minds set on what that nature desires, then we should be uncomfortable and suffer.

[This is a summary of our church retired pastor's Wednesday night prayer meeting sermon]

What the nature desires vs. what the Spirit desires?

"Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires;
but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires"
(Rom 8:5).

1. Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires.
What does that nature desire?

“Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality,
idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions,
factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these ...” (Gal. 5:19-21);

“For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts,

false witness, slanders”
(Mt. 15:19).

2. Those who live accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.
What does that nature desire?

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control ...”
(Gal. 5:22-23).

“Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things”
(Phil. 4:8).

When reigned by the flesh and when reigned by the Holy Spirit

When we were reigned by the flesh, the sinful passion or evil desires, which were aroused by the Law, were at work in our bodies, so that we bore fruit for death (Rom. 6:12; 7:5).

But since now we are reigned by the Holy Spirit,
we live by the Holy Spirit and walk by the Spirit (Gal. 5:25).
Now we serve in the new way of the Spirit (Rom. 7:6).
Now we live a new life (6:4).

When we were controlled by the flesh, we gratify the desires of the sinful nature and work on the deeds of the flesh (Gal. 5:19).

“Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality,

idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these ..." (vv. 19-21).

But now we are controlled by the Holy Spirit (v. 22) and live according to the Holy Spirit that is against the flesh (v. 17). Now we bear the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control (vv. 22-23).

Don't love to be first.

Don't love to be first (3 Jn. 1:9).

Don't gossip maliciously about the church leaders (v. 10).

Don't refuse to welcome the brothers (v. 10).

Don't stop those who want to welcome the brothers (v. 10).

Don't imitate what is evil (v. 11).

Grace?

There is dissatisfaction in the heart of the one who makes grace cheap, complaints in his lips and disobedience in his deeds.

But there is gratitude in the heart of the one who truly knows God's grace and a lot of labor for the Lord in his life. (1 Tim. 1:12; 1 Cor. 15:10)

I should be able to regard it as grace ...

Even the righteous reproves me, I shouldn't refuse it. Rather I should regard it as grace. (Ps. 141:5)

The Lord who gives us grace so that we can be gracious to others.

Now the Lord is commanding me to love my neighbor as myself (Mt. 22:39),

But that neighbor is the one that I don't like.

So I am now disobeying the Lord's command (Jon. 1:2).

But the Lord is enabling such disobedient sinner like me to receive grace from non-believers around me

And is teaching me that my God is gracious (vv. 4-13).

I think the purpose is that the Lord wants me to imitate Him

and be gracious to my neighbor whom I don't like.

But I am still refusing to be gracious to him.

Rather, I am still watching and waiting to see that it doesn't go well with him (4:5).

He who does not repay grace

When King Hezekiah was exalted in the sight of all nations and had immense riches and honor,

His heart was proud.

And in pride, he didn't repay the grace he received from God.

As a result, the wrath of the Lord came on him. (2 Chron. 32:23-26)

When our hearts become proud, not only that we don't repay God's grace

but also we don't even think about doing so.

A proud man forgets grace!

May God grant us favor and compassion ...

The commander of the officials didn't have to listen to Daniel and his three friends.

Actually, he shouldn't listen to them in order to save his own life.

But what's surprising is that he didn't listen to King Nebuchadnezzar's word

and didn't give the king's choice food and wine to Daniel and his three friends

but listened to Daniel and gave them that they wanted, that were vegetables to eat and water to drink.

The reason is because God granted Daniel favor and compassion in the sight of the commander of the officials. (Dan. 1:8-16)

Repaying the Lord's grace

It doesn't make sense that even though we say we have received the Lord's grace

But we don't struggle with "How can I repay the Lord for all his goodness to me?" (Ps. 116:12)

It's grace.

The suffering we receive for the Lord and His church and His gospel is grace (Phil. 1:29).

We should be thankful for just participating in that grace of God (vv. 3, 7).

An adulteress hunts for the precious life.

An adulteress hunts for the precious life (Prov. 6:26).

We must keep ourselves from evil woman, from the smooth tongue of the adulteress (v. 24).

We must not desire her beauty in our hearts (v. 25).

We must not touch our neighbor's wife and commit adultery with her (v. 29).

Anyone who commits adultery with her is lacking sense (v. 32).

It is destroying ourselves (v. 32).

Wounds and disgrace we will find and our reproach will not be blotted out (v. 33).

Jealousy will arise a husband's fury and he will show no mercy when he takes revenge (v. 34).

When we desire his delicacies?

When we desire his delicacies, eat food and fill our stomach and get fat,

Not only is our belly fat, but also our heart as well and we become proud.

As a result, we sin against God. (Prov. 23:3, 6; Deut. 8:9, 12-14, 17; 31:20, 32:15)

Not to prostitute ourselves

We must remember all the commands of the Lord and obey them

In order not to prostitute ourselves by going after the lusts of our own hearts and eyes. (Num. 15:39, 40)

Should communicate

We must communicate in order to avoid unnecessary misunderstanding in the church community

(Cf. Josh. 22:10ff.)

The Christians who have been persecuted

for the sake of righteousness ...

"Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 5:10).

The Christians who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness ...

1. Know that it is blessing to be persecuted for the sake of Jesus (Mt. 5:11).
Therefore, they rejoice even when they are persecuted (v. 12).
2. Participate in Jesus' suffering (Rev. 1:9).
They learn obedience through suffering (Heb. 5:8).
3. Enjoy the benefit of suffering (Ps. 119:71).
They know that it's God's will to suffer for doing what is right (1 Pet. 3:17).
They return from going astray through affliction and obey God's word (Ps. 119:67).
4. Long for future glory that cannot be compared with our present sufferings (Rom. 8:18).
They look for great reward in heaven (Mt. 5:12).
Therefore, they chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time (Heb. 11:25).

[As I was reading Iain M. Duguid's "Hero of Heroes"]

The Christians who are hunger and thirst for righteousness ...

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied" (Mt. 5:6).

The Christians who are hunger and thirst for righteousness ...

1. Rely on only the righteousness of Jesus that was imputed to us (Rom. 3:22).
They acknowledge that all their righteous deeds are like a filthy garment (Isa. 64:6).
2. Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness (Mt. 6:33).
3. Do the right thing in the sight of God.
They walk on the right path with the right thought as they do the right things.
4. Do good deed (Tit. 3:1).

They know that they are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works (Eph. 2:10).

5. Obey God's commands in the Scripture (Acts 5:29).

(As I was reading Iain M. Duguid's "Hero of Heroes")

Tribulation of the righteous and the wicked?

The Righteous One takes note of the righteous and the wicked.

He delivers the righteous from tribulation but He brings the wicked to ruin (Prov. 21:12).

The righteous stand firm forever.

The righteous stand firm forever even though the storm has swept by (Prov. 10:25).

The righteous will never be uprooted (v. 30) and the prospect of the righteous is joy (v. 28).

A righteous one can sing and be glad.

A righteous one can sing and be glad (Prov. 29:6).

Even the wicked hate a man of integrity (v. 10), who expose their unfruitful deeds of darkness (Eph. 5:11)

And commit sin of placing a snare to the righteous (Prov. 29:6),

The righteous sing and is glad even in that tribulation (v. 6).

The reason is because the righteous believe that

God will lead the wicked to fall into his own trap (28:10)

and will deliver the righteous from trouble (12:13).

The Lord who remains and who was sent to this world

The Lord who remains the same and whose years will never end (Heb. 1:11, 12)
Was sent into this world (v. 6) and had to be made like his brothers in every way,
In order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God (2:17).
Although he has been tempted in every way, just as we are – yet without sin (4:15)
In order to make atonement for the sins of the people (2:17)
And to help those who are being tempted because he himself suffered when was tempted (v. 18).

The purpose of existence in this world?

Although I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far,
It is more necessary for me that I remain in the body.
In other words, I exist in this world for the progress and joy in the faith
of my fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.
(Phil. 1:22-25)

The heavenly life in this world

Eternal life that we will fully enjoy in the coming age in heaven
can be partially enjoyed in this world by obeying Jesus' twofold command:
“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind”
and “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Mt. 22:37, 39).
When we love each other with Triune God's love
the Lord's joy will be in us and our joy will be complete (Jn. 15:9-12).
When we shine the love of the Lord, there will be full of joy in our hearts.
This is the heavenly life of the coming age that we are partially enjoying in this world.

We despaired even of life

The reason we hope in the Lord even though we are under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure,

So that we despaired even of life, is because God who raises the dead delivered us from such a deadly peril in the past will deliver us from now on. (2 Cor. 1:8-10)

The reason this disaster has come upon the church, as we now see ...

The reason this disaster has come upon the church is because we have sinned against the Lord
And have not obeyed Him or follow His law or His decrees or His stipulations.

So the Lord could no longer endure our wicked actions and the detestable things we did.

(Jere. 44:22-23)

This short life ...

The Lord God is from everlasting to everlasting.

To the Lord a thousand years in His sight are like a day that has just gone by, or like a watch in the night.

If we have the strength, we may live for 100 years; yet our span is but trouble and sorrow,

For they quickly pass, and we fly away.

In the end of this short life, we will turn back to dust.

So I want to live day by day as I am satisfy with God's unfailing love,

That I may sing for joy and be glad all my days. (Ps. 90).

This corrupt generation

It is truly corrupt generation. We should all join together constantly in prayer for our salvation.
(Acts 1:14, 2:40)

Flee from all this

God's people flee from all this.

We flee from false doctrines that don't agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching.

We flee from an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions and constant friction between men of corrupt mind.

We flee from many foolish and harmful desires,
the love of money and covetousness in dissatisfaction.

(1 Tim. 6:3-11)

Let us live today with this in mind.

Let us live every day with the end of our lives in mind (Eccle. 7:2).

This is the secret of forgiveness.

We can forgive those who have sinned against us

When we accept the work of God who has worked for our good by faith (Rom. 8:28)

Instead of focusing on what they did to us.

If we think only of the wrongs or sins that they have committed to us,
Then we can never forgive those who have sinned against us.
However, if we understand God's providence of working for our own good
In the midst of their wrongs and sins against us,
Then God will enable us to forgive them.
[Joseph (Gen. 50:19-21)]

This is what pleases God.

In pain and distress (Ps. 69:29) our hearts can be broken and be filled with helplessness (v. 20).
At that time, no matter how much we look for,
we may not be able to receive sympathy and comfort from anyone (v. 20).
Even at such time, we must seek God of salvation in faith with courage (v. 32)
And praise God with thanksgiving (vv. 29-30).
This will please the Lord (v. 31).

"But as for me, I will always have hope; I will praise you more and more" (71:14).

They shouldn't do this.

The free men who were obedient to the word of God changed their minds
and are disobedient to His word by taking back the slaves they had freed and have enslaved them again.
They shouldn't do this. (Jere. 34:8-11; Rom. 6:6)

Are you still living by faith in this family?

You own brothers (sisters) hate you and are jealous of you (Gen. 37:8, 11).

They are even plotting you to deceive you (v. 18).

As a result, you are forcibly put into the pit of life (v. 24).

And you are force to be separated from your beloved parents and live far away from them (vv. 3, 28, 36).

So you have to live alone by yourself in a distance with no family (ch. 39).

In the meantime, God was with you and is still with you (vv. 2, 3, 21, 23).

So you are living today with this Immanuel faith (2 Cor. 5:7).

If I have this humility ...

If I have this humility of understanding and acknowledging that

I am less than the least of all God's people,

Then I will preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to others.

(Eph. 3:8)

Are we asking God to answer this prayer before we die?

Unlike Agur who prayed "give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread"

I think we earnestly pray for God to make us rich and not poor.

Is this a very important prayer for us

so that like Agur we are asking God to answer this prayer before we die?

(Prov. 30:7-9)

Give me this faith

Immanuel faith, bold faith, winning faith, constant faith
(As I think about Joshua and Caleb)

I want to have this kind of faith.

Faith that regards disgrace for the sake of Christ as greater value than the reassures of this world ...
(Heb. 11:26)

I want to pursue this kind of character.

I want to pursue character without flaws that defends myself from sin.

(Ps. 18:23, Mark D. Futato in "CORNERSTONE BIBLICAL COMMENTARY")

I want to live this life of faith.

Pass away faith (Life of faith with death perspective)

End faith (Life of faith with perspective of the Lord's return)

Heavenly faith (Life of faith with eternal perspective)

You must make these companions.

Don't make companion with those who speak falsely and who practice deceit.

Make companions with those who are faithful and whose walk is blameless. (Ps. 101:6-7)

The Lord who gives mission to such a person

Jesus took Apostle Peter, who was fisherman, around

and did discipleship training on him for 3 years in order to make him fishers of men (Mt. 4:18).

But Peter said "I'm going out to fish" and went back to his full-time fisherman (Jn. 21:3)

Even though he saw the empty tomb of Jesus who died on the cross and was resurrected (20:6-7)

And witnessed resurrected Jesus who appeared to the disciples twice (vv. 19-29).

To such man Peter Jesus appeared 3 times (v. 14) and asked him "Do you love Me?"

and gave him mission: "Feed my lambs"/"Take care of my sheep" (vv. 15-17).

We must also show grace to these people.

Blessed are those who show kindness to a person who repays good for evil (2 Sam. 2:4-6).

How can we show kindness to him who has done evil to us?

It is possible when we realize the purpose of God's turning evil into good (Gen. 50:20-21).

We should not be such a young widow.

We shouldn't be such a young widow ...

Who feels sensual desires in disregard of Christ, who breaks her first pledge,

who has the habit of being idle, who gossips and says things she ought not to as she goes about from house to house.
She must not give the enemy Satan no opportunity for slander (1 Tim. 5:11-14).

Be aware of this kind of young widow.

Be aware of a young widow who is lustful, lazy, gossips, busybodies and says things she ought not to.
(1 Tim. 5:11-13)

The Lord who calls and molds such a person ...

I praise the Lord who calls a person who is passive, pessimistic, doubtful and fearful
And molds him to be the Lord's servant with bold faith, conviction and active.

(As I think about Gideon in Judge chapters 6 and 7)

Acknowledge such men

We should acknowledge the ones who supply what is lacking on our part rather than expose it
And who refresh our spirit rather than make it heavy. (1 Cor. 16:17-18)

We have no choice but to confess ...

There can be complaint and groaning when God's hand is heavy upon us (Job 23:1-2).
At that time, we should seek God who pays attention to us (v. 6) and present our case before Him

And fill my mouth with arguments (vv. 3-4, 7).
Then we want to learn the words which He will answer (v. 5).
But we cannot hear His answer, nor can we find God (vv. 6, 8-9).
Nevertheless, we believe in God.
God knows all the way we take and walk.
And He will try us and we shall come forth as gold (v. 10).
Therefore, our foot holds fast to His path. We keep His way and not turn aside (v. 11).
And we treasure the words of His mouth and don't depart from the command of His lips (v. 12).
We have no choice but to confess:
"But He is unique and who can turn Him? And what His soul desires, that He does" (v. 13).
Therefore, God will surely perform what is appointed for us (v. 14).

"We know love by this"

We know love by this and eternal life abides in us that Jesus Christ laid down His life for us.
Therefore, we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. (1 Jn. 3:15-16)

"Already" & "Not-yet" freedom from sin

We who believe in Jesus Christ by God's grace are already forgiven all our sins (Ps. 103:2, 3)
and have been freed from sin (Rom. 6:7).

Nevertheless, we are still committing sins against God.
What we do isn't the good we want to do but it is sin living in us that does it (7:19).
We ourselves in our minds are slaves to God's law, but in the sinful nature slaves to the law of sin (v. 25).
We fall into temptation and sin because even though the spirit is willing, but the body is weak (Mt. 26:41).

We have not yet been completely free from sin.

On the day when Jesus comes back to earth,
we will be brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God (Rom. 8:21).
The Lord will make all of us to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle
or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless (Eph. 5:27).
The Lord will sanctify us, having cleansed us by the washing of water with the word (v. 26).

What, then, is our responsibility?

Our responsibility as Christians is to obey the word of the Lord.

Our responsibility is to obey the truth that purifies our souls for a sincere love of the brethren,
Fervently love one another from the heart (1 Pet. 1:22).

Our responsibility is to obey Jesus' twofold command:

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ...
Love your neighbor as yourself” (Mt. 22:37, 39).

Although we cannot afford this responsibility

God is at work in us, both to will and to work out (Phil. 2:13).

God enables us to obey Jesus' twofold command

By bearing the fruit of the Spirit, love (Gal. 5:22-23).

God has already forgiven ...

Although God has already forgiven me who repented my sins and has forgotten my sins
I live without peace in my heart with guilt.

(When I think about Joseph 's brothers in Genesis 50 in Wayne Stiles's "WAITING on GOD")

“though he is dead, he still speaks”

“... “though he is dead, he still speaks” (Heb. 11:4).

The man of faith Abel is already dead, but he is still speaking through faith (v. 4).

Even though he was killed by his older brother Cain (Gen. 4:8)

He offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through

which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous (Heb. 11:4).

Although Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith (12:2) came to His own,

But those who were His own didn’t receive Him (Jn. 1:11)

And killed Him on the cross (Lk. 23:18, 21, 23).

Although Jesus died on the cross, His gospel is still preaching all over the world.

Although my beloved father-in-law is already dead, he still speaks through faith.

It is strange.

It’s strange. Although we always have to say “Yes” to the Lord (1 Cor.1:19), we say “No” many times.

And there are many times when we have to say “No” to our neighbors, we say “Yes”.

It’s strange that we say “No” to the Lord, whom we suppose to say “Yes” always,

and “Yes” to our neighbors whom we suppose to say “No”.

Let us not be surprised.

The Samaritan woman couldn’t understand why Jesus, a Jew, asked her for a drink since Jews didn’t associate with Samaritans (Jn. 4:9).

The disciples of Jesus, who were Jews, were surprised to find Jesus talking with the Samaritan woman with whom Jesus shouldn’t associate (v. 27).

We should have rebuked our neighbor ...

If we don't rebuke our neighbor who is keep on sinning by hating other person in his heart,
Then we are sharing in his guilt. (Lev. 19:17)

Despising and destroying his neighbor ...

A man who lacks judgment despises his neighbor and destroys his neighbor with his mouth.
(Prov. 11:9, 12)

The false pastors who show miraculous sign or wonder?

Satan makes the false pastors to perform miraculous sign and wonder

In order to try to turn us, who don't love God with all our hearts and with all our soul, from the way the
Lord our God commanded us to follow so that eventually we may rebel against Him.

(Cf. Deut. 13:1-5)

“Now, our God, what shall we say after this?”

Now, our God, what shall we say after this?

It is because we have forsaken God's commandments

Even though for a brief moment grace has been shown from the Lord our God

and He has granted us a little reviving. (Ezra 9:8-10)

Although we do not understand the Lord's word ...

Although we don't understand the Lord's word with our heads, we should obey His command by faith.
Then, it will go well with us. (Jere. 40:9)

Things we don't understand

Although I don't understand the things that are happening in my life with my head,
I think it's good thing.
The reason is because it makes me to acknowledge who my God is and trust in Him.
If I understand those things with my understanding,
then I won't trust in God but rely on my own understanding. (Prov. 3:5-6)

God's incomprehensible guidance

The Lord who brings into the net eventually brings us out into a place of abundance.
(Ps. 66:11, 12)

Essential heart for human relationship

In order to have good relationship, we need to have generous heart and heart that loves to give.
(Prov. 19:6)

The fulfillment of God's promises that cannot be prevented by human wisdom

The sons of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly, and multiplied, and became exceedingly mighty (Exod. 1:7).

So a new king of Egypt, who said that the sons of Israel were more and mighty than the Egyptians, wanted to deal wisely with them, “or else they will multiply and in the event of war, they will also join themselves to those who hate us (the Egyptians), and fight against us and depart from the land”(vv. 8-10). So the Egyptians afflicted the Israelites with hard labor (v. 11) and made the two Hebrew midwives to help the Hebrew women to give birth and put all the sons to death (vv. 15-16).

But the more the Egyptians afflicted the Israelites, the more the Israelites multiplied (v. 12).

Can the humans who think they are acting wisely stop God in fulfilling His promise to His people?

Even a man’s vain wisdom ...

What the king of Egypt did in order to deal with the Israelites, who were fruitful, increased greatly, multiplied and became exceedingly mighty, wisely was to make the Israelites’ lives bitter with hard labor (Exod. 1:7, 10-12, 14). But God even used the Egyptian king’s vain wisdom to make the Israelites to cry out to God in their bondage (2:23). So God heard their groaning and remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (v. 24). God saw the Israelites and took notice of them (v. 25).

I hope and pray that those who are in distress and who cry out to the Lord receive their prayers answered and be delivered from their suffering. Even the man’s vain wisdom is in God’s sovereign wisdom.

Life is ...

1. Life is vain because it returns to dust.

Look at Psalms 90:3 – “You turn man back into dust And say, "Return, O children of men.”

2. Life is vain because it’s short.

Look at Psalms 90:4-6: “For a thousand years in Your sight Are like yesterday when it passes by, Or as a watch in the night. You have swept them away like a flood, they fall asleep; In the morning they are like grass which sprouts anew. In the morning it flourishes and sprouts anew; Toward evening it fades and withers away.”

3. Life is vain because its pride is labor and sorrow.

Look at Psalms 90:10 – “As for the days of our life, they contain seventy years, Or if due to strength, eighty years, Yet their pride is but labor and sorrow; For soon it is gone and we fly away.”

A famine of our lives

It's better to lose riches than precious life through a famine of our lives.

We must not lose the life of our beloved one through the famine of our lives in order to preserve our riches.

It seems like we understand God's coming to the aid of us when we lose a precious life of our love one, not when we are in the midst of abundance.

(Ruth 1:1-6)

We must recognize and acknowledge.

We must recognize and acknowledge our sin

When the holy God exposes our hatred that is covers itself deep in our hearts (Prov. 26:26).

May God give us the grace of repentance.

Work or wait?

It is much easier to work for the Lord than to wait for Him.

But the Lord wants us to wait quietly for Him.

“Wait for the LORD; Be strong and let your heart take courage; Yes, wait for the LORD.” (Ps. 27:14)

A restrained life that enjoys “a day’s portion”?

When God heard the Israelites grumbling against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness

He promised to rain bread from heaven for them.

And God told them to go out and to gather a day’s portion every day.

It was His test, whether or not they would walk in His instruction.

How big was the test to gather only the day’s portion every day

among the many many breads from heaven? (Exod. 16:2-5)

God blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ (Eph. 1:3).

If God tests us by commanding us to take only daily blessing that we need out of all the blessings,

Can we live the restrained life of just taking the day’s portion every day?

Let’s say we went shopping with a lot of money and credit cards so we can use as much as we can.

Can we just buy only what we need that day and come out? Haha.

What’s the use when worshipping idols with 1000 women after offering 1000 burnt offerings?

What’s the use of offering 1000 burnt offerings? (1 Kgs. 3:4; 2 Chron. 1:6)

The reason is because when King Solomon, who had 1000 women (700 wives + 300 concubines) was old, his wives turned his heart away after other gods and his heart wasn’t wholly devoted to God

(1 Kgs. 11:3-4).

God said “I cannot endure iniquity” (Isa. 1:13) when his heart was stolen by 1000 women and was turned to other gods in idol worship and committed sin against God

after he offered 1000 burnt offerings.

God also says like this:

“What are your multiplied sacrifices (1000 burnt offerings) to me?” (v. 11),

“I have had enough of burnt offerings” (v. 11),

“Who requires of you this trampling of My courts”? (v. 12),

“Bring your worthless offerings no longer” (v. 13), “Incense is an abomination to Me” (v. 13),

“I hate your” 1000 burnt offerings (v. 14),

“They have become a burden to Me, I am weary of bearing them” (v. 14),

Even if you pray a lot, I will not listen (v. 15).

With the lips but the heart

If we Christians draw near to God and honor Him with just lip service but our hearts are far from Him,

Then the entire vision will be to us like the words of a sealed book

And our reverence for God consists of tradition learned by rote.

(Isa. 29:11-13)

Even if my mother forgets me ...

I praise the Lord because He will never forget me (Isa. 49:15)

Even if my mother forgets me and maybe I forget myself (dementia).

“Since Christ my soul from sin set free, This world has been a Heaven to me;

And 'mid earth's sorrows and its woe, 'Tis heaven my Jesus here to know.

O hallelujah, yes, 'tis heaven 'Tis heaven to know my sins forgiven;

On land or sea, what matters where? Where Jesus is, 'tis Heaven there.”

(Hymn “Since Christ My Soul From Sin Set Free” v. 1 and chorus)

The wise believes in God.

[Short Word Meditation (8)]

James Kim

Self-denial

If we are Christians and if we follow Christ Jesus,
Then we must deny ourselves and take up our own cross. (Mk. 8:34)

Denying Jesus instead of denying myself?

Peter, who set his mind not only God's interests but man's,

Supposed to deny himself, bear his own cross and follow Jesus (Mk. 8:33-34).

When Jesus was caught, Peter followed Him at a distance as far as the courtyard of the high priest, and entered in, and he denied Jesus three times (Mt. 26:47-75).

The disciple who supposed to deny himself and follow Jesus actually denied Jesus.

I look back to see if I am doing it now.

What does it mean to deny myself and take my own cross?

What does it mean "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me"?

To deny self is to set our mind on God's interest and not man's (v. 33).

And I think taking my own cross means losing my life for Jesus' sake and the gospel's (v. 35).

He does not live his soul.

He who is lazy in gaining wisdom without yearning for it is the one who doesn't love his soul.
(Prov. 19:8)

A zeal of those who seek self-righteousness is dangerous.

A zeal in seeking to establish their own righteousness isn't in accordance with knowledge. (Rom. 10:2-3)

He is the one who exalts himself.

He who trusts in himself that he is righteous and views others with contempt is the one who exalts himself.

(Lk. 18:9, 14)

He who is angry because he thinks that he didn't get treated well.

What should we do when someone comes to us and get angry because he thinks that he didn't get treated well? (Judg. 8:1, 3)

In order to subside his resentment against us, maybe we can exalt and acknowledge him in a way that we can't even be compared with him? (vv. 2, 3)

What is self-denial life?

Jesus said, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me" (Mt. 16:24).

What does it mean to deny myself?

Isn't it not to set my mind on man's interests but God's? (v. 23)

Here, the 'man's interests' means, at least to Apostle Peter, Jesus' sufferings and death would never happen to Him (vv. 21, 22).

But the "God's interests" means to "go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders

and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day” (v. 21).

Many times we think about our own interests rather than God’s due to our human emotions and thoughts. This isn’t a life of denying ourselves.

He who has understanding sees through him.

The poor who has understanding and sees through him cannot be wise in his own eyes. (Prov. 28:11)

“Each heart knows its own bitterness”

“Even in laughter the heart may ache” (Prov. 14:13).

Seems to be joyful but there is grief in an anxious heart (v. 13; 12:25).

It’s because there is pain in the heart that only he knows (14:10).

How should we raise our child?

One of the reasons why there is no peace and delight in the parents’ hearts due to their child and the child is disgracing his parents is because the parents may pamper their child, instruct him by words alone and didn’t discipline him in love.

If the parents truly love their child, they should correct him with the rod and reproof. (Prov. 29:15, 17, 19, 21)

The parents who give something unfamiliar to their child?

Although King Saul clothed David with his armor,
David took them off because he wasn't used to them (1 Sam. 17:38-39).

King Saul's son Jonathan also gave his robe along with his tunic to David (18:4).
The reason is because Jonathan loved David as himself (v. 1).

In love, the parents can give something to their child that the child isn't use to it.
That's proof that the parents don't know their child
and they don't love the child in his perspective but their own perspective.

The parents should love their child as Jonathan loved David.

We must show God's great grace to our children.

When King Solomon thought of his father David he knew
that the Lord had given his father "great lovingkindness" (2 Chron. 1:8).
That "great lovingkindness" was the Lord took David from the pasture,
from following the sheep, to be ruler over God's people Israel (2 Sam. 7:8).

I thought about in Solomon's perspective in thinking it was God's great lovingkindness

that He took his father David from the pasture to be ruler over God's people Israel.

In Solomon's perspective, his father David slept with his mother Bathsheba,
made her pregnant and killed her husband Uriah intentionally in order to cover it up
and took her to be David's wife.

In Solomon's perspective, was his father David deserve to be the king over God's people Israel?

How can we as parents show God's great lovingkindness to our children?

I think and believe that instead of trying to show them we are perfect parents,

It's better to humbly acknowledge and confess not only before God but also before our children

How weak, lack and imperfect parents we are as we continue to realize them

in our relationship with God and go to them just as we are.

And I think we shouldn't end there.

We should also confess to our children how we are living by God's great lovingkindness day by day.

The parents who do not forbid their children?

If the parents honor their children above God (1 Sam. 2:29, 30)

They won't rebuke their children who brought a curse on themselves (3:13)

Even though they know that their children have despised the worship of the Lord (2:17).

Ahab who sold himself to do evil in the sight of the Lord

Ahab king of Israel wanted a Naboth's vineyard

even though there was "a better vineyard" than in (1 Kgs. 21:1-2).

Even though he could buy another vineyard with his money,

he only wanted the Naboth's vineyard (v. 2).

And the reason was because the Naboth's vineyard was "in Jezreel beside the palace of Ahab" (v. 2).

It is truly absurd.

Clearly Naboth said to Ahab,

“The LORD forbid me that I should give you the inheritance of my fathers” (v. 3),

Ahab came into his house sullen and vexed, laid down on his bed, turned away his face and ate no food because of the word which Naboth had spoken to him (v. 4).

It is truly absurd.

When his wife Jezebel asked him,

“How is it that your spirit is so sullen that you are not eating food?” (v. 5)

He told her everything (v. 6).

And this is what Jezebel said to her husband Ahab:

“Do you now reign over Israel?” (v. 7)

It is truly absurd.

It’s as if Adam was led by his wife Eve

instead of leading her and ate the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 3:6)

and as if Abram heard what his wife Sarai said and went in to her maid Hagar (16:1-2),

Ahab was led by his wife Jezebel instead of leading her

and eventually made her to get the Naboth’s vineyard (1 Kgs. 21:15).

When Ahab heard from his wife,

“Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth, the Jezreelite,

which he refused to give you for money; for Naboth is not alive, but dead” (vv. 15),

he arose to go down to the vineyard of Naboth to take possession of it (v. 16).

Indeed, there is no countermeasure for him.

Ahab, a man who had no countermeasures,

sold himself to do evil in the sight of the Lord (vv. 20, 25).

“Surely there was no one like Ahab who sold himself

to do evil in the sight of the LORD” (v. 25).

“He acted very abominably in following idols,

according to all that the Amorites had done,

whom the LORD cast out before the sons of Israel” (v. 26).

But when Ahab humbled himself before the Lord after he heard the word of God

through the prophet Elijah, God promised to him,
“I will not bring the evil in his days,
but I will bring the evil upon his house in his son's days” (v. 29).
What is this, if not God’s grace?

“But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain;
but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me.”
(1 Cor. 15:10)

Don't make yourself too tired.

We shouldn’t make ourselves too tired so that our flesh is weak even though our spirit is willing.
If not, then we cannot keep watching and praying so that we may not enter into temptation.
Instead, we will fall asleep and will fall into temptation.
(Cf.: Mt. 26:41; Mk. 14:38)

Blessed are those who realize that they have many sins.

Blessed are those who realize that they have many sins.
That blessing is to love the Lord more and more
By knowing how big, how much, how wide and high high His love for me
and His greater and abundant grace as we realize our sins more and more.
(Rom. 5:20; Lk. 7:47)

Those who have contentment ...

Those who have contentment know that

“we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either.”

So they know that “If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content.”

(1 Tim. 6:6-8)

God who makes it small

When we walk by sight and not by faith (2 Cor. 5:7)

God makes what we see bigger than God small

So that it will never again be our confidence (Ezek. 29:15-16)

But God alone is.

A wrong bad rumor

I should have checked first whether it was true or not.

I shouldn't just talk about a person in speculation

Because it may become a wrong bad rumor in the church community.

If not, then that person's heart may get hurt by me and my word in speculation.

“The words of a whisperer are like dainty morsels,

And they go down into the innermost parts of the body.” (Prov. 26:22)

A wrong person or a happy person?

If you take the wrong advice and walk the wrong way, you have no choice but to be the wrong person.
But if Yahweh is your God and you trust in Him and if you enjoy obeying His instructions,
Then you are a happy person. (Ps. 1:1)

(As I was reading Mark Futato's "The Book of Psalms")

A wrong perspective of blessing

Since we don't enjoy enough every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ (Eph. 1:3)
We love to receive all the material blessings.

A man with an evil eye vs. A man with a good eye

An evil eye refers to the eye of a greedy man (Prov. 28:22, Park Yun-sun).

The eyes of the greedy never look at the poor.

He shuts his eyes to the poor (v. 27).

He doesn't react at all to the poor's needs (v. 27, MacArthur).

Rather, he looks at the richer than he and covets his riches.

But a man with a good eye, a generous man (22:9) is compassionate to the poor (28:27).

He who is gracious to the needy honors Him (14:31).

It is important to sleep well.

It is better to work hard and sleep well than not able to sleep well because of money.
It seems to be more important to sleep well than whether to have a lot of food or of money.
(Eccle. 5:12)

“Do not be silent, O God”

When the Lord’s enemies make an uproar, make shrewd plans against God’s people
and conspire together against His treasured ones,
“O God, do not remain quiet; Do not be silent and, O God, do not be still.”
(Ps. 83:1-5)

My soul finds rest in God alone.

Satan and his worldly crowd, who intend to topple us, the Christians, assault us, throw us down
And take delight in lies, bless with their mouths but in their hearts they curse (Ps. 62:3-4).
In this situation, we must trust in God (v. 8).
Never should we set our hearts on our riches even when our riches increase (v. 10).
And we should pour out our hearts to Him for God is our refuge (v. 8).
Therefore, our soul must find rest in God alone (vv. 1, 5).
The reason is our God alone is “my salvation” and “my hope” (vv. 1, 5).

We must be mature.

We must go beyond the level of an infant
who are only learning elementary principles for the oracle of God and need milk and not solid food.
We must be mature
who can eat solid food so that we can distinguish good from evil
by constant use of their trained sense. (Heb. 5:12-14)

It is better to lose wealth.

It is better to lose wealth than to lose health (Eccle. 5:13, 14).

The end of rich

Those who are rich, the end of rich will come (Jere. 51:13).

Even God makes riches to disappear ...

God makes riches to disappear in order to deliver us from the worries of the world, the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things that choke the word (Mk. 4:19) and save us by enabling us to hear the word of the Lord Jesus Christ and by believing in Jesus (Lk. 16:9).

When we are afraid of disaster ...

When we are afraid of disaster, we must realize that
We aren't turning from neglecting all God's counsel, not wanting His reproof,
loving our simple ways, delighting in mockery and hating knowledge.
(Prov. 1:22-26)

God who turns curse into blessing

Levi was cursed.

Before his father Jacob died, this is what he said to Levi and his brother Simeon:
"Their swords are implements of violence. ... Because in their anger they slew men,
And in their self-will they lamed oxen. Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce;
And their wrath, for it is cruel. ..." (Gen. 49:5-7).

The reason why Levi and Simeon were cursed is
because when their sister Dinah was violated by Shechem son of Hamor the Hivite (34:2),

Levi and Simeon deceived Hamor and Shechem (v. 13) and made them and all the rest of their men to circumcise (v. 24) and then three days later while all of them were still in pain, Levi and Simeon took their swords and killed every male, including Hamor and his son Shechem (vv. 25-26).

However, the descendants of Levi, were later blessed by God (Exod. 32:29). They were dedicated to God and became priests who kept God's holiness. After they killed about 3,000 men, who quickly turned aside from the way which God commanded the Israelites, had made for themselves a molten calf and had worshiped it and had sacrificed to it, as Moses instructed (vv. 8, 26-28).

Isn't it amazing? Our God is God who turns curse into blessing.
All of us were cursed. But God turned that curse into eternal blessing to us.
God gave us the source of blessing, Jesus.
Therefore, the Bible says, "Blessed are you" (Deut. 33:29).

(As I was reading Tremper Longman III's "IMMANUEL IN OUR PLACE")

The couple should enjoy sexual satisfaction.

The couple must fulfill each other's sexual obligations and enjoy sexual satisfaction together.
(1 Cor. 7:2-5)

"as he had been doing previously"

Like Daniel, I want to continue praying and giving thanks to God,
as I have been doing previously even when I'm on the crossroad of life and death. (Dan. 6:10)

Even in despair

Even in despair, I dedicate and determine to praise God more and more as I always have hope. (Ps. 71:14)

If you don't have self-control, you should marry.

You must marry in order to avoid immoralities (1 Cor. 7:1-2).

The couple's duty is to give each other sexual satisfaction (v. 3).

In order to do so, the couple shouldn't deprive each other (v. 5).

If not, then you will fall into Satan's temptation because of your lack of self-control (v. 5).

Therefore, if you don't have self-control, you should marry.

It is better to marry than to burn with passion (v. 9).

Our lives are just a point ...

If we look at our lives, even we live 100 years on this earth, from eternal perspective,

It is just a point. But in such a short life, why do we live in so much anxieties, worries, fears and pursue what is precious to us that will be consumed as a moth. (Ps. 39:11)

Leaders who prefer bribes than justice?

Isn't it tearing down the country when its' leaders are greedy for bribes rather than giving stability to the country by justice? (Prov. 29:4)

An unfaithful church

Now we are unfaithful to the Lord and we are giving birth to illegitimate children (Hos. 5:7).

Now the church, the bride, is unfaithful to the Lord, the Bridegroom, and illegitimate children kind of church members are increasing.

Now instead of having the affection of Jesus Christ (Phil. 1:8), we have "a spirit of prostitution" (Hos. 5:4).

As a result, our deeds don't permit us to return to our God (v. 4).

Furthermore, because of the spirit of prostitution in our hearts, our hearts became arrogant (v. 5).

In the midst of that, we go to the church every Sunday with our “flocks and herds”
to offer them to the Lord and worship Him (v. 6)
even though the Lord takes no pleasure in our “multiplied sacrifice” (Isa. 1:11).
We are just going to appear before Him (v. 12).
We are just trampling of His church (v. 12).
We are bringing “worthless offerings” to Him (v. 13).
The Lord is saying to us, “I cannot endure” any longer (v. 13).
All of them have become a burden to Him and He says, “I am weary of bearing them” (v. 14).
We seek God in this way, but aren’t finding Him (Hos. 5:6).
Now we are not experiencing God's presence and love in worship.
As a result, God will chastise all of us (v. 2).
Nevertheless, the amazing grace of God’s salvation is
when we suffer because of His chastisement,
God makes us to seek His face (v. 15).
And the Lord is sanctifying the church, having cleansed us
by the washing of water with the word,
That He might present to Himself the church in all her glory,
having no spot or wrinkle or any such things;
But that we would be holy and blameless (Eph. 5:26-27).
Therefore, the Lord, the Bridegroom, eventually prepares the church, the bride,
So that we may participate in “the wedding supper of the Lamb” (Rev. 19:9).
Therefore, we must return to the Lord (Hos. 6:1).
“For He has torn us, but He will heal us; He has wounded us, but He will bandage us” (v. 1).

We should not throw the stone of "condemnation".

We shouldn’t hit ourselves with the stone of “condemnation”.
The reason is because not even Jesus condemns (Jn. 8:3-11).
When we know this truth, the truth will make us free (v. 32).
Since the Son of God Jesus Christ died on the cross, resurrected in 3 days, and gave us freedom,
We are free indeed (v. 36).

The upright

The integrity of the upright guides them and the righteousness of the upright will smooth their way.
(Prov. 11:3, 6)

"a land which flows with milk and honey"?

"a land which flows with milk and honey" refers to the land of Canaan which God promised to give to the Israelites (Num. 14:8).

But Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab (16:1), who rose up against Moses (v. 2) said The land of Egypt was "a land flowing with milk and honey" (v. 13).

Aren't we now rejecting the true God's promised land, heaven (14:31)

And considering this world as "a land flowing with milk and honey"?

Five powers that I am asking the Lord

Everyone, aren't there times when you're tired and exhausted? What should we do then?

I pray to God for power. In particular, I have five powers that I personally seek from the Lord.

It is 'the power of grace', 'the power of love', 'the power of the word', 'the power of the prayer', and the 'power of the Holy Spirit'.

The reason I seek these five powers is because I feel that I really need them.

For example, the reason I seek the power of God's grace is because I believe that

If I keep on understand that 'I am what I am because of God's grace'

Then I will be able to labor even more for the Lord's work (1 Cor. 15:10).

Also, the reason I seek the power of love from the Lord is because I realize more and more deeply and a lot that I cannot even love my wife with my own strength. I believe that I can love my wife only with the power of love from the Lord. I believe that when I become more aware of the Lord's love for such sinner like me more deeply, broadly, widely and highly (Eph. 3:19) and become the garden of love (Jere. 31:12), then I will be able to love the Lord with all my heart, all my soul and all my mind and love my neighbor as myself (Mt. 22:37-39).

But the problem is when I ask the Lord for these 5 powers, Satan is constantly tempting me to live contrary to these 5 powers. For example, Satan is keep on trying to plant the merit consciousness than grace consciousness When I keep on seeking the power of grace from the Lord. So after I did all the things that the Lord commanded me to do, Even though I supposed to say, 'I am unworthy slave; I have done only that which I ought to have done' (Lk. 17:10), Satan tempts me to be like Diotrephes who loves to be first among the church members (3 Jn. 1:9). In the end, Satan wants to put in my mind that 'I am what I am because of my own power' Instead of 'I am what I am because of God's grace' (1 Cor. 15:10). Perhaps in the case of Christians in business men and women, Satan is tempting them to say in their hearts, "My power and the strength of my hand made me this wealth", even though it is the Lord who is giving them power to make wealth (Deut. 8:17-18). Satan also put hate in my heart and tries to make me to hate even my wife When I seek the power of the Lord. Although the Bible clearly says that "Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer" (1 Jn. 3:15), Satan not only tries to prevent me from loving my wife but also he makes me to hate her constantly in my life. Beside these, when I ask the Lord for the power of the Word, Satan tempts me not to open the Bible and to keep me far away from the Word of God. Therefore, Satan prevents me from learning to fear God So that I may not carefully observe all the words of God And makes my heart to be lifted up above my brothers and sisters in Christ (Deut. 17:19-20). Not only that, Satan tempts me to add or subtract from the truth When I keep on trying to draw closer to the word of God. So is prayer. Satan not only prevents me from continuing to pray

so that I cannot gain the power of prayer, but also seems to make me sleepy when I try to pray. Although Jesus said, “Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation” (Mt. 26:41), Satan’s purpose is to make me to fall into temptation so he keeps on making to fall sleep. In addition, Satan keeps on stirring me up and tries to make me to solve a problem with my own strength, power and experience when I try to do so with my knee bend down before the Lord and pray. When I seek the power of the Holy Spirit, Satan is encouraging me to live with the power of sinful flesh. In other words, Satan is keep trying to make me to be led by the flesh which sets its desire against the Spirit and to do the deeds of the flesh (Gal. 5:16-21). In this way, Satan works diligently in my life as opposed to the five powers I am asking the Lord. Furthermore, Satan is constantly trying to keep me away from the Lord, who is the source of all these powers. Satan is keep on attacking my faith towards the Lord and is trying to throw the questions in the realm of my thoughts, and in the end make me to doubt in my heart. Also, Satan keeps turning my gaze from fixing my eyes on Jesus, the perfecter of my faith (Heb. 12:2) to the circumstance such as “the wind” (Mt. 14:30) in order to make me to driven by fearful situation instead of by faith in the Lord.

What should I do to avoid falling into Satan’s temptations?

If God takes away the grace of holding back ...

What we need to fear is that God taking back the grace of holding back. It is because if God takes back the grace of holding back, Then He will give us over in the lusts of our hearts to impurity, over to degrading passions, and over to a depraved mind. (Rom. 1:24, 26, 28)

The hardest time is the best opportunity to cry out to God.

When there is complaint and trouble in my life and thus when my spirit grows faint within me,
The hardest thing is that no one helps, protects and cares for me.
But this hardest time is the best opportunity to cry out to God. (Ps. 142:1-4)

So that we may not lack anything

In order to be mature and complete, not lacking anything, perseverance must finish its work.
In order for our perseverance to finish its work, we must consider it pure joy
whenever we face trials of many kinds. How is this possible?
This is possible when we know that the testing of our faith develops perseverance. (Jam. 1:2-4)

We shouldn't tolerate anything!

We shouldn't tolerate anything! (Ezek. 14:3)
False prophets/false pastors, false prophecy/false fortune/false gospel (13:1-9), temptations (v. 10),
Lies (v. 22), idols (14:3), wicked stumbling blocks (v. 3).

Not haste but pant!

Let's not be haste (Prov.29:20) but pant (Ps. 42:1).

Watch out for false pastors!

Watch out for false pastors who come to us in sheep's clothing,
But inwardly they are ferocious wolves. (Cf. Mt. 7:15)

Opportunity to enjoy sufficient grace?

If we can fully enjoy the Lords' sufficient grace even in pain, such as "a thorn in my flesh" ...
(2 Cor. 12:7, 9)

The words of a leader who is not respected ...

The words of a leader whom we don't respect are hard to hear.
But the words of a leader whom we respect can be persuasive. (Acts 5:34-40)

Those whom we should honor

Honor men like Epaphroditus who almost died for the work of Christ,
Risking his life ... (Phil. 2:25-30)

They should be confined.

The children who have bad habits by nature should be warned and confined.
(Cf. Exod. 21:29, 36)

We need to be weakened?

If the blessings from the Lord are too great, it is easy for us to be too proud.

So what we need is our own ‘thorn in the flesh.’

We need to be weakened by that ‘thorn in the flesh.’ (2 Cor. 12:7, 9)

The narrow gate, the highways to Zion!

Although the Jesus’ followers deny themselves, bear their own cross (Mt. 16:24; Mk. 8:34; Lk. 9:23)

And enter through the narrow gate (Mk. 7:13) and walk the narrow path,

There are the highways to Zion in their hearts (Ps. 84:5).

All day long ... trust

I will put my trust in God when people press their attack all day long,

my slanderers pursue me all day long and they twist my words all day long.

Therefore, I will not be afraid and my feet will not stumble.

Rather, I will praise God’s word.

(Cf. Ps. 56).

They will not see when prosperity comes.

Those who trust in mankind and make flesh their strength, and whose hearts are turn away from the Lord

Will not see when prosperity comes. (Jere. 17:5, 6)

“Because of the multitude of her transgressions”

Our enemies prosper and we are in grief Because of the multitude of our transgressions. (Lam. 1:5)

Sin shall not be master over us.

Sin shall not be master over us.

The reason is because we aren't under law but under grace (Rom. 6:14). What is grace?

Grace is having been freed from sin we became slaves of righteousness, enslaved to God (vv. 18, 22).

We who were bearing the fruit of death is now reaping the fruit of holiness

And the end is the gift of God that is eternal life (vv. 22, 23).

What is sin?

1. Sin is lawlessness (1 Jn. 3:4).
2. Sin is not believing in Jesus (Unbelief) (Jn. 16:9).
3. Sin is not doing the right thing even knowing it (Jam. 4:17).
4. Sin is doing things not from faith (Rom. 14:23).

We should not take sins lightly ...

Although those who despise God mock at sin (Prov. 14:2, 9)

Those who fear God take their sins seriously.

We are considering our sins lightly.

We who don't return to the Lord with all our hearts but falsely

Are considering our spiritual prostitutes of loving and relying on things more than God lightly
and rebelling against God. (Jere. 3:6-10)

We must repent and return to God.

Now since we the church are sinning against God, God is hiding His face from us.
And since God gave us over to our enemies' hands, now the church is rapidly becoming secular.
To this church, God made the promise of restoration.
God says 'Now I will restore the church that was captivated by this world
And will have compassion on all of us.' He will be zealous for His holy name.
God promises to give us the restoring love.
Therefore, we the church must repent our sins and defilement.
We must return to God as we are ashamed of our sins and repent them before God. (Ezek. 39:23-26)

You will not master your desire to sin.

If you already became very angry and your face is downcast,
Then you will not master your desire to sin. (Gen. 4:5-7)

“so that they do not incur guilt and die”

God told Moses specifically about the priest's garments so that Aaron and his sons in priesthood wouldn't incur guilt and die (Exod. 28:31-43).
However, God told us through His people from the Old Testament (Gen. 3:15; Isa. 53; Ps. 22) that
The sinless High Priest Jesus Christ (Heb. 3:1; 2 Cor. 5:21) would bore our sins in His body on the cross,
So that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. (1 Pet. 2:24)

Sinful thanksgiving prayer

Just as only one Samaritan among ten leprous men who were cleansed came back to Jesus,
fell on his face at His feet, and gave thanks to Him (Lk. 17:16),
it seems like only one Christian out of ten is living a life of thanking God.
Although it's God's will for us to give thanks in in everything (1 Thess. 5:18),
It seems like we aren't living according to His will.
Why are there so many complaints and criticisms?

Why are the voices of worries and anxieties so loud?

It seems like in our hearts there is lack of thanksgiving for forgiveness of our sins and salvation through the death of Jesus Christ on the cross and every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ (Eph. 1:3)

Shouldn't we offer the prayer of thanksgiving to God?

But instead of giving thanks to Him like the Samaritan whose lepers got healed,

Maybe we are now like the Pharisee who prayed this to himself,

“God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector” (Lk. 18:11).

Maybe we are trying to show off that we are better than other people

When we see ourselves criticizing and condemning others countless times through our words and writings.

Then, like the Pharisees, aren't we trusting in ourselves that we are righteous, and viewing others with contempt? (v. 9)

And without knowing this, aren't we going up to the church every Sunday and offering thanksgiving prayer to God?

I wonder how God sees the Pharisees' prayer of thanksgiving.

Maybe in holy God's perspective, our prayer of thanksgiving is sinful thanksgiving prayer?

Finds out our iniquity ...

If God finds out our iniquity ... (Gen. 44:16)

Stumble into sin

God's material blessing that supposes to be the stepping stone of righteousness

Are making us stumble into sin. (Ezek. 7:19)

A man addicted to sin

A man addicted to sin, who can't control what his sinful thoughts are in his head,

Has no choice but to bear the bitter fruit of his sinful deeds.

"Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." (Gen. 6:5)

The soul which the problem of sin is not solved ...

The soul which the problem of sin isn't solved always feel in want.

Not only the Lord's hand is heavy upon the soul, the soul isn't free because it is bound by sin.

An unrepentant heart cannot be satisfied. (Cf. Ps. 23:1; 32:3-4)

“Because the sentence against an evil deed is not executed quickly”

The reason I am bold in sinning is because the sentence against an evil deed isn't executed quickly.

(Eccle. 8:11)

The evil slave in the eyes of the Lord ...

It may not seem to us, but in the eyes of the Lord, the evil slave is ... (Mt. 24:48-49)

1. He is thinking wrong.

The wrong thinking is that the Lord isn't coming for a long time (v. 48).

If we think that the Lord's return is slow now (or even without expecting the Lord's return),

Then we are “evil slave” in the eyes of the Lord.

2. He is doing wrong things.

The wrong thinking lead to the wrong action.

That wrong action is to beat his fellow slaves and eat and drink with drunkards (v. 49).

If we are like the people in Noah's time who were eating, drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the flood came and took them all away (vv. 37-39),

Then we are "evil slave" in the eyes of the Lord.

3. He is hypocrite (v. 51).

He doesn't analyze this present time (Lk. 12:56).

He honors God with his lips, but his heart is far away from Him (Mk. 7:6).

He cannot see the log in his eyes but sees the speck of his brother's eye (Mt. 7:5).

He is clean outside but inside he is full of robbery and self-indulgence (23:25).

He is like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside he is full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness (23:27).

He wants to be honored by men (6:2).

He lives his religious life to be seen by people (v. 5).

He is devoted to offerings and tithes, but neglects justice and mercy and faithfulness (23:23).

The Lord is telling us to be "the faithful and sensible slave" (24:45).

1. We must prepare for Jesus' second coming like the five prudent virgins (25:4, 8, 9, 13).

We must say "Amen Come, Lord Jesus" when Jesus says to us "Yes, I am coming quickly" (Rev. 22:20).

2. We must take the talents that the Lord gave us and go at once and put our money to work and bear fruit (Mt. 25:16, 17).

3. We must be faithful (Rev. 17:14).

We must have sincere mind (2 Pet. 3:1) and truthful lips (Prov. 12:19).

We must be faithful stewards (Lk. 12:42).

We must be faithful ministers (Eph. 6:21).

We must be truthful witnesses (Prov. 14:25).

We must call upon God in truth (Ps. 145:18).

When we all stand before the Lord, we will settle accounts (Mt. 18:23, 24, 25:19).

When He settles accounts, the Lord will say one of two things to us (25:14-30):

“Well done, good and faithful servant” (vv. 21, 23) or “You wicked, lay servant!” (v. 26).

We should be weak in the Lord?

Since Christ was crucified because of weakness, we must be weak in the Lord.

And we must be well content and boast about our weaknesses for Christ’s sake.

(2 Cor. 12:5, 9-10, 13:4)

He who is great in the sight of the Lord

He who is great in the sight of the Lord is filled with the Holy Spirit

and is bringing many people back to the Lord their God. (Lk. 1:15-16)

Lord, how have you loved us?

Although Father God loved us even to the point of giving His begotten Son Jesus Christ on the cross,

We are asking Him, “How have You loved us?” (Mal. 1:2)

The reason for asking this is because we do not know and know the breadth, length, height, and depth of the love of the Father God (Eph. 3:18).

As a result, we aren’t honoring our Father God (Mal. 1:6).

Rather, we are despising His name (in God’s perspective).

But we say to God, “How have we despised Your name?” (v. 6) (in our perspective)

Even though we are presenting “the blind for sacrifice” which is “evil” (v. 8)

And defiled food upon God’s altar, we say, “How have we defiled You?” (v. 7)

Also, even though we have wearied the Lord with our words,

We say, “How have we wearied Him?” (2:17)

Even though our words have been arrogant against the Lord,

We say, “What have we spoken against You?” (3:13)

What are our arrogant words?

“It is vain to serve God” (v. 14),

“what profit is it that we have kept His charge,

and that we have walked in mourning before the Lord of hosts?” (v. 14),

“So now we call the arrogant blessed; not only are the doers of wickedness built up
but the also test God and escape” (v. 15).

We must fear God and we must repent, forsake and be far away from all these evils.

We must return to the Lord and must distinguish between the righteous and the wicked,

Between one who serves God and one who doesn’t serve Him (v. 18).

We must esteem His name (v. 16).

God makes us His own possession and spares us (v. 17).

Lord, may You build Your church like this.

It’s my prayer that the Lord, the Bridegroom, build His church, the bride, like a noble woman
(Prov. 31:10). The church that fears God (v. 30), does good (v. 12), faithful (v. 12).

In Jesus’ Name I pray. Amen.

Rather than desperately wanting to be used by the Lord ...

Rather than desperately wanting to be used by the Lord

I want to be satisfied with the fact that I am in the hands of the Lord. (Jn. 6:11)

Leave life to the Lord?

Jacob: "As for me, if I am bereaved, I am bereaved." (Gen. 43:14)

Esther: "And if I perish, I perish" (Esth. 4:16)

You seem to obey the Lord, but you love money?

"Balaam the son of Beor" (Num. 22:5),

He seems to obey God's word (vv. 12-13, 18, 34, 20-21, 38; 23:12, 26; 24:12-13).

When Balak, king of Moab, said, "I will indeed honor you richly,

and I will do whatever you say to me" (22:17; 24:11),

Balaam said, "Though Balak were to give me his house full of silver and gold,

I could not do anything, either small or great,

contrary to the command of the Lord my God” (22:18; 24:13).

Although Balak mentioned about honoring him, Balaam talked about silver and gold.

Why did Balaam answer so wrong?

It is because Balaam loved the wages of unrighteousness (2 Pet. 2:15).

Although his lips seemed to obey God’s word, his heart loved money (Mt. 6:24; 2 Tim. 6:9-10).

We must bow down and serve the Lord only.

King Nebuchadnezzar, who fell on his face and did homage to Daniel (Dan. 2:46)

made an image of gold (3:1) and made everybody to fall down and worship the golden image (v. 5).

He threatened that “whoever does not fall down and worship

shall immediately be cast into the midst of a furnace of blazing fire” (v. 6).

At that time, everyone bowed down to the golden image (v. 7)

But Daniel and his three friends not only didn’t bow down and worship the golden image

but also they didn’t serve the Nebuchadnezzar’s gods (vv. 12, 18).

As a result, they were thrown into the furnace of blazing fire (vv. 19-23), but God saved them (v. 28).

And this is what King Nebuchadnezzar said about its reason:

It was because they “put their trust in Him, violating the king's command,

and yielded up their bodies so as not to serve or worship any god except their own God” (v. 28).

The Lord is the only One whom we should bow down and worship and serve.

When the Lord makes me to meet

When the Lord makes us to meet each other in prayer, we must meet without any doubt.

The reason is because the Lord will use you who pray to save the soul of that person whom you meet.

(Acts 10:20-48; 11:12-17)

Faith the Lord praises

Faith the Lord praises (Mt. 7:10; Lk. 7:9) is to know that the word of the Lord is enough (Mt. 8:8 - "just say the word"; Lk. 7:7 - "just say the word").

The Lord is good and does good.

"You are good and do good ..." (Ps. 119:68).

God is good. So He does good to us.

When we are afflicted, God does good to us (vv. 67, 71).

What is God's good will that allows us to suffer?

It is to teach us His commands (v. 71).

It is for us to learn obedience (Heb. 5:8).

It is to teach us good discernment (Ps. 119:6).

It is for us to understand that God has dealt well with us according to His word (v. 65).

The Lord knows that we are praying.

The Lord not only knows that we are praying but also He is doing His work (answering our prayer) while we are praying to Him (Cf. Acts 9:11 and context).

The Lord never wastes our meeting.

We should yearn for the meeting God gives us rather than the one we want.

The reason is because there is clear will of God that is good, perfect and pleasing (Rom. 12:2)

When He gives us the meeting or allows us to have one even though it looks coincidence (even though it may look like it to us)

All those meetings are for us (1 Sam. 22:3).

Maybe God's will is ...

For me to be like David who was running away from King Saul
So that we can meet “Everyone who was in distress, and everyone who was in debt,
and everyone who was discontented” (1 Sam. 22:2)
and that we can sympathize with their weaknesses (Heb. 4:15),

For me to realize that the only true comforter is God the Holy Spirit (Jn. 14:16)
By make me to understand that those who come to comfort me in suffering like Job’s friends,
Who were just sorry comforters (Job 16:2),

For me to be like Hannah, who pour out her soul before the Lord (1 Sam. 1:15),
Because she was provoked bitterly by Elkanah’s another wife Peninnah, who irritate Hannah (vv. 6-7),
because Elkanah loved Hannah in double portions (v. 5)
So Hannah wept and wouldn’t eat (v. 7) because
she was greatly distressed, prayed to the Lord and wept bitterly (v. 10).
But priest Eli thought that she was drunk and might consider her “a worthless woman” (vv. 14-16)
Even though she was pouring out her soul before the Lord (v. 15).
Maybe God wants me to pour out my soul before the Lord
through suffering and misery and pains by God’s given or allow meetings with family and pastor,

For me to be like Gideon, who bowed in worship with assurance of victory
After he heard the account of the dream and its interpretation from the enemies (Judg. 7:9-15)
Maybe God’s will is for me to bow down and worship God
By God’s given assurance of salvation and of victory even through meeting with me enemies,

For me to be like disobedient Jonah who was reminded the Lord’s command (Jon. 1:6)
even through non-believers
So that I may make the decision of repentance (v. 12) after being rebuked (vv. 7-10),

For me to be like Naomi, who experienced the bitterness of life (Ruth 1:20)
But eventually experienced great joy through her daughter-in-law Ruth (4:13-17),
So that the Lord may turn my bitterness into great joy through my family member,

For me to be like Joseph, who was loved by his father Jacob but hated by his older brothers (Gen. 37:4)
Ans was almost killed by them (v. 20) but eventually was taken to Egypt and became a Potiphar’s slave
(39:1),

Was falsely accused by the Phtiphar's wife and even got imprisoned (vv. 14-21),
Met the cupbearer of King Pharaoh and interpreted his dream (ch. 40)
And eventually interpreted King Pharaoh's dream and became in charge of whole Egypt (ch. 41),
And saved his whole family (45:5),
So that the Lord may work together even such meetings like the Joseph's brothers and the Photiphar's wife in order for me to forgive them and take care of them (50:21), etc.

As I meditate the Word of God, I believe that
God will never waste the meetings that He gives or allows in His sovereignty
But accomplish His good, perfect and pleasing will toward us.

The Christians who make God angry ...

The Christians who make God angry ...
Harden their hearts, Test and try God, are a people whose hearts go astray,
Have not known God's ways.
(Ps. 95)

Let us look to the Lord.

Let's not look at the difficult situation. Let us not look at ourselves.
Let's lift up our eyes and look to the Lord (Ps. 123:1).
Our hope and salvation is only the Lord.

Need to serve the Lord ...

God delivered the Israelites, who were serving the Egyptians, out of Egypt through Moses
In order to make them to serve God (Exod. 3:1, 9-10, 12).

The Israelites who were delivered and were in front of the Red Sea
Became very frightened when they saw the Egyptians were marching after them
And complained to Moses, “For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians
than to die in the wilderness” (14:10-12).

The purpose that God saved us and gave us a new life is to serve God.
But what if we say that we want to go back to our old life and serve the world
and be a slave to sin again because of our fear of death?

In serving the Lord,
We shouldn't be afraid of our physical death
As those who already have the new life in Jesus Christ.

What does it mean ‘to know’ God?

I think ‘to know’ Father God means ‘to obey’ the words of Jesus, the Son of God,
And ‘to bear’ the fruit of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God.

The difference between those who don't follow the Lord fully and those who follow Him fully?

Those who don't follow the Lord fully (Num. 32:11):

Unbelief → Dissatisfaction → Complaint → Disobedience → Unrighteousness

Those who follow the Lord fully (v. 12):

Faith → Contentment → Thanksgiving → Obedience → Righteousness.

Let us trust in the Lord.

,

I am realizing that as time goes by, I can only trust in the Lord

" Trust in the LORD with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding" (Prov. 3:5),

" "Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD And whose trust is the LORD" (Jere. 17:7).

Those who knew the miracle of the Lord first

At a wedding in Cana of Galilee,

The servants filled the water pots with water and drew some out
and took it to the headwaiter as Jesus said.

When they did so, they knew that Jesus turned water into wine

Even though the headwaiter and Jesus' disciples didn't know.

The servants witnessed the glory of Jesus first (Jn. 2:1-11).

As the Lord's servant,
When we obey the Lord's word,
Then we will witness the glory of the Lord first.

I am precious in God's sight.

No matter how I see myself and how others see me,
I am precious in God's sight. (Isa. 43:4)

The prayer that is pleasing in the sight of the Lord.

The prayer that is pleasing in the sight of the Lord is
Seeking an understanding heart to judge God's people to discern between good and evil,
Without seeking for ourselves long life, riches, the life of our enemies. (1 Kgs. 3:7-11)

The prayer who is pleasing in the sight of the Lord is humble.

Through a person after God's heart ...

May the Lord fulfill all His will through a person after His heart. (Acts 13:22)

A pastor who doesn't have God's heart

Can I say I am a Lord's servant, a pastor, who has God's heart
If I am extremely happy when God delivers me from my discomfort
But am greatly displeased and become angry when a dying soul repents and returns to the Lord?
(Jonah 4:1, 6; Jn. 10:11, 15)

A pastor who has no heart of the Lord?

What if a pastor who is called by the Lord and follows the Lord's command with a sense of mission
Doesn't see the affliction of God's people which God sees,
Cannot hear their cry which God hears,
And doesn't aware of their sufferings that God is aware of ... (Exod. 3:7, 9)

Response to the Lord's call

Moses: "Please, Lord, now send the message by whomever You will" (Exod. 4:13)
Isaiah: "Here am I. Send me!" (Isa. 6:8)

The promise of the Lord is ...

The promise of the Lord is my hope, my comfort in my affliction and has revived me.
(Ps. 119:49, 50)

According to the Lord's lovingkindness and compassion ...

Forgiving, covering, erasing and not remembering the sins fo those who sin against us
Is showing grace to the person according to the Lord's lovingkindness and compassion.
(Ps. 51:1)

The Lord's lovingkindness and compassion ...

First, the Lord speaks to us through the Scripture and comforts us
By enabling us to experience the Lord's lovingkindness according to that word (Ps. 119:76).

The Lord spoke to me through Psalms 63:3 in the morning
when my wife and I let our first baby Charis go
And comforted us by enabling us to experience marvelous and wonderful our Savior's love for us
(119:76).

And because His compassion came to me, I was able to live (v. 77).

We are comforted by the lovingkindness of the Lord.

Since our affliction that the Lord gives us through His righteous judgments is from His faithfulness,
We can be comforted by His lovingkindness even in that judgmental suffering
And we can live because of His compassion to us. (Ps. 119:74-77)

The Lord's servant ...

The Lord's servant does all things according to the word of the Lord. (1 Kgs. 18:36)

Even through the Lord's discipline ...

Blessed is the man whom God chasten and whom God teach out of His law (Ps. 94:12).

When we receive His law, we must repent and be free from sin so that we may receive relief (v. 13).

Also, when our anxious thoughts multiply within us, we must be held by God's lovingkindness

So that our souls may be delighted through His consolations (vv. 18-19).

The Lord's watchman?

The Lord's watchman's responsibility is to hear the words of God

and to give God's people warning from God (Ezek. 33:7).

Is there the Lord's watchman around me now?

If so, am I hearing the Lord's warning through the Lord's watchman now?

Could the Lord have called me as a watchman?

What the Lord requires from us, what we ask from Him

There is clearly what the Lord requires from us (Deut. 10:12; Micah 6:8).

But instead of that, we are looking more for what we ask of the Lord.

Because we don't understand what the Lord wants ...

We who say 'conservative' and cry out for 'reform'
Are condemning the innocent like the Pharisees.
The reason is even though we emphasize worship ("sacrifice")
We don't have compassion that the Lord desires. (Mt. 12:7)

Getting attention

When we get attention from many people,
And thus we are being loved by them and are receiving praises from them,
Any single person or a small group of people may keep a jealous eye on us. (1 Sam. 18:6-9)

Prayer topics before dying?

What are your prayer topics that you eagerly asking God before you die? (Prov. 30:7)

You will die.

You will die if you have been greedy. (Num. 11:34)

Even if I return to my dust ...

If the Lord takes away my spirit, I will expire and will return to my dust (Ps. 104:29).

But I will sing to the Lord as long as I live and I will sing praise to my God while I have my being (v. 33)

Because the glory of the Lord endures forever (v. 31).

I shall be glad in the Lord because my meditation will be pleasing to Him (v. 34).

Dead faith, false faith?

When Prophet Elijah said to all the sons of Israel who gathered at Mount Carmel,

“How long will you hesitate between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him”,

The people didn’t answer him a word.

Interestingly, when the prophets of Baal called on the name of Baal from morning until noon,

There was no voice and no one answered (1 Kgs. 18:20-26).

It is interesting that both the Israelites and Baal were silent.

I think the silent Israelites resembled the silent Baal.

I think the Israelites had dead faith and false faith that resembled the dead and false god (idol).

“We will all be dead”, “to die”, “dead”

When the 10th plague came, the Egyptians said, “We will all be dead” (Exod. 12:33).

When the Israelites saw that the Egyptians were marching after them, they said,

“For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness” (14:12).

Nevertheless, God saved the Israelites from the hands of the Egyptians,
and the Israelites saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore” (v. 30).

Even to the point of dying ...

The Lord’s servant who follows the Lord and His will preaches the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ
Even to the point of dying. (Cf. Act 21:13)

“the pursuit of death”

The acquisition of treasures by a lying tongue is the pursuit of death. (Prov. 21:6)

The Son of God who achieved great salvation through the suffering of death

The Son of God “is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature” (Heb. 1:3).
He is “the author of their salvation” (2:1) who fulfills a great salvation (v. 3),

That is “purification of sins” (1:3), “bringing many sons to glory” (2:10)

Through the sufferings of death (vv. 9, 10) “He might render powerless him who had the power of death,

That is, the devil, and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives”

(vv. 14-15).

Let’s live with the death perspective.

When I have the death perspective again

I don’t really worry about these and those problems anymore (Eccle. 7:2).

God prepares for those who are not prepared.

God not only prepared “a great fish” (Jonah 1:17), He also prepared “a plant” (4:6),

“a worm” (v. 7) and “a scorching east wind” (v.8).

Why did God prepare all these things for Jonah who wasn’t prepared for God’s mission?

The important thing is after receiving the prayer answer.

When ten leprous men who stood at a distance met Jesus and raised their voices, saying,

“Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!” (Lk. 17:12-13)

At that time, Jesus said to them, “Go and show yourselves to the priests” (v. 14).

Why did Jesus say that?

Although Jesus clearly knew that ten leprous men stood at the distance when they met Jesus (v. 12)
How could He say to them, “Go and show yourselves to the priests”? (v. 14)
What is surprising is that the ten lepers obeyed Jesus' word
Even though they couldn't understand His word with their reason.
But as they were obeying His word, they were cleansed (v. 14).
On the way to the priests, their leprosy got healed (v. 14).
But among the ten leprous, only the Samaritan, the Gentile, came back to Jesus
When he saw that he had been healed, and glorified God with a loud voice,
And he fell on his face at His feet, giving thanks to Him (vv. 15-16).
To him Jesus said, “Stand up and go; your faith has made you well” (v. 19).

We should ask the Lord, ‘Lord, have mercy on us!’
And we must obey the Lord's word. When we obey Him, our prayer will be answered.
The important thing is after receiving the prayer answer.
We should glorify God and give thanks to Him.
When we give thanks to God, the Lord will do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think
(Eph. 3:20).

What is the life of witness?

The life of witness (Acts 1:8) is preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ,
the mission that the Lord has given me, which is far more precious than our lives (20:24),
starting at home, then in the church and outside of the church such as, our works and society,
according to the Holy Spirit's guidance, by loving our neighbors and have good influences on them
as long as we are with them.

God who makes us low and small

God made Egypt, which the Israelites relied on, the lowest of the kingdom (Ezek. 29:14, 15).
There were two reasons for this:

1. The reason was to show Egypt God's justice. Since Egypt was arrogant, God made it the lowest of the kingdom (29:3, 9; 30:6, 18; 31:10, 14).
2. The reason was to show God's grace and mercy to the Israelites. So God judged Egypt so that it would never again have the confidence of the house of Israel and it wouldn't bring to mind the iniquity of their having turned to Egypt (29:16).

Lessons to learn:

God loves us so much that whatever or whoever we depend on more than God,

He will make it or him/her low and small.

Therefore, God makes us not to rely on it or him/her any longer.

The purpose of doing so is to make us to rely only on God and look only at God.

Although God has already forgiven our sins and doesn't even remember them anymore,

We still remember our sins.

In order to solve that problem, God makes everything we depend on more than God low and small.

God also makes us extremely weak when we are proud.

Therefore, the Lord makes us low (30:6).

Therefore, He makes us humbly rely on God alone.

Now the church is doing more evil than the people of the world.

Although God set the church at the center of the people of the world, with the people around her,

Now the church is doing more evil than the people of this world.

Now the church has more turmoil than the people of the world.

Therefore, God is against the church and will execute judgments among us in the sight of the people of the world. (Ezek. 5:5-8)

Now the church is collapsing.

There are 3 reasons why I think this way:

1. Now the church doesn't know God (Isa. 45:4, 5).

The reason is because the church has rejected knowledge of God.
Not only the saints but also the pastors have rejected the knowledge of God (Hos. 4:1, 6).
Now we the pastors don't know ourselves because we have rejected the knowledge of God.
As John Calvin said we must know ourselves by knowing God,
and we must know God by knowing ourselves.
But since we don't know God, we don't know ourselves now.
As a result, now we go beyond our thoughts and say and do beyond what we suppose to
(Num. 16:3, 7).
Therefore, now we dishonor God's holy name and steal God's glory.
Now the more we the pastors who have forgotten the word of God multiplied
the more we sin against God (Hos. 4:6-7).

2. Now the church is not preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The reason is because the church has rejected the knowledge of God (vv. 1, 6).
Now the church doesn't know the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus (Phil. 3:8).
In particular, since we the pastors don't know its value,
not only we don't preach the gospel of Jesus Christ but we also cannot preach it.
As a result, we don't preach the gospel that "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,
and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures"
(1 Cor. 15:3-4).
Now we don't proclaim "His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh,
who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead,
according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 1:3-4).
Rather, now the church is preaching "a different gospel" (Gal. 1:6-9).
Now the church is telling the other gospel that we can be saved by human effort
without proclaiming the gospel of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, who died and rose on the cross.
In other words, now the church is proclaiming that we can be justified by keeping the law.
Now the church is saying that we can be saved by doing good deeds.
Also, now the church is preaching 'a mixed gospel.'
In other words, the church is now saying that we can be saved through faith plus good works.
Also, now the church loves to listen to "a different doctrine" (1 Tim. 6:3).
Now the church doesn't endure sound doctrine, but wants to have our ears tickled,
we accumulate for ourselves teachers in accordance to our own desires,
and turn our ears from the truth and turn aside to myths (2 Tim. 4:3-4).

What's really serious is that the Church now accepts another gospel, the mixed gospel and myths (2 Cor. 11:4).

As a result, now the church isn't conducting ourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ (Phil. 1:27).

In other words, now we aren't standing firm in one spirit,
with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel (v. 27).

Although the church supposes to fulfill only the Lord's will with one mind,
Now the church is doing our own way, according to our own will and opinion
(Deut. 12:8; Judg. 17:6, 21:25). Isn't this the broken church?

3. Now the church is rejecting Jesus' discipleship.

Now the church is rejecting the word of Jesus saying, "If anyone wishes to come after Me,
he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me" (Mk. 8:34; Mt. 16:24; Lk. 9:23).

Not only the saints but even we the pastors are not denying ourselves
and taking up our cross and follow Jesus.

Now we are "lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents,
ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control,
brutal, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,
holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power" (2 Tim. 3:2-5).

Now we aren't denying ungodliness and worldly desires (Tit. 2:12).

Now our religion is worthless (Jam. 1:26).

Now we are leading to further ungodliness (2 Tim. 2:16).

Although "all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted" (3:12),

Now we are more inclined to applaud than persecution.

Right now, we love and look forward to being praised by people
rather than earnestly seeking praise from the Lord.

Now we are soaked with the prosperity gospel and like to hear when our church members say that
they have received grace from us when we have proclaimed to them, 'Believe in Jesus and be blessed.'

Now we have deposed God not as an object of worship, but as a material blessing
or instrument for personal happiness and put the purpose of faith in Jesus Christ
into temporal things such as personal prosperity and business prosperity (Internet).

In the midst of that, we are now walking on the wide path of the world
rather than on the narrow path of the cross that Jesus walked.

Now we prefer to live in "cedar building" (Jere. 22:23) like church building

and sit on our “couches” (Amos 6:4) and live in peace rather than to bear our own cross.
Now we refuse to learn obedience through sufferings like Jesus, the Son of God (Heb. 5: 8).
So how can “a fragrance of Christ” be spread? (2 Cor. 2:15)

The church has no choice but to collapse. The church must fall.
The church must be broken and destroyed.
In particular, the church pulpit must fall.
The reason is because the church pulpit now abandons the knowledge of God.
The reason is because we the pastors,
who don’t know the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus our Lord,
are preaching the different gospel, the mixed gospel and myths.
Since we preach only with our lips in front of the pulpit
and don’t live a life worthy of the gospel of Jesus Christ
and don’t preach the gospel, the church pulpit must collapse.

If you are desperately in need right now ...

If you are desperately in need right now, then you may not be able to remember the abundance before.
(Cf. Gen. 41:31)

Even if I’m trapped now ...

Although I am trapped now and even if I look at north, south, east and west,
there is no solution to the problem and thus I am suffering,
God promises that He is now working and will fulfill His will and His plan.

All I have to do is hold on to His promise and to cry out in faith to my Father God who is truthful and faithful with assurance of prayer answered. (Jere. 33:1-3)

Who am I looking for help now?

Now we aren't looking to the Holy One, nor are we seeking the Lord.

Rather, we go into this world for help and rely on those who are rich and trust in riches, in powers and so on.

So God will bring disaster and He will stretch out His hand on those who help and we who are helped.

As a result, they will stumble and we will fall. (Isa. 31:1-3)

Now we Christians are rejecting the word of God.

Now we Christians are rejecting the word of God (Isa. 30:12).

Now we hate to hear the word of God, the sword of the Holy Spirit and the rod (Jere. 23:29; Eph. 6:17).

The reason is because there are conscience-stricken and our hearts are being broken.

Therefore, we are asking the Lord's servants to speak the pleasant things to us (Isa. 40:10).

We want to hear the pleasant words that scratch our itching ears

Rather than the words that point out and rebuke our sins.

As a result, we don't realize the sins of our wrong choice, forsaking the the right path and pursuing falsehood.

Now we believe in deceit. Now we are rejecting God's holy words.

Now we are spiritually sick.

As if we eat the physical food only what we want,

We now eat the spiritual food only what we want.

We just want to hear the sermons only that we like and don't listen to the sermons that we don't like.

As a result, we are now spiritual unbalanced and sick.
Nevertheless, we don't know that we are spiritually sick. (Cf. 1 Kgs. 22)

Now our ears ...

Now, our ears love to hear the “different gospel” than the gospel of Jesus Christ (Gal. 1:6, 7, 8, 9).
That different gospel is the mixed gospel. And the mixed gospel is Jesus Christ + Alpha.
And that alpha is rich (Mt. 6:24; Lk. 16:13).
Now our ears like to hear the sermon about receiving material blessings than the blessing of eternal life
and the every spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus when we believe in Him and be saved.
Our ears are tickling, and we don't receive the sound doctrine.
Instead, we have accumulated for ourselves teachers in accordance to our own desires (2 Tim. 4:3).
So the pastors also preach the material blessing sermons we want to hear,
And gave up to a pastor and became our conspirator.
Now our ears aren't there is no joy except to hear the Lord's voice.
Now our ears are too exposed to the voice of Satan.
Just as Even who heard the crafty serpent's voice, “Indeed, has God said,
'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?” (Gen. 3:1),
we too keep on hearing the Satan's voice of questioning God's word.
As a result, we doubt God now. We lack confidence in His word.
We should no longer listen to Satan's lies.
We should no longer love to hear the false gospel.
Rather, we should love to hear the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.
We must rejoice to hear God's word of truth.

What are we relying on now?

In the midst of difficulties and troubles, the object we want to lean on and depend on
May in fact be “a staff made of reed” that breaks easily and thus may hurt us, shake us and break us.
(Ezek. 29:6-7)

Now God tells us the pastors ...

Now God tells us the pastors, “A son honors his father, and a servant his master Then if I am a father, where is My honor? And if I am a master, where is My respect?” (Mal. 1:6)
To this God’s sayings, aren’t we saying, “How have we despised Your name?”,
“How have we defiled You?” (v. 7)

Just as You have pardoned me ...

Lord, forgive my sin in accordance with Your great love,
Just as You have pardoned me from the time I first believed in Jesus until now.’
(Cf. Num. 14:19)

“so no one will think more of me than is warranted ...”

Ah ... I should refrain even from speaking the truth, that is
I shouldn’t boast about my mysterious spiritual experience
So no one will think more of me than is warranted by what I do or say.
(2 Cor. 12:6)

The problem of believing in Jesus “too much”?

Believing in Jesus “too much” and is “extremely zealous for the traditions of” the church
is the problem too? (Cf. Gal. 1:14)

The leader ...

The leader think deeply, rebukes when he needs to, fears God, doesn't take bribe, and does the Lord's work with all his strength. (Neh. 5:7-9, 14-15)

Skill ... ability ... willing heart?

The reason for my lack of willing heart in serving the Lord's church may be because I don't know how to do it.

And the reason why I don't know how to do it is because I don't have skill that God gives to me.

If I have skill that God gives, then I will be able to know how to do His work.

And if I know how to do His work, then it's because I am willing to do it for His glory.

(Exod. 36:1, 2)

Let us walk as wise ...

Those who walk as wise are filled with the Spirit, understand what the will of the Lord is and make the most of their time. (Eph. 5:15-18)

The wise one ...

The wise one is careful how he walks.

He makes the most of his time, because he knows the days are evil. (Eph. 5:15-16)

It is not wise.

It isn't wise to say that the old days are better than today.

It is foolish to long for the past rather than the present. (Eccle. 7:10)

Those who are wise ...

Those who are wise hear (Deut. 1:13, 15, 16). They listen to both sides (v. 16).

They hear both small and great alike (v. 17). And they don't show partiality in judging (v. 17).

They aren't afraid of any man (v. 17). Those who are wise judge fairly between both sides (v. 16).

The wise Christian

I think after God speaks to us through the Scripture (the Holy Spirit makes us to understand the Word)

He gives us an opportunity to obey His Word

The wise Christian doesn't miss that opportunity of grace and obeys His Word.

I think this is the life of the wise who makes the most of his time. (Eph. 5:15-16)

The wise rich

The wise rich, who lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age,

aren't arrogant. They don't put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain.

But they put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.
They do good, are rich in good deeds, and are generous and willing to share. (1 Tim. 6:17-19)

Those who are wise ...

Those who are wise are devoted to God (1 Kgs. 3:4), know God's great kindness (v. 6),
Humble themselves before God (vv. 7-8), and offer prayer that is pleasing to God (vv. 9-10).

A wise woman ...

A wise woman knows when to act without speaking to her husband. (1 Sam. 25:19)

A wise woman ...

A wise woman not only respect her husband (Eph. 6:33)
but also help her husband to be respected by others (Prov. 31:23).

A wise woman ...

A wise woman acts quickly in time of crisis (1 Sam. 25:34, 42).
She asks God for forgiveness of her husband's sin as she takes his sin as hers (vv. 24, 28).

She keeps her husband from doing the things that trouble his heart (vv. 31, 33).
She edifies her husband (vv. 28-30).

The wise ones ...

The wise ones don't long for the past days of their prime and don't dwell in that past.
They are faithful today. (Cf. Eccle. 7:10)

The wise trust in God.

Those who trust in themselves and their hearts are fools.
Those who walk wisely trust in God and in His heart. (Prov. 28:26)

The wise ...

The wise love wisdom and knowledge, choose to fear God, receive God's instructions,
turn to God after they hear God's reproof.
Therefore, they live securely and are at ease from the dread of evil.
(Prov. 1:22, 23, 25, 29, 30, 33)

The foolishness of the wise?

The wisest king in the Bible, King Solomon's greatest foolishness was
disobeying the words of Deuteronomy 17:16-17 and had many horses, silver and gold and wives.

(1 Kgs. 10:26-11:3)

We will be wise.

When we meditate on and keep the Word of God that is always with us, day and night,
We will be wise. (Ps. 119:98-100)

Am I wisely carrying out my mission?

What has the Lord entrusted to me? (mission)

Am I wisely and successfully carrying out my mission? (Cf. 1 Sam. 18:5, 14, 15, 30)

Let us deal wisely?

When the worldly people say that they deal wisely, what they do in fear is

To afflict those who may be threatening to them with hard labor

which they rigorously have imposed on them (Exod. 1:10-14).

But God's people who fear God are obedient to God's word
and disobedient to the worldly people (vv. 17, 21).

So God is good to them who fear God and establishes households for them (vv. 20, 22).

A wise and discerning heart

A wise and discerning heart is a listening heart and it discerns between good and evil. (1 Kgs. 3:9-12)

The beginning of one who learns wisdom is ...

The beginning (foundation) of one who learns wisdom is to understand and confess that
he is like a beast before God because he is ignorant and foolish. (Prov. 30:2-4; Ps. 73:22)

The faithful and sensible steward like pastor

The faithful and sensible steward like pastor faithfully feeds the spiritual food that is the word of God to
the Lord's entrusted flocks under his care. (Lk. 12:42)

The wise heart ...

The wise heart knows that the day of one's death is better than the day of one's birth,
Takes the end of every man which is death into his heart,

and knows that beneficial sorrow is better than laughter. (Eccle. 7:1-4)

What is the delusion that shakes the mind of the wise?

The delusion that shakes the mind of the wise is greedy and bribery (money?). (Eccle. 7:7)

God who did not turn away wrath

When the king of Nineveh and his people turned from their wicked way,
Then God relented concerning the calamity which He had declared He would bring upon them (Jon. 3:10).

But God didn't turn from the fierceness of His great wrath with which His anger burned against Judah because of all the provocations with which Manasseh had provoked Him (2 Kgs. 23:26).

Although there was no king like Josiah, the king of Judah, who turned to the Lord with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses;

nor did any like him arise after him,

God didn't turn from the fierceness of His great wrath with which His anger burned against Judah (2 Kgs. 23:25, 26).

When Father God made His begotten Son Jesus, who was without sin, to bear all our sins and to die on the cross, He didn't turn all the wrath, but poured out all His wrath upon His Son Jesus.

In and for the truth

Let's love in truth (3 Jn. 1). Let's walk in truth (vv. 3, 4). Let's work for the truth (v. 8).

**The reason why God makes us know
the certainty of the words of the truth ...**

The reason why God makes us know the certainty of the words of the truth is
So that our trust may be in the Lord. (Prov. 22:19-21)

We have to hear the truth.

If a senior pastor hears lies about the assistant pastors from an elder,
Then those assistant pastors become bad people. (Cf. Prov. 29:12)

Ahab, who doesn't realize even he heard the truth

Ahab, who didn't even "inquire first for the word of the Lord" before the war with the king of Aram (1 Kgs. 22:5), listened to the Jehoshaphat king of Judah (1 Kgs. 22:5) and Ahab's in-law (2 Kgs. 8:18; 2 Chron. 18:1) and gathered about 400 prophets (v. 6).

But those 400 prophets were the false prophets who were enticed by a deceiving spirit (v. 22) and were uniformly favorable to King Ahab (v. 13)

and said "the Lord will give it into the hand of the king" (vv. 6, 11-12).

Ahab loved to hear the words of false prophets who prophesied only good things for him.

But he didn't like the true prophet of God Michiah whom he thought only prophesied "evil" (v. 8).

But after he heard what Jehoshaphat said (v. 7),

Ahab called an officer and told him to bring Micaiah quickly (v. 9).

Meanwhile, Ahab sat on the throne with Jehoshaphat and listened to all the false prophets (vv. 10-12).

"Then the messenger who went to summon Michiah spoke to him saying,

'Behold now, the words of the prophets are uniformly favorable to the king.

Please let your word be like the word of one of them, and speak favorably" (v. 13).

But Micaiah said, "As the Lord lives, what the Lord says to me, that I shall speak" (v. 14).

But the strange thing is that the prophet Micaiah said to King Ahab the same thing as the false prophets:

"Go up and succeed, and the LORD will give it into the hand of the king" (v. 15).

The reason why he said like this was to point out foolishness of Ahab who liked to listen to the false prophets (Park Yoon-sun).

That was why Ahab said to Micaiah, "How many times must I adjure you to speak to me nothing but the truth in the name of the LORD?" (v. 16)

Isn't this little bit funny that Ahab, who liked to listen to the 400 false prophets who only prophesied good things to him but didn't like to listen to 1 true prophet Micaiah whom he though prophesied bad things to him and thus hated him (v. 8) said to Michiah "to speak to me nothing but the truth in the name of the Lord?" (v. 16)

This reminds me 2 Timothy 4:3-4:

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths."

The Word of God is the sword of the Spirit (Eph. 6:17)

and it's natural to listen to His word and be pierced by the word (Acts 2:37; 6:54).

But instead of repenting (2:38) when they heard this,

they began gnashing their teeth at him (7:54) and cried out with a loud voice,
covered their ears and rushed at him with one impulse (v. 57) and began stoning him (v. 58).
As they do do, like Ahab they want us to speak nothing but the truth
in the name of the Lord (1 Kgs. 22:16).
At least in the days of Prophet Jeremiah, the Israelites said,
“Whether it is pleasant or unpleasant, we will listen to the voice of the LORD our God
to whom we are sending you, so that it may go well with us
when we listen to the voice of the LORD our God” (v. 6).
Is this not us?

I want to be a true Christian.

It is better to speak the truth and be hated, be ostracized and be insulted
and our names be scorned as evil than speak lies and be praised by everyone. (Lk. 6:22, 26)

Truth

The Lord desires truth in the innermost being. (Ps. 51:6)

Is “wilderness” really a "terrible place"?

The wilderness was a terrible place (Num. 20:5) to the Israelites who were greedy (11:34).

The reason is because there was nothing they wanted in the wilderness (20:5).

However, the wilderness was a good place to Jesus' disciples who were satisfied with Jesus alone (Phil. 4:11; 1 Tim. 6:6).

The reason is because in the wilderness they could humbly enjoy every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ (Eph. 1:3) since there is nothing they desire physically.

Shouldn't we really deal with them?

The Pharisees in us separates the people whom we should evangelize as the people whom we shouldn't deal with and makes us to stay far away from them. (Jn. 4:4, 9)

What is true fellowship?

True fellowship is enjoying eternal life in vertical fellowship with Triune God and enjoying the fullness of joy in horizontal fellowship with fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. (1 Jn. 1:3-4)

True authority

‘There is true spiritual authority when we fulfill God’s will with fear and trembling
With self-awareness that we have been entrusted with the gospel from God,
With heart that we want to please God who searches our hearts,
And when we proclaim the truth honestly and boldly without distorting it
And without compromising with others as we deny our covetousness. ...
Foundationally Paul’s true authority comes from his self-understanding as a gospel proclaimer’
(Seyoon Kim).

The true authority of a pastor like me must come from self-understanding as a gospel proclaimer.
In other words, it is to live a life with grace consciousness
because such sinners like us are saved by God’s grace and are called to be a pastor by His grace
and a life that has no stumbling block whatsoever to the gospel of Christ
as we deny to act upon our given authority in the church as a pastor.
As we do so, the pastor’s true authority will be established.
That is how the pastor’s true authority is established.
I think the parents’ authority is the same.

The true authority of parents is not to assert the parents’ authority over their children
But to endure everything for the gospel of Christ without using the parents’ authority
in order not to be stumbling blocks to the children.

Especially a pastor like me shouldn’t use the pastor’s authority
but to endure and be patient with everything in preaching the gospel to the flocks
whom the Lord has entrusted to me.

I wrote this while meditating on 1 Corinthians 9:12 –

‘I need to endure all things without using my rights. d

The purpose is to ensure that there is no obstacle to the gospel of Christ (1 Cor. 9:12).’

I receive an instruction from 2 Timothy 2:25 that

“The Lord’s bond-servant must not be quarrelsome,

but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged.”

As a pastor (preacher), I must not be quarrelsome with my church members, but I must be kind to them.

And I want to be able to teach them well and be patient with them.

There is full of joy in true fellowship.

If we have true fellowship with Father God and the Son Jesus (1 Jn. 1:3)
Then there is full of joy in our hearts that the Holy Spirit gives (v. 4).
There is eternal life in fellowship with Father God and the Son Jesus (5:11-13; Rom. 6:23)
And we who enjoy that eternal life obey Jesus twofold command:
“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind”
And “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Mt. 22:37, 39).
As we do so, there is full of divine joy that the Holy Spirit gives to us.
(Jn. 15:9-12; 1 Jn. 1:4)

A true free man ...

A true free man in the Lord wants to edify his beloved brothers and sisters in Christ.
In order to do so, not only that he restrains his freedom and right,
He also makes himself a slave to all so that he may with more.
(1 Cor. 8:1, 9; 9:12, 19, 25)

A true free man ...

A true free man disciplines his body and makes it his slave
and confines himself with the boundary of God's word of truth.
(Jn. 8:32; 1 Cor. 9:27)

A true friend

A true friend not only helps me (Prov. 27:17) but also earnestly counsels me (v. 9).
With in that earnest counsel, there is painful rebuke for me (27:6).

Greed that makes even pearl like thing as bad

Greed makes us to consider God's pearl like eternal blessings as bad
but makes us to seek the worldly and temporary things that are like shells of pearl. (Cf. Num. 11:4-7)

I thought it was a real vain thing ...

I may think it is a real vain thing that I did good to him
Because even though I did good to him, he paid me back evil for good (1 Sam 25:21).
But in the meantime God is good to me and gives me precious grace that I have never expected.

(In the case of David, he got Abigail, a wise woman, as his wife.
And because of her, he didn't sin against God.)

The purpose of discipline

The purpose why God disciplines us due to the result of our unrepented sin is to transform us into God's purified worshipers. (Zep. 3:9-10)

(As I was reading Iain M. Duguid's "Zephaniah" REFORMED EXPOSITORY COMMENTARY")

Short meditation

Even if our situation seems to be worse,

God also uses that situation, eventually leading us to a better reality (Cf. Dan. 1:15, 20; 2:46-49).

God exalts His people in crisis (ch. 2, esp. vv. 48-49) even more (ch. 3, esp. v. 30).

The owner of the home and the church is the Lord. The Lord reigns our homes and churches.

After realizing this, our homes and churches will be firmly established (Cf. 4:26).

Our Tower of Babel, which we think that with our power and strength we did this, will surely fall.

The Lord will surely humble us who do things in our pride (Cf. 4:30, 37).

When we gradually regard God's given gifts as our merit even though at first we regarded as God's grace,

That means our hearts has already become proud.

The result of that proud sin is that God takes away all our gifts (Cf. 5:18-20).

If we don't humble ourselves, though we know all this,

And not honoring the God who holds in His hand our lives and all our ways

But setting ourselves up against the Lord, Then God will bring it to an end (Cf. 5:22-23, 26).

A good man Barnabas

A good man is full of the Holy Spirit and faith (Acts 11:24).
Barnabas was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith.
He was recognized by the Jerusalem community. That was why he was sent to Antioch (v. 22).
He who is recognized in the church is the one who is consistent in his word and action
and the worshiper whom God seeks (Jn. 4:23-24).
Barnabas was a man who was able to see God's grace (v. 23).
Since his spiritual eyes were open, he was able to see the spiritual thing.
The good man sees the word of the Holy Spirit with his eyes of faith.
Barnabas was glad when he saw the spiritual thing (v. 23).
He wasn't glad because he saw the physical thing. Barnabas was an encourager.
He encouraged the Antioch church saints to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts.
The good man is being used by the Lord as an instrument of the comfort of the Holy Spirit.
Barnabas was a man of vision. His vision was to raise the people.
He raised Saul (Paul) and stepped back (vv. 25-26).
I want to be good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith like Barnabas.

True disciples

Those true disciples (Lk. 14:26, 27, 33) who respond to the heavenly feast (Mt. 22:2)
and don't make any excuse (Lk. 14:18) love the Lord, who is the King of the heavenly feast (Mt. 22:2),
more than their lives and even to the point of hating their own father, mother,
wife, children, and brothers and sisters (Lk. 14:26).
They carry their own cross and follow the Lord (v. 27).
They give up their own possessions and follow Him (v. 33).
Jesus' true disciples are committed to pay the cost of discipleship in following Jesus (vv. 28-32).

When I feel the limit of patience to endure ...

When I feel the limit of patience to endure sorrow in my heart all the day (Ps. 13:1-2)

I have no choice but to shake (v. 4).

At that time, the fear that comes into my heart is my death (v. 3) and that my enemy will say,

“I have overcome him” and my adversaries will rejoice when I am shaken (v. 4)

“Consider and answer me, O LORD my God; Enlighten my eyes ...” (v. 3).

We must be close to the true things.

As we stay far away from the things we suppose to be far away (Prov. 30:8)

At the same time, we must be close to the things we suppose to be close to.

We must stay far away from the vain things and at the same time we must be close to the true things.

We must be close to the truth (Gal. 4:16; Eph. 4:15, 25),

true Witness (Rev. 3:14) and the true grace (1 Pet. 5:12).

In a word, we must be close to the truth, Jesus (Jn. 14:6).

A true believer is ...

A true believer cries out to God who accomplishes all things for him
even in the midst of destruction he has encountered.

And he wants the Lord to be exalted above the heavens and His glory above all the earth.

He sings praises in the midst of destruction.

The reason is because his heart is steadfast.

The true believer awakens the dawn even in the midst of destruction he has encountered.

(Ps. 57)

A true free man

We must devote ourselves to serve the Lord forever

Not only because we love the Lord but also we love our wives and children (Exod. 21:5-6).

The servant of the Lord who is so dedicated to the Lord is a true free man.

A true free man?

The servant of the Lord who has the beloved Jesus as his Lord and obeys His word is a true free man.

(Cf.: Exod. 21:5; Jn. 8:32; Apostle Paul's letters)

Short meditation on Genesis 13

Let us experience the richness of sharing.

The way we choose seems to make us richer may be a short cut to poverty (Cf.: Gen. 13:10).

Maybe there are many and great sinners in the sight of God

in the place where I see abundance (vv. 10, 13).

Even though there is abundance, if our hearts aren't abundant in the Lord, we will quarrel.

But if we have abundant hearts just as abundant material, there is peace (vv. 1-8).

How can one see "Sodom and Gomorrah" in where people are wicked exceedingly

and sinners against the Lord live as "the garden of the Lord"? (vv. 10, 13)

And how can he equate the expression "the garden of the Lord" with "the land of Egypt"? (v. 10)

What kind of person is Lot? What kind of church member are you

that you see "Sodom and Gomorrah" that the Lord will destroy like "the garden of the Lord"?

Even though you may see with your physical eyes that the place like "the garden of the Lord" has

abundant materials, when you see it with your eyes of faith,

there is the word of God's promise to be fulfilled in the future (vv. 10, 14-17).

God who is concerned and has seen

God is concerned about us and has seen our affliction ... (Exod. 4:31)

A life of heavenly citizen

Our citizenship is in heaven (Phil. 3:20).

Therefore, we must fulfill our responsibilities as citizens of heaven (1:27).

Th responsibility as citizens of heaven is to keep the law of heaven.

That law of heaven is Jesus' twofold command:

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind"; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself'" (Lk. 10:27).

When we obey this commandment we are taking on our responsibility as citizens of heaven.

Especially when we obey this commandment in our home, the Lord will make our home heaven.

And when He makes our home heaven, the Lord will use our home as a community of witness to testify the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The family members who conduct themselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ testify the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ with their lives.

The greatest in the kingdom of heaven

The greatest in the kingdom of heaven are the ones who humble themselves (Mt. 18:4), and also those who serve (20:26).

First 17 years and last 17 years

Joseph lived with his father Jacob for the first 17 years of his life (Gen. 37:2),
And Joseph's father Jacob who loved Joseph more than his other sons (v. 3)
lived with him together last 17 years of his life (47:28).

Although they were invited ...

Although many were invited to a wedding feast (Mt. 22:2, 4),
they all alike begin to make excuses (Lk. 14:18).
The reason is because they love their own father, mother, wife, children and brothers and sisters (v. 26)
more than the Lord, the King of the heavenly feast (Mt. 22:2).
The reason is because they aren't carrying their own cross and following the Lord (v. 27).
The reason is because they aren't giving up all of their possessions (v. 33).
In a word, the reason is because they aren't true disciples of Jesus (vv. 26, 27, 33).
The reason is because they aren't chosen (Mt. 22:14).

It is a blessing.

It is a blessing to be able to always hear the wisdom of the wise. (1 Kgs. 10:8)

It is a blessing. It is grace. He is a wise man.

It is a blessing to realize the lack of wisdom.
It is grace to understand that He is our God who gives wisdom to all generously and without reproach
He who seeks wisdom to God by faith is a wise man. (Jam. 1:5)

Jezebel who stirred up

Queen Jezebel asked her husband King Ahab about why his spirit was so sullen that he wasn't eating food (1 Kgs. 21:4, 5).

And she found out that it was because Naboth the Jezreelite wouldn't give Ahab his vineyard (v. 6).

So she said this to Ahab: "'Do you now reign over Israel?

Arise, eat bread, and let your heart be joyful; I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite"' (v. 7).

Then she wrote letters in Ahab's name and sealed them with his seal,

and sent letters to the elders and to the nobles who were living with Naboth in his city (v. 8).

The key point of the letters was to slander Naboth, saying "You cursed God and the king"

and then stone him to death (vv. 9-10).

Indeed, she was a wicked woman with a lot of her witchcrafts (2 Kgs. 9:22).

The elders and the nobles who lived in Naboth's city did as Jezebel had sent word to them,

just as it was written in the letters and stoned him to death with stones (1 Kgs. 21:11, 13).

This reminds me the letter David sent to Joab.

After King David tried twice to cover up the fact that Uriah's wife Bathsheba was pregnant

because he slept with her and failed (2 Sam. 11:2-5, 8-13), he wrote a letter to Joab

and sent it by the hand of Uriah (v. 14).

The key point of the letter was to place Uriah in the front line of the fiercest battle

and withdraw from him, so that he could be struck down and be killed (v. 15).

So Joab did as David told him and eventually Uriah died (v. 17).

We are "a letter of Christ" (2 Cor. 3:3), who preach the good news (gospel) of Jesus Christ.

Also, we are "a fragrance of Christ" to God (2:15) who, like Jesus,

should give ourselves up for Him, "an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma" (Eph. 5:2).

But aren't we like Ahab who covet our neighbor's possessions?

(Lk. 11:39; Mk. 23:25; Num. 11:4; 1 Cor. 5:11; Exod. 20:17; Eph. 5:3)

Aren't we like Jezebel who slander other who has done nothing wrong (1 Tim. 3:11; 2 Tim. 3:3)

and commit wicked sin of accusing him (Jam. 5:6; Isa. 29:21)

in order to satisfy our family member's greed?

Eventually, as Jezebel promised to her husband Ahab (1 Kgs. 21:7),

she let him take possession of the vineyard of Naboth (v. 15).

She even killed innocent Naboth (vv. 14-16) in order to stole his vineyard and give it to Ahab.

She was the one who controlled Ahab from behind.

She was the one who stirred up Ahab to do evil in the sight of the Lord (v. 25).

She was the one who made Ahab to act very abominably in following idols, according to all that the Amorites had done, whom the Lord casted out before the sons of Israel (v. 26).

To such a woman Jezebel, God said, “The dogs will eat Jezebel in the district of Jezreel” (v. 23).

Satan incites (Cf. 1 Chron. 21:1). He even incites God (Job 2:3).

That’s why even Satan’s people who are against Jesus and His gospel incite the church member inside the church (Acts 14:19’ 21:27; 1 Chron. 21:1).

Therefore they provoke (Acts 21:30), spread rumor (v. 31) and eventually are violent (v. 35).

How could these things happen in the church of God?

Although it is grumbling situation ...

Although it is grumbling situation (Josh. 9:18), and that situation got worse (ch. 10)

and worse in which we can be very fearful (ch. 11),

we must believe that God, who speaks to us “Do not fear them” (10:8, 11:6).

will work in all things for our good (Rom. 8:28) and will fulfill His clear purpose.

The Christians who cause fatally harm

Now I think there are many Christians who distort the word of God and receive and apply it incorrectly. Especially, I think among those who have deep interest spiritual in seeking and pursuing His word, there are people who misunderstand and misapply His word and distort it so that they cause themselves fatally harm (Prov. 26:9).

However more serious thing is that these people open their mouths and teach the distorted teachings to many people so they cause fatally harm to them as well. That's why we need to be spiritually awakened.

Also, we need to have spiritual sensitive and we should be faithful in sharpening our spiritual sensitivity with His Word and prayer. Therefore, with spiritual discernment we should be able to discern the proverbs of the fools and the proverbs of the wise. And we should walk with wise men (13:20). And we should be taught by the wise people. Then we will be wiser.

“Give instruction to a wise man and he will be still wiser,
Teach a righteous man and he will increase his learning.” (9:9)

Put away

In order to fear the Lord and serve Him in sincerity and truth, we must put away all the gods of unbelievers.
(Josh. 24:14)

We should participate in suffering in silence

Although it is we who deserve to be punished (Isa. 53:8),
God has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on His Son Jesus (v. 6).
When Jesus was oppressed and afflicted, yet He didn't open His mouth like a silent lamb (v. 7).
We who are saved by God's total grace should participate in His suffering in silence.

We shouldn't be silent.

We shouldn't be silent. We should deliver the good news. (2 Kgs. 7:9)

On our beds, we ...

On our beds, we should remember the Lord (Ps. 63:6).
On our beds, we should pray with weeping (6:6).
On our beds, we should sing for joy (149:5).
On our beds, we shouldn't plot evil (36:4).

The saints who are worthy to receive praise.

Those saints who have been faithfully kept the responsibility that the Lord has commanded them without leaving the church community these many days to this day are worthy to receive praise. (Josh. 22:3)

**To shake off
the temptation of covetousness**

[Short Word Meditation (9)]

James Kim

40 years ...

God delivered the Israelites who were slaves in Egypt for 430 years (Exod. 12:40-41).

But there were unfaithful to God so they became wandering people in the wilderness for 40 years (Num. 14:33). During those 40 years, God led the Israelites in the wilderness and performed wonders and signs (Deut. 29:5; Acts 7:36). And God fed them with manna for 40 years (Exod. 16:35).

The reason why God led them for 40 years in the wilderness was to humble them and to test them to know what was in their hearts, whether they would keep His commandments or not (Deut. 8:2).

God blessed them in all that they had done during those 40 years and He was with them so that they didn't lack a thing (Deut. 2:7).

Their clothing didn't wear out on them, nor did their foot swell and they weren't in want (v.7; 8:4; 29:5; Neh. 9:21). But they didn't present to God with sacrifices and grain offerings in the wilderness for 40 years (Amos 5:25). And they didn't listen to the voice of the Lord (Josh. 5:6).

Rather, they tried God by testing Him (Heb. 3:9).

But during that 40 years God put up with them (Acts 13:18).

For 40 years, God loathed them because their hearts went astray and hadn't known His ways (Ps. 95:10).

Eventually, God was angry with the Israelites (Num. 32:13; Heb. 3:17).

As a result, they couldn't see the land of Canaan, flowing with mil and honey (Josh. 5:6)

and their corpses lied in the wilderness (Num. 14:33).

But the Israel's descendants relied on Egypt, where their ancestors had been slaves for 430 years.

So God judged Egypt, which the Israelites were depended on (Cf. Ezek. 29-31).

God made the land of Egypt a desolate land so no one had ever lived in the land for 40 years (29:11).

God made the land of Egypt a desolation in the midst of desolated lands so that they were laid waste and was desolate 40 years (v. 12). God made Egypt the lowest kingdom (vv. 14-15).

The reason was to show Egypt God's justice.

God made the country extremely weak because Egypt was proud (vv. 3, 9; 30:6, 18; 31:10, 14).

Also, the reason was that God wanted to show God's grace and mercy to the Israelites and to judge Egypt, so that it would never again be the confidence of the house of Israel (29:16).

And by doing so, God didn't want the Israelites to bring to mind the iniquity of their having turned to Egypt (v. 16).

God has endured my sinful acts for the past 40 years.

Like David who committed adultery with Bathsheba and thus had given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme (2 Sam. 12:14), I had committed the sin of adultery to God for the past 40 years.

I had committed the great sin to holy God by being drawn to the lust of the eyes and the lust of the flesh (1 Jn. 2:16).

There was an idol of covetousness in my heart (Col. 3:5).

Although God had blessed me with so much grace in those 40 years,

I committed countless sins of ungrateful against Father God by forgetting His grace.

Then, in the wrath of God, I lost my first baby Charis about 20 years ago.

To me it was like God took a child born between David and Bathsheba (2 Sam. 12:14-18).

Even at that time, God enabled me to praise the Lord's savior love for me

Because His lovingkindness was better than Charis' 55 days of life in this earth

and my lips shall praise Him (Ps. 63:3).

God allowed me to experience the breadth and length and height and depth of His saving love (Eph. 3:18) in my life's greatest crisis.

But after that, I was like a dog that returned to its vomit (Prov. 26:11) because I was a fool who repeated the foolish adultery. No, I lived a life less than a dog. I realized it by looking at my dog.

I never saw my dog eating its own dung. But I repeatedly committed the same sin again and again.

I hated myself so much that I had experienced countless disappointments

and discouragement over and over again.

This was because sin had taken the opportunity through the commandment, produced in me coveting (Rom. 7:8) so that I did what I didn't want to do, the very thing I hated (v. 15).

The good that I wanted, I didn't do, but I practiced the very evil that I didn't want (v. 19).

My heart wanted to obey God's law but my body obeyed the law of sin innumerable times (vv. 22-23).

But finally after 40 years, God delivered me. It is totally God's grace.

From the deep pit where I couldn't deliver myself,

my Savior God showed His saving love to such sinner like me.

God stopped me from relying on covetousness anymore

by making my heart's covetousness extremely weak (Ezek. 29:14-16).

The reason was to keep me from remembering my sins (v. 16).

He did so because even though God already forgave me and didn't even remember my sins anymore (Heb. 8:12; 10:17) I was still remembering them and was miserable due to my guilt.

But God freed me from my guilt by delivering me out of the pit of guilt so that my sins wouldn't be remembered any longer (Ezek. 29:16). That is 40 years later. Ah~ Thank You, than You God.

300 and 30?

While a woman with an alabaster vial of very costly perfume or pure nard that was worth more than 300 denarii broke the vial and poured it over Jesus' head (Mk. 14:3, 5, 8), Judas Iscariot, one of His disciples (Jn. 12:4, 5), who rebuked the woman "For this perfume might have been sold for over three hundred denarii (Mk. 14:5), sold Jesus to the chief priests (vv. 10, 11) at the price 30 pieces of silver (Mt. 27:3).

No discrimination, but discernment

We shouldn't discriminate (Rom. 10:12; Col.3:11). But we should discern.

We should make a distinction between the holy and the profane,
and between the unclean and the clean (Lev. 10:10).

And with this discernment, we must live a life of separation with this world (Rom. 12:2).

A grievous evil

It is a grievous evil that we toil for the wind because we don't gain anything. (Eccle. 5:16)

**Let us be those who humble ourselves
rather than those who want to be the greatest.**

It is better to humble ourselves in this world so that we can be great in the kingdom of heaven than trying to be the greatest in this world. (Mt 18:1, 4)

For a big church pastor ...

I think for a big church (1 Kgs. 3:8) pastor, he needs great grace (v. 6) and a wise and discerning heart (v. 12) to be able to discern between good and evil (vv. 9, 10).

A foolish man who does evil to greater evil

A foolish man loves a woman whom he shouldn't have loved and does evil by violating her and laying with her forcibly. But after this evil, he does greater evil by hating her with a very great hatred and by sending her away. (2 Sam. 13:15-16)

**God who makes us to go through
a great difficult to a greater difficult?**

I'm not sure why the Lord is making us go through great difficulty (Josh. 10).

I have no idea why God allows much greater difficult to us

after we have gone through the great difficulty (ch. 11).

At that time, God says to us "Do not fear" (10:8, 11:6).

At that time, God promises to us that He will deliver us not only from the great difficult but also even the greater difficult (10:8, 11:6).

When we receive His promise, we must boldly and courageously obey the Lord by faith (10:9, 11:9).

When we obey Him by faith, the Lord will make us victorious! (10:10-20, 11:8, 11, 14)

Great salvation in great crisis

God commanded Jonah to arise and go to Nineveh "the great city" and cry against it (Jon. 1:2).

But Jonah disobeyed. Therefore, God threw "a great wind" on the sea

and there was "a great storm" on the sea (v. 4).

It was a great crisis that the ship that Jonah went aboard was about to break up (v. 4).

But God prepared "a great fish" for Jonah (v. 17).

Although Jonah disobeyed God's command (vv. 1, 3),

the great fish obeyed God's command and vomited Jonah up onto the dry land (2:10).

Although God allowed disobedient Jonah, who was worse the obedient great fish, to go through the great crisis,

God also delivered him from that great crisis by preparing the great fish to swallow him.

Like this, even though God gives us, who are disobedient to His command, great crisis and adversity, He also gives us great salvation.

God who does great things in great sin?

In the days of Samuel, all the elders of the Israel, asked Samuel for a king for the king to judge them like all the nations (1 Sam. 8:5). God said this was rejecting not Samuel but God from being king over them (v. 7). This was the Israelites' great wickedness in the sight of the Lord (12:17). The question is why did the Israelites ask for the king? Of course one of the reasons was because Samuel's two sons (Joel and Abijah) didn't walk in their father Samuel's ways, but turned aside after dishonest gain and took bribes and perverted justice (8:1-3) [even though Samuel had walked before the Israelites from his youth even to when he was old and gray and didn't receive any bribes (12:2-3)], but another reason was because they wanted their king to go out before them and to fight their battles (8:20) when they saw that Nahash the king of the sons of Ammon came against them (12:12). But what I don't understand is that God raised the king they had asked for among them (8:22; 12:13) Even though their asking of the king was great wickedness in His sight (12:17). Why did God listen to their great sinful prayers and did the great things to them? (v. 24) Maybe God wanted the Israelites to learn the difference between serving God and serving the kingdoms of the countries (2 Chron. 12:17). Maybe God made them know the greatness of the sins they had committed in the sight of God (1 Sam. 12:17) So that we may know that all the kings from king Saul to all the Israel's kings who had committed sins against God and thus suffered by the Gentile kings who couldn't save us but only the King of kings Jesus Christ who is the King of the Kingdom of God who came to this world in order to save us, the true Israel who were chosen by God in love, and to make us His people in order to reign over us forever.

Is it a valid excuse?

These were Moses' excuses to God's calling (Exod. 3:9-10):

"... for I am slow of speech and slow of tongue" (4:10);

"... for I am unskilled in speech" (6:12);

"... I am unskilled in speech ..." (v. 30)

However, this is what the Bible Acts 7:21-22 says about Moses:

"And after he had been set outside, Pharaoh's daughter took him away and nurtured him as her own son.

"Moses was educated in all the learning of the Egyptians, and he was a man of power in words and deeds."

This was God's promises to Moses:

"Now then go, and I, even I, will be with your mouth, and teach you what you are to say." (Exod. 4:12)

The fallen ones

Those who again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame are

The fallen ones who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift

and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God

and the powers of the age to come and then have fallen away.

It is impossible to renew them again to repentance. (Heb. 6:4-6)

Covetousness and idolatry

Covetousness and idolatry are related (Micah.1:7, 2:2; cf. Col. 3:5).

The fact that the leaders of the church and of the world are greedy means

that they love material, honor, or women more than God and are guilty of idolatry.

Covetousness

Covetousness makes us to go far enough in our thoughts and consider our duties as small (even though they aren't small at all) and consider other people's duties as big and thus covet their duties. (Num. 16:3, 9)

Covetousness

Covetousness leads to adultery, murder, and theft, giving occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme. (2 Sam. 12:14)

Covetousness steals another's spouse.

Covetousness makes us to covet our neighbor's wife by not being satisfied with our spouse of our youth (Prov. 5:18, 19).

This is what the Bible says: "and that in this matter no one should wrong his brother or take advantage of him. The Lord will punish men for all such sins, as we have already told you and warned you."

(1 Thess. 4:6)

To resist the temptation of covetousness ...

In order to resist the temptation of covetousness, we must always remember the Jesus' word "It is more blessed to give than to receive" and live according to that word. (Acts 20:33-35)

Because of the sin of covetousness

We are making God angry because of the sin of covetousness.

Therefore, God is hiding His face, is angry and disciplining us with His rod of love.

But we are still going on turning away (Isa. 57:17).

Now we aren't fearing God. The reason is because God has been silent even for a long time (v. 11).

Greed

This is what the Bible James 1:15 says, "Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death." Lust eventually leads to death.

Nevertheless, it seems that human lust is endless. Human greed cannot be satisfied.

Last week, I went to a Christian bookstore for church work and saw a book called 'Heedae's Hope' (author: Heedae Lee) and bought it because it was the book about cancer.

Since the author himself was a cancer specialist and suffered from cancer and was healed by God's grace, I wanted to buy it and read it.

As I read the writings of the author who experienced the 5th stage of life prepared by God in the 4th stage of cancer, I became interested in the author's book that was about cancer cells.

According to the author, cancer cells are mutations in the genes of cells that repeat growth and death and never die but grow constantly.

The reason why cancer cells are scary is because they take up the nutrients of other cells in order to grow constantly.

In other words, it is said that cancer cells grow constantly by migrating high-calorie nutrients while constantly moving around. In a word, according to the author, the essence of cancer cells is greed.

We must get rid of our greed. We must constantly put down our greed that wriggles in us endlessly in front of the cross moment by moment as we live in this world that fuels our greed.

Like our Jesus, we must constantly empty our hearts. We must put it down again and again.

And we must have the heart of Jesus.

We must learn the secret of contentment with only Jesus.

Greedy desires

Greedy desires cannot be satisfied (Num. 11:4, 20). Greedy desires are digging its own grave (v. 34).

Pastors and church members who are greedy and lying ...?

All the church members are greedy, and all the pastors are lying.

And we aren't taking the wounds of God's children seriously.

Although there is no peace due to their sins, they say "Peace, peace."

And when they do something abominable in the sight of God,

Not only they are not even ashamed at all but also they don't even know how to blush. (Jere. 6:13-15)

Don't mix with those who are greedy!

If we mix with those who are greedy, then we will be greedy as well. (Num. 11:4, 34)

The prodigal son

The prodigal son wants the father's wealth, but not the father's will. (Lk. 15:11-32)

"surely"?

Isn't the Satan's word right that "he will surely curse You to Your face"

If we curse God when all our possessions are gone? (Job 1:11)

Beatitude (1)

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Mt. 5:3)

The poor in spirit Christian ...

1. Knows that he is a sinner (Rom. 3:23).
He knows that he is the worst sinner (1 Tim. 1:15).
2. Knows that nothing good dwells in him (Rom. 7:18).
He knows that he cannot do good works by himself (v. 19).
He acknowledges that the indwelling Spirit is doing good works.
3. Knows that he cannot be saved by his own good works (Eph. 2:9).
He acknowledges that he was saved only by the death of Jesus on the cross (Rom. 10:9; 1 Thess. 5:9).
He believes that he was saved only by God's grace (Lk. 8:50; Eph. 2:8; 2 Tim. 1:9).
4. Relies completely on God (Deut. 30:20; Ps. 56:4, 10, 11; 2 Cor. 1:19).
He doesn't lean on his own understanding but trust in the Lord (Prov. 3:5-6).
He prays always (Ps. 62:8; Isa. 26:13).
5. Is humble (Micah 6:8; Mt. 11:29; Phil. 2:3; Jam. 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:6).
He doesn't boast himself and doesn't seek his own glory (Ps. 115:1).
He boasts only the Lord and seeks His glory (1 Cor. 10:31; 2 Cor. 10:17).

Beatitude (2)

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted" (Mt. 5:4).

The mourning Christian ...

1. Weeps and mourns for his own sins (Joel 2:12).

He confesses and repents his sins through the full work of the Holy Spirit when his sins are exposed by God's holy presence in the midst of his one-on-one intimate fellowship with God (Mt. 12:41; Rom. 2:4; 2 Cor. 7:10).

2. Mourns for the sins of his family (Job 1:5) and of his church (Rev. 2:5, 22; 3:3).

He confesses and repents the sins of his family and church that don't have God as their Lord, reject the Lord's rule, are disobedient to the Lord's authoritative words and cannot experience the Lord's presence.

3. Mourns for the sins of this country and this nation (Ezek. 18:30; Mt. 12:41; Acts 13:24).

He confesses and repents the sins of this country and this nation, not fearing God and rebel against Him.

He receives the comfort of the Holy Spirit.

Beatitude (3)

"Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth" (Mt. 5:5).

The gentle Christian ...

1. Knows himself by knowing God (Hos. 6:3).
2. Doesn't go too far in his thoughts (Num. 16:3, 7; Rom. 12:6; 2 Cor. 10:13).
3. Is humble (Isa. 57:15; Eph. 4:2).
He considers others better than himself (Phil. 2:3).
4. Is criticized but is not defensive.
5. Acknowledges his mistakes and weaknesses and wrongs quickly.
6. Sees his wrongs and boldly confronts them.
7. Not only knows that he himself is a greater sinner but also knows that he is a God's child who is loved by the greater God.
8. Endures and is patient with all the hardships and difficulties in order to reveal God's greatness who is highly exalted.

Beatitude (4)

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied" (Mt. 5:6).

The Christian who is hunger and thirst for righteousness ...

1. Relies on only the righteousness of Christ that was imputed to him (Rom. 3:22).
He acknowledges that all his righteous deeds are like a filthy garment (Isa. 64:6).
2. Seeks first His kingdom and His righteousness (Mt. 6:33).
3. Does the right thing in the sight of God.
He walks on the right path with the right thoughts and doing the right things.
4. Does good (Tit. 3:1).
He knows that he is created in Christ Jesus for good works (Eph. 2:10).
5. Obeys God's command in the Scripture (Acts 5:29).

Beatitude (5)

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy" (Mt. 5:7).

The merciful Christian ...

1. Knows that God has been merciful to him (Ps. 59:17; 1 Pet. 2:10).
He gives thanks to God because he who supposed to be destroyed due to his own sins knows that God has blotted out his transgressions according to the greatness of His compassion (Ps. 51:1).
2. Forgives those who have sinned against him (Lk. 17:4).
Since he believes that God has forgiven all of his sins in Christ Jesus, he also forgives those who have sinned against him.
3. Is merciful to those who suffer with the heart of Jesus Christ (Mt. 9:36, 18:33; Phil. 1:8).
Although he resolutely rejects and hates the sins of those who suffer because of their sins, he is merciful to them and helps them with the love of Christ.

Beatitude (6)

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Mt. 5:8).

The pure-hearted Christian ...

1. Pursues the purity of the body (Rev. 14:4).
2. Knows that no one can say, "I have kept my heart pure; I am clean and without sin" (Prov. 20:9).
3. Believes that not only was all of his sins are forgiven, but also his heart are purified by the blood of Jesus Christ on the cross (Ps. 73:1; Prov. 22:11; 2 Cor. 11:3).
4. Purifies himself from the things that proceed out of his heart that defile him such as, evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders (Mt. 15:18-19) and from the deeds of the flesh such as, immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these (Gal. 5:19-21). He prays to God, "Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me" (Ps. 51:10). Also, he lives with pure heart by keeping his way according to God's word (Ps. 119:9).
5. Lives a life of faith in front of the Lord whose eyes are too pure to approval evil (Hab. 1:13). He cleans himself from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God (2 Cor. 7:1).
6. Experiences God's presence (Ps. 41:12).

Beatitude (7)

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God” (Mt. 5:9).

The peacemaker Christian ...

1. Has a right relationship with God.

He is reconciled to God (2 Cor. 5:20).

He seeks intimate fellowship with Jesus Christ who is his peace (Eph. 2:14).

He lets the peace of Christ to rule in his heart (Col. 3:15).

He is anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, he makes his requests be known to God. As a result, the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, guards his heart and his mind in Christ Jesus (Phil. 4:6-7).

2. Has a right relationship with his neighbors.

He does his best to be at peace with everyone (Rom. 12:18).

He is faithfully fulfilling the duty of the ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:18).

He preaches peace through Jesus Christ (Acts 10:36).

3. Seeks the community harmony.

He makes effort to live in harmony with his family members in the community of his home and in the community of his church.

He pursues the things which make for peace (Rom. 14:19).

He is committed to build a community of love with one heart and one mind (Phil. 2:2; Acts 2:44-47; 4:32-35).

Beatitude (8)

“Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Mt. 5:10).

The Christian who has been persecuted for the sake of righteousness ...

1. Knows that it is blessing to be persecuted for the sake of Jesus (Mt. 5:11).
Therefore, he rejoices and is glad even when he is being persecuted (v. 12).
2. Participates in Jesus’ suffering (Rev. 1:9).
Like Jesus, he learns obedience from the things which he suffers (Heb. 5:8).
3. Benefits from suffering and enjoy it (Ps. 119:71).
He knows that it is God’s will to suffer for doing good (1 Pet. 3:17).
He turns from the wrong way through suffering and keeps the word of the Lord (Ps. 119:67).
4. Longs for the glory to be revealed in the future that cannot be compared with the present suffering (Rom. 8:18).
He looks at the great reward in heaven (Mt. 5:12).
Therefore, he chooses rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasure of sin (Heb. 11:25).

The rebellious Christians

The rebellious Christians are heaping sin upon sin

By trying to strengthen themselves in the power of the world. (Cf. Isa. 30:1-2)

We should avoid her.

We should avoid a dangerous person. Those who please God avoid her.

The reason why she is dangerous is because her heart is like snares and nets, and her hand are like chains.

The sinner will ensnare. (Eccle. 7:26)

Favoritism causes hatred.

It is irony that Joseph was especially loved by his father Jacob at home (Gen. 37:3) and at the same he was hated by his older brothers (v. 4) even more to the point that they tried to kill him (v. 18).

Like this, father's (or mother's) favoritism causes hatred among brothers.

Beware of evaluating and being evaluated

We pastors should beware of evaluating ourselves with the fruits of ministry and of being evaluated by the church members. The reason is because we as the Lord's servants are only doing our duties and the fruit of the ministry isn't what we produce but what God produces. (1 Cor. 3:5, 7)

"he cannot divorce her all his days"

Let's say after marrying his wife he hates her, charges her with shameful deeds and publicly defames her and turn out that it wasn't true then he cannot divorce her all his days. (Deut. 22:13-19)

We should read the Bible all the days of our lives.

We should learn to fear God and carefully observe all His word
by reading the Bible all the days of our lives.

Then our hearts won't be lifted up above our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ
and we won't turn aside from His commandment, to the right or the left. (Deut. 17:19-20)

The way of peace or the way of pain?

Being silent after I have sinned against God means that I am denying my sins in my heart.
This means that I have chosen to walk the way of pain because i stick to my stubbornness.
Anyone who chooses an easy way of peace confesses his sin to God immediately.
(Ps. 32).

(As I read Mark D. Futato's "The Book of Psalms")

The pastors who keep themselves from being a burden?

The pastors should be careful themselves
not to keep themselves from being a burden to their church members. (2 Cor. 11:9).

Severe famine is better than abundance?

It is much better for God to lead us to the land of Canaan which has severe famine than we choose to live in Sodom and Gomorrah that is like the garden of the Lord and like the land of Egypt but the people are wicked exceedingly and sinners against the Lord. (Gen. 12:5; 13:10, 13)

Those who think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience ...

Those who think lightly of the riches of God's kindness and tolerance and patience don't know that the kindness of God leads them to repentance and pass judgment on those who practice such things and do the same themselves in their stubbornness and unrepented heart. (Rom. 2:2-5)

There could be more sin in that abundant place?

There could be many wicked people who are sinning greatly against the Lord
In that place when I see abundance. (Gen. 13:10, 13)

When our prosperity is threatened ...

When our prosperity is threatened, we can be filled with rage and thus can create confusion
and do something rash with no real cause. (Acts 19:25, 27, 28, 32, 36, 40)

My cross that I want to avoid?

Our cross that we want to avoid in the midst of great trouble in our hearts ...
But we must not forget that we came thus far for that cross ...
(Cf. Jn. 12:27)

The path that I don't want to avoid

Let us seek God's grace for us to faithfully walk the path of suffering and of death with the Lord.
(Lk. 22:15, 22)

Until God fulfills all His promises to us

[Short Word Meditation (10)]

James Kim

In the sight of God ...?

I want God to turn His ears to my prayer even though I turned a deaf ear to His word?
(Prov. 28:9)

Everything is great commandments in the sight of God.

Among the Ten Commandments, I thought the first commandment
“You shall have no other gods before Me” was the greatest commandment (Exod. 20:3).
So I thought that God hated the sins of idolatry the most.
However, during this week Morning Prayer meeting, as I was meditating and preaching based on
Matthew 5:19, “Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do
the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven ...,” this thought came into my mind:
Although there is a great commandment and the least commandment in our eyes,
I think in the sight of God everything is great commandments.
The basis of my thought is if the first commandment of the Ten commandments is
about don’t worship any idols, then the tenth commandment “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house;
you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey
or anything that belongs to your neighbor” (Exod. 20:17) is also about don’t worship idol
(Col. 3:5 – “... greed, which amounts to idolatry”).

The wicked in the eyes of God ...

The wicked in the eyes of God preach the word of God with the lips but ignore and hate God’s word in
the heart. (Ps. 50:16-17)

A beautiful old man in the sight of God

An old man (Ps. 71:18) who has been redeemed (v. 23) and who always has hope, praises the Lord's truth more and more (vv. 14, 22) and glorifies Him (v. 8) in the midst of many troubles and distresses (v. 20) because of the Lord's righteousness and His salvation that cannot be measured (v. 15), is a beautiful in the sight of God.

The children of God who really please Father God (1)

The children of God who really please Father God (Prov. 23:15-16) don't let their hearts envy sinners (v. 17). [The reason is because they know that there is no future and hope to the sinners (v. 18)].

Rather, they fear God (v. 17).

The reason is because there is future and hope for those who fear God (v. 18).

The children of God who really please God enjoy the blessing of prosperity even through suffering (Ex. Joseph). The reason why they suffer is because they hate evil since they fear God (8:13).

Therefore, they suffer because of the wicked but they consider suffering for the sake of the Lord as grace (Phil. 1:29).

The children of God who really please Father God (2)

The children of God who really please Father God (Prov. 23:15-16)

keep their hearts on the right path (v. 19).

And in order to keep their hearts on the right path, they listen to the word of God and are wise (v. 19).

The children of God who really please Father God break up their unplowed hearts (Hos. 10:12) by the word of God, that is like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces (Jere. 23:29), in order to direct their hearts on the right path.

They break their hardened hearts again and again. Also, they let the sword of the Spirit, the word of God (Eph. 6:17) to pierce their hearts (Acts 2:37) so that they repent and turn to obey the word of God.

Therefore, they make the word of God their own possession (Ps. 119:56).

And they make the word of God to lead them. As a result, they direct their hearts on the right path.

The children of God who really please Father God (3)

The children of God who really please Father God (Prov. 23:15-16)
don't join those who drink too much wine or gorge themselves on meat (v. 20).
The reason is because they know that drunkards and gluttons become poor,
and drowsiness clothes them in rags (v. 21).

The children of God who really please Father God don't associate with those who enjoy pleasures.
They don't mix with those who live a life of debauchery.
They never socialize with them intimately or closely.
The reason is because they know that they aren't wise (20:1).
They know that those who live the life of debauchery have woe, sorrow, strife, complaints, needless
bruises and bloodshot eyes (23:29).
They know that those who seek pleasure will become poor (v. 21).

The ones whom we are to associate with are first the wise ones.
We should be friends with those who can make us wiser.
Second, we should make friends with those whom we can walk the journey of faith with us.
Third, we should be friends with those who can have good Christian influences on us.
If they have bad influence on our faith, we shouldn't get close to them and associate with them.

What is great worth in God's sight?

What is great worthy in God's sight isn't outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. What is great worth in God's sight is that of our inner selves, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit. It is being submissive to their own husbands. (1 Pet. 3:3-5)

It is detestable in God's sight.

Those who love money and are justify themselves in the eyes of men and are highly valued among men is detestable in God's sight. (Lk. 16:15)

Before God and before your spouse

Although he was dancing before the Lord with all his might and was rejoicing and glad with fellow brothers and sisters in Christ and was blessing and sharing, his spouse despised him in her heart because in her eyes he was undignified. (2 Sam. 6:12-22)

Relying on others than God ...

It is sinning against God to rely on others than God while going about so much, changing your way.
Yet those who say "I am innocent" will be judged by God.
God will forsake those whom you rely on so that you will not prosper through them.
(Jere. 2:35-37)

Lord, teach us to number our days aright.

A psalmist Moses prayed like this: “Teach us to number our days aright” (Ps. 90:12).

We should pray like Moses. Two prayers are implied in this prayer. These two prayers are ...

1. ‘Teach us that our lives are a mere breath’
2. ‘Teach us how to live our lives worthwhile.’

'O Lord, take my life.'

He was afraid and arose and ran for his life and went a day's journey into the wilderness and requested for himself that he might die, and said:

‘O Lord, it is enough. Now take my life because I am not better than my fathers.’

(1 Kgs. 19:1-4)

Thank God

I cannot help myself but to thank God when I see faith of my fellow brothers and sisters in Christ is growing and their love is increasing. (2 Thess. 1:3)

Thank God ...

“I am unworthy of all the lovingkindness and of all the faithfulness which You have shown to Your servant; for with my staff only I crossed this Jordan, and now I have become two companies”
(Gen. 32:10).

When I think of my whole family, I am grateful for all the lovingkindness and of all the faithfulness which God has shown to us. The reason is because God has provided great and many blessings to all my family even though we don’t deserve them.

“For His lovingkindness is great toward us, And the truth of the LORD is everlasting. Praise the LORD!”
(Ps. 117:2)

Leave my revenge to God?

Although he had two opportunities to revenge his enemy who wanted to harm and killed him,
And a person beside him said, this was the God’s given opportunities,
He didn’t revenge on his enemy because he trusted what God said, “It is mine to avenge, I will repay.”
(1 Sam. 24:12, 26:10; Rom. 12:19)

He who isn’t rich toward God

He who isn’t rich toward God constantly worries about how to store up his wealth instead of using the wealth wisely for the Lord. (Lk. 12:16-21)

Even as we are calling to God ...

We, the people of God, are doing all the evil we can even as we are calling to God
Because we have the brazen look of a prostitute and we refuse to blush with shame.
(Jere. 3:3-5)

The battle is God's.

The spiritual battle is God's. Life, death, happiness and misery are God's.
Ministry is God's. Therefore, we must not be afraid.
(Cf. 2 Chron. 20:15)

If we sin against God ...

If we disobey God's command and sins against God (Josh. 7:1) it will bring trouble on us (6:18).
We will be afraid with sense of defeat (7:5). And we will regret the present situation and will want to
return to the past with nostalgic satisfaction (v. 7).

Those who are born of God

Everyone who believes that Jesus is Christ is born of God” (1 Jn. 5:1).

Those who are born of God love God, and those who love God are born of God (v. 1).

They are God’s children and God’s children love God and keep His commands (v. 3).

And those who are born of God overcome the world by faith (v. 4).

They who believe that Jesus is the Son of God overcome the world (v. 5).

Those whom God calls and uses ...

Those who God calls in His time and uses according to His will are holy and humble.

Why does God faithfully bringing disaster to us?

God is faithful. When we faithfully obey God’s word,

God faithfully blesses us according to His promise to us.

But when we faithfully disobey His word,

God faithfully brings disaster to us according to His promise to us.

Therefore, God makes us known whose words will surely stand,

whether God’s word or the words of the false pastors.

(Cf. Jer. 44:27-29)

Will God accept us?

Since we don't understand God's love, don't honor Him and don't fear Him,
We are showing contempt for His name and are profaning devoted worship to God.
Nevertheless, we are asking God to be gracious to us. Will God accept us?
Will God accept our offering? (Mal. 1)

Until God has done what He has promised us ...

Esau hated his younger brother Jacob so much that he said to himself,
“The days of mourning for my father are near; then I will kill my brother Jacob” (Gen. 27:41)
because Jacob had deceived Esau two times:
“He took my birthright, and now he's taken my blessing!” (v. 36).
When their mother Rebekah was told what Esau had said, she sent for Jacob and said,
“Your brother Esau is consoling himself with the thought of killing you.
Now then, my son, do what I say: Flee at once to my brother Laban in Haran.
Stay with him for a while until your brother's fury subsides” (vv. 42-44).
She thought that Esau's fury would subside and would forget what Jacob did to him (vv. 44-45).
But it wasn't Esau's fury subsided or he forgot what Jacob did to him
that Jacob returned to the land of Canaan.
It was the Lord who was with Jacob, watched over him wherever he went,
and brought Jacob back to the land of Canaan (28:15).
The Lord didn't leave him until He had done what He had promised him (v. 15).
The same God will not leave us and will watch over us wherever we go
until He has done what He has promised us.

What God desires from us ...

What God desires from us is acknowledgment of God (Hos. 6:6).
But there is no acknowledgment of God in our land (4:1).
We are being destroyed from lack of knowledge of God (v. 6).
Even the pastors are rejecting the knowledge of God (v. 6).
All of us are ignoring the law of God (v. 6).
The number of church members and churches is decreasing now,
but the number of pastors is increasing.
And the more the pastors are increasing, the more they are sinning against God (v. 7).
Therefore, God is changing their glory into shame (v. 7).

The reason why we don't want to know God is
because the more we know God, the more our sins will be exposed (Eph. 5:11).
In other words, the reason why we aren't pursuing the knowledge of God is
because now we are participating in the unfruitful deeds of darkness (v. 11).
We don't want to know Him because we are walking in the darkness
even though we keep on saying that we have fellowship with God (1 Jn. 1:6).

We must know God. Let us press on to know the Lord our God (Hos. 6:3).

What devotion does God want from us?

Devote yourself to God. Offer your life to Him.

Why did God command Abraham to offer his son Isaac to Him?

Wasn't it because Isaac was the most precious son to Abraham?

The meaning was that God asked him, "Do you love Me more than your son Isaac?"

John 21:15 – "Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?"

God wants us to offer our most precious and beloved person to Him.

God wants to be always first in our lives.

Is God really the first in our lives?

But in the days of the prophet Malachi, the Israelites offered "defiled food,"

"the blind for sacrifice," "the lame and sick" and "what was taken by robbery" (Mal. 1:7-8, 13).

God didn't receive these offerings (vv. 8, 10, 13).

Not only that, God didn't receive the Israelites who offered these offerings (v. 9).

Those who sincerely praise "There is nothing more precious than the Lord Jesus"

offer the most precious and the beloved person to Him

like Abraham offered his precious and beloved son Isaac to God.

And they offer by faith in trusting that "The Lord Will Provide" (Gen. 22:14).

The message that God is giving to us

The God's message to us through the 39th anniversary of the Victory Presbyterian Church Word Rally

God wants us to live our Christian lives with the perspectives of death,

of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ and of eternity, life in Heaven.

God wants us to listen to His words and obey them in His presence.

Therefore, we should move forward in silence of trust as we worship God with songs of thanksgiving,

Believing and assuring that God will fulfill His promise word in His time and in His own way.

Father God who gave manna sent Jesus, the true manna and the bread of life, to the earth.

And Father God who made the covenant with Jesus faithfully fulfills

and brings completion His promise of salvation.

Jesus, who is true manna and the bread of life from heaven,

was obedient to His Father God until death on the cross.

The Holy Spirit feeds us the true manna to us

and assures us of the fulfillment of God's covenant in Christ Jesus, the bread of life.

Therefore, we must give thanks to our faithful God and obey His word.

And we must live of life of sharing Jesus and His gospel to our neighbors.

Because we believe that God is with us.

The reason why we don't fear or aren't dismayed and going out to face our enemies is

because we believe that God of salvation is with us.

(2 Chron. 20:17)

How much does God hate our sins?

The Israelites, who hated the God's promised land of Canaan, didn't believe God despite all the signs which He had performed in their midst, had put God to the test, were disobedient and grumbled, would learn God's opposition as they bore their sins in the wilderness for 40 years (Num. 14:11-34). This reminds me Jesus who bore our sins and died on the cross. I think of how much God hates our sins.

God has given you.

God has given you (Gen. 43:23). We are just God's instruments.

Life with God is much better.

Rather than living in a royal palace and sinning against God (2 Sam. 11), it is much better to live a life with God even if you live as a slave in a foreign county. (Gen. 39)

The people whom God makes me to meet?

When I think about why God makes me to meet the people through church and internet ministries,
1 Samuel 22:1-2 comes to my mind:

“So David departed from there and escaped to the cave of Adullam;
and when his brothers and all his father's household heard of it, they went down there to him.
Everyone who was in distress, and everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was discontented
gathered to him; and he became captain over them.
Now there were about four hundred men with him.”

When David was running away from King Saul, there were his brothers
and all his father's household and others who came to the cave of Adullam where David was.
They were those who were in distress, who was in debt and who was discontented.

When I think about his and think about whom God has brought into my life,
I think that God is bringing the people who are similar to me.
I am sure this is God's will.

God ...

God surely fulfills His will in His time in His way. (Cf. Gen. 21:1-6)

God also works in our lives through meeting with non-believers.

Not only God makes us to be found favor in a non-believer's sight (Gen. 39:4),
He also allows us to go through an unfair thing through the same non-believer (vv. 19-20).
But in the midst of going through the unfair thing, God makes us to meet another non-believer (40:1)
and get help from that non-believer (41:9-13).
And then, God makes us to meet another non-believer and exalts us (vv. 37-45).

Therefore, we must not think that we should always live only among the believers.
We only need to live in the Lord.
God will cause all things to work together for good to us (Rom. 8:28) and
fulfills His good, pleasing and perfect will (12:2)
through all the meetings the Lord allows in our lives.

God speaks louder to us when we are in a lot of trouble.

God speaks louder to us when we are in a lot of trouble.
And the indwelling Holy Spirit enables us to receive His word that are heard loudly with joy
(1 Thess. 1:5), but not as the word of men, but for what it really is
so that it performs its work in us who believe (2:13).
In other words, the Holy Spirit enables us to hold onto that promise word of God and cry out to Him
and gives us assurance and conviction that God will surely fulfill it no matter what.
As a result, we become imitators of the Lord in much tribulation (1:6).

God makes such a pastor ...

God makes such a pastor to be despised and to be abased before all the people (Mal. 2:9).
The pastor who doesn't listen to the word of God and doesn't take it to heart (v. 2),
The pastor who doesn't revere God and stands in awe of His name (v. 5),
The pastor whose mouth doesn't have true instruction but have unrighteousness (v. 6),
The pastor who doesn't preserve knowledge (. 7),
The pastor who turns aside from the way and causes many to stumble by the instruction (v. 8),
The pastor who shows partiality in the instruction and turns many back to iniquity (vv. 6, 9).

I want to follow the Lord fully.

I want my heart to be wholly devoted to the Lord and follow Him fully
without doing what is evil in the sight of the Lord.
To do that, I must obey His command that I shouldn't associate with unbelievers,
nor should they associate with me so that they cannot turn my heart away after their gods.
(1 Kgs. 11:1-6)

God knows me best.

God discerns me so He knows me. He perceives my thoughts and is familiar with all my ways.
God knows everything about me. (Ps. 139:1-4)

God knew.

God knew what the Israelites were thinking.

God knew that when they entered into the land flowing with milk and honey, and they have eaten and were satisfied and became prosperous, then they would turn to other gods and serve them, and spurn Him and break His covenant (Deut. 31:16-20).

Moses knew the Israelites' rebellion and their stubbornness.

He knew that after his death they would act corruptly and turn from the way which he had commanded them; and evil would befall them in the latter days, for they would do that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, provoking Him to anger with the work of their hands (vv. 27-29).

God called us.

Gad has called us by name and said "you are Mine!" (Isa. 43:1). He has redeemed us (v. 1; 44:22, 23). He has wiped out our transgressions and sins (44:22). God will show forth His glory (v. 23).

At an acceptable time ...

When our prayer to God is at an acceptable time, God answers us with His saving truth in the greatness of His lovingkindness. (Ps. 69:13)

God says these to us.

God says these to us: “you will not be forgotten by Me” (Isa. 44:21).

"I, even I, am the one who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake,
And I will not remember your sins" (43:25).

"... Truly I have spoken; truly I will bring it to pass. I have planned it, surely I will do it. ...
My salvation will not delay And I will grant salvation in Zion, And My glory for Israel” (46:11, 13).

God is our refuge.

God is our refuge (Ps. 46:1, 7, 11). God is our strength (v. 1).

God is a very present help in trouble (v. 1). God will help us when morning dawns (v. 5).

This God is with us (vv. 7, 11).

Therefore, we aren't afraid (v. 3). We will not be moved (v. 5).

We will be still and know that He is God (v. 10).

“God did”

“For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did:
sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin,
He condemned sin in the flesh, so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us,
who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit” (Rom. 8:3-4).

A man came up to Jesus and asked, "Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?" (Mt. 19:16).
At that time Jesus said to him, "... If you want to enter life, obey the commandments" (v. 17).
The young man said, "All these I have kept ... What do I still lack?" (v. 20)
“Jesus answered, ‘If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor,
and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me’” (v. 21).
“When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth” (v. 22).
Then Jesus said this to his disciples: “I tell you the truth,
it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.
Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle
than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God” (vv. 23-24).
“When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished and asked, ‘Who then can be saved?’” (v. 25)
When Jesus heard this, He looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible,
but with God all things are possible” (v. 26).

This is what the Bible Romans 8:3 says, “For what the Law could not do,
weak as it was through the flesh, God did”
When we look at this word, the Bible says God did what the Law couldn’t do.
What did God do? God did set us free from the law of sin and of death (v. 2).
Here “the law” refers to the Mosaic Law.
The Bible says the Law is holy and righteous and good (7:12) and spiritual (v. 14).
But the Law cannot set us free from the law of sin and of death (8:2) because it is weak (v. 3).
The Mosaic Law is weak as it was through the flesh
so it cannot set us free from the law of sin and of death (v. 2).
But the Bible says “God did” (v. 3). How did God set us free from the law of sin and of death?
It was through His begotten Son Jesus Christ (v. 3).
God sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin
in order to set us free from the law of sin and of death (v. 3).
The Word became flesh and dwelt among us (Jn. 1:14), yet without sin (Heb. 4:15).

Why did Jesus, who is conceived by the Holy Spirit
and is the holy Child and called the Son of God (Lk. 1:35) become the likeness of weak flesh?
The reason is because He wanted to bear all our sins, the punishment of sins, even our hell (Rom. 5:21).
Also the reason is because He wanted to sympathize with our weaknesses and help us (Heb. 4:15).

God sent Jesus in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin
and condemned sin in the flesh (Rom. 8:3)
so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us (v. 4).
Although by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight (3:20),
The righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the Law (v. 21)
And those who believe in Him can be justified (4:24).

As a result, we who don't walk according to the flesh
but according to the Spirit (8:4), has been set free from the law of sin and of death (v. 2).
Now there is no condemnation (v. 1) for us (v. 4) who are in Christ Jesus (v. 1)
and walk according to the law of the Spirit of life (v. 2).

[This is summary of the sermon by our church retired pastor on 2015. 7. 8.]

Are we fearing God?

Those who fear God will not spare even his most beloved and precious family member but offer him or her to God by faith. (Gen. 22:12)

He who fears God ...

He who has feared God from his youth not only helps His servants but also is obedient to God and His servant even it may risk his own life. (1 Kgs. 18:3-4, 7-15)

God who puts the fear of Him in our hearts

Just as God who brings a great disaster on us,

He will also bring on us all the good that He is promising us (Jere. 32:42).

Not only that God restores us after He has disciplined us in love and helps us to live securely,

He also becomes our God and enables us to always fear God for our good and for the good of our children after us and gives us one heart and one way so that we will not turn away from Him.

God will rejoice over us to do us good and will faithfully plant us in the land of promise that is in Heaven (vv. 37-41).

We should fear God.

Maybe the reason why we go through hardships in our live is because we have hardened our hearts (Prov. 28:14).

And the reason why we have hardened our hearts is

because we don't fear God and thus not hating evil (8:13).

If we fear God, not only that we will hate evil but also we will keep away from evil.

We will not hid our sins but acknowledge them when we realize them and will renounce them (28:13).

We are not in God's place.

Father Jacob and his son Joseph weren't in God's place. (Gen. 30:2, 50:19)

The result of staying far away from God?

Like Jonah, even though God called us and gave us a mission, we may disobey His command and try to run away from God's presence far away from Him (Jonah 1:1-3).

As a result, we may be put into painful situation in which we are trapped in north, south, east and west. At that time, even though we try very hard to deliver ourselves from that situation we cannot so we can feel very helpless and powerless. And we can feel that God is far away from us.

We can feel that God is far away from us in the midst of pain due to the result of we are staying far away from Him.

It is treating God with contempt.

Not believing God despite all the signs which He has performed in our midst is treating God with contempt. (Num. 14:11)

Trusting God

When I go to YMCA to exercise, I often see mom and dad are playing together in a small pool. It was interesting to notice that 2 or 3 years old kids were jumping into the pool and Asian parents usually were catching them inside the pool and American parents usually let them sink and then drag them out of water. I remembered this scene that I saw when I was meditating on Proverbs 3:5-6. When we say we trust God with all our hearts, I think it is like those children who trusted their parents that they would catch them or would drag them out of water when they jumped into the pool.

In order for us to trust God with all our hearts, we should ...

- (1) Believe that God is our Father,
- (2) Believe that our Father God loves us,
- (3) Believe that Father God guides us.

Are we following the Lord wholeheartedly?

If we live in this wilderness-like world like the ten spies who spied on the land of Canaan, who didn't follow the Lord wholeheartedly (Num. 32:11), then we will see only big problems.

As we see only those big problems, not only that we will be discouraged but also we will discourage other people around us by constantly complaining and grumbling.

But if we live in this world like Joshua and Caleb who followed God fully (v. 12), then we will focus on the greater God by faith who can save us fully in the midst of great problem that we see with our physical eyes and we will think, talk and act by faith alone.

Like Joshua and Caleb, I hope and pray that we follow the Lord fully by looking at our great God by faith and that we may be able to please Him as we speak and act by faith (Heb. 11:6).

Trusting in the Lord with all my heart

What does it mean by trusting in the Lord with all my heart? (Prov. 3:5-6)

It is not to doubt but believe and have assurance that God will fulfill His promise to me in His time and in His way even though in my eyes it is impossible to be fulfilled. (Rom. 4:20-21)

Success in God's point of view ...

In God's point of view, there are temptation, unfair accusation and prison life in success. (Gen. 39)

The reason I have no choice but to seek God's compassion ...

The reason I have no choice but to seek God's compassion is because I have realized that my sins, both qualitatively and quantitatively, are great in the sight of the Lord. (Cf. Ps. 51)

(As I was reading Mark J. Boda's "THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO DAVID: AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART")

Those who are considered worthy of the kingdom of God

Those who are considered worthy of the kingdom of God suffer for that kingdom.

When they suffer, they persevere and endure by faith. (2 Thess. 1:4-5)

Why we cannot prove God's will

The reason why we cannot prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect is because we are conforming to this world, but not being transformed by the renewing of our mind.
(Rom. 12:2)

What is not God's will

We Christians ask what God's will is many times. But we aren't use to ask what is not God's will.

This is what the Bible Matthew 18:14 says:

“So it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones perish.”

What isn't God's will is one of these little one is perishing.

What isn't God's will is to despise one of these little ones (v. 10).

It's God's will.

It's God's will that we suffer for doing what is right with a good conscience. (1 Pet. 3:16-17)

Why is it difficult to obey God's Word?

If Abraham had relied on his own understanding rather than trusting God (Prov. 3:5-6), Then he couldn't offer his beloved precious son Isaac to God as a burnt offering when God tested him (Gen. 22:1-2).

The reason is not only because he loved his son Isaac (22:2) whom God gave to him when he was 100 years old (21:5) but also if he offered Isaac as the burnt offering then God's promise "So shall your descendants be" wouldn't be fulfilled (15:5).

However, Abraham didn't rely on his own understanding but trusted God and feared Him (21:12). Thus, he obeyed God's word and offered Isaac to God (22:9-10; Heb. 11:17) without withholding his only son Isaac from God (22:12).

Because of the word of God ...

The word of God is like fire (Job 41:19-21), and a hammer (Jere. 23:29) and is the sword (Isa. 49:2). Because of that word of God, our icy hearts should be melted, our consciences should be stricken, and our hardened hearts should be broken.

Make the word of God mine

We should make suffering as an opportunity to make the word of God ours, the opportunity to write down His word on the tablet of our hearts. (Ps. 119:56)

We must fear the word of the Lord.

Those who fear the word of the Lord pay regard to His word and obey it. (Cf. Exod. 9:18-21)

We must be offended by the word of God.

We, who honor God with our lips but our hearts are far away from Him (Mt. 15:8), are worshiping God vainly because our teachings are but rules taught by men (v. 9).

We are breaking the command of God for the sake of our tradition (v. 3).

We say that “Whatever help you might otherwise have received from me is a gift devoted to God, he is not to ‘honor his father’ with it” (vv. 5-6). “For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander” (v. 19).

We who are like these Pharisees must be offended by the word of God (v. 12).

When we hear the word of God

When we hear the word of God, the sword of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12),

The word of God should pierce our hearts (Acts 2:37).

Then we should rend our hearts (Joel 2:13) and repent our sins.

When I hear the word of God, I hope and pray that my heart becomes tender

and I humble myself before God and I want to repent my sins with mourning. (2 Chron. 34:27)

A Christian who follows the word of God

A Christian who follows the word of God obeys Him when He says, “Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father’s house, To the land which I will show you” (Gen. 12:1). He obeys His word by faith as he holds onto His promise (vv. 2-4) and goes out, not knowing where he is going (Heb. 11:8).

Because he lacks the word of God ...

Those who don’t stand firm in faith because he lacks the word of God ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord. The reason is because he prays to God without faith or with doubt. (Jam. 1:7)

(As I am reading John Calvin’s “Institute of the Christian Religion”)

It is God’s command.

God commands us “Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed.”

The reason is because the Lord our God is with us wherever we go. (Josh. 1:9)

“the law of God”, “a law of faith”, “the law of the Spirit of life”?

"the law of God"(Rom. 7:22, 25) [vs. "the law of sin"(vv. 23, 25)]
"a law of faith"(3:27) [vs. sin that is our master (6:14, 15)],
"the law of the Spirit of life"(8:2) [vs. "the law of sin and death" (v. 2)].

When I was meditating on these three laws that Apostle Paul mentioned in the Book of Romans,
I thought these laws are the Triune God's law –
the Father God's law, the Son Jesus' law of faith and the law of the Holy Spirit.
And I tried to meditate this Triune God's law in connection with the core theme of the Book of Romans,
that is 'The righteousness of God that is revealed in the gospel,
that is "The righteous will live by faith" (1:17).

I first thought that salvation is the work of the Triune God.
God the Father plans salvation, God the Son completes salvation
and God the Spirit applies to us the saving work planned by the Father God
and completed by the Son Jesus Christ. (Cf. Eph. 1:3-14)

Then, I thought about what are "the law of God," "a law of faith" and "the law of the Spirit of life"
in connection to the saving work of the Triune God.
Father God's law is His saving love,
Son Jesus' law of faith is the truth of salvation that whoever believes in Jesus Christ will be saved,
"the law of the Spirit of life" is the applied law of Father God's saving love
and the saving truth of the Son Jesus Christ by faith,
that is the power of salvation that makes us to obey the Jesus' twofold command.

“the priestly duty of proclaiming the gospel of God”

[Romans 15:16-21]

Apostle Paul thanked God for putting him into service (1 Tim. 1:12).

The reason was because he knew that it was God's grace for him to be put into service (Rom. 15:15).

Paul was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor (1 Tim. 1:13)

who persecuted the church of God (1 Cor. 15:9).

But by the grace of God, he became an apostle to the Gentiles (Rom. 1:5; 11:13). Isn't this God's grace?

That was why Paul confessed 'I am what I am because of God's grace' (1 Cor. 15:10).

Apostle Paul said because of the grace that was given him from God,

he became a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles (Rom. 15:15-16).

In other words, what Paul said about Father God's grace is that he who persecuted the church that the Head of the Church Jesus Christ (Acts 9:4, 5) became the minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles by God's total grace (Rom. 15:15-16).

As a minister of the Son Jesus,

Paul fulfilled his priestly duty proclaiming the gospel of God to the Gentiles.

Here his priestly duty refers to proclaiming the gospel to the Gentiles

so that the Gentiles might become an offering acceptable to God (v. 16).

Here, the gospel of God (1:1) that he proclaimed to the Gentiles is regarding his Son who was promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures (vv. 2-3).

And the Son, who as to his human nature was a descendant of David, and who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord (vv. 3-4).

The purpose why the Father God sent Apostle Paul to preach the gospel of God to the Gentiles as the minister of Christ Jesus is so that the Gentiles might become the offering acceptable to God (Rom. 15:16). This means that the purpose was "to call people from among all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith" (1:5).

And this is for them to believe in Jesus Christ by hearing the gospel of the Father God and of the Son Jesus Christ and be obedient to the Lord (v. 5; 15:18), that is being "sanctified by the Holy Spirit" (15:16) so that they might offer their bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – that is their spiritual act of worship (12:1).

The Son Jesus worked through Apostle Paul so that the Gentiles might obey God

by what he had said and done (15:18).

Apostle Paul gloried in Christ Jesus in his service to God (v. 17) because he wouldn't presume to speak of anything except what Christ had accomplished through him (v. 18).

As a result of the work of the Son Jesus, the Gentile became obedient (v. 18) in the power of the Spirit (v. 19).

Here, "the power of the Spirit" means the Spirit of God enabled the Gentiles to believe in Jesus Christ and to obey Him in the power of signs and wonders (vv. 18-19), in things pertaining to God (v. 17).

Eventually, Apostle Paul, who became the minister of the Son Jesus Christ by the Father God's grace, ministering as the priest the gospel of God, in the power of God the Spirit, offered the Gentiles to whom he proclaimed the gospel of Jesus Christ, the gospel of God so that he might offer them as holy and living sacrifices to God.

We also serve as priests and ministers of the Son Jesus Christ by Father God's grace who go out into the world and proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Then the power of God the Spirit appears that our gospel doesn't come to them in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction (1 Thess. 1:5).

They will believe in Jesus and obey Him (Rom. 1:5) and will accept the word of God not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God (1 Thess. 2:13).

They will receive the word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit and will become imitators of the Lord (1:6).

[This is summary of the sermon preached by our church retired pastor on February 10, 2019.]

The process of building up as a man of God

God who delivers us from the needy to the more needy situation
makes us to look only to God who is rich in love and grace.
He teaches us that there is only the Lord whom we can rely on.
God who leads us to the problem to the bigger problem makes us to pray to the God of salvation.
He enables us to experience the power of God's salvation that raises the dead (1 Kgs. 17:22).
God, who commands us to enter into greater adversity among adversity,
allows us to know that "man does not live by bread alone,
but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the LORD" (Deut. 8:3).
God makes us to be led only by the word of God's promise.
By doing so, God is building us up as "a man of God" (1 Kgs. 17:24).
Seeing this man of God, this is what people say:
"Now I know that you are a man of God and that the word of the LORD in your mouth is truth" (v. 24).

God's love is ...

God's love is sending love (Jn. 3:34), giving love (v. 16), and God with us love (Mt. 1:23).

To doubt God's love ...

To doubt God's love for us is the root of all spiritual problems (Mal. 1:2).
Hearts that have not personally experienced God's perfect love that was revealed by the death of Jesus on the cross are bound to fall into various temptations.

(As I am reading Iain M. Duguid & Matthew P. Harmon's "Zephaniah, Haggai, Malachi"
REFORMED EXPOSITORY COMMENTARY")

Those who are loved by God ...

Those who are loved by God are in God's hand, bow down at His feet, receive God's words and obey them and thus dwell in security by Him. (Deut. 33:3, 12)

Let us enjoy God's gift.

Let's consider everything as God's gifts and let's enjoy them in the Lord (Eccle. 3:13, 5:19)

We must experience God's goodness.

Without experiencing God's goodness (Ps. 34:8; Rom. 8:28),
we cannot be good those who tried to harm us (Gen. 50:20).

We believe in God's providence.

In raising children, there may be pains such as testing, separation, and death.

But in the meantime, we must believe that God's sovereign will is being fulfilled in His providence.

Also, we must believe that God will fulfill His will in His time and in His way.

The God of Abraham commanded Abraham to offer his son Isaac, whom he born unto him when Abraham was 100 years old, in order to test him (Gen. 22).

The God of Isaac made Isaac and his son Jacob to be separated for 20 years (31:38).

The God of Jacob made Jacob known that his beloved son Joseph, whom he thought was dead at the age of 17 (17:2), became a ruler over all the land of Egypt 22 years later when Joseph was 39 years old (45:26).

Then through Joseph God not only delivered Jacob and all his descendants from the famine but also preserved their lives (vv. 5, 7).

The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob has fulfilled His sovereign will in His time and in His way through Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

We must trust God's character.

We must trust God's character. Then we can trust God's work that we cannot understand with our reason.
(Ps. 33:4)

God's test, the Israelites' test

God tested the Israelites, who were complaining by raining bread from heaven for them so that they could go out and gather a day's portion every day, whether or not they would walk in His instruction (Exod. 16:4).

But the Israelites, who were thirsty and thus complaining, tested God by quarreling with Moses and saying, "Is the Lord among us, or not?" (17:2, 7)

Isn't God's perfect time so amazing?

This is what the prophet Elisha said to his servant: "Is it a time to receive money and to receive clothes and olive groves and vineyards and sheep and oxen and male and female servants?" (2 Kgs. 5:26)

Is this a time for the pastors to receive money in their greed from new church members?

The Shunem woman whose son the prophet Elisha had restored to life did according to the word of man of God.

So she went away with her family and stayed in the land of the Philistines 7 years.

After 7 years, she came back and went to the king to beg for her house and land.

Right at that time, the king was talking to Gehazi, the servant of the man of God Elisha to find out about all the great things Elisha had done.

So just as Gehazi was telling the king how Elisha had restored the dead to life, the woman whose son Elisha had brought back to life came to beg the king for her house and land (8:1-5).

Isn't God's perfect time so amazing?

God's priority and our priority

We must keep in mind that our priority should be aligned with God's priority.

God's priority for Paul and his companions were not Asia or Mysia.

God's priority was Macedonia (Acts 16:6-7).

That's why the Holy Spirit forbade or didn't permit Paul and his companions from going to Asia or Mysia even though they tried hard to find a mission field.

We don't know how the Spirit forbade Paul and his companions from going to Asia or Mysia because the Bible doesn't mention.

The important thing is when the apostle Paul and his companions were blocked by the Holy Spirit, they obeyed the Spirit instead of trying to fulfill their own will.

Here, the lesson that we should learn is when the Spirit stops us, we need to know how to press the break.

In a word, when the Spirit says "Stop," then we must say "Yes" and obey the Spirit.

But for some reason, we aren't good at pressing the spiritual break when the Holy Spirit says 'Stop' because we do the Lord's work so hard like when we press the car's accelerator pedal too deep to speed up so that it's hard for us to press the break pedal.

We must know when to stop.

We must not be too busy just looking ahead and running without knowing when we have to stop.

If the Holy Spirit tells us to run, then we should run.

But when the Spirit tells us to stop, then we should stop.

What we need here is spiritual sensitivity

If we are spiritually sensitive all the time, we can realize the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is the God who clearly tells us the will of the Lord.

He isn't the Spirit who lets us know the Lord's will blurry.

He makes black and white clear and makes "yes" and "no" clearly.

Then, why can't we understand the Spirit's blocking (not allowing)?

The reason is because we are spiritually dull.

The reason is because our mind isn't sharpened with the word of God.

That's why Paul exhorted us not to be conformed to this world,

but be transformed by the renewing of our mind (Rom. 12:2).

In doing so, we will be able to discern His good, acceptable and perfect will (v. 2).

The fatal thing that makes us to forget God's grace

The fatal thing that makes us to forget God's grace is our pride and our righteousness. (Deut. 8:14, 9:4-6)

I want to see God's grace.

I want to see God's grace. I want to see God's grace on how He makes us to preach His word even through the tribulation we face. I want to see God's grace of bringing non-believers who hear the gospel of Jesus Christ through us to believe in Him and return to Him. (Acts 11:19-23)

It's just making God's grace cheap!

When what we want and what the Bible says collide, mostly we don't live what we say and believe.

It is no coincidence that this past writing appeared on Facebook at this time.

In sovereign God's good, acceptable and perfect will, I have now come across this writing in this morning.

Then what are the lessons that the Lord wants to give us through this writing?

1. The word of God has no choice but to collide with the greed that is beyond proper limits.
2. At that moment, my conscience tells me not to according to my greed. But I am already decided to do it according to my greed and actually am doing so.
3. Eventually, I didn't live by what I said (preached) and believed. My hypocrisy is being revealed.
4. However, I am standing in front of my church members again and preaching 'By God's grace, I am'
5. My lips are full of 'God's grace' but deep in my heart there is full of my merit.
6. Now I am making God's precious grace cheap grace.
7. Now I am just revealing my glory as a man and never the glory of God!

God's guidance?

1. God who blocks and opens

God blocks the way we want to go and opens the way God wants us to go (Acts 16:6-10).

2. God who leads around

God doesn't lead us to the shortcut but to the way around by the desert road (Exod. 13:17-18).

The purpose is not only to let us experience God's glory (chs. 14-15) but also to humble us and teach us that we don't live by bread alone but by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord (Deut. 8:2-3).

3. God who leads ahead and stays

God leads us ahead and eventually leads us to stay before Jesus (Mt. 2:9). God guides us to the Lord and makes us to sit down before Him and listen to Him like Mary when we are busy working for Him like Martha (Lk. 10:39-40).

4. God who leads us to the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

God never tempt us (Jam. 1:13). But God tests us (Ex. Gen. 22).

The Holy Spirit leads us to the wilderness and let us be tempted by the devil (God's permissive will) (Mt. 4:1). That doesn't mean that God tempts us through the devil [we are tempted when we are carried away and enticed by our own lust (Jam. 1:14)].

It means that in God's sovereignty God allows the devil to tempt us [as if God allowed Satan to strike Job and his children and his possessions (Job 1:12, 2:6)].

The purpose is to teach us that we can overcome the devil's temptation only by the word of God (Mt. 4:4, 7, 10; Cf. Deut. 8:3)].

God's work and God's will

God's work is to believe in Jesus (Jn. 6:29).

God's will is to believe in Jesus and have eternal life (v. 40).

Those who think of God's work

Those who think of God's work follow Jesus.

Those who follow Jesus deny themselves and take up their crosses and follow Jesus.

Such people lose their lives for Jesus and His gospel. (Mk. 8:33-35)

What is God's work?

We need to make our priorities clear. Our first task is not to serve God.

The first thing we should do is the work of God.

And the work of God is to believe in Jesus whom God has sent (Jn. 6:29).

Our priority is to believe in Jesus and the progress of our faith (Phil. 1:25).

First thing from God's point of view?

From our point of view, we have to worship God first.

From God's point of view, we first reconcile each other and then worship God. (Mt. 5:24)

God's children, witnesses, and soldiers ...

God's children must be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus (2 Tim. 2:1).

The children of God, who are able to call God "Abba Father"

because their sins are forgiven and are justified through death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, understand deeply that they are what they are because of God's grace (1 Cor. 15:10) so that they labor more than others with the power of God's grace.

God's witnesses must be faithful (2 Tim. 2:2).

As Jesus' witnesses, we must be faithful to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

They who have been given a trust must prove faithful (1 Cor. 4:2).

God's soldiers suffer hardship with Jesus (2 Tim. 2:3).

As God's soldiers, we join with Him in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God (1:8).

It's God's grace to suffer with Jesus and His gospel (Phil. 1:29).

God's soldiers please Jesus who enlisted them as soldiers (2 Tim. 2:4).

We shouldn't entangle ourselves in the affairs of everyday life (v. 4).

As God's soldiers, we must please our God who is our joy and our delight (Ps. 43:4).

It is God's total grace.

In love God calls those whom He chose before the foundation of the world to salvation.

Those whom God called to bring salvation were predestined (Rom. 8:30)

[(predestination (Eph. 1:4-5; Rom.8:29)).

Those whom God predestined to salvation, who He called first regenerates them, the sanctification of the Holy Spirit.

Conversion is the inevitable result of this regeneration and there are elements of repentance and of faith.

It is God's total grace that He gave us salvation in Jesus Christ. (Eph. 2:8-9; Cf. Internet)

God's secret and instruction ...

There is God's secret and instruction with those who fear God (Ps. 25:12, 14).

God leads and teaches the humble (v. 9).

What is good and fitting?

It is good and fitting in the sight of God to eat the daily bread God gives and enjoy oneself in all one's labor in which he toils in this world. (Eccle. 5:18)

God abhors

God abhors the man of deceit. (Ps. 5:6)

God has come ...

God has come in order to test us, and in order that the fear of God may remain with us, so that we may not sin. (Exod. 20:20)

"not one word has failed"

Not one word failed of all God's good promise, also not now and not in the future as well.
(1 Kgs. 8:56)

"the hope laid up for you in heaven"

The hope laid up for us in heaven is the hope of the gospel and the hope of glory.
(Col. 1:5, 23, 27)

My days as handbreadths

My days as handbreadths, and my lifetime as nothing in God's sight is a mere breath (Ps. 39:5).
Surely we walk about as a phantom. Surely we make an uproar for nothing.
We amass riches and don't know who will gather them (v. 6).
With reproofs God chastens us for iniquity and consumes as a moth what is precious to Him.
Surely every man is a mere breath (v. 11).
"And now, Lord, for what do I wait? My hope is in You" (v. 7).

We put to fight a thousand ...

Since the Lord our God is He who fights for us, just as He promised us, we put to fight a thousand and should have good influence of the Lord to the thousand. (Cf. Josh. 23:10)

I want to learn the heart of God which values a soul.

In the Bible the book of Jonah, I think God had compassion on His one servant Jonah and molded him and eventually enabled him to obey God's mission more than the 120,000 Ninevites (Assyrians). Then, last week, as I was meditating on Judges chapters 6 through 8, I learned that God who called Gideon and set him as a judge and gave him assurance of deliverance from his fear and eventually used him as He promised and delivered the Israelites from the hands of the Midianites. The lesson that I learned from both Jonah and Gideon was that God wanted me to learn His heart which values a soul.

Life together

I want to reach out to fellow brothers (sisters) in Christ who are suffering with love and humble heart and manifest the Lord's glory by being with them.

(A little while ago, after I heard my church retired pastor's Wednesday night sermon based on John 1:14)

Because there are people who are 'together' ...

There must be some who rejoice together, mourn together and carries heavy burdens together.
(Exod. 18:9, 18-22; Num. 11:14, 16-17; Rom. 12:15)

God who causes all things to work together for good

God causes even the bad things that we did or bad things that happen to us
to work together for good (Rom. 8:28).

God causes even the sins that we committed and sinners like us to work together for good (v. 28).

Be satisfied with Him at all times

As if we should be satisfied with the Lord at all times so that we won't serve other idols,
We must be satisfied with our spouse of our youth (Prov. 5:18-19)
so that we won't desire the beauty of another woman (6:25).

“the pains of childbirth”?

We must have the pains of childbirth until a dying soul believe in Jesus Christ and Christ is formed in him/her (Gal. 4:19). Just as there are the pains of childbirth in witnessing one soul, there is the pains of self denying and bearing our own cross until Christ is formed in him/her.

(Mt. 16:24; Mk. 8:34; Lk. 9:23)

A woman who committed adultery and left her husband

A man who tries to bring a woman, who committed adultery and left her husband, to his house by speaking tenderly to her ... (Judg. 19:2-3)

Love that covers an offense

Let's live a life of covering over an offense of our neighbors with God's love that has covered our many offenses that are being revealed before holy God by the precious blood of Jesus Christ on the cross.
(Prov. 17:9)

A person with vain conceit

If there is a person goes too far and pursues vain conceit, then there will be complaints and quarrels.
(Cf. Phil. 2:3)

God brought their days to an end in futility.

When they didn't believe in God and didn't trust in His salvation (Ps. 78:22) and still continued to sin against Him and to rebel against Him and put Him to the test by demanding the things they craved (vv. 17-18), and don't abandon their greed (v. 30) and kept on sinning (v. 32, God would bring their days to an end in futility and their years in terror (v. 33).

Keep it far from us

We must keep it far from the thing that should be far from us (Prov. 30:8).

We must keep falsehood and lies far from us (v. 8).

We must keep vain world (Eccle. 1:1-11), vain wisdom (vv. 12-18) and vain pleasure (2:1-11) far from us.

Herod

Although he heard the word of God and was stricken in his conscience,
he didn't practice according to his conscience (Mk. 6:20).

But the oaths that he made before people, he kept it even though he was very sorry (v. 26).

(Although he didn't practice the word of God, he kept his word.)

After separation, there is a new meeting.

After bereavement with our beloved mother (or father) God sends beloved spouse to us in order to comfort us (Gen. 24:67). We can expect new meeting after separation.

Present sufferings and future glory

Since we are God's children, heirs of God we have no choice but to go through this present sufferings (Rom. 8:17-18). And when we suffer, we must be patience, endure and keep our faith with sure and clear hope in Christ Jesus.

That hope is "the glory that is to be revealed to us" (v. 18).

The present sufferings aren't worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us (v. 18). An eternal weight of glory isn't worthy to be compared with momentary and light affliction (2 Cor. 4:17; Rom. 8:18). What is the glory that is to be revealed in the future that isn't worthy to be compared with the present suffering?

It is "the redemption of our body" (Rom. 8:23).

At the last trumpet will sound, when Jesus comes back, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed (1 Cor. 15:52). He will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory (Phil. 3:21).

In addition, the future glory that will appear in the future is we will enjoy eternal life in heaven and we will the Lord face to face (1 Cor. 13:12; Rev. 22:4) and we will reign with Him forever and ever (Rev. 22:5).

The Lord God will illumine us (v. 5).

Therefore, in the midst of suffering, we must be patience and endure with the conviction of the glory that will be revealed to us in the future. And we must faithfully fulfill our mission.

[This is a summary of the retired pastor's sermon based on Romans 8:18.]

Come between brother

The closer the relationship gets between us and the one we love together,
there can a person who will envious of us.
Thus that person can come between us and our beloved person
by telling lies about us to that beloved person.
God hates anyone who tries to spread strife among brothers (Prov. 6:19).

Maybe even now God is asking us ...

"Oh that there were one among you who would shut the gates,
that you might not uselessly kindle fire on My altar! I am not pleased with you,"
says the LORD of hosts, "nor will I accept an offering from you" (Mal. 1:10).

Maybe even now God is asking us 'Is there anyone among you
who would shut the my church gate so that you might not uselessly offer vain worship?'

Sometimes 'alone' is better than 'together'.

Prophet Jonah chose to disobey God's command and tried to go to Tarshish with the unbelievers
instead of to obeying God's command and going to Nineveh alone (Jonah 1:2-3).
It is much better to walk the path of obedience with the Lord than
to walk the path of disobedience with the worldly people.

Woe to me!

If someone is led to sin, then I should have intense concern and my heart should be hurt.

But I myself is led to sin and I don't have intense concern and my heart isn't even hurting (2 Cor. 11:29).

Woe to me!

The peacemaker Christian ...

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God” (Mt. 5:9).

The peacemaker Christian ...

1. Has a right relationship with God. He is reconciled to God (2 Cor. 5:20).
He seeks intimate fellowship with Jesus Christ who is his peace (Eph. 2:14).
He lets the peace of Christ to rule in his heart (Col. 3:15).
He is anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, he makes his requests be known to God. As a result, the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, guards his heart and his mind in Christ Jesus (Phil. 4:6-7).
2. Has a right relationship with his neighbors.
He does his best to be at peace with everyone (Rom. 12:18).
He is faithfully fulfilling the duty of the ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:18).
He preaches peace through Jesus Christ (Acts 10:36).
3. Seeks the community harmony.
He makes effort to live in harmony with his family members in the community of his home and in the community of his church.
He pursues the things which make for peace (Rom. 14:19).
He is committed to build a community of love with one heart and one mind (Phil. 2:2; Acts 2:44-47; 4:32-35).

[As I was reading Iain M. Duguid's "Hero of Heroes"]

In the day of trouble

In the day of trouble, we must look to God who gives us trouble. (Ps. 22:11).

In the midst of tribulation and persecution ...

How can we keep our faith in the midst of tribulation and persecution?

How can we be filled with joy when we think of this faith?

We must trust in the Lord (Isa. 50:10).

We must learn and realize a lot of things from God even during the tribulation.

[“The Lord God has given Me the tongue of disciples ...” (v. 4) (Park, Yun-sun)]

We must obey the words we learn and understood even during the tribulation.

[“... He awakens My ear to listen as a disciple” (v. 4) (Park)]

He who vindicates us is near (v. 8) and He is helping us (vv. 7, 9).

Therefore we should boldly obey His words.

In doing so, not only we can keep our faith in the midst of tribulation and persecution,
but also we will be filled with joy when we think of this faith.

When we met tribulation and persecution ...

When we met tribulation and persecution, we Christians ...

1. Should know that our God will display strength and take action (Dan. 11:32).
2. Should instruct many people with God’s wisdom (v. 33).
3. Should be refined and purified (v. 35).

The saints who repent but a pastor who doesn't repent

Although the people in Nineveh repented when they heard the word through the prophet Jonah (Jonah 3), Jonah, who proclaimed the word, didn't truly repent (ch. 4).

Although as a pastor who proclaims the word of God, I don't truly repent,
What if the saints who hear His word through me are repenting?

God who gives us grace of restoration ...

God who gives us grace of restoration again like in the past days will let us hear
the sound of joy and gladness, the voices of bride and bridegroom,
and the voices of those who bring thank offerings to the house of the Lord, saying
“Give thanks to the Lord Almighty, for the Lord is good; his love endures forever”
in our lives that is a desolate waste without this and that.
(Jere. 33:10-11)

What is restoration?

Restoration is going back. Restoration is returning to God with a repentant heart..
God says that He will bring us back (Ezek. 39:25, 27, 28).
God promises to restore us.

No one should be unsettled

We should strengthen and encourage those who are suffering in their faith so that no one would be unsettled by the trials. (1 Thess. 2:14; 3:2-3)

Interesting observation

Similar words:

- (1) "Who shall go up first for us against the Canaanites, to fight against them?" (Judg. 1:1)
"Judah shall go up; behold, I have given the land into his hand" (v. 2).

War victory!

- (2) "Who shall go up first for us to battle against the sons of Benjamin?" (20:18)
"Then the LORD said, 'Judah shall go up first'" (v. 18).

War defeated

Difference:

1. (1) was against the Canaanites, while (2) was against the people of Benjamin.
2. (1) won in the war, while (2) lost in the war.
3. (1) God promised "behold, I have given the land into his hand" but (2) there was no such promise.

Interesting loot distribution

As Moses was obeying the Lord's command of taking full vengeance for the sons of Israel on the Midianites, he told the Israelites to send into battle 1,000 men from each of the tribes of Israel (Num. 31:2, 4).

So 12,000 men armed for battle (v. 5).

And those 12,000 men fought against Midian, as the Lord commanded Moses, and killed every man (v. 7).

In addition, they killed the 5 kings of Midian (v. 8).

The interesting thing is how God told Moses to distribute the loot.

After winning the battle, the Israelites took all the plunder and spoils, including the people and animals (v. 11).

And God said to Moses, "Divide the spoils between the soldiers who took part in the battle and the rest of the community (v. 27).

In other words, give the half of the spoils to 12,000 men who went to war and the other half to 880,000 people [1,000,000 (v. 5 in Korean bible) – 12,000 = 880,000] who didn't go to war

Why did God command Moses the loot to be divided like that?

How could God command Moses to give 50% of the loot to 12,000 soldiers and another 50% to 880,000 congregations?

Not only that, God told the Israelites through Moses to levy a tax for the Lord from the men of war who went out to battle,

one in five hundred of the persons and of the cattle and of the donkeys and of the sheep (v. 28),

while to take one drawn out of every fifty of the persons, of the cattle, of the donkeys and of the sheep, from all the animals,

and give them to the Levites who keep charge of the tabernacle of the Lord (v. 30).

To this extent God supported the soldiers.

So I think it is biblical to support American soldiers like the Republican Party.

It is interesting.

Although obedience is better than sacrifice, King Saul disobeyed the Lord's command "Go and utterly destroy the sinners, the Amalekites, and fight against them until they are exterminated" (1 Sam. 15:18, 22).

As a result, King Saul was rejected by God (v. 23) and later killed by the Amalekites (2 Sam. 1:8-10). It is interesting that the result of not destroying the Amalekites, King Saul was killed by the Amalekites.

When we lose hope and fall into deep despair

When we lose hope and fall into deep despair,
we must remember the days that have passed and think about everything the Lord has done in our lives.
And we should pray to the Lord with earnest desire for Him.
We should pray for quick answer of our prayers, for the Lord's lovingkindness,
for the Lord's deliverance and guidance and protection, and to teach us the Lord's will. (Ps. 143:4-11)

The joy of sacrifice

We must rejoice in sacrificing ourselves (Phil. 2:17) for the progress and joy in the faith (1:25) of those brothers and sisters in Christ whom we love with affection of Jesus Christ (1:8).

The people of God who supposed to serve God ...

Although God told Moses whom He called at Mount Sinai that after delivering the Israelites from Egypt, they should worship God at Mount Sinai (Exod. 3:1-12),

they made a molten calf and worshiped it when Moses was on Mount Sinai (32:4).

Just as the people of God who supposed to serve God actually served the fertility bull in the land of Goshen Egypt as a fertility and abundance god (internet), they made the molten calf and worshiped it under Mount Sinai.

When we are burden excessively, beyond our strength ...

When we are burdened excessively, beyond our strength, we can be despaired even of life and have the sentence of death within ourselves.

God's will is for us to not to trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead.

(2 Cor. 1:8-9)

Sad

I must teach the Lord's command as I obey it but I am not. Sad.
(Mt. 5:19)