

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. Jere. 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.

God 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), t

hen 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 a 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 if 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 Amalikes.

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)