

MARCH 2023

OBEDIENCE TO SAVE



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JESUS BAPTIZED IN OBEDIENCE TO RIGHTEOUSNESS

(MATTHEW 3:13-17)

" Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness. ..."



2



JESUS RECEIVED BAPTISM

(MARK 3:13-17)

*" No one can enter heaven except through Jesus.
Jesus fulfilled God's righteousness. ..."*

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LETTERS FROM WORLD BEREANS

FROM. CHINA, MALAWI, UGANDA

*" Most especially, these books have strengthened
my spritual, physical, emotional, and social life. ..."*



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WHAT DO YOU WANT?

(MATTHEW 20:17-34)

*" However, there is something God wants to give us.
And God will pay great attention to whoever seeks that. ..."*

JESUS BAPTIZED IN OBEDIENCE TO RIGHTEOUSNESS

(MATTHEW 3:13-17)

Sermon by Overseer Sung-Hyun Kim



When Jesus came to John the Baptist to be baptized, John stubbornly refused, saying, **“I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?”** John the Baptist did not know what to do and he thought, ‘How could I baptize such an innocent One? The Pharisees and Sadducees came to me, but they had no intention to repent, so I refused them. Why would the One who should baptize sinners be baptized among sinners?’ However, Jesus commanded, saying to John,

***“Let it be so now;
it is proper for us to do this
to fulfill all righteousness.”***

When the Pharisees and Sadducees came to John the Baptist to be baptized, their intentions were to appear righteous before others and fulfill their own personal righteousness. In contrast, through baptism by John, Jesus aimed to fulfill the righteousness of God, which is to accomplish God’s ministry of salvation. To achieve this, Jesus identified Himself with sinners so that He could save them according to God’s will. In other words, He prepared the qualification for sin of humanity to be transferred to Himself. Thus, Jesus was baptized by John and opened the door to His public life, which ultimately led to His suffering on the cross.

Jesus, who was without sin, was baptized in obedience to righteousness, and this became a model for all Christians who have received the grace of redemption through His obedience. Jesus was much greater than John the Baptist, but He did not neglect or hold contempt for him or his baptism. This is because Jesus, despite being the Son of God, obeyed God thoroughly as a servant under God’s salvation ministry. Therefore, through baptism in Jesus’ name, we now have the privilege of becoming children of God, and we should obey Him as servants of God. Our identity as Christians must be those who obey Christ, and this is who we are meant to be.

Some people believe that the essence of faith is to establish a logical system of knowledge related to faith, and to raise their own righteousness to a certain level by adhering to the principles they lay down. However, this is a misconception. Seeking self-righteousness is close to human nature, making it instinctive and difficult to restrain. As a result, people continuously create something to boast about by seeking their own righteousness, and in doing so, they have a nature to confirm their sense of superiority. If we leave this personality as it is, we cannot accept God’s guidance and will ultimately fall into temptation. This is how we destroy the precious opportunity for salvation given to us through Jesus Christ’s obedience.

God is still guiding us so that we can keep the salvation received through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and participate in God's ministry for salvation. God's passion for the ministry of salvation has never cooled off compared to the past. He continues to teach, encourage, and command us through our church. God has made an overseer in each church to guide us specifically, and now demands powerful determination and action from us. God never stays in the past nor He is far away from the present. He is with us at this moment, leading us with a burning passion. Let us move forward in obedient faith before God who is guiding us.

Sermon by Overseer Sung-Hyun Kim



JESUS RECEIVED BAPTISM

MARK 3:13-17

And He went up on the mountain and called to Him those He Himself wanted. And they came to Him. Then He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach, and to have power to heal sicknesses and to cast out demons: Simon, to whom He gave the name Peter; James the son of Zebedee and John the brother of James, to whom He gave the name Boanerges, that is, "Sons of Thunder".

God is perfect. There is no mistake or flaw in what He wills, plans or does. Jesus said to us, "Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect" (Mt 5:48). Mankind has weaknesses, but if they obey God's perfect will, they can become perfect.

God sent His Son into the world to fulfill the righteousness He determined by His plan. Knowing God's righteousness is faith. The person who knows and does God's righteousness is righteous. If you do not know what righteousness is, you cannot do it. If you do not do it, you cannot be righteous. Romans 5:1 says, "Therefore, having been justified by faith." You need to have faith to be justified, but this is impossible if you do not know what righteousness is. You must know righteousness to believe in it, and then you can be justified.

No matter how diligently a person serves in their church, if they do not know about God's righteousness, their faith will be in great danger. Many people today barely attend service on the Lord's Day and live a passive faith life because they do not know God's righteousness. We must thoroughly know what God's righteousness is. To do this, we need to pay attention to Jesus' words to John before He was baptized by immersion.

When John the Baptist preached repentance at the Jordan River, many people came to him to be baptized. John gave a baptism of repentance (Mk 1:4). Only humble people confessed they were sinners and came to John to be baptized. But one day, Jesus stood before John. Was He indeed a sinner who needed to repent? John said to Jesus, "I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?" Jesus replied, "Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." John gave the people a baptism to make them repent, but the baptism Jesus received fulfilled righteousness. God regarded Jesus' baptism as righteousness. This was God's will (Mt 3:13-17).

When Jesus was baptized, He went in and out of the water. The earth originally came from water (Gen 1:9). Entering water means entering the earth. Who enters the earth? Those who have died. Entering water means burying the dead. On the other hand, coming out of water means the resurrection. Thus, baptism by immersion means death and the resurrection.

God showed people death and resurrection for the first time through Jesus Christ. In other words, God's righteousness was shown to the world. This is why Jesus said to John before He was baptized, "Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness" (Mt 3:15).

Jesus was baptized to fulfill God's righteousness

and we are baptized to acknowledge Jesus fulfilled God's righteousness and to unite with His righteousness. In other words, baptism is to unite with Jesus' death and resurrection. When we do this, God regards us as righteous. This is called 'justification by faith'.

A person without faith cannot be justified (Rom 3:26). This means a person not interested in Jesus Christ's works cannot be recognized as righteous. Many Christians today hate participating in church life and only live their faith life moderately. Matthew 22:11-13 says, "But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. So he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'" Being invited to the wedding yet thrown out does not mean you go to hell. This is warning us that there will be those who go to heaven but unable to enter the most holy area.

Some people say, "I don't know anything about that. I guess I'll receive something if I pray hard." This is not the right attitude to have as a believer. We must first know what Jesus did and join in what He did. Jesus does not join us, but we must join in what Jesus achieved.

Until Jesus died on the cross and resurrected, no one knew what He did. Jesus' work and the world were completely separate. It was only after Jesus went to heaven that people understood, "Ah! So He fulfilled God's righteousness according to God's will." When Jesus spoke about His death, people thought He was warning them about His downfall. One of His disciples said, "Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!" The Lord replied, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men" (Mt 16:22-23). As far as people knew, death was despair. So Jesus' word and deeds were very disappointing to them. Yet Jesus' interests were in fulfilling God's determined righteousness.

God let Jesus die on the cross because, if He did not, mankind could not be saved. This does not mean some things are impossible with God. Even if God did not use this method, He can still save mankind. Nothing is impossible with the Almighty God. But as we understand from Jesus' words, "Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness," God regarded Jesus' death and resurrection as righteousness.

Why do people build a fence and gate around their houses? They indicate: "If you want to enter our house, do not enter by another way, but come through here." In the same way, Jesus did not die because mankind could not be saved if He did

not, but because it was the righteousness determined by God's will.

Some people do not look at God's work with foresight, but rashly judge it with shortsightedness. If they cannot understand something, they grumble and say, "God, You are too much! How could You do that?" If the situation improves in a short while, they are pleased and say, "That's better. Thank You, Lord!" No matter what difficulties come, we should trust in God's goodness. If you look back, you will later discover God fulfilled good through all of it.

Jesus' work finally became the Gospel after He went to heaven and it was preached to us. God gave us a chance and said, "If you regard Jesus' accomplished work as righteousness, I will consider you righteous. Live by His righteousness." Jesus fulfilled God's righteousness according to God's will, and we are justified by the Gospel later preached to us.

Jesus did not die because the situation turned out unexpectedly or because He unwillingly suffered. He fulfilled God's righteousness according to God's command. If we acknowledge this, God regards our faith as righteousness and acknowledges us as righteous people. The person who wants to be justified by God must clearly know what Jesus did and regard it as God's righteousness. On the other hand, the person with no interest in what Jesus did cannot

be justified.

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When Jesus was baptized, He finally fulfilled death and resurrection by God's will. We are today baptized in Jesus Christ's name and united with His death and resurrection. We acknowledge His work as righteousness and climb aboard it. Whether mankind is saved or not, Jesus Christ needed to die and resurrect for God's determined will. However, God said, "If you believe that what I did is righteousness, you will also be justified and enter where I dwell." He gave mankind the chance to come aboard His righteousness. Mankind being

saved is not a matter of course, but God's gift (that is, His grace).

Jesus was baptized to fulfill God's righteousness. After God's only begotten Son went through the resurrection, God wanted Him to ascend to heaven's throne. Heaven is the eternal kingdom set up for the Son to be Heir. It was created by God (Heb 1:2). The resurrection is a type of front gate. The One who came from the Father's bosom needed to go through it to enter heaven. Also, there must first be death for there to be the resurrection.

Genesis 3:22 says, 'Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"'. Adam knew good and evil—just like the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. When it says 'good and evil', this does not mean good and evil deeds. The wages of sin is death. 'Evil' refers to death. Who among the Trinity tasted death? The Father and the Holy Spirit never tasted death.

Only the Son tasted death and the resurrection. He has authority to die and authority to live again. This is the command He received from His Father (Jn 10:17-18). When God said, "The man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil," it means we have become able to experience death and resurrection. We are just like Jesus, who received God's command to die and resurrect.

Our baptism means we are united with Jesus, just as it was prophesied: "The man has become like one of Us."

Death and resurrection is the front gate to enter heaven. God decided His Son to be Heir and created heaven before eternity for Him. God's Son came from the Father's bosom two thousand years ago. After He experienced the resurrection, He went up to heaven's throne. Of course, He had to first taste death to experience the resurrection.

Some people wonder, "No! Are you saying God had no other way?" Of course, everything is possible with God. But God considered the only begotten Son's death and resurrection as righteousness. Jesus said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them" (Jn 10:7-8). Jesus was saying that if there was someone who said, "I am the way to heaven" before Him, he was a thief and robber. No one ever became the door to enter heaven before Jesus.

Jesus opened the front gate to enter the glorious kingdom. This is where the eternal throne is. Hebrews 10:19-20 says, "Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh." God considered Jesus' fulfilled

work as righteousness. This is the front gate to enter heaven. When a guest climbs over a wall to enter the house, the owner will see and say, "Why are you climbing over the wall? Come through here and go through the door." Everything is possible with God. God determined righteousness according to His own will; and when Jesus fulfilled this righteousness, He opened the front gate to enter heaven.

Jesus fulfilled God's righteousness, and you must pass this front gate if you want to enter heaven. No one can enter heaven except through Jesus. Jesus fulfilled God's righteousness. Whether mankind is saved or not, He fulfilled righteousness, entered heaven and sat on the throne. The Lord gives us a chance and says, "If you believe My work is the front gate and recognize they are God's righteousness, you can also enter heaven." Therefore, we acknowledge Jesus' work as God's righteousness and are baptized to unite with His righteousness. Our baptism is not merely the going in and out of the water.

Jesus fulfilled God's righteousness to enter heaven and sit on the throne. We should not judge Jesus' work with human eyes, but recognize they fulfilled God's righteousness. No one can enter heaven except through Christ. Jesus Christ's death and resurrection is the front gate to enter heaven.

We should be so thankful to realize all this. The Lord does not need to be concerned if people never heard the Gospel. The Lord saving mankind was His grace, not fulfilment of a duty. As a person goes into the city with an empty car and takes some people with him along the way, the Lord gave us the chance to be saved.

Those who know righteousness will not rebel or complain about God's work. Rebelling or complaining about God's work destroys your own spirit. Jesus' work fulfilled God's work. We should believe that Jesus' death and resurrection fulfilled God's righteousness and be united with His righteousness.

in *Let Us Know Jesus*,
Chapter 22 "Jesus Received Baptism."

JESUS
RECEIVED
BAPTISM

LETTERS FROM WORLD BEREANS

- 1 Minister Chang **from China**
- 2 Mcpherson **from Malawi**
- 3 Pastor Samanya **from Uganda**



I recently heard a sermon by Overseer Sung-Hyun Kim titled “God Should Be Glorified,” which helped me change my misunderstanding I had about bearing fruit. I used to think that the only way I could bear fruit was through preaching, but I have come to realize that all the services, devotions, and offerings I do in the church are also bearing fruit.

When I serve God, my motivation should be intact. The reason why I serve and glorify God is that I have already received God’s grace. But some may have a wrong motivation of serving to get rewards. In the past, my church had the bad habit of comparing each other based on who preached more, taught more, or received bigger rewards. But now I have come to realize that bearing fruit means obeying God's word and working in our own places, and glorifying God. I am merely a tool that God is using.

I also understand that the motivation for preaching is crucial. If my motivation is impure, I can cause suffering and harm the church, which can lead to division eventually. Preaching the gospel is not for my own sake but rather for the sake of the church’s representative. When I reach out to people without pure motivation, those who hear my preaching may not have pure motivations either since they won't be guided correctly. It is like planting a disaster in the church.

As the Bible says, “Good trees bear good fruit, bad trees bear bad fruit.” Likewise, I cannot serve God alone, apart from the church. Our church is guided to serve with integrity through the teachings of the Overseer Sung-Hyun Kim. I give glory to God for this.

He once said, “We do not work for the sake of our rewards, but we love and serve God with pure hearts, as those who received His grace.” At the time of the sermon, I didn't fully understand what he meant by those words. So, I wondered, “Should I serve God just to receive rewards? Is this a bad idea?” But now, I understand that I had only grasped his words partially. While it is true that I may receive rewards for my service to God, but my starting point for serving should be to express gratitude and give glory to God from my heart for the grace He has given me.

I pray that God continues to guide, protect, and change my church through the Overseer. I do not want to forget the grace of Mother Church, Sungrak Church, and I hope to follow in its footsteps. May God achieve His will through all the Berea churches!

Minister Chang
from China
December 11, 2022

Dear Pastor

I am a Malawian man aged 42 and Christian. I read two books, entitled "The Law and the Truth" and "Let us know JESUS" by Ki-Dong Kim. I got them from my friend.

They made me start understanding the Bible in a different way now. As such, I need to go beyond just reading the books, and I need to do a full Online English Course at your Berea Academy. I feel this will fully change my understanding of the Bible as well as my life and that of others out there.

This writing seeks to get from your admission requirements for one to get enrolled and start studying as well as how to get enrolled so that I become one of the students and do the course. Help me please, I really need the course. Looking forward to your favorable consideration

And I will be happy to be receiving the sermons every week.

From "The Law and the Truth," this book, I got to know the difference between The Law and The Gospel and that the Law was not abolished but strengthened. Some teachings used to say we should concentrate on New Testament only, not Old Testament, because it's no longer applicable.

After reading the book I got a new understanding.

A certain preacher once preached about JESUS as man, but many people including myself criticized the teaching. But after reading the book "Let us know JESUS," I got the real understanding.

MCPHERSON

from Malawi

March 6, 2023

Thank you

I am so grateful to you for trusting me with the books that you, as a church and Dr. Kim, sent me last year, the books are really inspiring, and I pray to God to continue guiding you in writing more books that inspire the children of as a whole.

Most especially, these books have strengthened my spiritual, physical, emotional, and social life. They have given me more ideas on teachings in my church based on bible doctrine without using my own understanding but by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Thanks for that good testimony and encouragement since I started reading these books and following your website's sermons, before I knew how to preach outside the biblical teachings and my own understanding, what changed my mind was when I realized the truth, everything changed beginning with my sermons and growing spiritually, and my ministry is getting stronger, and many things have happened that I can't explain more. Thanks, and may God bless you. Nice to hear from you.

*Appreciate
you*

Pastor Samanya
from Uganda
March 6, 2023

WHAT DO YOU WANT?

(MATTHEW 20:17-34)



Jesus, whom we believe in, came to the earth through one particular nation. So in the eyes of man, He appears as one of the people of that nation. Israel is located in the Palestinian region near the Mediterranean. A person I know asked this question when I first started my faith life. "Why are you following the religion of Israelis when Korea also has a religion? We have Dangun, but why do you follow Jesus?" He thought that Jesus was a man of Israel because He came to Israel. He regarded Jesus as the god that the Israelites believed in.

However, Jesus, whom we believe in, is the Son of God who created heaven and earth, not just Jesus of the Israelites. It was God who wanted to give us something. And giving us that was like planting a seed. For example, there is an orchard full of apple trees. A farmer who wants to build an orchard plants apple trees. He wants to grow young apple trees and cultivate them. He wants to plant and grow trees from a seedling. But he does not take the seed and plant it in the orchard directly. He first plants it in a small pot. Once it grows into a young seedling of a certain size, he then takes it and plants it in the orchard. But the place the seed gets planted at first is a small pot. The farmer has no choice but to use a small pot.

However, what the farmer is after is not the pot or to profit from the pot. Instead, it is to fill the whole orchard with that tree.

In the same way, when God wanted to give something to mankind, He chose one nation out of all the people on earth. And what He revealed through that one nation, He wants all nations to possess now. Hence we should seek what He gave. When we come before God, that is what we are trying to obtain - that which God gave us. However, many people seek what God has not even given. Of course, God does give those things too, but they are given to help us for that time being only. There is something else that God wants to give us forever, yet people are indifferent to that and only seek what they want.

The part of the Bible we read is the scene when Jesus was going up to Jerusalem. Matthew 20 is towards the end of the Book of Matthew. For what reason was Jesus going up to Jerusalem? It was for Him to die. And He called His twelve disciples aside and said, "I will be put into the hands of the high priests and teachers of the Law, and they will be determined to kill me. They will hand me over to Gentiles and finally have me crucified". He spoke to them of His death.

It was a grim moment. Even if the disciples were in tears, they would not feel comforted. But did the disciples even understand what Jesus said? Did they understand or not? They did not. They did not understand what He meant when He said He was going to die. Their hearts were only filled with the yearning for the Messiah. Who is the Messiah that they were waiting for? They had something that they were after. And they believed that Jesus was the one they were waiting for.

The people of Israel were all alike, waiting for a king like King David to appear again. Throughout the history of Israel, it was during King David's reign that Israel was the richest and most powerful. The nation was so powerful at that time that its influence was all over the nearby regions as well as Egypt. And stretching from east to north, Israel was a renowned nation so that even during Solomon's reign in the next generation, people from Ethiopia of Africa came to see the beauty of Israel after hearing about Israel.

Hence in the heart of the Israelites was a longing for King David. Because after David died, the nation started to plunge gradually. After the time of King Solomon, the nation was divided

into two - north and south - just like Korea. The ten tribes that moved up north perished first and later, the south in Jerusalem also fell. Since then, they have been invaded by foreign countries, first by Babylon, which is Iraq today. They were ruled by Iraq for some time. And just when they thought it was going to get better, Greece dominated them, and they became a Greek empire, that is, Greece of today. But at least they had some relief during that time because the Greek colonial policy was about giving freedom and respecting their culture. So they had some relief for the time being, but after that, the Roman Empire arose and took over them. However, the Romans ruled them with a powerful military force, so the Israelites suffered insults and humiliation during that time.

Hence they were longing and yearning for the return of the times of David's reign. And they were thinking, "when would he come? When would a savior like David come? When is the king coming who will restore our nation?" It was then that Jesus appeared. Thus some people insisted that Jesus was the king they were waiting for. At first, they were not sure. Yet they saw the works He was doing which certainly were not common - He fed ten thousand people with five loaves of bread.

After the people saw such incredible things, they began to think. "If He stays with us, we wouldn't have to worry about military supplies." Since they heard that Jesus walked on water to reach the boat and even calmed the waves, the seas and the winds with a command, they thought, "He definitely can liberate our nation from the Romans' tyranny! If He can go and raise the flag in Jerusalem as our leader, we, full of love and zeal for our nation will go after the Romans and regain our independence!" They were filled with such anticipation.

As the disciples were following Jesus, they heard Him say, "The kingdom of God! The kingdom of God!" Yet they did not understand that as the kingdom of heaven, which we know, but as the restoration of David's kingdom in Jerusalem by defeating the Romans. Hence they were picturing the kingdom of Israel on earth. So when Jesus said, "Let us go. I am about to die!" the people that followed were not saddened, but instead, they were excited. They mistook Jesus' words as though He was saying, "Ok, I am ready to fight unto death!" because He said, "I am going to die!" That is why Peter, who heard Him, said, "Lord, I will go with you even to death. I will also fight unto death!" Jesus said, "I will have to

go to die!" But if we read the Book of Luke, we can see how Jesus was in tears as He looked toward Jerusalem. It was a grim moment. Jesus was actually ready to die. But the disciples thought Jesus was reaffirming His resolution with tears before heading into the decisive battle.

Probably the disciples that followed Jesus would have looked like this. If Jesus was going ahead, they would have followed behind in this manner. They probably followed Jesus with pompous air and proud faces. When Jesus said He was going to die in Jerusalem, a woman came to see Him. It was the mother of Zebedee's sons. Zebedee's sons were John and James. They were brothers. They were also called sons of thunder because they had a fiery temper. Their mother came to Jesus, bowing. He asked her, "What is it you want?" He asked this very question, "What do you want?" Their mother's reply was, "Let one of my sons sit on Your right and the other on Your left in Your kingdom when You restore the kingdom." In other words, let one of them be the prime minister and the other deputy prime minister. To put it simply, she was saying, "When you come into power, let my sons be prime minister and deputy prime minister".

When Jesus heard that He said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles Lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant!" Then He asked, "Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?" And the disciples with Him confidently answered, "We are able." The cup here refers to the suffering that God gave Jesus. The sacrifice He must make on the cross. It is His death. So He was actually asking them, "Are you able to die?" But they didn't even understand Him and answered, "We are able." Even Jesus did not want to drink that cup that He prayed to God to take the cup from Him. Yet the disciples were saying that they can drink this cup. So Jesus said, "Whether you drink this cup or not is up to you but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared by My Father." If you are able to take this it would be great. But if you can't, it would be impossible to sit on His left or right.

After He said this, He sent her away. And what do you think the other ten disciples who later heard about this felt? "So you two intended to be His right-hand man in secret? What about us?"

And they were indignant. A quarrel arose. What did we say the Lord was going up to do at Jerusalem? He was going to die to sacrifice Himself. At this moment, where He was about to die, the disciples were fighting each other about who would sit on the right and left of the Lord. Thus there was such a gap between the Lord and the disciples. There was a significant difference between what the Lord knew and what the disciples knew. Though they followed Him for three years and listened to His word, the kingdom of God they ultimately wanted was to hold power on earth. This was the level of knowledge the disciples had of the Lord at that time.

Now Jesus had left Jericho and was drawing closer to Jerusalem. As He set off for Jerusalem, a great crowd began to follow Him. Why were they following Him? To them, it was the king's grand entrance. Once He enters Jerusalem, nobody knows what could happen. The disciples followed behind Him, proudly shrugging their shoulders. Also, many people followed behind them. They were curious but also marvelled and thought, "Hey, watch out! It's the end for you Romans! He is going to bring a strong wind and flip you upside down. When we are hungry, He

will feed us all with one loaf of bread! The Roman Empire is at its end! Like the prophets of old, He will have fire sent down from heaven and burn all of you up!" This was their attitude.

Since many people were crowding around Him, He could not be seen very well. But just as He was passing, there were some blind men nearby. And two blind men suddenly called out to Jesus. As everyone knew very well, Jesus was a descendant of David who would succeed David. Hence the blind men called out saying, "Jesus, Son of David!" For these people, it was a decisive moment. They never had Jesus walk past them. But at that moment, Jesus was going past in front of them. The people all believed that Jesus would enter to seize power and become king. Hence for them, their future king, their future president, was passing in front of them at that moment.

These two men had suffered a great deal in their life. They are blind, so what could they possibly do for a living? How can they make a living? We can conjecture this from their words when they say, "Have pity on us!" They said, "Take pity on us!" This is something that beggars always say habitually. They say, "Take pity on me! Have pity on me!" The people think they

were asking for? They probably assumed they were asking for money. For the people, the king was making his grand entrance, yet these beggars dared to beg him for some change. So they rebuked the two men to be quiet.

But these two beggars didn't stop but called all the louder. "Have pity on us! Have pity on us!" They were desperate because if they miss this chance, they would never see Him again. So they shouted even louder. Even if there were hundreds and thousands of people, they cried, "Have pity on us! Take pity on us!" Finally their cry reached Jesus' ears. And He told men to bring them to Him. So the two blind men stood before Jesus.

At that time Jesus asked again. Remember how He asked His disciples earlier what they wanted. Now He was asking the same question to these men. "What is it you want?" Who did they think Jesus was? If they had regarded Jesus the same as everybody else did - that He was going to be their future king or president what would they have answered when Jesus asked, "What do you want?" They would've said something like, "We've been begging on this road for ten years. But now our throats are hurting and we can't beg as well as we used to. Mr president, please show more support for the

welfare of the disabled. Please hand out free walking sticks for the blind! Please allow us pensions every month! Help us so that we can go nearer to the city to beg! Please implement measures to support people like us or announce an enforcement ordinance". If they were of the same mind as the disciples and the many people following Jesus, they would have deemed Him to be their next king and made requests to the king.

However, the answer that came from the blind men was remarkable. What did they say? "We want to see!" They were blind, and they requested that they could see. Who did they see Jesus as? To open someone's eyes, to make the blind see again, is certainly not a thing an ordinary person can do. Actually, it is impossible. These men were blind from birth and lived tough life all those years. So can anyone make them see it again? It is impossible. Nobody believes that is possible. On another occasion, Jesus opened the eyes of another blind man, but as soon as his eyes were opened, Jesus moved away to another place. So when people found him, they asked, "Who made your eyes open? Who opened your eyes?" And the blind man answered, "Don't you people know? Who is able to open the eyes of a blind? No one except God can open the eyes of a blind!" That is exactly

right. When this blind man Bartimaeus said, "I want to see!" he recognized Jesus as one who is equal to God.

All the other people deemed Jesus as their future ruling king, and they longed for the restoration of their nation Israel. That is, they were picturing themselves taking back Jerusalem and driving out the Roman soldiers. Furthermore, John and James were thinking of becoming the president and vice president to rule the nation. While everyone else was dreaming about this, these blind men had this faith. We do not know where they got the inspiration from, but they requested of Jesus, "We want to see!" Jesus was so joyful. At the same time, He was disturbed. He was grieved. Why? Because it was so hard to find people with faith! Therefore He took them and said to them, "According to your faith, may it be done!" And their eyes were opened! Hallelujah!

The blind man Bartimaeus believed Jesus as God and made such a request. Hence his story is written in the Bible. There are many records of Jesus healing the sick and opening the eyes of the blind. Yet this story in Matthew 20 is not talking about a miracle that was done. Why would the story of another blind man being

healed be written here in this momentous time when Jesus is entering Jerusalem to carry out such an important mission? This was not written to teach about healing but because of this man's incredible faith. He believed Jesus to be God and therefore requested something that could only be requested from God.

As you come to church, you probably have something you want, don't you? "Well, I am getting nowhere with job hunting. I want to believe in God and find a good job!" This is something you can ask of the president. People with such hopes may be disappointed after coming to church. Why? Because that is not what God wants for them. Of course, He can help them in those aspects, too, but He may not. However, that which only God can give us is what we need to seed. Some people come to church seeking a change in their relationship with their husbands. And since they came to church, they may meet God. Nevertheless, one cannot continue seeking God with only those goals. God is able to provide answers to all of our problems. However, there is something God wants to give us. And God will pay great attention to whoever seeks that.

At church, you need to seek what God wants to give, that which God can give an abundance of. What is most important, above all, is that your

spirit gets saved from sin and has eternal life. This is a power we cannot find anywhere in this world. Even the president cannot give us. It is not the power of this world. Only God can save you. Jesus Christ is your one and only Savior. I bless you in Jesus' name to seek that which only God can give you.

Pastor Ki-Taek Lee

The Director of Sungrak Mission Center

**PLEASE
GIVE ME
WHAT ONLY GOD
CAN GIVE...**

