



## Sermon, Sunday March 26, 2023

### “Spirituality of Waiting”

**Psalms 130:1-8** <sup>1</sup> Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD. <sup>2</sup> Lord, hear my voice! Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications! <sup>3</sup> If you, O LORD, should mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand? <sup>4</sup> But there is forgiveness with you, so that you may be revered. <sup>5</sup> I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in his word I hope; <sup>6</sup> my soul waits for the Lord more than those who watch for the morning, more than those who watch for the morning. <sup>7</sup> O Israel, hope in the LORD! For with the LORD there is steadfast love, and with him is great power to redeem. <sup>8</sup> It is he who will redeem Israel from all its iniquities.

#### Introduction: Spirituality of the writer of Psalm 130

Today is the 5th week of Lent. Today's text is a familiar and well-known Psalm to us. Reformer Martin Luther wrote the words of a hymn inspired by Psalm 130. Today's text describes the psalmist's heart; showing how he waits for the Lord more earnestly than a watchman waits for the morning. In addition, words appear that tell the essence of the Christian faith – words such as “**depths**”, “**cry**”, “**sin**”, “**forgiveness**”, “**awe**”, “**waiting**”, “**mercy**”, and “**redemption**”. Today's text is short, but it clearly shows us the spirituality of Christian faith. Psalm 130 shows the spirituality of the psalmist who waits for the grace and redemption of the Lord deep inside through the parable of the watchman. We also need the spirituality of the psalmist who waits for the grace and redemption of the Lord.

Because we often experience being stagnant rather than growing in faith, the fundamental reason why these phenomena appear is that we do not seek the Lord from deep inside. Because we don't listen to the voices that come from deep inside us, we only see our realistic needs and desires. Such a life of faith cannot bring us true peace. I hope that you and I will deeply meditate on the religious challenge given by today's text, so that our spirituality will grow. Then, what spirituality does the psalmist show us?

#### Body: Waiting and redemption

In today's text, the psalmist confesses, “**My soul waits for the Lord and hopes for the word of the Lord.**” We must be able to feel or empathize with the spiritual condition of the psalmist making this confession. By the way, what does it mean to wait on the Lord in this verse?

In today's text, the psalmist says that he waits for the Lord more earnestly than a watchman waits for the morning. Here, a watchman is a person who is vigilant and guards, as we know well. He stays up all night and is vigilant, his duty ends only in the morning.

By the way, the psalmist in today's text compares his spiritual condition to a watchman intensely waiting for the morning. Here we must think about the position of a watchman who is on guard at night. For the watchman, the nighttime, when he stands guard awaiting the morning is a time of temptation, trial, and uncertainty.

I can understand the mind of the watchman well because of the experience of compulsory military service for 2 years and 2 months in South Korea. All healthy adult males in South Korea are required to do compulsory military service. It is the result of the Cold War created by the division of North and South Korea.

I served in the military in a front-line division vigilant to the DMZ, where Barack Obama, Donald Trump, and President Joe Biden visited. By the way, there are many temptations and uncertainties during soldiers' vigilance. In fact, during guard duty, soldiers doze off due to physical fatigue, or neglect their duties due to



repetitive routines. However, sometimes unexpected enemy infiltrations or provocation will occur. Therefore, soldiers who stand guard hope that their duty hours will go well without incident. So, like the watchman in today's text, they eagerly wait for the morning when the darkness disappears and the dawn breaks.

In today's text, the psalmist says that he cried out to the Lord from the depths of his heart, waiting for the morning to come more than a watchman waiting for the morning. However, our lives in general are flat, so it is not easy to hear our own voice coming from the depths of our hearts. But there are times when we focus on the voices deep within us, such as when we have an incurable disease or are amid a survival crisis. Then, what is the meaning of the psalmist's cry to the Lord? This is an awareness of our situation where we have no choice but to seek the Lord due to the limitations of creation. We know from the Bible that Jesus also cried out to God the Father. Jesus was also afraid of being cut off from and abandoned by God the Father before taking up the cross. Do you and I have the same fear deep in our hearts today as the psalmist and Jesus before he was crucified? In fact, there is no greater punishment for man than to be abandoned by the Lord. But many people are unaware of it. The sad thing is that many people who go to church do not know what it means to be abandoned by the Lord.

The Bible says that although people experience much happiness and satisfaction on earth through money, fame, and power, humans cannot experience perfection without the Lord. In other words, true life is given to man only in and through the Lord. But why can't human beings complete a perfect and true life on their own? The reason the psalmist says in verse 3 is, **"If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand?"**. In other words, the cause is human sin. The sin the psalmist is referring to here refers to the situation in which we have fallen and failed to live according to God's original will of creation. The sin the psalmist mentioned here is more fundamental than our ethics and moral concepts.

We must not forget that God is the creator of life and that life itself is God. **The apostle Paul confesses in 1 Timothy 1:15, "I am the chief among sinners."** He made this confession not because he was more unethical or immoral than other people. This is the confession that the apostle Paul made because he deeply reflected on and realized his inner spiritual state. To borrow the expression of the apostle Paul, it is the result of introspection on one's duality of doing what the Lord wants and not doing what the Lord wants. In today's text, the psalmist said, **"If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand?"**, this confession was made on the same level as the apostle Paul's reflection on his own existence mentioned above.

The Bible says sin is the separation of man from God, who is the ultimate life itself. In this situation, the psalmist hopes for only one thing. Only the Lord can solve the problem of human sin. In other words, only the Lord can save us from sin (severance from God and true life). The psalmist realized this fact and put his hope in the Lord who redeemed him from deep darkness. So the psalmist says in verse 8, **"It is he who will redeem Israel from all its iniquities."**

In conclusion, the spirituality shown by the psalmist in today's text is like that of a watchman eagerly waiting for the morning, even though it is still night.

What is true Christian spirituality? It is the spirituality of Christians who live by trusting in the promise that the moment of completion is coming to us even though our lives have not yet been completed. The cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ are sufficient proofs that we can live by this spirituality.

**Conclusion: We are the people of faith in the covenant of Christ.**

Now let's summarize today's message. Today we shared about the spirituality of the writer of Psalm 130. As the psalmist experienced, as Christians living in this world, we still live an imperfect life due to disagreement with the Lord, who is the true life.

However, through faith in Jesus Christ, perfect and eternal life has been given to us as a promise at the end. Therefore, do not be discouraged if we do not experience the perfection of Christ in our present life. I hope that the psalmist's confession to the Lord today will be our confession. Amen!

