



**Sermon, Sunday September 26, 2021**

## **“How Does a Christian Overcome the World?”**

**SCRIPTURE Deuteronomy 7:17-26** <sup>17</sup> If you say to yourself, “These nations are more numerous than I; how can I dispossess them?” <sup>18</sup> do not be afraid of them. Just remember what the LORD your God did to Pharaoh and to all Egypt, <sup>19</sup> the great trials that your eyes saw, the signs and wonders, the mighty hand and the outstretched arm by which the LORD your God brought you out. The LORD your God will do the same to all the peoples of whom you are afraid. <sup>20</sup> Moreover, the LORD your God will send the pestilence against them, until even the survivors and the fugitives are destroyed. <sup>21</sup> Have no dread of them, for the LORD your God, who is present with you, is a great and awesome God. <sup>22</sup> The LORD your God will clear away these nations before you little by little; you will not be able to make a quick end of them, otherwise the wild animals would become too numerous for you. <sup>23</sup> But the LORD your God will give them over to you, and throw them into great panic, until they are destroyed. <sup>24</sup> He will hand their kings over to you and you shall blot out their name from under heaven; no one will be able to stand against you, until you have destroyed them. <sup>25</sup> The images of their gods you shall burn with fire. Do not covet the silver or the gold that is on them and take it for yourself, because you could be ensnared by it; for it is abhorrent to the LORD your God. <sup>26</sup> Do not bring an abhorrent thing into your house, or you will be set apart for destruction like it. You must utterly detest and abhor it, for it is set apart for destruction.

### **Introduction: Anxiety and Fear**

A few days ago, there was Speech and Performance of BTS (a Korean popular music boy group) at the United Nations. The UN had invited BTS, which has a global fandom, to host the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Moment. Looking at the behind-the-scenes video of BTS' speech and performance at the United Nations, one of the star members of the group was very nervous before the speech and performance. We all experience nervousness, worry, and anxiety in our lives and especially before big events.

There are many times in our lives when we encounter these feelings, which arise within us for a variety of reasons. We worry about and fear failure, persecution and exclusion from others, illness, accidents, and loss of jobs and valuables.

This inner state of ours causes us to distrust in the Lord's power and breaks our relationship with Him. So anxiety and fear are great obstacles in our life of faith. But anxiety and fear also provide opportunities for us to draw closer to the Lord.

Today's text tells us not to fear, but to remember the Lord. If we are anxious and afraid because of various problems within ourselves in the world, we should be able to listen to the promises the Lord gives us.

Today's text is the second half of Deuteronomy 7. According to today's text, the Lord promises to protect Israel from the various nations of Canaan and to be with Israel so that they can settle and live in the Canaan that the Lord promised. So, the Lord says to the people of Israel that if they are not afraid, but believe the promise of the Lord then they will take possession of the land of Canaan. Furthermore,



when after Israel occupies Canaan, the Lord commands them to stay away from idols and live as a holy people serving only the Lord.

But in order for the Israelites to keep the Lord's commands, they need faith.

In a meeting with Jairus, the leader of the synagogue, Jesus said, "Don't be afraid, just have faith." (Mark 5:36) And Jesus raised the daughter of Jairus from the dead.

So, what are the three ways that a Christian can overcome fear of the world?

## **Body: Three Ways for Christians to Overcome Fear (Faith, Holiness, Grace)**

### **1) Christians live by faith.**

Although Canaan is the land that the Lord promised the Israelites, it is not a land that the Israelites could obtain without any preparation; because, in Canaan there lived seven powerful idol-worshipping tribes. They were numerous and powerful. Therefore, the war with them was not easy for the Israelites. Therefore, before the war with Canaan, the Israelites were afraid and anxious.

The situation facing the people of Israel in today's text is similar to the way we live in the world. As Christians, we are saved by the grace of the Lord and live in the world according to the command of Christ until we reach the kingdom of heaven. We, who have been saved by the grace of the Lord, must fight the temptations of the world and win every day. However, it is faith that leads us to victory in the battle against the world.

We have to choose every day whether to live according to the idols (money, honor, and power) served by the seven Canaanite tribes or to live according to the word of the Lord. We must have the faith to practice sacrifice and love for others, not after money, fame, or power.

As you know, parents love their children at the expense of everything, even themselves. And the strength with which parents love their children like comes from the love they receive from their own parents. If we received much love from the Lord, we can love others with the power of that love. Therefore, it is faith to remember the love the Lord has given us and to serve our neighbors with thanksgiving.

So what is the second way a Christian can overcome fear of the world?

### **2) Christians are the Lord's holy people.**

The problem facing the Israelites is not only winning the war to conquer Canaan, but how to live as the Lord's holy people in the land of Canaan. Because the Lord is well aware of the weakness and sinfulness of the people of Israel, He strictly commands the Israelites to live in the land of Canaan and keep the Lord's commands. From today's point of view, these commands of the Lord seem quite harsh.

The Lord commands Moses to destroy all seven tribes of Canaan. The Lord is also told not to marry the seven tribes of Canaan. Also, He commands them not to worship the idols of the seven tribes of Canaan. These strict commands of the Lord are not focused on destroying all seven tribes of Canaan, rather on maintaining the holiness of Israel, whose people have been called as the Lord's holy people. So we must not misunderstand the Lord's command to the people of Israel.

Instead, we need to know how strictly the Lord is demanding holiness from us. In order to keep the holiness that the Lord requires of us, we need to reflect on ourselves. Through the process of reflection, we should be able to see whether our words and actions are in accordance with the Lord's will. Also, the most important thing we need to guard against in order to preserve holiness is pride. Evidence of our



arrogance is distinguished by whether we are judges of others, or whether we first reflect on our words and actions. So, when we judge and criticize others, it proves that we are not yet mature.

**Romans 2:1 says: "You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge the other, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things."** I hope that we will keep our holiness well and become mature believers.

So, what is the third way a Christian can overcome fear of the world?

### **3) Christians live by the grace of the Lord.**

The Lord commands Israel to remember what the Lord has done. It is very beneficial to remember the grace of the Lord in our religious life.

A few days ago was Chuseok, a traditional Korean holiday. Chuseok is a holiday similar to Thanksgiving. It is a season to give thanks for the bountiful harvest obtained during the year. Personally, I couldn't feel the Korean holiday atmosphere at all because I live in the United States, but I thought about my parents over the Chuseok holidays. How much hard effort my father, who died in 2016, put in at work to raise his children? The weight of his responsibility as a father must not have been light, but I was grateful to my father for taking care of it all. I also thought of my 82-year-old mother, who now lives alone. How great is the dedication of a mother who has spent her whole life cooking, washing clothes, and caring for her children? I felt that I received a lot of love from my parents, but I couldn't return anything to them.

Even though we have received indescribable grace from the Lord just like the love we received from our parents, we cannot properly return the love we received from the Lord. If it were not for the grace of the Lord, we would still be living according to our selfish nature. But the grace of the Lord has changed us so that we can live according to His love, not according to our selfish nature.

What we are today is made up of the love of the Lord and the love and devotion of those who live with us. I am sure that if we do not forget this fact, our lives will be abundant.

### **Conclusion: The Lord's Promise**

Now let's summarize today's sermon. The basics are important in our religious life. If we have faith, we can love our neighbor with the love of the Lord. If we want to preserve holiness, we must have the maturity to reflect on our arrogance. Also, when we live in grace, we live with the realization that our lives are the result of the sacrifices of the Lord and of our neighbors.

**Isaiah 41:10 says: "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."**

**Also, Matthew 11:28 says: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."**

I bless you to bear fruit in your life through the promise of the Lord.

