

The Lord Jesus Revealed His Glory

March 12nd, 2013, Kichijouji Bible Study
 Gotthold Beck¹

John

1:14 The Word became flesh and lived among us. We gazed on his glory, the kind of glory that belongs to the Father's unique Son, who is full of grace and truth.

1:15 John told the truth about him when he cried out, "This is the person about whom I said, 'The one who comes after me ranks higher than me, because he existed before me.'"

1:16 We have all received one gracious gift after another from his abundance,

11:1 Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha.

11:2 Mary was the woman who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair. Her brother Lazarus was the one who was ill.

11:3 So the sisters sent word to Jesus, saying, "Lord, the one whom you love is ill."

11:4 But when Jesus heard it, he said, "This illness is not meant to end in death. It is for God's glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it."

11:5 Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.

11:6 Yet, when he heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed where he was for two more days.

11:11 These were the things he said. Then after this he told them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am leaving to wake him up."

11:12 So the disciples told him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will get well."

11:13 Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was speaking about resting or sleeping.

11:14 Then Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus has died.

11:15 For your sake I am glad that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let's go to him."

11:17 When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days.

11:18 Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles away,

11:19 and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother.

11:20 As soon as Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home.

11:21 Martha told Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.

11:22 But even now I know that whatever you ask of God, he will give it to you."

11:23 Jesus told her, "Your brother will rise again."

11:24 Martha told him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day."

11:25 Jesus told her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The person who believes in me, even though he dies, will live.

11:26 Indeed, everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe that?"

11:27 "Yes, Lord," she told him. "I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who was to come into the world."

11:39 Jesus said, "Remove the stone." Martha, the dead man's sister, told him, "Lord, there must be a stench by now, because he's been dead for four days."

11:40 Jesus told her, "I told you that if you believed you would see God's glory, didn't I?"

11:41 So they removed the stone. Then Jesus looked upward and said, "Father, I thank you for hearing me.

11:42 I know that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me."

11:43 After saying this, he shouted with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!"

11:44 The man who had died came out, his hands and feet tied with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a handkerchief. Jesus told them, "Untie him, and let him go."

11:45 Many of the Jews who had come with Mary and had observed what Jesus did believed in him.

[International Standard Version]

Last weekend, we had Bible Camp at the city of Oarai under the Ibaragi prefecture and one of the sisters made a short testimony, in which she said, "I surrendered myself and came to love Jesus." That is a good testimony, isn't it? She surrendered herself to Jesus and now she loves Him much more than she used to. This is actually how Jesus works on people and reveals His glory. Please let me read some more verses from the Gospel according to John, Chapter 2. Jesus also revealed His glory in here.

John

2:1 On the third day of that week there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee. Jesus' mother was there,

2:2 and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding.

2:3 When the wine ran out, Jesus' mother told him, "They don't have any more wine."

2:4 "How does that concern us, dear lady?" Jesus asked her. "My time hasn't come yet."

¹ 『主イエスはご自分の栄光をあらわされた』、2013年3月12日、吉祥寺学び会、ゴットホルド・ベック

2:5 His mother told the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

2:6 Now standing there were six stone water jars used for the Jewish rites of purification, each one holding from 20 to 30 gallons.

2:7 Jesus told the servants, "Fill the jars with water." So they filled them up to the brim.

2:8 Then he told them, "Now draw some out and take it to the man in charge of the banquet." So they did.

2:9 When the man in charge of the banquet tasted the water that had become wine (without knowing where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew), he called for the bridegroom

2:10 and told him, "Everyone serves the best wine first, and the cheap kind when people are drunk. But you have kept the best wine until now!"

2:11 Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee. He revealed his glory, and his disciples believed in him.

Jesus is called "the savior". His disciples began to realize that Jesus was the one who would provide the promised salvation. So many people now read the Bible and refuse to believe that water turned into wine. However, all things written in the Bible are true and doubtless.

Most of the readers will be fascinated by the miracle itself, but the most important event that happened in here is in verse 11; "Jesus revealed His glory." This is the point. The glory of Jesus has to be revealed. What matters is whether our lives reflect the glory of Jesus.

We need to have the living Lord God enter into our dark and miserable lives. Jesus can change water to wine. We may not have to see the miracle to occur; rather, all we need to see is Jesus Himself.

Our lives must manifest the glory of the Lord. We have to bring the glory of the Lord into our life and pass it on further to other people. We must reflect the glory of Jesus just like mirrors. This is one of the most wonderful verses from the second epistle to Corinthians which is cited very often. Paul wrote to the people of Corinth;

2 Corinthian

3:18 As all of us reflect the glory of the Lord with unveiled faces, we are becoming more like him with ever-increasing glory by the Lord's Spirit.

Do our lives reflect the glory of the Lord? That is what matters. For the discussion of today's theme, "The Lord Jesus revealed His glory", I would like to raise three questions.

Question One; Does Jesus still reveal His glory today?

Question Two; How can we reveal the glory of the Lord?

Question Three; Why does Jesus reveal His glory?

Does Jesus still reveal his glory in this present day? What do you think? Unfortunately, we have to answer that He no longer reveals his glory to us, don't we?

Jesus undoubtedly used to reveal His glory in the days of Early Christianity. He needed the foundation, on which He needed to establish churches, from which He needed to spread gospel all over the world. What about this present time when the end of history is near?

Second question; then, how can we reveal the glory of the Lord?

And the third question; why does Jesus have to reveal His glory? He does so not for our sake but for the Lord Himself. It is a manifestation of his immeasurable love.

Does Jesus still reveal His glory, today in this present time? Some people say that Jesus can't reveal His glory today and He won't perform miracles anymore. Some people even believe that Jesus actually never carried out any miracle at all and the miracles described in the Bibles are nothing but fairy tales.

However, Jesus is the one who performs miracles even to this day. Some people still certainly see or experience this marvel of Jesus. Our Lord surely performs His miracle today. All those saved people we see are living proof of this wonder.

Believers would say that, "Although I have been dead from my sins until today, I repent now and I will be regenerated by the faith and mercy of the Lord." This is nothing but the miracle. No one can explain the miracle logically, but it is a fact.

But, does Jesus still perform miracles today in the lives of the believers? To answer this question, let us ask another question to ourselves; how does Jesus reveal His glory? The answer is that Jesus reveals His glory through us. What matters is whether or not the Lord Jesus can use us as instruments to spread his message. The devil, on the other hand, uses whoever is convenient to him regardless of whether they are even suitable enough to be chosen.

What is important today is whether Jesus is still able to reveal His glory or not. Can He glorify Himself through each one of us who is gathered here this morning? Does He still perform His miracles? Without doubt, He does. Then, how does Jesus glorify Himself? He shows His glory through the pains and problems in our lives.

The door to heaven is open today. Baptism of Jesus, transformation, resurrection, Ascension and Pentecost; all these events prove that entering heaven is still a possibility. The door to heaven is already open for us, so it does not even require our prayers, enthusiasm or devotion.

Our savior is raised to heaven and he has all power and authority. So, the door to heaven is open to us. We are able to reveal the glory of Jesus to people through the way we live our own lives.

We can't make any excuses now. For instance, 'my burden is too heavy.' 'My situation is hopeless.' 'The mood in my home is dark.' 'I don't get along with my colleagues.' We can't use these situations as excuses.

When Jesus gives us a word, light shines into our lives of darkness. Jesus can still say, "Let there be light." When Jesus does so, we will manifest the glory of the Lord through our lives. Today, I entitled this sermon "The Lord revealed His glory." And as I mentioned, we are discussing three questions.

The first question was whether Jesus still reveals His glory today or not.

Secondly, how can we reveal the glory of Jesus?

A miracle itself is not important, no matter how amazing it looks. But the question is whether it is performed to reveal the glory of the Lord. Then, in what way does Jesus reveal His glory? I must, at this juncture, tell you about the wedding ceremony in Cana. It was actually very peculiar and unique.

Generally, in any wedding ceremony, the bride and bridegroom should be the most important, but in here they were not paid a lot of attention. Instead, Jesus was the center of this wedding. The message thus was that if Jesus does not stay at the center of our lives, it will cause us misery.

When Jesus dwells inside us and merges together with us, He will be the focus of our lives. When it happens, our lives will start to reflect the glory of the Lord. Jesus was invited to the wedding solely for this purpose.

Jesus was not merely one of the guests, but He was the center of this wedding ceremony. Likewise, we must have Jesus at the center of our lives. Jesus wants to reside within us. When we come together with Jesus, miracles will be brought into our lives.

This is the miracle of blessing. Not placing Jesus at the center of our lives will be the reason for all failures. When He dwells inside us and truly merges as one with us, He

will be the focus of our lives and consequently, our lives will reflect the glory of the Lord.

How will the glory of Jesus be revealed? Needless to say, it can be revealed only through Jesus Himself. When the Lord Jesus is at the center of our life, it is manifested by a sign; a sign that we have come to realize our poverty. Now, wines are all gone. As people see such situation, they always want to assume a role of self importance even when they are in front of the Lord.

If you live in humility, the Lord can work on you. Contrarily, when you manage to accomplish something by yourself, Jesus recedes from view. As He comes into our life, we will recognize our true poverty. As long as we believe that we are rich, Jesus cannot use us to reveal His glory.

How can we experience the power of the Lord's miracle? It occurs when Jesus truly becomes the center of all things in our daily life. In the middle of hardship, can we act like His mother at the wedding ceremony in Cana?

She did not come to the bridegroom or master of ceremonies to discuss the problem. Instead, she came to see Jesus immediately. She had a firm conviction when she came to Jesus. It was an unshakeable belief that Jesus could do and Jesus would do."

Do we have the same faith as she had when we draw near to the Lord? Do we have the conviction that Jesus can do anything and that He will absolutely do it? You will be blessed when you open your eyes wide again to what Jesus accomplished on the cross. All things He had done before he was crucified were preparations for the cross and all things he accomplished after the cross were consequences of the crucifixion.

How can we glorify the Lord? We have to accept what Jesus' mother accepted. The mother of Jesus accepted His words with unquestioning faith, which sounded so loveless; "How does that concern us, dear lady?" He was telling her that their thoughts were totally different from each other. He made it clear that He would never obey her. These are very harsh words. Jesus had to draw a very clear line between Him and His mother. Jesus didn't say, "All right, you are my mother. I will do whatever you say."

Luke

14:26 If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father, mother, wife, children, brothers, and sisters, as well as his own life, he can't be my disciple.

This verse is a command of Jesus. At this wedding in Cana, Jesus put these words into practice. "Our earthly

relationship has no meaning at all"; so said Jesus to His mother.

Jesus never reveals His glory for our sake. He only reveals His glory for Himself. Jesus did not reveal His glory even for the earthly relationship between his mother and Himself. Likewise, He would never reveal His glory for the sake of our troubles, pains or prayers. Jesus is the Lord, therefore His glory is revealed for no one but Himself.

How do we experience the glory of the Lord? It can be experienced when Jesus comes into our lives. Jesus needs to transform us. Until you accept this transformation, you will never be blessed.

"My time hasn't come yet." The Lord said, "Be patient". The important fact is not to learn how to endure, but to possess the endurance in the first place. Endurance cannot be obtained by learning. True endurance means nothing else but to serve under Jesus Christ. That was exactly what His mother did. Are we capable of endurance like this?

Are we truly serving under Jesus? "For you need endurance", so wrote the author of the Hebrews. The person who endures to the end would be allowed to experience the glory of the Lord. "My time hasn't come yet." But, the time of the Lord Jesus will come. We might have to wait for a very long time. However, His time will certainly come and Jesus will undoubtedly reveal His glory.

How can we experience the glory of Jesus? We will experience His glory after we understand obedience in our faith. According to the Bible, even Jesus learned obedience.

Hebrew

5:8 Son though he was, he learned obedience through his sufferings

5:9 and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.

Mary, the mother of Jesus said, "Do whatever he tells you." It is important to learn from His living word, not from so-called Apostles' Creed or doctrines.

"Whatever he tells you"; these words show us the importance of obedience to Jesus. We need to pray, read the Bible, listen to His words and reflect them in our deeds. "Do whatever he tells you." This requires a lot of dedication and devotion. For example, Jesus told them to fill jars with water. It should not have been such a difficult order to follow.

However, it was not so easy to put into action the next task Jesus told them to do, which was "to draw some out and take it to the man in charge of the banquet". We would feel the same way. While the first command was simple and easy, anyone would hesitate to obey the next command. It was a reasonable request to fill the jars with water.

But, it was without much surprise that they hesitated to bring the jar to the governor of the feast. It seemed so absurd and unreasonable. It was water, not wine. Yet, they brought that water to the governor of the feast. They obeyed the command of the Lord. After all, this made it possible for Jesus to reveal His glory. The secret of glorification lay in this unswerving obedience to the words of Jesus.

The subject of today's sermon was "Jesus revealed His glory" and we have been discussing the answer to three questions so far.

The first question was whether Jesus still reveals His glory. Yes, He does.

Secondly, how can we reveal the glory of Jesus? Needless to say, it can only be revealed through the compassion of the Lord.

Now, let's talk about the third and the last question; what is the purpose of Jesus in revealing His glory?

It is for us to be transformed into the image of the Lord Jesus. Jesus does not reveal His glory for our sake. He reveals his glory always for Himself. As we can see from the Bible, the Lord Jesus desires us to be transformed into His image. It is in actuality the only reason that Jesus reveals His glory. "We have to become more like the Lord with ever-increasing glory", as is written repeatedly in the Bible.

What was His purpose of revealing His glory? It was to strengthen the faith of the disciples. It is written at the end of this part that "his disciples believed in Jesus"; it was meant for His disciples to renew their devotion to the Lord. There is one path that is only possible to those who have experienced the glory of Jesus. It is to dedicate their lives to the Lord.

For the apostles to renew and refresh their worship for Jesus, Paul commanded them to "glorify God with their bodies". Thus, why don't we newly devote our whole lives to Jesus today? We will then be truly blessed if Jesus reveals His glory through our lives.

End