

## [1] What the Lord wants

'Unser Herr lebt', issue 25  
Gotthold Beck

『主は生きておられる』25号、『主の願い』の英訳です。

### Second Epistle of Peter

3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness. but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

What does the Lord Jesus want? What is the desire of the Lord Jesus in His heart? As we can see from this verse, the Lord wants not one of us to perish.

### Gospel According to John

6:40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which sees the Son, and believes on him, may have everlasting life. and I will raise him up at the last day.

This is the will of God the Father, that every one which believes in Jesus may have everlasting life. To save men, He gave us his most beloved one, Jesus Christ.

Do we all also want to save other people? Those who do not keep this wish in their minds can't help but be accused of being lazy. Jesus is looking for someone who has the same spirit as the Lord.

### Gospel According to Mark

1:16 Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea. for they were fishers.

1:17 And Jesus said to them. Come you after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.

1:18 And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him.

Jesus looked at Simon by the sea of Galilee. When Jesus met Simon for the first time, he did not think Simon was a particularly righteous man. Simon had two names. One name was Peter. The other one was Simon, which represented the weakness of man. In fact he knew that Simon-Peter would deny Jesus three times before the cock crowed.

Jesus knew from the beginning that Peter was going to deliver a wonderful sermon on the day of Pentecost. Jesus did not only see how the people were, but how they would be eventually changed by the blessing of the Lord. As Jesus looked at Simon, He is looking at us now. Let's listen to the words of Jesus, who is watching us and inviting us. Jesus is still telling us today, "follow me, and I will make you fishers of men". Followers of Jesus are after all, the people appointed as "fishers of men". Are we convinced of this important fact and aware of it?

Jesus prepared the perfect salvation for all people by being crucified. If someone comes to Jesus as a sinner, but expresses his appreciation for the salvation of Jesus, that someone is saved.

Jesus is looking for someone to carry this good news to the other people. The Lord said to Isaiah 2600 years ago, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" But, he is still seeking for vessels to serve him today. We will be glad if we can say "Here am I. Send me.", just like Isaiah. We spend our lives surrounded by those who are not saved yet. How can we prepare souls to serve Jesus? This is the most critical and urgent question we face at every moment of our life. The devil is always thinking how he can end people, how he can blind their eyes.

What conditions are necessary for salvation? How can we help people to know Jesus? What has the Lord done for you to achieve salvation? Let us find the answer from the Bible.

## For men to be saved

The Son of God, Jesus came down to this world as human. Jesus is “the friend of sinners”. We have to meet Jesus himself to be saved. The mediator between God and man is Jesus. Therefore, the most important thing is to meet Jesus himself.

### First Epistle to Timothy

2:5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;

### Acts of Apostles

4:12 Neither is there salvation in any other. for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

God's spirit, the angels, have been poured out on all people, after Jesus resurrected. Only angels can release the souls of man. Angels want to do so. No one can accept their own sins without help from the spirits. They can neither repent nor believe. These things are accomplished from the side of God.

### Zechariah

4:6 Then he answered and spoke to me, saying. This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel, saying. Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, says the Lord of hosts.

So what do sinners have to do to really be saved? The most important thing is to neither repent nor to believe. It is not just a matter of understanding that Jesus has died for your sins. What is most important is to come to Jesus with an honest mind, with your whole heart; to pray to Jesus.

## Come to Jesus, the friend of sinners

When Jesus lived in this world, he was always referred as the friend of the sinners by his enemies. What a truth! Jesus is the friend of all sinners. Jesus, when he came to this world, first walked as a friend of the people. Later, he became their savior. Even today, he does the same. Lord Jesus, to become our savior, first becomes our friend. Before the time comes when we accept Jesus as our savior, Jesus welcomes us. He is friend to all sinners. Let's look at some examples which prove the fact that the Lord is a 'friend of sinners'.

One young lady came to a believer and said, “I do not want salvation”. She was a graduate of a mission school and had enough knowledge of the bible. But she decided to live a life she just wanted. The answer from the believer of Jesus was “Fine. But why don't we pray together for a moment?”. She was surprised and asked “I have nothing I want to pray. What am I supposed to pray about?” The believer answered, “It is none of my concern. I am going to pray first so please, you pray after that. You can say everything to Jesus as you just said to me.” “No, I can't do that”, she insisted. “Why can't you? Don't you know that Jesus is the friend of sinners?” the believer asked. This fact, that Jesus is the friend of sinners, touched her heart. She prayed to Jesus, the friend of all sinners and was saved a few days later.

The bible makes it clear that Jesus came down to the earth as the friend of sinners so that all sinners could be saved. This “friend of sinners” was glorified by the Lord God before the world was created, before everything existed. It is also said that all things ever created were created by Jesus just for Jesus. What a great Lord he is! His apostles also testified;

### Acts of the Apostles

16:31 And they said. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shalt be saved, and your house.

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What if someone says, "I do not believe"? What can we do?

Once, there was a man who was in deep trouble. He said, "I tried so hard. But, I still do not believe although I have made all efforts. I want to believe but I can't. My family keeps telling me to believe but it makes no difference". The believers answered, "It does not matter. Don't worry about it at all. But you still can pray to Jesus and ask him to give you a faith, because so far, you do not believe him. Jesus will be so happy to give you the faith, being the friend of all sinners".

The bible clearly states the importance of repentance. But so many people want to avoid repentance. What shall we do with these people?

One day, this university student came in and said, "I am young. I want to enjoy the life in this world. So, I do not want to be saved now. Look at two thieves crucified with Jesus. They had experienced all kinds of pleasures of this life before they were saved. I am still young. I would like to enjoy a pleasant life for some 40 years from now. Then I will repent." The believer then said, "That is fine. But let's pray now". But the student answered "No, I won't. I can't pray". "It is not true. You can pray. Please simply repeat after me what I am going to say to Jesus. Jesus is the friend of those who do not want to repent." The student still insisted he could not say these things but finally he prayed. "Jesus, I do not want to repent at this moment. I do not want your salvation", he prayed. The Lord worked on the heart of this young man. He was drastically saved on that day.

More than 100 years ago, there was a lady in England. Her parents were Christians. She wanted to have the salvation of Jesus so badly. But she was not saved. One day, she was actually almost going to give up all hope; but then she went to a small church of the town. The priest, in his sermon, talked to her and said, "You too can achieve the salvation of Jesus, today. You do not have to do anything." At the moment, she was saved. She went home and made this hymn.

[Just As I Am by Charlotte Elliott]

1 Just as I am, without one plea,  
But that Thy blood was shed for me,  
And that Thou bidst me come to Thee,  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

2 Just as I am, and waiting not  
To rid my soul of one dark blot,  
To Thee whose blood can cleanse each spot,  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

3 Just as I am, though tossed about  
With many a conflict, many a doubt,  
Fightings and fears within, without,  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

4 Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind;  
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,  
Yea, all I need in Thee to find,  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

5 Just as I am, Thou wilt receive,  
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;

Because Thy promise I believe,  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

6 Just as I am, Thy love unknown  
Hath broken every barrier down;  
Now, to be Thine, yea, Thine alone,  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

In the bible, which is a collection of words of God, it is emphasized that Jesus, the friend of sinners, can do the things which sinners cannot. So, people do not have to wait. But you can come to Jesus, the friend of sinners, immediately. Regardless of the state of your mind, whatever the problem you have, you should come to Jesus just the way you are now. If you talk to Jesus, he will absolutely answer.

### Only if you believe in the Son, Jesus

What is salvation? How can one become saved? Many people think it is the belief that Jesus died for them, but that is not what the bible says. The bible does not state that people can be saved by believing that Jesus died for their own sins. There only is a promise: "Believe in Jesus and you shall be saved".(Acts 16:31) And those who believe in the Son of God have gain eternal life.(John 3:16)

Gospel according to John  
20:31 But these are written, that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.  
and that believing you might have life through his name.

John wrote in the gospel;

Gospel According to John  
1:11 He came to his own, and his own received him not.

Why didn't people accept Jesus, even after they actually met Jesus? Was it because they did not believe in the salvation he had accomplished? No, it was not. It was before Jesus was crucified and they did not know about the salvation. They were not ready to accept the Lord Jesus himself.

What is most important is not to believe in the salvation Jesus accomplished, but to believe that Jesus is the Christ, son of God.

Gospel according to John  
3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes  
in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

It does not state that those who believe that the Son of God died for them on the cross have everlasting life. But it says that, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life". Of course, we are not trying to make light of the salvation Jesus had done. But acquiring knowledge does not mean being saved. Meeting Jesus is important. It is the encounter with Jesus.

Gospel according to John  
17:3 And this is life eternal, that they might know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ,  
whom you has sent.

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Let's look at three quick examples from the New Testament.

#### The thief

The first example is a thief nailed on the cross next to Jesus.

Gospel according to Luke

23:39 And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying. If you be Christ, save thyself and us.

23:40 But the other answering rebuked him, saying. do not you fear God, seeing you are in the same condemnation?

23:41 And we indeed justly. for we receive the due reward of our deeds. but this man has done nothing amiss.

23:42 And he said to Jesus, Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

23:43 And Jesus said to him. Verily I say to you, Today shalt you be with me in paradise.

The thief was saved by Jesus just before he died. And he deserved the punishment he received. So why was he saved? What did the thief say to Jesus? "Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom." And what was Jesus' answer? Did he say "You have done so many bad things in your life. Your soul must perish because you committed sins. But do not worry, because I am going to die for your sins now."? No, that was not what he said. Neither did he say "you may possibly be saved". He only said "Verily I say to you, today shalt you be with me in paradise." Why did Jesus speak in this way? Why didn't Jesus talk about his plan of salvation? It was because the thief believed that Jesus was the son of God. He believed in Jesus and that was simply enough.

#### Woman suffering from bleeding

The next person is a woman suffering from chronic bleeding.

Gospel according to Mark

5:24 And Jesus went with him. and much people followed him, and thronged him.

5:25 And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years,

5:26 And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse,

5:27 When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment.

5:28 For she said. If I may touch but his clothes. I shall be whole.

5:29 And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up. and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague.

5:30 And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said. Who touched my clothes?

5:31 And his disciples said to him. You see the multitude thronging you, and say you, Who touched me?

5:32 And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing.

5:33 But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth.

5:34 And he said to her. Daughter, your faith has made you whole. go in peace, and be whole of your plague.

Verse 24 states that "Many people followed him and thronged him". So many people must have touched Jesus' clothes. But only one woman was healed. She was not healed because she had knowledge. She only had to meet Jesus, touch Jesus consciously. This weak sick woman

touched the friend of sinners who was full of strength. She was healed instantly. She was called by Jesus. She was so full of joy and surprise and “fell down before him, and told him all the truth.” Then, the friend of sinners pulled her up from the press and said, “Your faith has made you whole”.

### The Tax Collector

The third example is the tax collector.

Gospel according to Luke

18:9 And he spoke this parable to certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:

18:10 Two men went up into the temple to pray. the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

18:11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God. I thank you, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

18:12 I fast twice in the week. I give tithes of all that I possess.

18:13 And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying. God be merciful to me a sinner.

18:14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other. for every one that exalts himself shall be abased. and he that humbles himself shall be exalted.

These verses clearly describe the difference between the prayers of Pharisee and a publican. Pharisee had studied all about sacrifices and offerings to God. But, he did not have any passion to praise the living and true God at all. The publican asked, “God, please forgive me, a sinner”. The difference between the two is so clear. Nothing is more important than coming to the Lord with an honest and pure heart.

### Peter's mission

The disciple Peter made no mention about the plan of God's salvation in his mission described in the Bible.

Acts of Apostles

2:22 you men of Israel, hear these words. Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as you yourselves also know:

2:23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, you have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

2:24 Whom God has raised up, having loosed the pains of death. because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.

Why didn't Peter talk about the blood of Jesus shed? Why didn't he cite chapter 53 of Isaiah to preach about the sacrifice of Jesus? He only talked about Jesus himself; therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God has made that same Jesus, whom you have crucified, both Lord and Christ(Acts 2:36). Peter did not even use the word “savior”. Still, his preaching brought more than three thousand people to him crying, “What do I have to do to be saved?”

Later, Peter came to meet Cornelius but again avoided talking about the meaning of the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus or the importance of redemption. They were all heathens. But Peter only talked about Jesus himself. The bible states in the Acts 10:44, that the Holy Ghost descended to the all audiences.

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As we have seen, the salvation is not a matter of knowledge. It is important to be touched by Jesus for us to achieve salvation. We do not need to understand the plan of salvation. There is no need to know the consequences of our sins. We only have to look at Jesus.

Our Lord lives. Jesus is not just a crucified savior in the history. Jesus still sits on the right hand side of his father as the Lord of the Lord who was brought up in the air. This is why we do not have to come to the cross to be saved. Instead, we are just supposed to come close to the Lord at the throne of grace. It is stated that those who believe in him will have everlasting life.

Usually when we preach about the gospel, we tell people to repent and believe. However, the majority of people are not saved just by listening to these kinds of messages. For example, I often talk about how horrible sins are or what the wage of sin is. But, some people say, "I have heard these kinds of stories so many times. I am sick and tired of this. I still want to commit sins. I love sin!" These kinds of people can be saved by no one but the friend of sinners.

Some people, after talking with us, come to believe that they want to be saved. Some of them come back after a while to ask, "I'm sorry but I forgot the third point you mentioned in your message. Will you please repeat it?" To be saved, you do not need to remember what you heard in the preachings. You won't be saved because of your intentions, nor because of your apprehension. To be saved, neither knowledge of the bible nor the ability to understand is required at all. You only have to meet Jesus.

#### Come to Jesus with your whole heart.

It is stated in the Bible; the heart is more deceitful than anything. It is incurable (Jeremiah 17:9). Of course, we do not have such righteousness. However, even a person with most evil and deceitful heart can talk to Jesus, the friend of sinners, honestly. Just like the lady I just mentioned earlier, those who fall down before the Lord and make an honest confession are blessed. It is a blessing if they can ask Jesus faithfully, "God, please forgive me, a sinner".

#### Second Chronicles

16:9 For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him.

The Lord is always seeking people who have an honest mind and a whole heart. You need to have an honest mind to be saved. It is neither faith nor repentance.

The thief, when he pleaded, "Lord, remember me," had this honest mind. The woman who had been suffering from chronic bleeding, when she stepped forward to touch the robe of the Lord, and the publican, when he asked, "God, please forgive me, a sinner", they had this honest heart.

Saul never wanted the salvation of Jesus. He rather was the one who persecuted the believers of Jesus. But when he felt the presence of the Lord, he asked, "Lord, what do I have to do?" This meant that he also had this honest mind.

Jesus is the friend of sinners. Jesus accepts any sinners and never turns them away if they ever come to see him. If we confess to the friend of sinners, everything in our minds, the Lord will listen to the voices of the honest hearts.

This was the case that happened to a lady in England. She was very wealthy and famous. She had an excellent education and was also a good musician, young and so beautiful. Nevertheless, she did not feel fulfilled at all. One night, she said, "God, I've got everything, youth, health, wealth,

beauty, fame, all respects and glory, all kinds of pleasure. But, I have not surrendered to you. God, I do not want your salvation. I hate you. I also hate all the joy and peace you give. So, God, please give me what I do not want. I want to be satisfied." This lady was saved at this very moment, since then she has served Jesus very well.

The most important thing is to come to Jesus faithfully with your whole heart. Jesus, the friend of sinners delightedly forgives sinners and accepts them. When will it happen? According to the bible, the answer is now. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation. (2 Corinthians 6:2)" The Bible tells us; whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.(John 3:16). The will of our father is for everyone who sees the son and believes in him to have everlasting life.(John 6:40) And whoever shall call upon the name of Jesus shall be saved.(Acts 2:21)

We shall all have good hearts and come to the friend of sinners faithfully. Then, the spirits will finally lead you to real faith and repentance.

### Pure mind ready to seek

We looked at many kinds of people, namely people who didn't want to repent, who didn't want salvation, who had given up hope because they had committed serious sins, who couldn't understand salvation, and who still refused Jesus, even though they knew the plan of salvation. All of these people can achieve salvation, however. If they tell the whole truth to the friend of sinners, the Lord will accept them. Even if some people have never believed in the existence of God, once they confess everything to the Lord with honest mind, they will be saved.

Finally, I want to talk about the importance of seeking an innocent mind, just like a little child.

#### Gospel according to Mark

10:46 And they came to Jericho. and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the highway side begging.

10:47 And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, you Son of David, have mercy on me.

10:48 And many charged him that he should hold his peace. but he cried the more a great deal, You Son of David, have mercy on me.

10:49 And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man, saying to him, Be of good comfort, rise. he calls you.

10:50 And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus.

10:51 And Jesus answered and said to him. What wilt you that I should do to you? The blind man said to him. Lord, that I might receive my sight.

10:52 And Jesus said to him. Go your way. your faith has made you whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.

When he was asked, "*What wilt you that I should do to you?*", the blind man answered instantly, "*Lord, that I might receive my sight.*" It is so important to make your intentions clear about what you need most, what you want most and keep seeking for it.

We too, shall meekly ask, "I am a sinner. Please forgive my sins. I am so scared. Please let us live in peace. My heart is so cold and I can't love others. I want love. I do not have a real soul. Please give me one. I do not even know why I have to live this life. Please show me. I am blind. Please open my eyes." I want everyone to say these words now and spread your hands in front of Jesus filled with faith, Savior of God, the only one man who loves us forever, who forgives us and who gives us everlasting life. Jesus is waiting for you to come to him with empty hands. Why don't we extend our empty hands to Jesus?