

[1] The most important decision in your life

'Unser Herr lebt', issue 26
Gotthold Beck

主は生きておられる26、『人生におけるもっとも大切な決定』の英訳です。

Hebrew

10:32 But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after you were illuminated, you endured a great fight of afflictions;

Exodus

13:3 And Moses said to the people, Remember this day, in which you came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage. for by strength of hand the Lord brought you out from this place. there shall no leavened bread be eaten.

When someone is illuminated by the light of God, that person is transformed into someone new.

Acts of the Apostles

26:13 At midday, Oh king. I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me.

26:14 And when we were all fallen to the earth. I heard a voice speaking to me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecute you me? it is hard for you to kick against the pricks.

26:15 And I said. Who are you, Lord? And he said. I am Jesus whom you persecute.

This is the testimony of Paul. He described what happened to him when he was illuminated by the light. As you know, Paul was the worst persecutor of Jesus' believers. Paul believed that Jesus had died on the cross and that Jesus' believers were criminals who had to be arrested and punished. But, one day, when he was suddenly illuminated by the light, and heard the voice of Jesus he had never even imagined. At the moment, he was caught by Jesus and was held captive. By being illuminated, Paul saw where his heart was standing, the state of his mind. In addition, he came to understand the value of Jesus, and the greatness of Jesus. What happened to Paul after that? We can see it in the next few verses.

Epistle to the Galatians

1:12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Epistle to the Philippians

3:8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,

3:9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

When Paul was illuminated by the light from above and captured by the Lord Jesus, he was given wonderful hope and a mission from his resurrected Lord.

Acts of the Apostles

26:17 Delivering you from the people, and from the Gentiles, to whom now I send you,

26:18 To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

God, who gave Paul the mission to preach the gospel to non-Jewish people, is the light.

First Epistle of John

1:5 This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare to you, that God is light,

and in him is no darkness at all.

The Lord God refers to Himself as “a father of light”. The Lord God dwells in an inaccessible light. The Devil's sin has only brought devastation and darkness. God has retreated and the earth was covered with darkness. But the light was there by the words of God.

Epistle to the Galatians

1:12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Psalm

33:9 For he spoke, and it was done. he commanded, and it stood fast.

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[2] The most important decision in your life

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We cannot even imagine the world without light, but no doubt, it is a world without any delight. Light is life and darkness is death. Light is a power of life coming from the Lord God. According to the Bible (Genesis 1:3), God said, "Let there be light". Then there was light. How simple it is. What a great work of God.

Second Epistle to the Corinthians

4:6 For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Have we already had the same experience? Has the Lord God already talked to you, to your life, or to the darkness within you? Let there be light. To the life of anyone, the miracle of recovery will occur. It is the way to the cross. When angels illuminate the bottom of our hearts, then our eyes will be open, we will understand that we are sinners, and know that without Jesus, we will just have to perish eternally.

No matter how much your face is covered with dirt, you cannot see it in the night. When the light shines on you, you will be so surprised to see how dirty your face is. Without the heavenly vision from God, without being illuminated by the light, nobody can recognize the filthiness of his or her own heart.

When we hear the voice of the Lord, "Let there be light", inside our own miserable and darkened hearts, we are re-created.

If the Lord talks to our darkened hearts and says, "Let there be light", light is thrown into our hearts. The Lord Jesus has promised, "I am the light of the world. The one who follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life". (John 8:12) Do we already have the light of life? Unless we obey the word of Jesus, we will never have that light. We are asked to make a choice. Do we have the light of Jesus? Or, do we only have a darkness of ourselves? Are we going to accept Jesus as light or refuse Him? Those who have experienced the light created by His words, "Let there be light" are blessed.

What does it mean to be illuminated by the light?

1. To be illuminated by the light is to be born as a new person.

Nicodemus was a famous religious leader, a Pharisee, and a leader of Jews of the time. Jesus said to him, "Truly, I tell you with certainty, unless a person is born of water and Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God" (John 3:5).

Believing in a religion is not important. What is most important is to be illuminated by the light of God. Nicodemus was so knowledgeable about the law. Even Jesus called him "a teacher of Israel". He, just like other Pharisees of the time, prayed every day and climbed up to the house of the Lord to pray. He also fasted twice every week and devoted one tenth of his income. But still, he could not see the kingdom of God. It was because he was not yet illuminated by the light of God. Nicodemus accepted Jesus as his teacher from the beginning. However, it was not until he was illuminated by the light that he really believed in the Lord Jesus as Christ. When there was a division in the crowd because of Jesus, he said:

Gospel According to John

7:50 Nicodemus says to them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,)

7:51 does our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he does?

He actually came back to entomb the body of Jesus when the body was taken off the cross.

Gospel According to John

19:39 And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight].

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[3] The most important decision in your life

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2. Being illuminated by the light is to experience salvation.

Ephesians

2:8 For by grace are you saved through faith. and that not of yourselves. it is the gift of God:

Many people still believe that they are saved by their own efforts, by their good deeds. These people want to receive salvation in their hands by working hard, while those who have been illuminated by the light of God don't think that way. They are people who are convinced that salvation is given in exchange for nothing.

The salvation of Jesus can be received without paying money, any price. If we go to Jesus as we are now and entrust our lives to Him, and totally rely on the work Jesus has finished on the cross, and if we turn to Jesus at this very moment, we get salvation. To be illuminated by the light is to accept Jesus.

Gospel According to John

1:12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

It is important to accept just one character, Jesus Himself. Not just His teachings. So, I ask you to believe in the Gospel, to open the door of your heart to Jesus and to invite Jesus into your heart. Jesus is waiting outside your heart to enter. He is truly wishing to enter.

Revelation

3:20 Look. I stand at the door, and knock. if any man hear my voice, and open the door. I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

Will we keep the door closed even after we have heard Jesus knocking on it? Needless to say, Jesus will not force you. We always have to keep it in mind that the door is locked from the inside, where we are. We have to unlock that door. At the moment we open the door to our heart, Jesus will come inside. The Lord Jesus says, "I want to enter". What do we do? Don't we accept Jesus? If we do not receive this offering of the blessing, we will regret it eventually. Please choose the light before it's too late.

3. To be illuminated is to return to the Lord.

First Epistle to the Thessalonians

1:9 For they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God;

The people who were illuminated by the light are the people who knew that the real worship was to worship only the living and true God and all others were idolatry.

How did we come to believe in Jesus? It was because neither were we taught, nor did we understand, nor did we study. Paul made this confession;

Epistle to the Galatians

1:12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

1:16 To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen. immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:

The only thing important is for the Lord God to reveal Jesus, the son of Lord God inside us. We only

worship the Lord, and this has to be the basis of our lives. When the masses saw the miracle performed by Paul, they started to worship him as one of their Gods. Then, the apostles screamed to them:

Acts of the Apostles

14:15 And saying. Sirs, why do you these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach to you that you should turn from these vanities to the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein:

4. To be illuminated by the light is to repent.

Gospel According to Luke

15:7 I say to you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repents, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.

15:10 Likewise. I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repents.

Repentance is to admit your sins and to confess your sins; to throw them away, to hate your sins, and to become a good person. Admitting your own sins is a great gift from the Lord God. If a sinner makes a sincere confession, hates his own sins, throws them away, and returns to good persons, he has accomplished the purpose of God.

To repent is to make a 180-degree turn.

People illuminated by the light do not want to commit sins anymore. Of course, they are confronted by temptation and the power of sins every day. They also are aware of their own weakness. Those who are illuminated by the light understand that people can never save themselves by their own efforts. They are taught that any efforts to save themselves are all proved vain.

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5. When you are illuminated by the light, the forgiveness of sins is offered to you.

Epistle to the Ephesians

1:7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

Epistle to the Romans

3:24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

We are justified by the deeds of Jesus, the blood that Jesus shed on the cross. We can only be justified because of what the Lord has done, neither because of our own deeds, nor through our own efforts. There is only one reason we can be justified. The spotless justice of Jesus, his unstained righteousness, and the fact that Jesus has taken the punishment that we should have received; these are only reasons that we can be justified.

And thus, there is a choice we are all facing and it is inevitable. Do we want to continue committing our own sins? Or do we ask for Jesus who died on the cross? Are you sure that you already have obtained forgiveness for your sins? David could have testified in Psalm 32:1 "blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered".

If you know that you have not yet been saved, and you think that you do not have to be hasty to accept salvation, that it can wait until some other time, please stop and listen to the words of God now.

2Corinthians

6:2 Look, now is the accepted time. look, now is the day of salvation.

6. When you are illuminated by the light, you must make your final decision.

Gospel According to Matthew

7:13 Enter you in at the strait gate. for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leads to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

7:14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leads to life, and few there be that find it.

Jesus always used allegories to show us the way to salvation. There are two gates in this world. One gate is wide and the other one is narrow. There also are two roads in this world. And there are two kinds of people in this world. One group is huge and the other one is small. There are two goals in this life. One leads to the eternal demolition and the other leads to an eternal life. This way, Jesus classified the people all over the world into two groups. You have to make your own decisions with respect to two alternatives. Jesus sees through deep into the bottom of our hearts. We are blessed if we could see ourselves with the same eyes as the Lord sees us. If you open the eyes of your hearts and look into your own souls, you will understand that you were terrible sinners in the eyes of the Lord. Once you are told that you are sinners, you cannot help but confess your sins. The time has already come to choose between salvation and destruction.

7. When people are illuminated by the light, they come to believe in the Lord Jesus.

The only way to know Jesus is simply to come to Him and talk to Him. Jesus will tell you, "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee".

Gospel According to John

6:37 All that the Father gives me shall come to me. and him that comes to me I will in no wise cast out.

Gospel According to Matthew

11:28 Come to me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

11:29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me. for I am meek and lowly in heart. and you shall find rest to your souls.

11:30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

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.

To have faith is to trust in God's grace with unshakable hope, because of Jesus' redemption on the cross. Faith is to grab the hands of Jesus, which are offered to you.

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