

## Training of the Disciples, Part 2 of 2

“Unser Herr lebt,” Issue 28  
Gotthold Beck

### 弟子たちの教育(後編)

主は生きておられる 28 号  
ゴットホルド・ベック

Hebrew

12:2 fixing our attention on Jesus, the pioneer  
and perfecter of the faith.

[International Standard Version]

In the previous issue of “Unser Herr lebt,” we learned about the purpose, instrument, and results of education by the Lord. In this article, I would like to look into some other verses from Scripture while discussing the same subjects.

### Purpose of His Education

The purpose of the Lord in educating us is, primarily, to “manifest the glory of the Lord Jesus,” and secondly, to “transform us into the image of the Lord.”

What the Lord reveals to us first is always “the Lord Jesus Himself”. Jesus always wants to reveal Himself to us. On the other hand, do we truly understand how lowly we are? Do we see that we are the lost ones? Do we realize our self-centered nature, which can never be changed on our own?

#### (1) To Reveal the Glory of the Lord Jesus

In every aspect of our lives, the Lord is trying to reveal Himself to us. Until we encounter the Lord and know Him through own experience, our agonies, our worries and all the problems in our lives won't be truly resolved. Let's look into the Bible and see what happened when Jesus appeared to His disciples in the storm:

Mark

6:45 Jesus immediately had his disciples get into a boat and cross to Bethsaida ahead of him, while he sent the crowd away.

6:46 After saying goodbye to them, he went up on a hillside to pray.

6:47 When evening had come, the boat was in the middle of the sea, while he was alone on the land.

6:48 He saw that his disciples were straining at the oars, because the wind was against them. Shortly before dawn he came to them, walking on the sea. He intended to go up right beside them,

6:49 but when they saw him walking on the sea, they thought it was a ghost and began to scream.

6:50 All of them saw him and were terrified. Immediately he told them, “Have courage! It is I. Stop being afraid!”

6:51 Then he got into the boat with them, and the wind stopped blowing. The disciples were utterly astounded,

6:52 because they didn't understand the significance of the loaves. Instead, their hearts were hardened.

When Jesus got into the boat, the wind stopped blowing. This implies that all troubles that the disciples were facing were instantly resolved. The Lord wants to manifest Himself to us more and more. The Lord Jesus desired His disciples to clearly understand and be certain of His authority, so that they could rely on the Lord Jesus. The Lord required them to have faith and fully trust in Him, and this was the exact purpose of His education. However, at that moment the disciples did not understand this purpose and were not faithful enough.

What is faith, after all? Faith is nothing but absolute reliance on the Lord Jesus. Those who don't have this kind of faith only care about their own lives. If you don't want true happiness, if you are not interested in knowing Jesus Christ, you can just care about your own life everyday. Faith, in other words, is to have certainty in the almightiness of the Lord. If you don't have this certainty, you get caught up with doubts that keep rising inside you. The consequence of such doubts is a paralyzed and hardened faith and a life without joy. Faith is to fasten your eyes on invisible things. If you fail to do so, your life will be dominated by anxiety and unrest about worldly things that your eyes can see.

#### (2) To be transformed into the image of the Lord.

The second purpose of His education is for us to get connected with the Lord and be transformed into the his image. As we look up to the Lord Jesus and experience Him in our life, we are being transformed unknowingly.

2 Corinthians

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.

The education of the Lord cannot be completed through our efforts or perspiration. It can be achieved only when we walk with our eyes looking up to the Lord Jesus. Jesus as the teacher will never force us to do something. Instead, He acts as the best example to follow. So, if we truly desire to change and become like the image of the Lord Jesus, we must avoid being tempted by worldly things. We have to look to something invisible.

### Instruments Used in His Education

#### (1) The Lord Jesus

Now, let's think about the instruments that the Lord uses to educate us. Again, the first instrument is the Lord Jesus Himself. He is the most exemplary worshiper who has the authority to make nature obey, and He is the merciful comforter.

▪ Exemplary Worshiper

Sometimes, the Lord Jesus left the people and departed into the mountains to pray alone.

Matthew

14:23 After dismissing the crowds, he went up on a hillside by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone.

Even for the Lord Jesus, a life of prayer was indispensable. Despite his extremely busy life, He still made time to be alone in silence. He made time to pray alone early in morning, late at night or even at midnight. The Bible shows us that Jesus placed importance on prayers.

Mark

1:35 In the morning, while it was still very dark, Jesus got up and went to a deserted place and prayed there.

Mark

6:46 After saying goodbye to them, he went up on a hillside to pray.

Luke

5:16 However, he continued his habit of retiring to deserted places and praying.

Luke

6:12 Jesus went to a mountain to pray, and he spent the whole night in prayer to God.

These verses describe some aspects of Jesus' prayer life. We too need to have a time to pray alone quietly—just like Jesus did—in order to have communion with the Lord. Otherwise, we will become slaves to the devil. The Lord also commanded His disciples to find a quiet place and pray alone.

Mark

6:31 He told them, "Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest for a while".

Luke

9:10 Then he took them away with him privately to a city called Bethsaida.

"Having time to be alone in silence" does not mean doing nothing. Instead, you have to think profoundly of the Lord, pray sincere prayers, and have communion with the Lord. The Bible refers to this in many places:

1 Chronicles

16:11 Seek the Lord and his strength. Always look to him.

Matthew

7:7 Keep asking, and it will be given to you. Keep searching, and you will find. Keep knocking, and the door will be opened for you.

Matthew

26:41 All of you must stay awake and pray that you won't be tempted. The spirit is indeed willing, but the body is weak.

Luke

18:1 Jesus told his disciples a parable about their need to pray all the time and never give up.

John

16:24 So far you haven't asked for anything in my name. Keep asking and you will receive, so that your joy may be complete.

Ephesians

6:18 Pray in the Spirit at all times with every kind of prayer and request. Likewise, be alert with your most diligent efforts and pray for all the saints.

1 Thessalonians

5:17 Continually be prayerful.

James

5:13 Is anyone among you suffering? He should keep on praying.

All of these words command us to not stop praying, but to seek the Lord all the time. However, we should not forget that there are some preconditions to prayer.

2 Chronicles

7:14 when my people humble themselves—the ones who are called by my name—and pray, seek me, and turn away from their evil practices, I myself will listen from heaven, I will pardon their sins, and I will restore their land.

Jeremiah

29:13 You will seek me and find me when you search for me with all your heart.

Mark

11:24 That is why I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it and it will be yours.

James

5:16 Therefore, make it your habit to confess your sins to one another and to pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of a

righteous person is powerful and effective.

1 John

3:22 Whatever we request we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him.

Conditions that must be met before you pray are a humble heart, a desire to seek the Lord sincerely, a willingness to reveal all your sins, and the ability to trust in the Lord. The Lord will never fail to answer such prayers, so teaches the Bible.

Psalms

91:15 When he calls out to me, I will answer him.

Isaiah

58:9 Then you'll call, and the Lord will answer; you'll cry for help, and he'll respond, 'Here I am.'

Isaiah

65:24 Before they call, I will answer, while they are still speaking, I'll hear.

Luke

11:9 Keep asking, and it will be given you.

John

15:7 If you abide in me and my words abide in you, you can ask for anything you want, and you will receive it.

Now, let's go back to the verses we read earlier and continue to learn about the Lord Jesus as an exemplary prayer. *"After saying goodbye to them, he went up on a hillside to pray. When evening had come, the boat was in the middle of the sea, while he was alone on the land. He saw that his disciples were straining at the oars, because the wind was against them. Shortly before dawn he came to them, walking on the sea."* While praying on a mountain, Jesus saw His disciples were in trouble. Generally speaking, those who pray quietly in the presence of the Lord can see their problems from a higher perspective. They have more profound insights when compared with others, which leads them to solutions for their problems. Furthermore, just as the Lord Jesus cared about His disciples while they were facing hardship, He has been watching everything that has occurred in our faithful life.

In the time of Noah, *"The Lord saw that human evil was growing more and more throughout the earth, with every inclination of people's thoughts becoming only evil on a continuous basis (Genesis 6:5)."* The Lord is always paying attention to our thoughts, desires, and motivations. No sin can be hidden from the Lord. Our "sins" have become our "debts." How can we take care of these "debts in our lives? Are we making meaningless efforts to neglect all our debts? Debt is always debt, and it will never disappear

unless it is paid. Only those whose debts are paid in full will be forgiven—and this was already accomplished by the Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus sacrificed His precious life to redeem our debts, and in this way His gospel is provided to people all over the world. Don't you want to embrace this wonderful salvation?

In the time of Moses, the Lord said, *"Now, listen carefully! The cry of the Israelis has come to my attention about how severely the Egyptians have been oppressing them (Exodus 3:9)."* He then rescued the Israelites and set them free from Egypt. Those who don't know the Lord Jesus Christ are bonded as slaves to the devil, sins, and this world. True liberation can be accomplished only through the Lord Jesus. When you reflect on yourself, don't you feel that you are crippled and your life is controlled by something that deprives you of joy? The Lord Jesus not only knows what that is, but He will liberate you from it.

We can see from the testimony of David that the Lord was watching everything in the time of David, as in the times of Noah and Moses.

Psalms

34:16 The face of the Lord is set against those who do evil, and he will remove people's recollection of them from the earth.

34:17 The Lord hears those who cry out, and he delivers them from all their distress.

34:18 The Lord is close to the brokenhearted, and he delivers those whose spirit has been crushed.

This is the testimony and experience of David. The Lord delivered his people from all kinds of distress and suffering. For believers, the most important thing is whether they truly trust in the Lord and their hearts are wholly one with Him. The Bible says, *"You are to carry out your duties in the fear of the Lord, serving him faithfully with your whole heart (2 Chronicles 19:9)."*

#### ▪ The Authority to Control Nature

It is not only in chapter 6 of Mark, but also in many other parts of the Bible that the Lord Jesus is proclaimed to be the one to whose authority even nature bows. However, these days many people question this Biblical fact. They, not only refuse to accept the truth, but they raise their voices to criticize the Bible. In contrast, those who have truly experienced the Lord Jesus have no doubt about this fact. Instead, they are certain that the Lord Almighty has the power to control nature. The coming of the Messiah was predicted in the Old Testament—and the Messiah who had all of these authorities and strengths.

Isaiah

9:6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government will be upon his shoulder, and his name is called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Matthew

8:27 The men were amazed. "What kind of man is this?" they asked. "Even the winds and the sea obey him!"

It is no wonder that this Lord Jesus, who was called the "Mighty God", had the power to control natural phenomena—that he could calm the turbulent water of the lake and walk on it. This is nothing to be surprised at. Actually, for the Lord Jesus, calming the wind and lake was an easy thing to do. He has accomplished far greater things. He forgave the sins of all men, was resurrected by His own strength, and gave all believers everlasting life. Jesus testified to this Himself:

Matthew

9:2 All at once some people brought him a paralyzed man lying on a stretcher. When Jesus saw their faith, he told the paralyzed man, "Be courageous, son! Your sins are forgiven."

9:6 But so you will know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins..." he told the paralyzed man, "Get up, pick up your stretcher, and go home!"

John

10:18 No one is taking it from me; I lay it down of my own free will. I have the authority to lay it down, and I have the authority to take it back again.

John

17:2 For you have given him authority over all humanity so that he might give eternal life to all those you gave him.

After the Lord Jesus died on the cross and then resurrected, He said to His disciples, "*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me*(Matthew 28:18)". And the disciples too testified of His authority;

Ephesians

1:22 God has put everything under the Messiah's feet and has made him the head of everything for the good of the church.

1 Peter

3:22 who has gone to heaven and is at the right hand of God, where angels, authorities, and powers have been made subject to him.

The Lord Jesus is given all power and authority. Now, what does this man mean to our life? Is He a

"stranger" to us? If He is, we have no God, no hope. In front of us lies the road that leads to eternal destruction. Or has Jesus become our "savior?" If He is already our savior, we have peace with God, our sins are forgiven and we are already given eternal life through Him.

Jesus desires to be our "Lord." Only when Jesus stays at the center of our life will we be heirs of the Lord, destined to inherit everything. We will have unspeakably wonderful blessings. This is to say that we will be given the privilege to sit down upon the throne in heaven.

▪ Wonderful Comforter

The instrument that the Lord uses to educate us is the Lord Jesus Himself, as our comforter.

Mark

6:50 Immediately he told them, "Have courage! It is I. Stop being afraid!"

These words were not said just to calm this particular situation down. Rather, the Lord Almighty stood behind these words. Do we wholly rely on the Lord? Let us turn our eyes away from all visible things—our anxiety, fears, and worries—and always look up to the Lord alone. We always have to come back to the words of the Bible, instead of looking at ourselves or others, or making judgments based on our emotions, thoughts or desire. The Bible says:

Isaiah

43:1 But now this is what the Lord says, the one who created you, Jacob, the one who formed you, Israel: "Do not be afraid, because I've redeemed you. I've called you by name; you are mine.

Isaiah

43:25 I, I am the one who blots out your transgression for my own sake, and I'll remember your sins no more.

Isaiah

41:10 Don't be afraid, because I'm with you; don't be anxious, because I am your God. I keep on strengthening you; I'm truly helping you. I'm surely upholding you with my victorious right hand."

Isaiah

41:13 For I am the Lord your God, who takes hold of your right hand, who says to you, Don't be afraid. I'll help you.

Why did the Lord say these things? It was for all believers to achieve a sense of peace.

John

16:33 I have told you this so that through me you

may have peace. In the world you will have trouble, but be courageous—I have overcome the world!”

## (2) Ordeals

So far, we have been looking at Jesus Himself as the primary instrument of His education. As a second instrument, “ordeals” are given to us. These can actually constitute an extremely severe pain. We can see this in the book of Mark, chapter 6, verse 45: the Lord Jesus forces His disciples to board the boat. This implies that when we obey the Lord Jesus, our obedience is always followed by ordeals. However, it is through such ordeals that the Lord Jesus accomplishes his ultimate purpose.

No “education” can be completed in one day. Rather, it is accomplished in small steps over a long span of time. This was also true for the disciples of the Lord—because they could not learn everything at once, the same training had to be repeated a number of times.

We can see, starting with verse 35 of Mark chapter 4, that the disciples had had a similar experience of being panicked by a fierce storm and waves in the past, and that when it happened, Jesus said to the scared disciples: “*Why are you such cowards? Don't you have any faith yet* (Mark 4:40)?”

The situation described in Mark chapter 6 is very similar to this. In this case, the wind was blowing and the waves were high. And when it happened again, the disciples were filled with fear and anxiety. Furthermore, unlike in the previous incident, the Lord Jesus was standing far away from them. Thus, they must have been much more terrified. According to the Scripture, it was as late as three o'clock in the morning and almost dawn when the Lord Jesus came close to His disciple, walking on the lake. This implies that the disciples had been fighting the fear for a very long time. The Lord always appears when all hope seems to be lost. This is when the Lord Jesus extends his hands to help us.

Now, let's look at seven real-life examples from Scripture.

### ▪ Woman Suffering from Chronic Bleeding

Mark

5:25 Now there was a woman who had been suffering from chronic bleeding for twelve years.

5:26 Although she had endured a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all of her money, she had not been helped at all but rather grew worse.

She had no hope for her life after having been in the grip of illness for twelve years. However, it was at

this very moment—when all her hopes seemed to have gone—that the Lord Jesus came into her life. “*Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace and be healed from your illness* (Mark 5:34),” the Lord Jesus told her gently.

### ▪ Young Man Possessed by a Demon

Mark

9:17 A man in the crowd answered him, “Teacher, I brought my son to you. He has a spirit that won't let him talk.

9:18 Whenever it brings on a seizure, it throws him to the ground. Then he foams at the mouth, grinds his teeth, and becomes stiff. So I asked your disciples to drive the spirit out, but they didn't have the power.”

With his son being possessed by a filthy spirit, this father was in a desperate situation. However, this was exactly the time for the Lord Jesus to reveal Himself. Let's read from verses 25 to 27 what the Lord Jesus did for them. “*Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, 'You spirit that won't let him talk or hear—I command you to come out of him and never enter him again!' The spirit screamed, shook the child violently and came out.*” Jesus took his hand and helped him up, and he stood up.

### ▪ Peter Chained in Prison

Acts

12:6 That very night, before Herod was going to bring him out, Peter, bound with two chains, was sleeping between two soldiers, and guards in front of the door were watching the prisoners.

Peter was bound with two chains and was kept under very close watch. It seemed impossible to escape from that prison. However, a miracle occurred. It is described in verse 7: “*Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in the cell. He tapped Peter on his side, woke him up, and said, 'Get up quickly!' His chains fell from his wrists.*” The Lord sent His Holy Angel and the way to escape was revealed.

### ▪ Paul and Others on the Wrecked Boat

Acts

27:20 For a number of days neither the sun nor the stars were to be seen, and the storm continued to rage until at last all hope of our being saved vanished.

This time, not just Paul, but all 276 people on board were caught in the middle of a desperate situation, and they had all lost hope. It was at such a moment that the Lord reached out his hands and saved them. Let's look at verses 23 to 26: “*An angel of God, to whom I belong and whom I serve, stood by me and*

said, 'Stop being afraid, Paul! You must stand before the emperor. Indeed, God has given to you the lives of everyone who is sailing with you.' So take courage, men, because I trust God that it will turn out just as he told me. However, we will have to run aground on some island." Again, this is an example that in an extreme situation where—from a human's perspective—all hopes are vanished, the Lord extends his hands to save.

### ▪ The Israelites Pursued by Pharaoh's troops

#### Exodus

14:10 ...the Israelis looked up, and there were the Egyptians bearing down on them! Extremely frightened, the Israelis cried out to the Lord.

14:11 They also told Moses, "Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you took us out to die in the desert? What have you done to us, by bringing us out of Egypt?"

The Israelites had also given up all hope. Steep mountains were on their right and left. The sea was in front of them, and behind them troops from Egypt were advancing. However, in this absolutely desperate situation, the Lord opened the way that led to their salvation and liberation. "In the morning watch, the Lord looked down on the Egyptian camp through the pillar of fire and cloud, and he threw the Egyptian camp into confusion (Exodus 14:24)." In front of the Israelites, the waters of the sea were divided and formed a wall on both sides. They walked into the middle of the sea on dry land. When the enemy of God pursued them into the sea, the waters returned and the entire army drowned.

### ▪ Gideon Facing the Enemy Force

#### Judges

7:12 The Midianites, the Amalekites, and certain groups from the east lay encamped in the valley, as thick as locusts. The number of their camels couldn't be calculated—they seemed as numerous as the sand on the seashore.

This time, the enemy of God formed a formidable army. From a common sense perspective, Gideon and his 300 soldiers had no chance of winning against such a strong foe. However, "as the 300 trumpets were being sounded, the Lord turned the swords of the Midianite soldiers against one another throughout the entire army (Judges 7:22)" and the whole army finally withdrew with their tails between their legs.

### ▪ The Disciples Facing Headwind

#### Mark

6:48 He saw that his disciples were straining at the oars, because the wind was against them. Shortly before dawn he came to them, walking on

the sea. He intended to go up right beside them.

Although the Lord Jesus saw the disciples were in distress and knew very well that they were seeking help, He did not come to them immediately. He always appears upon the scene at the extreme moment, when our pain or anxiety reaches its limit. When the Lord appeared and "got into the boat with them, the wind stopped blowing. (Mark 6:51)."

As these seven examples indicate, no matter how bad our pains, anxieties and problems are, the Lord is always caring for us and paying attention to us. Even in the most desperate and hopeless situation, those who believe in the Lord Jesus will never end up in disappointment. This is the truth that no one can deny. So the Bible tells you:

#### Matthew

6:25 "That's why I'm telling you to stop worrying about your life—what you will eat or what you will drink—or about your body—what you will wear. Life is more than food, isn't it, and the body more than clothing?

6:32 because it is the gentiles who are eager for all those things. Surely your heavenly Father knows that you need all of them!

#### 1 Peter

5:7 Throw all your worry on him, because he cares for you.

#### Philippians

4:6 Never worry about anything. Instead, in every situation let your petitions be made known to God through prayers and requests, with thanksgiving.

### Consequence of Education

Finally, let's quickly discuss the consequence of this education. Let's look at next few verses of what we read a little while ago. "The disciples were utterly astounded, because they didn't understand the significance of the loaves. Instead, their hearts were hardened (Mark 6:51-52)." What do we think of these disciples? As we read the Bible today, we see the stupidity of the disciples as much as we see the richness and strength of the Lord Jesus. The disciples should have recognized the great power of the Lord, but they didn't.

How about us? Are we clever enough to criticize these disciples? Too often, we also bother ourselves and get anxious worrying about the future, don't we? 'Totally relying on the Lord Jesus' is not such an easy thing to do. Very often, we opt to focus on something tangible rather than seeking something invisible, don't we? Faith is relying on something invisible and avoiding depending on something your eyes can see.

As we can see from verse 52, the hearts of the disciples were hardened, although this was after they had abandoned everything to serve the Lord Jesus. Still the disciples couldn't help but harden their hearts.

We too have to watch for the danger of hardening our hearts, just like the disciples. The Lord didn't calm the storm so as to let the disciples realize the true states of their minds. Likewise, we suffer from various pains, distress and troubles because the Lord wants to let us realize the true states of our minds.

#### Psalms

95:6 Come! Let us worship and bow down; let us kneel in the presence of the Lord, who made us.

95:7 For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture and the flock in his care. If only you would listen to his voice today,

95:8 do not be stubborn like your ancestors were at Meribah, as on that day at Massah, in the wilderness,

95:9 where your ancestors tested me. They tested me, even though they had seen my awesome deeds.

95:10 For forty years I loathed that generation, so I said, "They are a people whose hearts continually err, and they have not understood my ways."

As we can see from these verses, we have to worship the Lord sincerely from our hearts, otherwise our hearts will be totally closed.

#### Proverbs

28:14 Blessed is the man who always fears the Lord, but whoever hardens his heart will fall into disaster.

This verse also tells us that some people fear the Lord from the bottom of their hearts, while others just harden their hearts.

#### Hebrew

3:13 Instead, continue to encourage one another every day, as long as it is called "Today," so that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

We need to calm our minds in the presence of the Lord and follow His voice every day, otherwise our hearts will be hardened again and again.