

Difference between the Lord Jesus and his Disciples

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主イエス様と弟子たちの違い
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Mark

10:32 Now Jesus and his disciples had been on the road going up to Jerusalem, with Jesus walking ahead of them. They were astonished, and the others who followed were afraid. Once again, Jesus took the Twelve aside and began to tell them what was going to happen to him.

10:33 "See, we are going up to Jerusalem. The Son of Man will be handed over to the high priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death. Then they will hand him over to the unbelievers,

10:34 and they will make fun of him, spit on him, whip him, and kill him. But after three days he will be raised."

10:35 James and John, the sons of Zebedee, went to Jesus and told him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask you."

10:36 He asked them, "What do you want me to do for you?"

10:37 They asked him, "Let us sit in your glory, one on your right and one on your left."

10:38 But Jesus told them, "You don't realize what you're asking. Can you drink from the cup that I'm going to drink from or be baptized with the baptism with which I'm going to be baptized?"

10:39 They told him, "We can." Jesus told them, "You will drink from the cup that I'm going to drink and be baptized with the baptism with which I'm going to be baptized.

10:40 But it's not up to me to grant you a seat at my right or my left. Those positions have already been prepared for others."

10:41 When the ten other disciples heard this, they began to be furious with James and John.

10:42 Jesus called his disciples and told them, "You know that those who are recognized as rulers among the unbelievers Lord it over them, and their superiors act like tyrants over them.

10:43 That's not the way it should be among you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant,

10:44 and whoever wants to be first among you must be a slave to everyone,

10:45 because even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many people."

[International Standard Version]

These verses we just read, clearly revealed the

contrast between the Lord Jesus who would never be shaken by anything and His disciples who were full of fears all the time and were so easily shaken. Today, I would like to discuss this with the following three points.

Most importantly, the determination of Jesus who always stood firm and would never be shaken by anything.

First of all, Jesus knew all things; secondly, He was the one who would never be shaken by anything and would never be intimidated by anyone; thirdly He was the one who was humble and was willing to serve the people. Now, What can we say about His disciples on the other hand? They were the ones who did not understand anything; the ones who were always scared of and intimidated by something; and the ones who were filled with arrogance and a desire to dominate others. The difference between them was beyond expression.

Mark

10:32 Now Jesus and his disciples had been on the road going up to Jerusalem, with Jesus walking ahead of them. They were astonished, and the others who followed were afraid. Once again, Jesus took the Twelve aside and began to tell them what was going to happen to him.

Jesus, of course, knew everything in detail from the beginning. When Jesus took the first step toward the Cross that was destined for Him, the disciples feared and were shocked according to the Bible. The disciples could not understand anything about His fate and they were just shaken with fear. At the same time, each one of them was still captivated by arrogance and a desire to dominate other disciples. Contrarily, Jesus was the one who knew all things, the one who stood firm all the time and feared nothing. He was the one who was humble and was willing to serve the people.

Mark

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10:34 and they will make fun of him, spit on him, whip him, and kill him. But after three days he will be raised.

Unlike us, who do not even know what will happen tomorrow, Jesus was clearly aware of each and everything that was going to be done to Him throughout His life. It was not that Jesus vaguely imagined what was going to happen in His future.

He clearly knew everything that would occur in every detail. Now, let us open the Gospel according to

John and take a look at a few verses:

John

6:64 'But there are some among you who do not believe...'—because Jesus knew from the beginning those who weren't believing, as well as the one who would betray him.

It must have been unimaginable pain for Him that He had to live with such disciples for three years.

John

13:11 For he knew who was going to betray him. That's why he said, "Not all of you are clean."

13:1 Now before the Passover Festival, Jesus realized that his hour had come to leave this world and return to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

18:4 Then Jesus, knowing everything that was going to happen....

19:28 After this, when Jesus realized that everything was now completed, he said (in order to fulfill the Scripture), "I'm thirsty."

Jesus was clearly aware of every detail of His fate; that he would have to endure the horrible pain and die on the cross. Nevertheless, when Jesus talked about it, He never spoke in a distressful tone of voice even for once, which was so strange to others.

The purpose of Jesus' coming down to this world was to sacrifice His own life as a price for the redemption of many people. By this time, Jesus had already completed most of His work and now, He was on His way to Jerusalem, where He was going to be crucified. For Jesus, Jerusalem was a place where He would be denied by people, be humiliated, suffer from pains, bear the cross and have to die. On His way to this city, Jesus clearly revealed His determination to His disciples.

Luke

9:51 When the days grew closer for Jesus to be taken up to heaven, he was determined to continue his journey to Jerusalem.

Under any circumstances, Jesus stood firm and feared nothing at all, just like Job did, which was described in chapter 11, verse 15:

Job

11:15 Then your confidence will be flawless, and your security will keep you from terror.

Jesus knew very well that He would have to give up His own life as the price of redemption of many people and He was sincerely willing to do so. I

believe that the most significant verse in the Gospel according to Mark is verse 45 of chapter 10:

Mark

10:45 "Because even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many people."

What Jesus wanted from His disciples was for them to become fishers of men. In order for it to be realized, the requirement was that they know about themselves thoroughly. Jesus had totally different intentions from His disciples.

Indeed, the purpose of Jesus' life and the desires the disciples had in their minds were totally different from each other. Because of this, the eyes of the disciples needed to be opened to see the state of their own minds. What was hidden deep at the bottom of their minds needed to be exposed in the light.

Deuteronomy

8:2"Remember how the Lord your God led you all the way these 40 years in the desert, to humble and test you in order to make known what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands."

Jesus demonstrated for men what it is to be great in the true sense. He taught that they needed to stand behind others, serve the people and sacrifice their own lives for others. And He showed an example of such greatness in Himself. Jesus took a form of a servant and walked on this earth. The work He accomplished on this earth was exactly the work of a servant.

Mark

10:45 "Because even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many people."

How did Jesus serve and what was the determination in His heart? It is illustrated in chapter 13 of the Gospel according to John:

John

13:4 "Therefore he got up from the table, removed his outer robe, and took a towel and fastened it around his waist.

13:5 Then he poured some water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to dry them with the towel that was tied around his waist."

This fact is explained again in the Epistle to the Philippians:

Philippians

2:7 Instead, poured out in emptiness, a servant's form did he possess, a mortal man becoming. In human form he chose to be.

With no hesitation or perturbation at all, Jesus began stepping onto the straight path that led to Jerusalem. We too, just like the Lord Jesus did, want to walk keeping clearly in mind the goal of our entire life, don't we?

Deuteronomy

5:32 You must be careful to do what the Lord your God commanded you, turning neither to the left nor to the right.

Joshua

1:7 Only be strong and very courageous to ensure that you obey all the instructions that my servant Moses gave you—turn neither to the right nor to the left from it—so that you may succeed wherever you go.

We can find many similar verses in the Scripture:

Proverbs

4:25 "Let your eyes look directly ahead; fix your gaze straight in front of you.

4:26 Carefully measure the paths for your feet, and all your ways will be established.

4:27 Do not turn to the right or to the left; turn your foot away from evil."

Ezekiel

1:9 "Their pairs of wings overlapped each other. They moved in straight directions without turning their faces around as they moved."

1:12 "Each moved in straight directions. Wherever they decided to go, they went without turning themselves."

And Jesus said to His disciples:

Luke

9:62 "Jesus told him, 'No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.'"

Paul too wrote in the so-called book of the resurrection:

1 Corinthians

15:58 "Therefore, my dear brothers, be steadfast, unmovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, because you know that the work that you do for the Lord isn't wasted."

Paul also encouraged people living in the region called Corinth:

Galatians

5:1 "The Messiah has set us free so that we may enjoy the benefits of freedom. So keep on standing firm in it, and stop putting yourselves

under the yoke of slavery again."

Peter too encouraged believers of those days:

1 Peter

5:9 "Resist him [the Devil] and be firm in the faith."

Later, Paul again wrote to brothers and sisters in Philippi:

Philippians

3:13 "Brothers, I do not consider myself to have embraced it yet. But this one thing I do: Forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead,

3:14 I keep pursuing the goal to win the prize of God's heavenly call in the Messiah Jesus."

All those who follow the Lord should live with the same determination Jesus had. That is to say, we ought to run straight toward the goal with no hesitation or waver at all.

What was wrong about the attitude of the disciples? As I mentioned earlier, their attitude was always based on fear. These disciples hesitated to accept the words of their master. What can we say about these disciples? They did not understand anything that they were supposed to; they were always caught up in fear and were easily surprised; they were filled with arrogance and a desire to dominate others.

As I mentioned earlier, the intention of Jesus was totally different from His disciples. Jesus' actions and His thoughts were fundamentally opposite to the attitude of His disciples. The disciples were so astonished, they trembled and feared to come after Jesus.

Jesus walked ahead of His disciples and showed them how they should live. However, the disciples were just scared and dismayed again by that. They were filled with anxieties. Of course, these disciples already had encountered Jesus and were convinced that the Lord Jesus was the only begotten Son of God. This conviction made them throw away all they had in order to follow Jesus.

They had been living with Jesus and experienced many things. They saw thousands of people gathered to listen to what Jesus spoke. And they were there when an unknown number of people were fed by Jesus.

Moreover, sick people who were carried to the Lord were all completely healed without exception. The Pharisees of those days made all attempts to make Jesus fall into a trap, but always ended up being defeated. Even filthy demons testified about Jesus being the Son of God and dead people came back to

life. The disciples trusted Jesus and they themselves actually experienced so many things.

They witnessed so many miracles performed in front of their eyes. They shared three years of their lives with Jesus, during which they came to understand and be convinced that this man was the promised Savior. Now, Jesus began to talk about His cross, which no one was prepared for at all.

Then, Jesus turned His face straight toward Jerusalem. Until then, He had been having friendly fellowship with His disciples. But this time, Jesus looked like a completely different person. The disciples were no longer able to imagine what was in the mind of Jesus.

It made them astonished and tremble in fear, according to the Bible. Nevertheless, Jesus still kept standing firm and did not tremble at all as He began walking toward the cross. This must have made Jesus look like a complete stranger to His disciples. The intention of the Lord Jesus was fundamentally different from that of His disciples and there was nothing common between them now.

The disciples could not deny anymore that there was a total difference between themselves and Jesus.

Haven't we, by the way, experienced the same thing? Sometimes it happens, that we suddenly find ourselves being unable to understand Jesus, becoming unsure about the way He is guiding us, our minds being trapped in the darkness and being filled with dismay and fear. Even when we are in such state of mind, we still can be blessed if we could remain in the attitude that the prophet Micah took.

Micah

7:7 "But as for me, I will look to the Lord; I will wait for the God who will deliver me. My God will hear me

7:8 Don't be glad on my account, my enemy. When I fall, I'll get up. Though I sit in darkness, the Lord is a light for me."

This was a great confession from Micah. When we take an attitude like this, obeying the Lord will become a great joy. Jesus explained to us what kind of people are great in the true sense; they are those who serve other people and sacrifice their own lives for the sake of others.

The definition of greatness that the disciples had was fundamentally different from that of the Lord. For them, being great meant to lead other people, to have an authority over them and to have others serve them. As Jesus continued to talk about His crucifixion, the decisive difference between the disciples and Jesus became more and more evident.

And the disciples had a conflict and argued with each other all the time about their rank order. While Jesus had never done anything on behalf of Himself, the disciples always cared only about themselves.

Mark

10:35 James and John, the sons of Zebedee, went to Jesus and told him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask you."

10:36 He asked them, "What do you want me to do for you?"

10:37 They asked him, "Let us sit in your glory, one on your right and one on your left."

10:38 But Jesus told them, "You don't realize what you're asking. Can you drink from the cup that I'm going to drink from or be baptized with the baptism with which I'm going to be baptized?"

10:39 They told him, "We can." Jesus told them, "You will drink from the cup that I'm going to drink and be baptized with the baptism with which I'm going to be baptized.

"We want you to do for us whatever we ask you. Let us sit in your glory. We can do so." They spoke of their self-centered desires. What these words revealed about them was that they were totally blind to themselves. Those whose eyes are closed to themselves often become captivated by jealousy or rivalry against others.

Matthew

23:12 "Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted."

What was the worst problem the disciples had? It was their total unawareness of themselves. It was revealed in their self-confidence and reliance on their own strength.

Mark

10:39 "They told him, 'We can.' Jesus told them, 'You will drink from the cup that I'm going to drink and be baptized with the baptism with which I'm going to be baptized.

10:40 But it's not up to me to grant you a seat at my right or my left. Those positions have already been prepared for others.'"

As we can see from these two verses, these two men always saw themselves as better and more valuable than others. They mistakenly believed that they deserved to be granted seats at the right and left side of Jesus. They were quite confident of themselves, but in actuality, other disciples shared this arrogance.

John

13:37 "'Lord, why can't I follow you now?' Peter asked him. 'I would lay down my life for you!'"

Mark

14:31 "But Peter kept saying emphatically, 'Even if I have to die with you, I will never deny you!' And all the others kept saying the same thing."

Luke

22:33 "Peter told him, 'Lord, I am ready even to go to prison and to die with you!'"

When we act relying on ourselves like they did, we always will end up in miserable defeat. The promise of the Lord is not given for those who are proud of themselves. It is given to the humble and contrite. This is repeated a number of times throughout the Bible.

Psalms

138:6 "Though the Lord is highly exalted, yet he pays attention to those who are lowly regarded, but he is aware of the arrogant from afar."

Proverbs

22:4 "The reward of humility is the fear of the Lord, along with wealth, honor, and life."

29:23 "A person's pride will bring about his downfall, but the humble in spirit will gain honor."

A prophet called Isaiah emphasized the same thing repeatedly in his book:

Isaiah

57:15 "For this is what the high and lofty One says, who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: 'He lives in the height and in holiness, and also with the one who is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite'"

66:2 "But this is the one to whom I will look favorably: to the one who is humble and contrite in spirit, and who trembles at my message."

Jesus, of course, stressed that same thing:

Matthew

18:4 "Therefore, whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom from heaven."

Luke

9:48 "Then he told them, 'Whoever welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me, because the one who is least among all of you is the one who is greatest.'"

14:11 "Because everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the person who humbles himself will be exalted."

James summarized it in a simple sentence:

James

4:6 "God opposes the arrogant but gives grace to the humble."

I guess that after all, this is what the Bible is telling us. Peter said the same thing:

1 Peter

5:5 "In a similar way, you young people must submit to the elders. All of you must clothe yourselves with humility for the sake of each other, because: 'God opposes the arrogant, but gives grace to the humble.'"

In these verses, the total discrepancy between the intention of the Lord and desires of men are clearly revealed. When humans attempt to obtain something for themselves, they tend to strive using their own strength and knowledge. And, very often they do not even hesitate to deceive or pester other people.

However, what the Lord God encourages us to do when we attempt to achieve something for Him is to throw away all the things we possess and give them away to people in need. Throwing things away or giving them away to strangers may look like a loss from a human perspective. However, it is through our doing so that the Lord grants us even greater grace. Once, Jesus said to this young man:

Matthew

19:21 "Jesus told him, 'If you want to be perfect, go and sell what you own and give the money to the destitute, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come back and follow me.'"

To His disciples, Jesus said these things:

Matthew

19:29 "In fact, everyone who has left his homes, brothers, sisters, father, mother, children, or fields because of my name will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life."

Mark

8:34 "If anyone wants to follow me, he must deny himself, pick up his cross, and follow me continually,
8:35 because whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and for the gospel will save it."

John

12:24 "Truly, I tell all of you emphatically, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone. But if it dies, it produces a lot of grain."

Paul understood from his own experience:

Philippians

3:8 "What is more, I continue to consider all these things to be a loss for the sake of what is far more valuable, knowing the Messiah Jesus, my Lord. It is because of him that I have experienced the loss of all those things. Indeed, I consider them rubbish in order to gain the Messiah."

It was a wonderful testimony and confession.

End