



Sermon, Sunday May 28, 2023

“The Spirit Helps Us in Our Weakness”

SCRIPTURE: Romans 8:22-27 ²² We know that the whole creation has been groaning together as it suffers together the pains of labor, ²³ and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴ For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope, for who hopes for what one already sees? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. ²⁶ Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with groanings too deep for words. ²⁷ And God, who searches hearts, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

Introduction: The Secret of the Abundance of Faith Life

Today is Pentecost Sunday. In Acts 2, there is an account of the descent of the Holy Spirit. Jesus told his disciples in **John 14:16-17**, “**I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever (v.16) the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.**”

The most important concept the Bible explains about the Holy Spirit is that the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. However, the problem in our life of faith is that we do not feel the help of the Holy Spirit, and we do not know that the Holy Spirit dwells in us.

The reason we don't realize the help and presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives is because our lives are rigid. So what does it mean for life to be rigid? In Matthew 12:1-8, the Sabbath argument between Jesus and the Pharisees comes out. The Pharisees criticized Jesus' disciples for not observing the Sabbath rules because they were hungry on the Sabbath and picked some heads of grain and ate them. But Jesus said to the Pharisees, “**If you had known the meaning of 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice', you would not have condemned the innocent.**” As this argument shows, the Pharisees absolutized their experience, criticized others and revealed their own righteousness based on it. The Pharisees' attitude toward life is narrow-minded, far from displaying tolerance and abundance.

However, in today's text, the apostle Paul clearly shows what it means to experience abundance in faith. **Romans 8:26** says, “**Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words.**”

By the way, what does it mean specifically in this verse that the Holy Spirit helps our weakness? In fact, in this verse, there is a secret by which we can experience the richness of our life of faith.

Body: The Holy Spirit Helps Us

Romans 8:26, mentioned above, says that we are weak beings. That is why, as created beings, we do not know what to pray for. Perhaps someone will say that they do not agree with this passage. Because we share and pray urgent prayer topics.

However, what the main text of today means is not simply sharing and praying the title of prayer, but it refers to the existential problems of life that cannot be solved by our efforts. We all live with problems, both Christians and non-Christians. We struggle with economic problems, and we struggle with children, wives, and husbands. We are also discouraged by illness or relationship difficulties. Also, death is always present in our lives whether we acknowledge it or ignore it.



In today's text, Romans 8:22, the apostle Paul expresses the existential problem found in human life as **“groaning as in the pains of childbirth.”** The Apostle Paul knows that the burdens of life are never light. He talks about what kind of attitude we should have in the middle of this life. **Romans 8:23 says: “Even we, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies.”**

“Adoption” in this verse means that we are recognized as children of God. **“Redemption of the body”** refers to the liberation or salvation of the body. This verse says that we wait for the moment when salvation is complete. Salvation is completed through the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

Because salvation has not yet been completed, our lives are still during a life where we can only groan. But we must be able to acknowledge and accept this. The life we must accept includes both joy and pain.

Therefore, the life of Christians waiting for the Second coming of Jesus is more difficult than that of the people of the world. Because wishing for the completion of salvation through waiting is against our instincts. The apostle Paul says in this part that the Holy Spirit helps us who are weak. In other words, when the Holy Spirit knows the essential problem that we cannot solve and groans and prays, God solves the problem. So what we need is the confidence that the Holy Spirit pleads with God for us. If we have this confidence, we can live a completely different life than before.

Dear brothers and sisters! Are you sure that the Holy Spirit intercedes to God for us? Or do you have experience with the help of the Holy Spirit? However, there is something we should not misunderstand in this part. It means that the essence of the Holy Spirit helping us is that we come to realize the love of Christ through the help and guidance of the Holy Spirit. If we were to focus on the help of the Holy Spirit to solve our problems like disease, poverty, resolution of broken relationships, we might be disappointed that **“the essence of the help of the Holy Spirit is to realize the love of Christ”**. However, the Apostle Paul says that the greatest thing we can realize through the help of the Holy Spirit is the love of Christ.

The apostle Paul says in **Romans 8:35. “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?”** And it says in **Romans 8:39. “Neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”** These verses mean that God's love in Jesus Christ is the way to salvation for us. And it is the Holy Spirit that makes us realize this deeply.

The Apostle Paul speaks in Romans 8:1-2. “Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, (v.1) because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death. (v.2)”. This verse explains why God's love can only be realized through the help of the Holy Spirit.

People in the world want to be recognized through education, wealth, and social status. And the Pharisees at the time of Jesus wanted the people of the world to acknowledge their righteousness through the fact that they were godly people who kept the law well. However, Christians became righteous through being one with Jesus. As mentioned in Romans 8:2, it is because the law of life in Jesus has set us free from the law of sin and death. That is the love of God in Christ.

My personal confession about God's love is that God's love frees me from comparison with others and gives me a heart to be grateful for the little things. It has also changed my standards for being successful. I prefer a person who is pure, honest, and holy before the Lord. And I respect those who love the Lord. Of course, I still have a long way to go, and I am a person with many shortcomings. However, I want to live until the day I meet the Lord with the power of God's love.

Conclusion: Christians who live by the love of Christ

Now let's summarize today's message. Beloved saints in Christ! Today is Pentecost Sunday. Keeping the Sunday of Pentecost means that the church understands and accepts the love of Christ most deeply. The Apostle Paul expressed this in today's text as 'the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness'. May all of you live with the power of Christ's love through the help of the Holy Spirit.

