

UBF  WORLD MISSIONS

**JESUS CHOSE**

# *The Twelve*

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 UNIVERSITY BIBLE FELLOWSHIP

**2022 NEW YEAR  
Continental  
Conferences  
E-book**





2022 NEW YEAR  
Continental  
Conferences  
Attendees



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>GD'S NEW YEAR MESSAGE</b>	<b>5</b>	Moses Yoon, General Director (USA)
<b>KOREA</b>	<b>14</b>	Report
<b>AFRICA</b>	<b>18</b>	Report by Joshua Suh (South Africa)
	<b>22</b>	Opening Message by James Lee (South Africa)
	<b>24</b>	Message by James Odejimi (South Africa)
<b>M.E.</b>	<b>32</b>	Message I
	<b>37</b>	Message II
<b>EUROPE</b>	<b>44</b>	Report by Reiner Schauwlenold (Germany)
<b>OCEANIA</b>	<b>50</b>	Report by Moses Kang (Australia)
<b>ASIA</b>	<b>56</b>	Report by Paul Kwon (Mongolia)
	<b>58</b>	Closing Message by Mark Hui (Taiwan)
<b>CIS</b>	<b>66</b>	Report by David Lee (Russia)
	<b>68</b>	Message I by James Point (Turkey)
	<b>73</b>	Message II by Artyom Datsenko (Russia)
<b>NORTH AMERICA</b>	<b>82</b>	Report by Yvonne Lee (USA)
	<b>86</b>	Opening Message by Teddy Hembekides (USA)
	<b>90</b>	Message I by David Chang (Canada)
	<b>97</b>	Message II by Philip Wong (Canada)
<b>LATIN AMERICA</b>	<b>104</b>	Report by Esteban Cho (Bolivia)
	<b>106</b>	Message by Edwar Ti (Guatemala)
	<b>111</b>	Closing Message by Esteban Cho (Bolivia)



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# NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE

**P. Moses Yoon (Chicago, USA)**  
**UBF General Director**

## Jesus Chose the Twelve

*Luke 6:9-19*  
*Key Verse 6:12-13, "One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God. When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles."*



We give thanks and praise to God for blessing the year 2021. I pray that, through this passage, God may help us to set a clear spiritual direction for the new year 2022.

In Luke 6:1-5, Jesus was going through the grainfields with his disciples on the Sabbath. In order to serve God's will Jesus lived a life dependent on God without

a place to lay his head. The disciples who followed Jesus also lived the same life style, and at times they skipped a few meals. One Sabbath, as they were passing through the grainfields, the disciples ate some heads of grain by rubbing them with their hands. If I saw them doing this, I would feel pity for them. It is a normal human feeling to have sympathy to serve hungry people with a warm meal. However, the Pharisees sharply criticized the disciples saying, "Why are you doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?" They valued keeping the Sabbath law more important than saving lives. They were legalistic.

On another Sabbath Jesus went into the synagogue and was teaching, and a man was there whose right hand was shriveled. The people gathered on the Sabbath to hear the word of God, similar to Sunday worship service of today. Jesus taught them God's word. That day in the synagogue there was a man whose right hand was shriveled. It meant that the nerves and muscles of his hand were dead. He had both hands, but he could not use his most active and useful right hand at all. He couldn't play a musical instrument. He couldn't tie his shoelaces. When someone reached out their right hand to shake hands with him, he quickly put out his left hand, and embarrassed the other person. His shriveled hand must've made his heart shriveled with a sense of inferiority complex. He might have had a guilty conscience about his disability. There was no real rest in his heart. Jesus saw him and had mercy on him. Jesus wanted to heal him.

The religious leaders were supposed to be shepherds of the people. But what did they do? The Pharisees and the teachers of the law were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they watched him closely to see if he would heal on the Sabbath. They used the man as



a means of finding a reason to accuse Jesus. No matter how weak or vulnerable a person may be, one cannot be used as a means to an end. Human beings are made in the image of God. Trying to achieve something by using people is wicked and evil.

Jesus knew their thoughts and their evil schemes. In order to avoid conflict with the religious leaders, Jesus could have said to the man, "Today is the Sabbath. Can you come back tomorrow?" or, "I will see you after today's meeting." But what did Jesus say? He said to the man, "Get up and stand in front of everyone." By this, he challenged the wickedness of the religious leaders.

As the man stood in the middle of the synagogue, Jesus said to the Pharisees, "I ask you, which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy it?" They only thought about whether it was right or wrong to work on the Sabbath. But Jesus challenged them saying, "Which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy it?" Whether to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy it, all these things are doing something. Here we can learn that the Sabbath is not a day of rest for doing nothing, but a day of rest for doing something good. Doing good means saving lives. When a person is saved, that person finds rest, and the one who has done good deeds also enjoys rest. The religious leaders did not help the man, leaving him in a restless state.

In verse 10, Jesus looked around at the crowd and said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." It was never easy for the man to stretch out his withered hand. Actually it was physically impossible for him to obey. But he obeyed Jesus' word. He put his hand forward. Then his shriveled hand was stretched out. Wow! It was truly amazing. His hand was fully restored! He could move his hand freely, stretching and pulling, raising and lowering, turning forward and backward. The dead nerves were revived and the muscles were

re-created. Truly, it was a miracle that only God the Almighty Creator could do. Jesus, who healed the man's withered hand, is the one who saves us from our sins and weaknesses and restores us completely. He is the Christ who makes us children of God and gives us true rest and salvation.

The religious leaders should have rejoiced over the man's healing. Witnessing the amazing miracle, they should have accepted Jesus as the Christ and bowed down before him. But how did they respond? They were furious and began to discuss with one another what they might do to Jesus. Being furious means being full of anger. Anger is a desire to hurt others. Anger has the same motive as murder (Mt 5:21,22). Rather than repenting of their sins, they were offended and furious that Jesus had violated the Sabbath. They discussed with each other how to get rid of him. They became spiritually blind because they were engrossed in the traditions their forefathers had made in order to protect the Jewish community from secular influence. The Pharisees claimed to be the shepherds of the people. But they only prided themselves in their position and were indifferent to people in need (Ro 2:17-23). The people of the time were wandering like sheep without shepherds and became the prey of the devil.

What did Jesus do in that dark time? Look at verse 12. "One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God." Jesus went to a mountainside to pray. Jesus always lived a life of prayer. When he began his messianic ministry, Jesus was baptized by John and prayed. At that time, the heavens were opened and the Holy Spirit descended on Jesus in bodily form like a dove (Lk 3:21-22). Then Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness and was tempted by the devil while Jesus was fasting and praying for 40 days. Jesus often went to a solitary place after serving a great work of God. He had fellowship with God the Father, and was empowered by the Spirit. However, going to a mountainside to pray this time had a more special meaning.

This was because this time Jesus' prayer was more than prayer for an intimate fellowship with God. It was a desperate prayer to seek direction for solving the problems of the time. Luke 6:12 emphasizes the fact that Jesus went out to a mountainside to 'pray' and spent the night 'praying' to God.

Jesus prayed all night on a mountain. Many do not know how cold a night on a mountain is and how slowly time passes by. Many years ago, when I stood guard overnight at a military outpost, I realized how cold winter nights were and how slowly time passed by. Even now, I can't forget the thrill and joy of seeing the sunlight and enjoying the warmth when the eastern sky brightened the dark night and the sun rose over the mountain. Regardless of the night dew and the cold, Jesus prayed all night on the mountain.

What did Jesus pray for? We do not know the details of Jesus' prayer. But if we think about him before and after his prayer, we can infer the content of his prayer. Jesus must have prayed regarding his dark times. His heart was broken because of the wicked religious leaders and because the people were wandering like sheep without a shepherd. Jesus must have brought those problems to God and sought how to serve the generation. As Jesus prayed deeply, he found what the fundamental problem of his time was. Reforming the priesthood or eradicating the religious leaders was not the solution. Jesus did not focus on fighting the Pharisees and removing them. It was because he knew that in all those problems the root issue was not fighting with people or the social system, but fighting with the devil. The devil that Jesus had defeated in the wilderness was still working behind the religious leaders. The devil incited the pride of the leaders and blinded their spiritual eyes. The devil blinded their minds so that they could not see Christ, but opposed him (2Co 4:4).

His battle was not against flesh and blood, but against the evil spirits that rule this world and their leader, the

devil (Eph 6:12). So, through his prayers, Jesus fought the spiritual battle to gain discernment and power from God. He stayed up all night praying with all his heart, and finally the dawn arrived and the morning sun rose. The light came into Jesus' heart, and a clear spiritual direction from God was set in him. What did Jesus do?

Look at verse 13. "When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles." Jesus called the disciples who were together with him. In verse 17, there was still "a large crowd of his disciples" at the foot of the mountain. So, the 'disciples' were those who continued to follow Jesus, unlike the crowds who sometimes gathered and dispersed. It is not known how many disciples were with Jesus on the mountain, but it was probably around 70 (Lk 10:1). Jesus chose twelve among them. On what basis did he choose the twelve? Mark 3:13, says, "Jesus went up the mountain, and he called those he wanted, and they came to him." "He called those he wanted" does not mean that he called them according to his mood. Rather, it meant that Jesus, having been with them, observed them, and called those whom he thought worthy of special nurture as his disciples. That call was entirely according to the sovereign will of Jesus.

Jesus chose twelve and called them "apostles." The word "apostle" means "one who is sent." It refers to those sent directly from Jesus to preach the gospel. Jesus' life on earth was limited. In the future, Jesus would have to complete the gospel mission through the cross and resurrection, and then return to God. Workers were needed who would preach the gospel, which gives salvation to everyone who hears and believes it. Jesus called the twelve to be missionaries of evangelism. Of course, they were not yet at the apostle level. Jesus just called them with a vision of raising them as outstanding disciples, and enabling them to fulfill the office of apostles in the future. Jesus knew that the work of evangelism was spiritual warfare. He knew that it was a spiritual battle against



the devil, not against established religious leaders or social structures or institutions. Warriors are important in warfare. The apostles were leaders who knew the heart of Jesus and would receive the power of His Holy Spirit to lead the spiritual battle of gospel preaching. Jesus wanted to raise the twelve as spiritual generals. He set a direction to train and raise them up as apostles who would bear with any kind of hardship and boldly preach the gospel.

How did Jesus raise his disciples? When we hear the words “Jesus raised up and trained his disciples,” or “He raised them as generals,” we tend to think of training people just like in the military or in a business. That’s why we make discipleship programs and make special training courses. We create various courses and give them a certificate of completion or a diploma. Such training or curriculum is very helpful. However, completing a certain program or course does not mean becoming a disciple of Jesus. In order to become a disciple of Jesus, knowledge is important, but above all, one’s character and faith are crucial. Mark 3:14 says, “He appointed twelve that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach.” The first purpose of Jesus’ appointing of the twelve was that they might “be with him.” This meant to have the twelve always with Jesus so that they might learn his words and, especially, his life. We also must walk with Jesus and learn not only his words of truth but also imitate his love and humility, his service and sacrifice, his gentleness and wisdom, and his faith and life of prayer. This is a true relationship between a teacher and a disciple. If we give a certain title just because one has gained knowledge, we easily end up producing a group of spiritual elites. Such people can become modern-day Pharisees. As disciples of Jesus, we must first learn of Jesus himself. Apostle Paul wanted to know and learn of Jesus throughout his life, and therefore, he could become a good disciple of Jesus (Php 3:10). The same is true as we raise disciples. We must help disciples learn from Jesus, and imitate us in ways that we strive to learn

from Jesus (Php 3:17).

Today’s universities have long been merely places of knowledge transfer. People go to college to get good jobs and careers. A true teacher and disciple relationship is rare on the campuses. In the last two years of the Corona pandemic, people have become more individualistic and are distanced from others. Rather than gathering on campus, students increasingly gather in the so-called metaverse to talk and live. The physical existence of the campus itself, occupying the land and buildings, is increasingly being questioned. Today’s college students are like wandering sheep without a shepherd. Also, anti-Christian forces are gaining strength in the name of protecting social minorities. Those who have preoccupied the frame of protecting minorities are waging a political war in their fields. Ephesians 6:12 says: “our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.” Our struggle is not against people. Nor is it against a social system. It is the devil that we fight against in spiritual warfare which has continued fiercely since the fall of Adam, and will continue until the return of the Lord.

Satan’s strategy is to secretly act as if he doesn’t exist. He tempts people to be so occupied with other things that they may not be interested in spiritual things. He puts people in political and economic fights. Through this, the devil blinds people’s hearts, so that the glorious light of the gospel of Christ cannot shine on them (2 Co 4:4). Jesus fought the devil through prayers. He also decided to raise outstanding disciples who would continue such spiritual battles. We, too, need to know the existence of the devil and his crafty schemes. So, we should strive to pray to gain spiritual discernment and power. War requires wise and brave generals. If the generals are strong, they win. What is the way for us to serve not only this generation but all generations to come? It is to raise spiritual generals, that is, outstanding disciples of Jesus. I pray that we will accept

this and, in this year, do our best to pray with all our hearts, and raise excellent disciples of Jesus.

Who were the twelve chosen by Jesus? They were: Simon (whom he named Peter), his brother Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Simon who was called the Zealot, Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor. Luke singles out Simon whom Jesus named “Peter” as the key disciple. There was a risk of conflicts among 12 competitive young men when Jesus deliberately was going to raise a top disciple. Yet, Jesus chose to make Simon the top disciple. This was the wisdom of Jesus. After the ascension of the Lord, Peter took on the role of the leader who led the twelve apostles and the church.

We can find some characteristics of the twelve: First, they were ordinary people who were faithful in their work; second, when they were called by Jesus, they made a decision to willingly follow Jesus, leaving everything behind; third, they were those who wanted to learn; fourth, they were from all walks of life and various professions, but none of them were from religious leaders. In other words, they were teachable people like new wine skins. Why did Jesus choose only twelve? This was probably because twelve people were the maximum number that Jesus could personally help while staying together. Beyond that number, it would be difficult to form a personal and intimate relationship. Also, the twelve symbolizes the twelve tribes of Israel, which means the whole world. Jesus appointed twelve apostles to preach the gospel to the whole world.

Jesus went down the mountain with them and stood on a level place. A large crowd of his disciples was there and a great number of people from all over Judea, from Jerusalem, and from the coastal region around Tyre and Sidon, who had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases. Jesus did not take the twelve deep into a mountain, and pass on knowl-

edge for three years. Instead, he came down to the plains where people lived and many troubles were. There Jesus confronted the practical problems of people and taught his twelve disciples how to serve people. Around Jesus, there were a large crowd of disciples and a large number of people from all over the regions who came to hear the words of Jesus and to be healed. Among them, those suffering from unclean spirits were healed. Jesus had practical power to cast out demons and heal diseases.

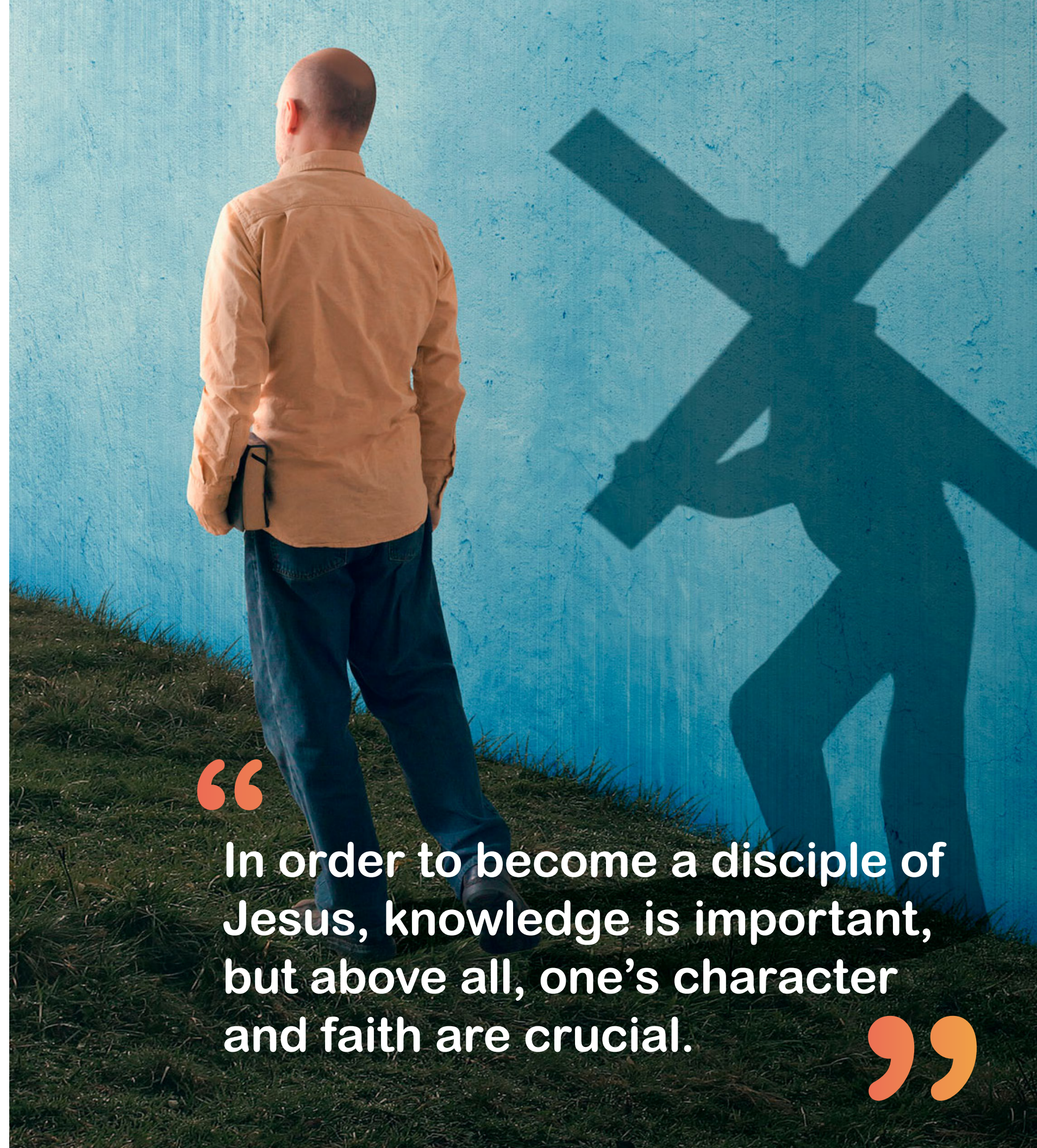
The disciples of Jesus must have two things. The first is spiritual knowledge and discernment based on the gospel truth. To this end, Jesus was always with the twelve, teaching them the gospel and filling them with the truth. The twelve were able to deeply learn the word of God through the gracious and powerful teachings of Jesus. Peter, who was a fisherman, came to have such a profound understanding of the Bible because he heard and learned the truth while walking with Jesus. What Peter learned from Jesus became the foundation, and when he was later filled with the Holy Spirit, he was able to testify to the truth with boldness and great confidence. The second thing the disciples must have is spiritual power. Afterward, Jesus’ disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit and given the power to cast out demons and heal diseases. A disciple of Jesus must have the word of truth and spiritual power. Only then can one serve God’s people as a leader who overcomes the spiritual battle against the devil.

In conclusion, when we see our times, there are seemingly many political, economic and social problems, yet there is only one real problem. It is the spiritual battle against the devil. Jesus has called us to be warriors and disciples in this spiritual battle. How can we win the battle? As Jesus did, we must pray with all our hearts and be empowered with the Spirit. Jesus raised a small number of disciples as apostles, and established God’s new covenant community. This is what Jesus would do if he were here in the world



today. As for me, I pray that this year I would serve the two senior shepherds in England to grow into outstanding disciples of Jesus. For this, I pray that I would first devote myself to prayer, and to learning the character and faith of Jesus. I earnestly pray that God would bless us this year as a community of spiritual warriors fighting against the devil on campuses around the world. In the year 2022, may God bless us as a disciple-making community that prays. Amen!

-  [English](#)
-  [Russian](#)
-  [Spanish](#)
-  [Korean](#)



“

In order to become a disciple of Jesus, knowledge is important, but above all, one's character and faith are crucial.

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# KOREA

I AM APPOINTED  
FOR THIS GOSPEL

December 6-8, 2021





# REPORT

## I am Appointed for This Gospel

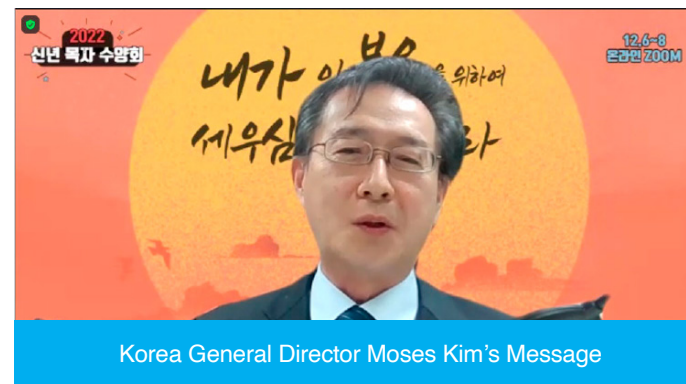
In order to set a spiritual direction for the upcoming 2022 New Year, we held an online New Year staff shepherd conference with the title of “I am appointed for this gospel” (2 Timothy 1:11) on December 6-8, 2021. A total of 78 people attended.

On the first day, S. James Kim of Yuljeon UBF preached the words “I have been appointed for this gospel” (2 Tim 1:1-18) with authority. Through the Word, we renewed our identity and calling as preachers, apostles, and teachers for the gospel. We are facing a challenging time, but as a servant of the gospel, we have set a direction to more actively participate in the sufferings of Christ through studying the Word earnestly, preaching the gospel diligently using spiritual gifts.



In the evening, we had a prayer meeting for world missions and invited continental coordinators to hear God’s work in each continent over the past year, followed by a united prayer. We were all encouraged to see God’s amazing work in the midst of the pandemic

and gave thanks to the Lord. We also praised God for enabling us to offer the world mission report and missionary/shepherd conference, which greatly encouraged our precious coworkers around the world this year. We also gave thanks to God for enabling us to provide practical help to the missionaries in need.



On the second day, S. Jonathan Kim preached the words “Moses raised his hand and conquered” (Exodus 17:1-16). Moses prayed at the time of need and battle, and Israel experienced God’s presence and power. We too can experience God’s presence and power through prayers and coworking. We pray that we may serve the gospel work more effectively through faith and partnership in the new year. During the evening presentation, S. Samuel Hwang (Chuncheon), Abraham Im (Anseong), Abraham Jang (Jeonju 2), Spurgeon Lee (Jongno 2), Daniel Cho (Busan National University of Education), Jae-seok Kim (Seongdong), Mark Gu (Gwangju 3), and Caleb Kim (Jongno 1) presented their gracious pioneering testimonies. We appreciated the devotion, hard work, and prayers of the pioneer shepherds, and prayed for them wholeheartedly.



On the third day, P. Moses Yoon (GD) delivered a message, “Jesus appointed twelve” (Luke 6:1-19).



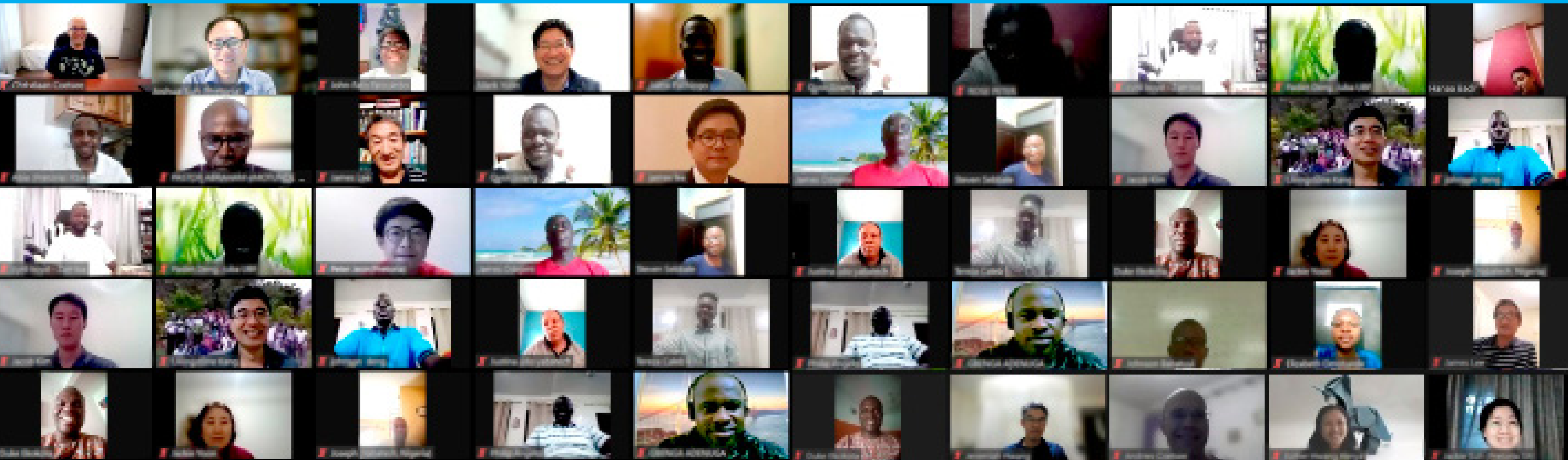
We were reminded that disciple-making is the mission Jesus gave us and found a clear direction to become a community focused on raising disciples of Jesus. Finally, there was a staff meeting with reports and announcements from all departments, followed by a united prayer.



# AFRICA

Let me inherit a double  
portion of your spirit

December 10-12, 2021





# REPORT

**Joshua Suh (Pretoria, South Africa)**  
Africa UBF Coordinator

## Let Me Inherit a Double Portion of Your Spirit

*“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.” (Colossians 3:16)*



On 10-12 December 2021, UBF Africa ministries held an online New Year Conference hosted by Wits UBF

in Johannesburg, South Africa with “leadership succession” as the main theme of the conference based on 2 Kings 2:1-25. Despite different time zones, 85 attendees (25 missionaries, 56 national leaders and 4guests) joined the conference. Due to poor internet connection, senior shepherds from Egypt, South Sudan, and Nigeria UBF joined as a group gathering in a hotel, or Bible house where there was better internet connectivity.

As the conference started, Wits Worship Team presented with soulful worship songs before the opening message. They gathered at Wits Bible House, streaming it live. In zoom meetings you cannot sing together. But it was so good to hear their live worship songs. Indeed, it created a spiritual environment and prepared the attendants’ heart to receive the word of God.



Missionary James Lee from Pretoria delivered the opening message titled “I am with you always” based on Matthew 28:20b. He testified how the Risen Jesus had been with him for the past 30 years since he was first sent to Malawi as a missionary, and even now in South Africa. He made a clear point that local leaders who would succeed (or already succeeded the missionaries), must believe that the Risen Jesus is and will be with them always.

After the opening message we divided into 8 groups for the group Bible studies, which more or less 80 people participated in. All group studies were conducted in English, except shepherd Oyor’s group, which was for Arabic speaking shepherds. Group Bible study leaders gathered together a week before the conference to study and pray together for the conference.

After Group Bible Studies, we had the first main message titled “Let me inherit a double portion of your



spirit” based on 2 Kings 2:1-25 by shepherd James Odejimi from Medilag chapter, Nigeria. He shared how Korean missionaries in Nigeria sacrificially served the campus mission and raised the disciples. He would like to inherit their pioneering spirit and sacrificial work. He also shared how the local shepherds including himself, grew up to serve the ministry independently after all Korean missionaries left Nigeria. We were touched by his powerful and graceful message. After his message we all prayed together that we may double our ministry in 2022.



On Saturday morning, we had a special lecture by missionary Mark Yoon and a panel discussion on the mission in Africa for another 30 years. Msn Mark Yoon well presented the special lecture meticulously about the ministry succession. He thoroughly examined and explained about what leadership succession is, reasons for suc-

cession, when, to whom, what to do after succession by the predecessor, and vision for another 30 years and beyond.



After his special lecture, shepherd Oyor Moses (Egypt), Owoeye Omotunde (Nigeria), and Christiaan Coetsee (South Africa) who were the panellists, presented what they have learned from Korean missionaries, and what they would like to pass on to the next generation. After the panellists shared their experience and thoughts, we discussed many areas of leadership succession. Many participants enthusiastically joined the discussion, so we extended the session one hour further.

such as whether it will be an online conference, in-person conference or hybrid conference, when, which chapter will host, theme of the conference etc. Due to time constraints, we decided to meet during early February 2022 to finalise the matter. There were also suggestions that we have an Africa UBF forum in





order to continue to discuss the topic of leadership succession, and a further education programme for local shepherds and missionaries. And the next New Year Conference, regardless of being online or an in-person conference, will be hosted by Makerere chapter, Uganda on 16-18 December 2022.

On Sunday morning each chapter independently had its own Sunday worship service, and had the second main message delivered by DG pastor Moses Yoon with title "Jesus chose the Twelve" (Lk. 6:6-19). His message gave us a clear direction that we were called to be warriors and disciples of Jesus to fight against the devil. In this spiritual battle we must pray with all our hearts and be empowered with the Holy Spirit, and devote ourselves to the disciple-making ministry in this New Year.

It was the second online New Year conference under the current covid-19 pandemic. Many local senior shepherd and shepherdesses could join this conference as it was conducted in an online platform. Most of all, it was meaningful that we discussed and prayed for the leadership succession. We looked back what our Korean missionaries did for the past 30 years, and discussed and prayed for what we should do for the next 30 years. Many of the missionaries in Africa went back to Korea or retired, and chapters such as Egypt, Nigeria, South Sudan, Zambia, and Wits in South Africa no longer have missionaries, but continue to serve the ministries independently. And there are many ministries which are praying for leadership succession from missionaries to local shepherds. We prayed together for leadership succession that we may raise many local shepherds who may succeed the missionaries. We also prayed that we may have a double portion of the Holy Spirit that we may double our ministries in Africa in the New Year, 2022.

We give special thanks to pastor Elisha Kim and Namsan UBF in Seoul, pastor John Kwon and LA UBF, and HQ in Chicago and Korea for their unceasing prayer and material support to Africa UBF ministries. Praise the Lord who blessed the New Year Conference abundantly with His life-giving word, and who granted us a new direction for the year of 2022.

“  
We may raise  
many local shep-  
herds who may  
succeed the mis-  
sionaries.  
”



# OPENING MESSAGE

James Lee (Pretoria, South Africa)

## I am with You always

*Matthew 28:20b "And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*



Praise be to God who allowed us to have this Africa New Year Conference 2022. May God bless this conference abundantly with His Spirit and word!

The title of the opening message is "I AM WITH

YOU ALWAYS," based on Matthew 28:20b, which reads, "And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

When Jesus rose from the dead, he went to Galilee and met his disciples. There Jesus gave them the command of preaching the gospel to all nations. And he promised, "surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." The disciples of Jesus have been following Him for three years, but they were still weak and timid. When Jesus was arrested, they all fled away in fear. Peter loved Jesus and tried not to deny Him his Lord, but he also failed. When he found himself denying Jesus, he wept with bitterness. But Jesus still loved them deeply. He didn't blame them. Instead, he said, "Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

"Age" means the length of time that something has existed. The world where we are living in, will not last forever. God will bring an end to this world, and until the very end of the world, the Risen Jesus will be with his disciples. While we preach the truth of the gospel to all campuses of all nations, Jesus will remain in each of us and protect us with the power of his resurrection. Jesus will supply all they need, while they do the work of God.

I came alone to Malawi in 1990. When I left Korea as a missionary to Malawi, I was uncertain what to eat and how to talk to the natives. But I believed this promise the Risen Jesus told me, "Surely I am with you always." Because Jesus helped me, I could share the gospel with many youth for the last thirty years. Now I can confess, Jesus has been staying with me up to this moment.

As for our UBF ministry, it is the time for God to transfer the leadership from missionaries to native leaders. We believe that the Risen Jesus says to our native leaders, "Surely I am with you always," and this promise will remain deep in their hearts continually. They will be reliable disciples, and will testify that Jesus has risen. And to the very end of the world, Jesus will use them precious among their people.

In the book of Genesis, Jacob left his parents' home because his brother Esau tried to kill him. He was fearful and lonely. His heart was troubled about the uncertain future. He stopped for a night in the wilderness and tried to sleep in the cold. Then God appeared to him, and said, in 28:15, "I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go...I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you." Jacob held on to the promise of God in his heart. In many dangers and adverse situations, God was with him just as he had promised. In the end, Jacob raised the twelve tribes of Israel, because God was with him.

When Moses appointed Joshua his successor, he was just an assistant. Joshua would have felt a heavy burden to become Moses' successor. Then God said to him, in Joshua 1:5, "I will be with you. I will never leave you nor forsake you." God promised him to be with him always. Joshua would not know how to carry on the work of God. But when he believed the promise of God in his heart, he could divide the Jordan River into two, and destroyed Jericho city. He conquered the land of Canaan. When God was with him, he could complete the mission given by God.

When Jesus came to this world, He planned to be with his people always. Matthew wrote it in his book chapter 1, "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel – which means, 'God with us.'" Jesus didn't want to stay in this world just for thirty three years. He wants to stay with his people always to the very end of the world. Because of that, Jesus had died on the cross, but rose from the dead in

order to be with his people always.

In the time of this leadership succession, we, each of us, remember that the Risen Jesus said, "Surely I am with you always." The Risen Jesus will be with both the native leaders and missionaries, because he entrusted us the world mission command which is preaching the gospel among campus youth. The Resurrected Jesus is with us. Jesus will be with us in this conference. Jesus is surely with the successors of God's ministry. He will carry on his own gospel ministry through them greatly, as he is with them always. Amen.

Let's pray ;  
Father God, thank you for the grace of being with us always. May you be with our following generation always and bless them greatly. Bless this conference with word, living spirit and your presence. I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.



# MESSAGE

James Odejimi (Pretoria, South Africa)

## Let Me Inherit a Double Portion of Your Spirit

2 Kings 2:1-25

**Key Verse 2:9, “When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, “Tell me, what can I do for you before I am taken from you?” “Let me inherit a double portion of your spirit,” Elisha replied.**



Transition is a constant life phenomenon. As one generation leaves another spring up. Transition necessitates continuity. Or should we say it's more

like a relay race where one passes the baton to the next runner. No matter how good we are we must run only our own race and hand-over the baton to the next generation. However, God is the sovereign God and the everlasting God who orchestrate every life transition- either ministry or life.

However, this passage teaches us one important thing that we need to have to do God's work. And What is that? It is the Holy Spirit. To do God's work we need the Holy Spirit more than anything else. In today's passage Elisha asked for the double portion of Elijah's spirit. This is because Elisha believes that in doing God's work nothing is more important than the Holy Spirit of God.

When we have the Holy Spirit, we can overcome any difficulty and do great work of God in our own generation. Through the Holy Spirit we can build a strong foundation for pioneering the 56 countries of Africa through our African leaders. May God help us to seek the Holy Spirit like Elisha in this passage. (Amen)

I will divide the message into four parts

1. God is the Lord of the ministry (V1)
2. I will not leave you (V2-8)
3. Let me inherit a double portion of your spirit (V9-18)
4. God's Affirmation of Elisha's ministry. (19-25)

### FIRST, GOD IS THE LORD OF THE MINISTRY (V1)

Let us look at V1a. “When the Lord was about to take Elijah up to heaven in a whirlwind”. I don't know how old Elijah was at the time, but under God's sovereignty Elijah's time has come to an end. /God had used Elijah tremendously. He was

a bold and powerful prophet who challenged kings and lead Israelites to God. He administered God's judgment on the Baal priest. But now it was time to go. /Maybe Elijah wanted to stay longer to train Elisha the more to be able to face the challenges ahead. But God decided that Elijah must leave the scene. Maybe Elijah hesitated to leave in his heart, so God had to take him away with a whirlwind.

Sometimes, ministry succession takes place with the careful planning and leadership transfer, while sometimes God uses the whirlwind like in the case of Elijah and John the Baptist. Whichever way we must be willing to accept God's sovereignty and submit to his plan.

In this verse, we can also learn that God wants to reward his faithful servant Elijah with Eternal life. Despite his difficult life, Elijah served God faithfully. So, God wants Elijah to have eternal life with him in his kingdom forever.

God rewards those who diligently seek him by faith. God remembers the sacrifices of many of our missionaries in African and he will surely reward them in due time. (Amen)

### SECOND, I WILL NOT LEAVE YOU (V2-8).

Let us read V2 “Elijah said to Elisha, “Stay here; the Lord has sent me to Bethel.” But Elisha said, “As surely as the Lord lives and as you live, I will not leave you.” So they went down to Bethel.” When we look at V2-6 we see some repetitions – at Bethel, at Jericho, and finally at Jordan. /What were those repetitions? First, 3 times Elijah asked Elisha to stay behind instead of following him. We wonder why Elijah asked Elisha to stay behind rather than encouraging his beloved student to follow him at the end of his time on earth. He surely must be testing Elisha's commitment and loyalty to God and the ministry.

How did Elisha respond each time Elijah to him to stay behind? /3 times Elisha responded, “As surely as the Lord lives, and as you live, I will not leave you” This response shows that Elisha loved God and he loved God's servant Elijah. Because of his love Elisha wanted to be with Elijah to the end.

This reminds me of my daughter who always wants to be with her father. I remember how she went to hide my passport when I wanted to travel to Kenya to attend the East African conference. She wants to be with we me because she loves me.

Elisha was surely determined not to let Elijah out of his sight, because he has come to love him as a father. More than that Elisha was a faithful man for God's ministry.

Elisha has shown his full devotion to serving God when God called him in 1 Kings 19:19-21. When Elijah threw his cloak around him, Elisha excitedly told Elijah to wait for him while he goes to kiss his father and mother goodbye, but Elijah asked him to go back. Elijah's remark meant to rebuke Elisha that following God requires loving God above family ties. In response, Elisha slaughtered his yoke of oxen and used his ploughing equipment to cook the oxen and gave it to people to eat. Then Elisha left everything to follow Elijah.

In Luke 14:26,27 Jesus said, “if anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sister – yes, even their own life – such a person cannot be my disciple.” Jesus said that those who do not love him above family ties and their own lives CANNOT be his disciples. /Even though we are chosen and called by grace, God wants our love and devotion to him to be above our love for our family and our own very own lives. This way Jesus wants to keep us from any distraction that might prevent us from following him.

Just two years after my graduation and return from national service, I lost my father and my immediate younger sister. I was left to take care of my five siblings and the five children that my late sister left behind. At that time also, I had no job. So, I lost my faith to serve my Bible students. I was burdened to find a job to be able to serve my family first. This word of Jesus exposed my lack of devotion to God. I realised I did not love Jesus deeply enough, so I could not endure some period of difficulties. I repented (many times) before God to help me grow deeply in love with him above my self-love and above the love for my family. God helped me to entrust my family into his hands and God took care of them.



Like Elisha loved God, Jesus wants us to love him and follow him to the end, hence, we must deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow him to the end.

Look at V7. Unlike Elisha the other prophets just wanted to talk about Elijah's departure and follow him from a distance. They have not commitment to Elijah or to the ministry. They are satisfied with their normal life. They are examples of Christians who want to follow Jesus from a distance. They do not want to participate in Jesus' cross or his suffering. They do not want to deny themselves or make any sacrifice. They are satisfied with bearing the title of a Christian.

But, in this passage, Elisha wants to follow Elijah to the end until he sees the glory of God. Elisha wants to know the God of Elijah intimately. This must be our position as servant of Christ. We must live each day of our lives to grow in our intimate relationship with Jesus. We must be willing to participate in the remaining suffering of our Lord Jesus and have faith to see him in glory someday. Apostle Paul wrote in Phil. 3:10-11 "I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead." May God help us to love Jesus and follow him intimately to the end in Jesus' name. Amen

### **THIRD, LET ME INHERIT A DOUBLE PORTION OF YOUR SPIRIT (V9-18)**

Let us read the key verse, v9 together, "When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, "Tell me, what can I do for you before I am taken from you?" "Let me inherit a double portion of your spirit," Elisha replied." Elisha requested to inherit the double portion of Elijah's spirit. This request is better understood as the inheritance due to a firstborn son.

What does this mean? It means that Elisha considered himself as Elijah's son. It means their relationship is more than that of a teacher and a student. Elisha is going to succeed Elijah as a son with the

right of a firstborn son. The two of them probably have grown to love each other as father and son. The relationship is more than being a mentor and a student, it is like a father and son relationship. /Leaders must love the next generation like their children and serve them with God's love.

I read and I heard from our leaders that late Dr. Samuel Lee loved the leaders at that time like his own children. And even though he gave them strict training, those trainings were precious to those them because they saw the fatherly love from his heart.

I also heard during the Group Bible study preparation for this conference, one of the shepherds said that he has learned a lot from the missionaries. But one thing he regretted was not having a similar relationship with the missionaries like Elisha and Elijah had to the end. His relationship with his spiritual mentor was like a business relationship, and they had spent less time like friends doing things together and praying together. Most times they only discuss the ministry, Bible studies, ministry plan, problems among members. I almost have this feeling that our African shepherds feel same the way. I felt, there is a little bit of distance. But I pray that God may help our missionaries and local shepherds to build up more close relationships as Elijah and Elisha did.

Let's look at Elisha's request again?" "Let me inherit a double portion of your spirit," Literary speaking Elisha wants the same portion of God's spirit that worked in Elijah. Let us imagine Jesus is giving us such a blank cheque today, I am sure many of us will have many things to ask for. Elisha could have asked for material wealth, fame, and power. He could have asked for a beautiful co-worker that will give him handsome sons and lovely daughters; he could have asked for a Green card to fulfill his American dream.

But what did Elisha pray for? Elisha asked for the most important thing that every spiritual leader need (who is that? – The Spirit of God. Elisha knew

that the driving force behind God's work through Elijah was the Spirit of God. To succeed in a leadership position, the most important thing is receiving the Holy Spirit or being empowered by the Holy Spirit. We can take over ministry, but without being empowered by the Holy Spirit we cannot do the work of God. When we have the Holy Spirit, we can overcome hardship and impossible situations to serve God. With the Holy Spirit, we can become powerful witnesses of Jesus.

In Act. 1:4,5, Jesus gave his disciples specific command not to leave Jerusalem until they are baptized with the Holy Spirit. And in V8, Jesus said "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth". Without the Holy Spirit, we cannot raise even one remnant in this dark generation not to talk of pioneering the 56 countries

of Africa. African leaders must pray till we are full of the Holy Spirit, then we can overcome all obstacles to carry out God's work. Through the Holy Spirit our messages and Bible study can move the hearts of African students to accept Jesus' love in their heart and follow him to the end.

Secondly, when he prayed for the double portion of Elijah's spirit, It seems Elisha had the burning desire and spiritual ambition to serve God more and better than Elijah had done. It was not that he wanted to be twice as powerful as Elijah had been, but that he might expand and bring the work of God to a new level. This means he was willing to work harder twice as much as Elijah did. His request shows that Elisha loved God's work that he wanted to work more than Elijah did.

If we do not love the work of God, it is burdensome and fearful to take over the ministry from the





Korean missionaries or senior shepherd. Succession itself requires lots of sacrifices, devotion, and commitment. And for most of us lay shepherds we must carry the cross of full-time work and parenting while serving campus ministry. So, praying to God to give you the double or triple size of ministry than the one you have now, will surely require much more work and sacrifice. But Elijah desired such things with willing hearts.

Indeed, God granted Elisha a double portion of Elijah's spirit. Elijah raised one disciple, but Elisha raised a company of prophets. In terms of the number of miracles that they performed; Elijah performed 14 miracles; while Elisha performed 28 miracles. Elijah was a spiritual fighter and Elisha was a spiritual builder. Elijah confronted and Elisha counselled. Elijah ministered over Israel and Elisha ministered over Israel and surrounding nations.

I pray that our African shepherds will willingly work harder than what our missionaries did in the last 30 years. I pray that we have holy desire and pray to double the ministry with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Look at verse 10. "You have asked a difficult thing," Elijah said, "yet if you see me when I am taken from you it will be yours—otherwise not." Elijah had a conviction that God would grant Elisha's request. However, Elisha had to demonstrate faithfulness to the end first. God will fill us with his Holy Spirit when we earnestly pray for him by faith. In Luke 11:13 Jesus says, "If you then, though you are evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

As Elijah and Elisha were walking along and talking together, suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them, and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind. Whirlwinds and fire were associated with the power and presence of God (Isa 29:6). Elijah went up to heaven as more than a conqueror. In the same way, God's children will all go to heaven as more than conquerors in God's time.

Seeing what happened, Elisha cried out, "My father! My father! The chariots and horsemen of Israel!" The chariots and horsemen of Israel represent the spiritual defence of the nation (2 Ki 13:14). Elijah's departure

was a great loss, not only to Elisha but to the entire nation of Israel. Out of great sorrow, Elisha tore his clothes. Then he took Elijah's cloak, which had fallen. Elisha struck the water with it, saying, "Where now is the Lord, the God of Elijah?" He wanted the God of Elijah to become his God. Then, the water was divided to the right and to the left, and he crossed over. The company of prophets who were watching said, "The spirit of Elijah is resting on Elisha." When they met him, they bowed to the ground before him. The God of Elijah had become the God of Elisha. Their bowing to Elisha means their acknowledgment of him as Elijah's successor to God's ministry.

#### **FOURTH: GOD CONFIRMS ELISHA'S MINISTRY. (19-25)**

Through the two events in Verses 19-25 God confirms Elisha's ministry and it also reveals the character of God. First, by the Spirit of God, Elisha heals the bad water and the unproductive land with salt. Elisha went to the spring and threw the salt into it, saying, "This is what the Lord says: 'I have healed this water. Never again will it cause death or make the land unproductive.'" Jesus says that we are the salt of the earth. Hence the healing of the water with salt means that God wants to use us as salt to heal many students and people who are sin-sick and have become unproductive in their lives. Jesus wants to heal them completely that they will never die again but live to glorify God.

The second event was the reverse of the first (V23-25), God brought judgment upon those who rejected God's word and God's servant.

I thank God who gave me a humble and sacrificial shepherd and shepherdess, who nurtured me to be the man of God I am today. Although I was a Christian, I came to UBF as a young man without direction and with so many burdens of life. Missionary Peter and Monica Park loved me like their own son, but trained me to be a spiritual warrior.

I learnt 4 key legacies from my shepherd –

1. Loving sheep with Jesus' love and serving them humbly with one-to-one Bible study.
2. Sacrificial serving despite difficult situations.
3. Early morning prayer to be full with the Holy Spirit

and praying one by one for the Bible students and  
4. Loving the word of God by practicing reading 10 chapters every day and the new testament at least once a month. He did not just tell me this, he was doing it himself.

So when my shepherd told me to prepare with my wife to pioneer the Medical College of the University of Lagos, just immediately after my wedding, I did not hesitate because I trusted his spiritual judgment as a father. so I obeyed and went. By the way, I did not have accommodation before my wedding (I moved straight from common life into marriage. My wife was a real woman of faith).

Indeed, the beginning of the pioneering was tough and it's still not easy with a full-time job. Taking care of family and Bible students, and keeping one's own spiritual intimacy with Jesus. I lost my job just a year on into the pioneering work. At that time our son was a few months old (with a huge appetite for food) and my wife was in national service. We had to trust God as our Jehovah Jireh and God was faithful.

My shepherd and shepherdess always encouraged us to trust in God. At a point, we had to return to the main chapter for two years because we could not get suitable accommodation and we were also struggling financially. But we kept going to the campus to pray and invited students for Bible studies, but this time with one of my bible students Shp. Gbenga and Shp. Chiaka. Of course, we faced rejection many times because I was not a doctor. However, through our persistent prayer, and filling our hearts with the word of God we had the spirit to challenge the rejection and preached the word. God gave us one faithful brother – Shepherd Johnson who is with us today. He was our consolation and a seed of faith to pioneer the medical campus. God answered our prayers for a place to rent as a Bible house, but again we were ejected again after two years. My wife and I, and our co-workers – and all the brothers prayed and fasted to have a new place. And God gave us a better place within 3 months.

We have learned self-supporting ministry through consistent prayer life and meditating on the word of God every day. today, God has granted us many

fruits through the work of the Holy Spirit, and just this year 7 of our brothers and sisters graduated as medical doctors. We are praying that God may raise them as remnants and use them for the great work of God among other medical students.

Also God is working in Nigeria ministry through the love and humble co-working of our Nigerian leaders. May God continue Nigeria ministry to grow as a kingdom of priest and a holy nation. May God help us to pass on the good legacies that we received from our missionaries.

What did we learn from the succession from Elijah to Elisha?

First, we learnt that must decide whether to follow or not. We must first decide by faith to accept the leadership position. Without making such a decision by faith we cannot take over and carry all the crosses together with God's blessings. We should not only make decisions to be spiritual leaders but also desire to serve God's ministry with a hard-working spirit willingly desiring to do the double portion of God's work.

Second, we should remember that in leadership succession, being empowered by the Holy Spirit is the utmost important thing. Without being empowered by the Holy Spirit, we cannot serve the work of God.

Indeed we our African leaders have benefited a lot from our missionaries, following their examples of how to serve God and His work, their love for the word of God, and their sacrifice and prayers for Africa. We can utilize our experiences with them in serving sheep and ministry. What is important is that a leader must have a personal relationship with God believing that God of the predecessor of your ministry was, is, and will be with you. We must be personally empowered by the Holy Spirit to continue the work of God. We must further desire not to merely maintain the ministry, but desire to further double the ministry. To do this, we need the help of the Holy Spirit.

I pray that God may bless each of us to pray earnestly to be full of the Holy Spirit, and be willing to take up the double portion of the work of God.



M.E.

Of this Gospel I was Appointed

■ January 10-13, 2021



# MESSAGE-1

## Of this Gospel I was Appointed

**2 Timothy 1:1-18**

**2 Timothy 1:11** “*And of this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher.*”

Happy New Year! I hope your life is full of God’s mercy this year. For the last 2 years we have been suffered from Covid 19 crisis. We, all of us, have experienced something new and strange phenomenon. Wearing facemask became a must in our daily lives. I learned new English words thanks to this crisis, such as Curfew, Pandemic, social distance, and so on. I could learn even the Greek alphabet like Omicron. I wish this year we may learn other new words such as revival in the Middle East, 100 new coworkers joining us, Religious freedom, and the like.

Today we are here to start the New Year with the word of God. In today’s passage we can learn how earnestly, urgently and desperately the apostle Paul urges his spiritual son Timothy to preach Gospel of Jesus boldly and powerfully. We also learn how much he was proud of himself as a herald and an apostle and a teacher of the Gospel.

Look at verse 1 and 2. “Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, according to the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus, To Timothy, my dear

son: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.” Apostle Paul’s greetings are always the same. He is talking about his spiritual identity. And he gives spiritual blessings to his disciple Timothy. But Paul’s circumstances was not that much peaceful to bless Timothy in this way. He is now in a Roman prison. This is his second imprisonment.

Paul was very familiar with suffering. He suffered many hardships during his missionary journeys and finally was brought to Rome as a prisoner. However, his second imprisonment was very much different from the first. During his first imprisonment he was in a rented house, and he had relatively freedom interacting with people and could preach the gospel. Many co-workers visited him. He could also write letters to the churches. During this time he wrote Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon, and probably Hebrews.

At this time, however, he was in a dungeon, in chains like a common criminal, and with no hope of deliverance. And what made things worse was that many of his close coworkers abandoned him for fear of persecution. Certainly Paul was sure that he will die soon. If you were Paul, how would you begin your letter? Perhaps, did you not start by asking for help to save your life or complaining about your current situation?

But in today’s passage which have been written shortly before his martyrdom, Paul, like his previous epistle, speaks of his calling by God and begins with a blessing to Timothy. Paul, who suffered a lot because of Jesus, could be sad or regretful about his calling. But he was not ashamed of his situation. Above all, he

blesses Timothy. How can Paul greet with a blessing even though he is in such a big trouble?

Speaking of greetings, there is an old joke about it. Once, a Korean got a car accident in the United States. He was wounded and bleeding. When the traffic police arrived at the scene, they were concerned about his condition so the policeman asked, “How are you?” And the Korean answered mechanically as he had learned in school. “I am fine. Thank you, and you?”

But Paul did not automatically bless Timothy as a habit. He truly blessed Timothy from his heart. The three words Paul uses to bless Timothy—grace, mercy, and peace— are not really only needed for him. We need them too. Grace is God’s favor given to those who do not deserve it. Mercy means God’s love. God’s mercy is the heart of a father who waits for his prodigal son who has left home. And it is also the heart of a shepherd who looks for his lost sheep. Here the word ‘Peace’ is the peace of God. This is heavenly peace. It will not be broken or shaken under any circumstances. This peace is different from the worldly peace. It is an absolute peace. Paul is praying that Timothy will receive these three blessings from God abundantly. Not only Timothy, but all of us here also need grace, mercy, and peace of God. I pray this year grace, mercy, and peace from God will be overflowed on us.

Look at verses 3-5. “I thank God, whom I serve, as my forefathers did, with a clear conscience, as night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers. Recalling your tears, I long to see you, so that I may be filled with joy. I have been reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also.”

In these verses Paul is thankful for Timothy’s faith. But Timothy, who had such a good faith, also was in trouble. Timothy, who was serving the church in Ephesus at the time, seemed to be afraid of various difficulties.

First of all, he was a relatively young pastor. He was also physically ill. He had a weak stomach. So, Paul suggested Timothy to use a little wine for his weak stomach and frequent illness.

Paul was a strong man in character, while Timothy seemed timid and cowardly. So, after Paul was imprisoned for preaching the gospel, maybe Timothy was afraid of serving his ministry. Timothy had to keep fighting against false teachers who distort the truth of the gospel and deceive the believers in the Ephesian church. These constant internal and external suffering must have weighed heavily on Timothy’s heart. This lovely but fragile young leader shed many tears as he parted from Paul.

When Paul was thinking about this Timothy, he wanted to advise him one thing. Look at verses 6-7. “For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.”

If you fan the flame when the fire doesn’t burn well, the flames rise fiercely. In a blacksmith’s shop, the fire does not become hot enough to melt the iron just by putting a lot of wood on the fire. The blacksmith fan the flame to supply air more. Then the temperature rises above 1500 degrees and finally the iron melts. Then, how Paul fan into flame the gift of God? It is to remind Timothy that the gift of God is already in him. In other words, Paul wants Timothy to remember who he is in front of God.

Look at verse 7. “For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.”

Paul tells Timothy that timidity is not his true color, but God has given him power, love, and self-discipline. Perhaps Timothy could not believe Paul’s word. He was now trembling in fear. He desperately needed



power to overcome persecution. He needed love to serve church members. But when he looked back on himself, he seemed to have no such gift at all. But Paul said that God had already given Timothy these characters as gifts. Timothy might think he is timid and cowardly, but the truth is that he is powerful, lovely, and self-disciplined. God had already given Timothy these qualities abundantly by dwelling of the Holy Spirit in him.

When I saw my circumstances, I found my positions were like that of Timothy. Although there is no severe persecution like Nero's era, there is no freedom of preaching. Even if there is freedom to spread the word of God, people do not want to accept Jesus as their savior because they do not want to change their old belief. Our external environment doesn't seem that much different from Rome in the time of Timothy. Moreover, when I look back at myself, I am powerless and lazy. But verse 7 says that God has already given me the spirit of power, of love, and of self-discipline. I couldn't agree with it. But God has already given us these qualities as gifts. It is not going to be given sometime in the future. God has already given me. God wants me to realize who I am. Who am I and who you are? We all of us are filled with the spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.

Then, what should Timothy do, who has a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline? Look at verse 8. "So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner. But join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God,"

Timothy could have regretted the position of Paul. Timothy may not have been proud of Paul when he thought that even Paul devoted his entire life to serve God and his life ends with imprisonment rather than receiving worldly blessings. Or he may have doubted God's love, thinking why God doesn't protect his teacher, Paul. In any cases, from Timothy's point of view, Paul's situation could be regrettable and shame-

ful.

But Paul did not tell Timothy to flee to a safe place for a moment because he was in great trouble. Instead, Paul proudly invites Timothy to suffering. Paul recommends Timothy to join in his suffering. He asks him not to be ashamed of Paul, but to join with him in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God. Here, the important word is 'by the power of God'. We cannot bear suffering with our human will power. We can endure hardships only when we are clothed by the power of God.

Then why does Paul tell Timothy to suffer for the gospel? Look at verses 9 and 10. "who has saved us and called us to a holy life-not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."

First, it is because the gospel is the basis and foundation of our salvation. We have been saved not because we are qualified or worthy to be saved by our work. We are totally undeserving people. We were destined to be judged by God and fall into the fiery lake of burning sulfur. But regardless of our deeds, God decided to save us before the beginning of time.

Second, it is because the gospel is the completion of salvation work.

God has decided to save us, but it wasn't granted for free. Christ's death on the cross was necessary to accomplish our salvation. Christ atoned for our sins by dying on the cross. And through his resurrection, he has given us new birth into a living hope and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. When Paul thought of this gospel, even though his life was filled with suffering, he was not ashamed of it. Rather,

he urged Timothy to preach this gospel even more diligently, in spite of suffering.

In verse 11 Paul boldly proclaims his spiritual identity. Look at verse 11. "And of this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher."

Here, a herald is a person who preaches a message with authority. In the past, a person who delivered a king's order or government's announcement was called 'herald'. An apostle is a person who has been sent. This word was used when Moses was sent to Pharaoh by God's command, and when Elijah was sent to King Ahab. Teacher is the one who teaches knowledge. But they do not teach the knowledge of the world, but the knowledge of the kingdom of God, the cross, the resurrection, and the salvation of Christ.

Then, how can we be good heralds, apostles, and teachers?

We must know the Word of God well. If someone doesn't know about what he is going to proclaim or preach or teach, he cannot be a good herald, apostle and teacher. In Luke 12:42, Jesus compared us to a servant who distribute food allowance to his house members. Food allowance is the Word of God. The Bible is the storehouse in which the Word of God, the food of the soul, is stored. A servant has a duty to distribute faithfully the word of God to God's people. I pray we become more zealous in the study of the Word of God in order to become good servants.

The apostle Paul was a good servant and devoted his life to preaching the word of God. And he was proud of himself as a servant of the word of God. What's the reason that Paul is so proud of himself? Look at verse 12. "That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day."

Because he knew who God is. He knew that God was trustworthy and that he would guard him until the last day. Here, 'what he has entrusted' does not mean that God will get Paul out of prison. Paul knew that God would protect his faith and lead his soul to heaven.

In a human point of view, Paul seems to have lived a social failure. He lived in poverty almost all his lifetime since he met Jesus. He was beaten several times. He even went through the brink of death due to shipwreck. Yet, the last years of his life were not that much peaceful and happy. His close friends have abandoned him, and he has been chained in a cold cell. If I were Paul, I could say, 'Ah! At that time, when I met Jesus in Damascus, I shouldn't have followed him.' or 'I shouldn't have gone when the disciples told me not to go to Jerusalem.' But he was well aware that the present sufferings are not worthy to be compared with the glory that will be revealed in us. He knew that 100 years of life on earth is shorter than the blink of an eye when it is compared with eternal life.

In verse 13, the apostle Paul tells Timothy, "What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching." We must keep the sound teaching by obeying them. Also, in verse 14, we are told to guard the good deposit that was entrusted to Timothy. 'The good deposit that was entrusted to you' is preaching the gospel. The ministry of preaching gospel will be accomplished "by the Holy Spirit who lives in us." 'The Holy Spirit lives in us' means that God is with us, and this is a wonderful privilege of the all servants of God. The Holy Spirit helps us to serve the ministry. Ezekiel 36:27 says, "And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws." Timothy's ministry of preaching gospel will be carried out by the Holy Spirit who lives in Timothy. So it is not Timothy who serve the ministry but Holy Spirit who works through him.

In verses 15-18, The Apostle Paul mentions the co-workers who have forsaken him and the co-workers



who have been with him. As God reserved 7,000 remnants for Elijah, he also today reserves his servants for us. Most of all, we ourselves should be good co-workers for each other.

In conclusion, Paul sent a letter to his beloved spiritual son Timothy. In fact, this letter is not only for Timothy but also for all of us. Paul emphasizes Timothy that he already received 3 gifts of Power, Love and Self-discipline. And Paul invites him to suffering for gospel. Everyone is invited by Paul. Actually, God invites us to be a herald and an apostle and a teacher. We look to be timid and powerless. But in today's passage, God strongly insisted that he already gave us power, love and self-discipline and appointed us as his herald, apostle and teacher. Whether you agree with it or not, you are able herald who has power, love and self-discipline spirit. May God help us to always remember this fact!

# MESSAGE-II

## With Hands up, Winning the Battle

**Exodus 17:1-16**

***Exodus 17:11, As long as Moses held up his hands, the Israelites were winning, but whenever he lowered his hands, the Amalekites were winning.***

Today's passage is the record of what happened just a few months after Israel left Egypt for the land of Canaan promised by God. It seems that this passage is just about two historical happenings: Israel's severe suffering due to the problem of no water and Israel's fighting against the Amalekites. However, these two historical events give us very important lessons, though they happened several thousand years ago. I pray, from today's passage, we may think about the meaning of faith and learn about the importance of prayer and co-working.

### **I. Strike the rock (1~7)**

"The whole Israelite community set out from the Desert of Sin, traveling from place to place as the LORD commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink."<sup>(1)</sup> Israel were moving towards the land of Canaan after they got out of the Pharaoh's tyranny. They experienced God's great power when God divided the Red Sea. They tasted God's wonderful grace when God gave them quail and manna. Now they, traveling from place to place as God commanded, camped at Rephidim. But they encountered a serious problem; there was no

water at Rephidim. In desert area, their survival could be threatened when there was no water. They might have expected their life would not have any problems they were moving as God commanded. But there can be unexpected difficulties ahead of those who live by faith.

"So they quarreled with Moses and said, 'Give us water to drink.' Moses replied, 'Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you put the LORD to the test? 'But the people were thirsty for water there, and they grumbled against Moses. They said, 'Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to make us and our children and livestock die of thirst?'"<sup>(2,3)</sup> The people of Israel quarreled with Moses demanding water for them. They also put God to the test by quarreling with Moses who was God's chosen leader for them. How many God's miracles and wonders had they experienced and witnessed? So far, no other generations than these Israelites at that time have not seen with their own eyes more marvelous and dramatic works by God. Most of all, it must have been in their vivid memory that the Red Sea was divided at once making great walls of water at their both sides. It might have been as if thousands of Niagara Falls with tremendous water flowing upward were making roar of thunders. Those water walls, which stood beside them while they were crossing the sea on foot, fell upon the Egyptian army like collapsing mountains to sweep away all the Egyptian army. The Israelites also observed this formidable destruction by God of the Egyptian army. How come these same people could grumble as mentioned in verse 2 and 3? They even said, "Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to make us and our children and livestock die of thirst?" In fact this was not their first time to complain and grumble. When they were chased by the Egyptian army, they said, "Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us to the desert to die? What have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt?"<sup>(Ex.14:11)</sup> In Marah, they grumbled against Moses because water was bitter. <sup>(Ex.15:24)</sup> In the Desert of Sin, they grumbled against Moses



and Aaron saying, "If only we had died by the LORD's hand in Egypt! There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you have brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death." (Ex.16:3) By saying like this, they glamorized their life of slavery in Egypt as worthy of living. People have a high tendency to remember their past distorted and beautified at their convenience. I heard some people grumbling, "Why am I suffering like this by living a life of faith?" They usually do not remember how wretched they were under the power of sin before they met Jesus. Though people easily forget what he really should remember, it is quite difficult to understand Israel's attitude. Just a few months ago, they left Egypt and became free from Pharaoh's harsh and grueling ruling. It seems that they were born to complain. Complaining and grumbling is a habit and a life style coming from servile spirit. Their long life of slavery in Egypt distorted their character as God's people. They needed a good training from God.

Gratitude and complaint are in inverse proportion. Once Israel received God's graces, they took them for granted and forgot about them. But they began to grumble almost automatically when they faced difficulties. They were now even putting God to the test. They were so impatient and had no faith from their past experience that God could do greater things for them. They had no faith in which they asked God's grace humbly faced with difficulties.

What did Moses do in this situation? He might make a human decision to cater to people's anger to placate them. Humanly speaking it seemed better to decide to go back to previous camping areas where they could drink water. Human decisions based upon reasonable consideration look very attractive. Abraham once made a human decision like this. He, by faith, obeyed God and left his hometown abandoning his comfortable and stable life there. But in Canaan where God would give him as promised land, he made a human decision when there was a famine. He decided to go

to Egypt to avoid the famine. In a sense it was very considerate and reasonable decision, but not by faith or without asking God. However, this human decision led to another human and disgraceful decision. In fear of possible harm due to her beautiful wife, Abram lied that she was his sister and sent her to Pharaoh. Without graceful God who interfered in this matter, Abram must have lived alone while Sarah's resentment heaping upon him until she died. Only by God's mercy Abram could take her wife back. Since then, whenever there was any quarrel between Abraham and Sarah, Abraham might always have been rebuked by Sarah with his sending her to Pharaoh. Of course Abraham had something to say, "It was just to survive." No other principle may be more desperate and determining decision factor in our life than survival itself. But when we follow the principle of survival above faith like animals, our life of faith will be lightened more and more, not to speak of finally meeting with more serious crisis humanly and spiritually as well. In the midst of hardships and difficulties, we tend to grumble more and try to find out our own human solution. But Moses did not behave so. He first came to God and prayed. He asked God to give him right direction. He was a man of prayer. God could say to Moses, "Now sweep them away because they are faithless and grumble again and again." But what did most gracious and patient God say to Moses?

"The LORD answered Moses, 'Walk on ahead of the people. Take with you some of the elders of Israel and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go I will stand there before you by the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it for the people to drink.' So Moses did this in the sight of the elders of Israel."(5,6) When Moses obeyed God and struck the rock at Horeb, water came out so abundantly that all the Israel and their livestock drank water fully. In fact if you strike a rock with a staff, the staff will be broken and your wrist will be injured. Water cannot come out of a rock, even though you strike it with an iron rod or even destroy it with dynamite. But when

Moses obeyed God's word and struck the rock with his staff, water came out of it. How could it happen? The staff itself did not have any special power. But God mentioned it as 'the staff which you struck the Nile.' When Moses struck the Nile with this staff, all the water of the Nile changed into blood. When God told Moses to struck the Nile with the staff, he also mentioned it as 'the staff that was changed into a snake.' With God's power, this powerless staff changed into a snake and swallowed up all the snakes changed from the Egyptian magicians' staffs. Now when Moses struck the rock with this staff, the water came out of it. The more I am advanced in years, the more I realize I am like a powerless staff which cannot do anything by itself. But I just wanted to remain in life of faith. Whether I was in spiritual difficulties or I failed repeatedly in human competitions, I just hold firmly to one wish, which was to live as a campus shepherd. Gracious God did not overlook my spiritual wish and has used me like powerless staff in several ways for campus mission. Shepherd Banseok is my hometown friend. I think he is another powerless staff. When he was about to be sent here around 26 years ago, there was a special announcement for him by a senior shepherd. "For world mission Banseok is flying for a place where gospel is not preached well. I believe he will become a great servant of God for this place." I expected the senior shepherd would say like that. But he said, "What can he do in such a barren place? It is good if he can just settle down there." Compared to Europe where I worked, his announcement still sounds right in some respective. I heard that this region is the most difficult place to serve our ministry. And I feel it more strongly while I am staying here. I even cannot go out by myself from my residence. But I already saw God has been using our coworkers preciously here for his ministry despite very difficult conditions, like God used Moses' staff powerfully. Whatever the situation here may be, I pray God may use our coworkers here more preciously in this year if we continue sticking to our LORD.

"And he called the place Massah and Meribah because the Israelites quarreled and because they tested the LORD saying, "Is the LORD among us or not?"(7) 'Massah' means 'test' and 'Meribah' means 'place of quarrel.' It was because the Israelites tested God and quarreled. Why did they do so? It was because they looked at their hardships only and grumbled. Complaints prevented them from remembering God's grace. They even raised a question, "Is the LORD among us or not?" This unfaith is not just Israelites' problem. We also test God and quarrel when we have sufferings. The question we should raise is not 'Is God with us or not?' but 'Do we go together with God or not?' It is because God is faithful and loves us all the time. God is always with us. If not so, how could God sacrifice his one and only son Jesus on the cross for sinners like us? This grace is enough for us to give our whole-hearted thanks to God whatever situation we may be in. Prophet Habakuk had this thanks to God when he said, "Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will be joyful in God my Savior."(Hab.3:17,18)

## II. The LORD is my Banner (8~16)

"The Amalekites came and attacked the Israelites at Rephidim."(8) Israel solved their water crisis. But another crisis rose to them. The Amalekites attacked them. The Amalekites were descendants of Esau who sold his inheritance rights for a single meal. So, they were blood relatives to Israel, but they often troubled Israel. Their attack was a big crisis to Israel, because Israel had no war experience since they had lived as slaves. In this time of crisis, what did Moses say?

"Moses said to Joshua, 'Choose some of our men and go out to fight the Amalekites. Tomorrow I will stand on top of the hill with the staff of God in my hands. So Joshua fought the Amalekites as Moses had



ordered, and Moses, Aaron and Hur went to the top of the hill.”(9,10) It is understandable that Joshua chose some of their men to go out to fight the Amalekites. But why did Moses stand on top of the hill with the staff of God in his hands? In old times generals directed their battles from high places like hills. Did Moses also want to direct Israel’s war with the Amalekites from the hill-top? It was not the case for Moses, though.

“As long as Moses held up his hands, the Israelites were winning, but whenever he lowered his hands, the Amalekites were winning.”(11) On the top of the hill Moses held up his hands, then the Israelites were winning. But when he lowered his hands, the Amalekites were winning. Moses wanted to keep his hands up continuously, but he could not do so. It was because he was a human being with physical limitation. Therefore, he held up his hands and lowered his hands alternatively, which made the Israelites winning and losing in turn. But Moses’ hands would be lowered more and more as Moses got tired more and more. It was matter of time that Moses would finally lower his hands down and the Israelites would be defeated. Aaron and Hur found out this problem. They saw that Moses’ hands should be kept up all the time to have victory over the Amalekites. So what did Aaron and Hur do?

“When Moses’ hands grew tired, they took a stone and put it under him and he sat on it. Aaron and Hur held his hands up--one on one side, one on the other--so that his hands remained steady till sunset.”(12) Firstly, they put a stone under Moses so that he might sit on it. This relieved Moses of his fatigue caused by standing for many hours. Secondly, they held Moses’ hands up from each side. In this way his hands could remain steady till sunset. What was the result of this? “So Joshua overcame the Amalekite army with the sword.”(13) Joshua defeated the Amalekite army completely with the sword. It should not be overlooked that Joshua bravely fought the Amalekites. Prayer and action need go together. Jesus also prayed and acted continuously. Joshua, supported by Moses’ prayer,

was able to win a victory. Here Moses’ holding up his hands means his prayer. Israel was on the way to the promised land according to God’s direction. So, the Amalekites’ challenge against Israel was challenge against God and this war was not against flesh and blood, but against the spiritual forces of evil hampering God’s work. The most important is God’s power, not human power in this spiritual war. Prayer is definitely needed to receive God’s power. Even Jesus, the son of God, spent a whole night praying to God. After Jesus drove out evil spirit from a boy, he said, “This kind can come out only by prayer.” (Mk. 9:29) Therefore, nobody can win a victory in spiritual war without depending upon God’s power. How many victories did David win? His secret of victory was his prayer. He always prayed to God before going to war. But when he neglected to pray while oversleeping, he became a slave of sin committing adultery and murder as well. Prayer should be continuous. It is, in some respect, like pouring water in a jar with a crack at the bottom through which water leaks. So for the jar to be filled with water, pouring water cannot be stopped and need be more than leaking water. Moses’ raising his hands was like praying and lowering his hands was like stopping praying. By praying intermittently like this, Israel could not achieve a decisive victory. In Luke 18:1~8, Jesus taught us that we should pray like a widow who cried out day and night. Though I do not know well about this region, I believe we need to pray here persistently and tenaciously more than in any other region. One day I arrived at Baghdad airport around 3AM and saw many Muslims begin praying prostrating themselves on the airport ground at 5AM. I could not but doubt how I would be able to win a victory without sincere and continuous prayers while they are praying like that.

But sincere and persistent praying is not easy. It is because we are weak humans. Even Moses himself could not continue his praying because he was tired. We sometimes tend to get tired more in time of prayer. It is, I think, praying is a spiritual battle. It seems that

praying is more challenging in our age because we are surrounded by so many interesting things. I feel I pray very long, but it is much less than half an hour. I feel I watch Youtube clips very shortly, but it is much longer than an hour.

This problem is not limited to prayer only. We also easily get tired when we do other spiritual things. It is not easy for one person to invite students to Bible study. It is even fearful to address students. Writing a testimony is easily stopped if there is no testimony sharing meeting. But when we go fishing together, we can overcome inner fear and laziness. We can write a testimony regularly when we have testimony sharing meetings. When we have regular prayer meetings, we can pray more continuously and persistently. This will be very much important in serving our ministry successfully. Actually all these things are co-working. In today’s passage Aaron and Hur co-worked wisely with Moses so that he might keep holding his hands up. Without this co-working, they must have been defeated by the Amalekites. In the Bible we can see God works through our humble co-working. Jesus sent his disciples two by two for preaching the gospel. Peter and John, initially in rivalry, co-worked beautifully after they received the Holy Spirit. There were many co-workers in Apostle Paul’s ministry. From when God created this world, God let humans co-work. This was why Adam got to have his wife Eve. But they co-work wrongly and sin came into this world. We learn from them we should co-work rightly before God. Many years have passed since I got to have my wife as my co-worker from marriage by faith. But as years passed we have been just cohabiting before this world without co-working before God. We neglected in praying together for campus mission and sheep God sent to us. Now I am even not able to cohabit with my wife separated from each other for my work. Nevertheless I see I can co-work wisely with her, even though I cannot cohabit with her. Aaron and Hur used a stone to co-work with Moses. Likewise I can use Kakao-talk or Whatsapp to co-work. We can pray together all the time regardless of geographical distance. I see

our environment is not matter but our heart is matter. I pray I may resume praying together with my wife for campus mission. I gave Bibles to two local staffs here and have been praying for them and also for two sheep in Netherlands. Now I need pray for them also together with my wife, not by myself only. I think this is how I can co-work with her as of now.

“Then the LORD said to Moses, ‘Write this on a scroll as something to be remembered and make sure that Joshua hears it, because I will completely blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven.’ Moses built an altar and called it The LORD is my Banner. He said, ‘For hands were lifted up to the throne of the LORD. The LORD will be at war against the Amalekites from generation to generation.’”(14~16) Joshua would succeed to Moses. So, Joshua should remember without fail how Israel won a victory from war against the Amalekites. By doing so he would be able to win victories again on the way ahead to Canaan. Moses built an altar and called it “The LORD is my Banner.” Banner is the symbol of an army unit. It means the prestige of the unit. So, what is most disgraceful in battle is to be taken its banner away by its enemy. When God becomes our banner, victory is guaranteed. When we complain and grumble, God will not be our banner. God will be our banner of victory when we pray in faith regardless of our situation.

In conclusion, we learn today that we should not put God to the test, even though we are in hardships, but should pray continuously. Facing our current difficulties, we do not need complain. Rather, we need give thanks to God who has so far led and protected us. If so, God will be pleased with us and keep helping us. Rather than play individually, we should work together in serving campus mission. If so, we can serve campus mission more strongly. With beautiful co-working like Moses, Aaron and Hur, I pray God may bless our shepherds in this region abundantly in this new year of 2022. May God help us confess like Moses, “The LORD is my Banner.”

# EUROPE

Grow as a Loving  
Community that Raises  
Disciples of Jesus

December 29-30, 2021 (Online)





# REPORT

Reiner Schauwienold (Europe UBF Coordinator)

## Grow as a Loving Community that Raises Disciples of Jesus



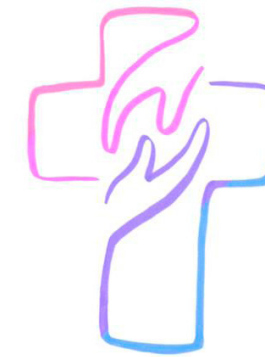
We thank God for blessing the Europe UBF New Year Conference abundantly! The conference was held online on December 29 and 30 and was open to all coworkers in Europe, who had lived another year under the pandemic. 222 coworkers from all over Europe and some delegates from the USA and Korea attended.

On the first evening we began with Bible study on Luke 6:6-19 in three languages. After worship lead by Encounter worship team, a video about UBF World mission activities in 2021 was presented. In the message of P. Moses Yoon we learned that Jesus prayed all night with a broken heart for the people, who

were lost without shepherds. In the morning Jesus chose twelve disciples and called them apostles with his divine will to raise them as spiritual leaders with spiritual power to bring the Gospel of salvation to the whole world. The message encouraged us to renew our prayers for helping students and young people to receive Jesus' grace and calling and to grow as his disciples and spiritual leaders for this generation.

On the second day we began with testimony sharing in the Bible study groups. The main program was a forum with the theme "How to win the West again – Evangelism in Europe". Three speakers gave insightful presentations: Bruno Aussant on the challenge we are facing, Ester Nett on the how we can speak to young Europeans, and James Wood on experiences from Evangelising London. In the following panel discussion they answered the questions from all attendants based on their personal experience. Even though not all questions could be answered due to time constrictions, the answers were very inspiring and encouraging to help young people to know Jesus and grow as his disciples with a humble heart, prayer and genuine love of Jesus.

At the end of the program there were words of appreciation for Dr. James Kang's graceful leadership of Europe UBF in the past four years and blessing prayers for the new coordinator for Europe, Sh. Reiner Schauwienold. May God help Europe UBF to grow as a loving community that raises disciples of Jesus for the evangelism of Europe.



UBF Europe New Year 21/22

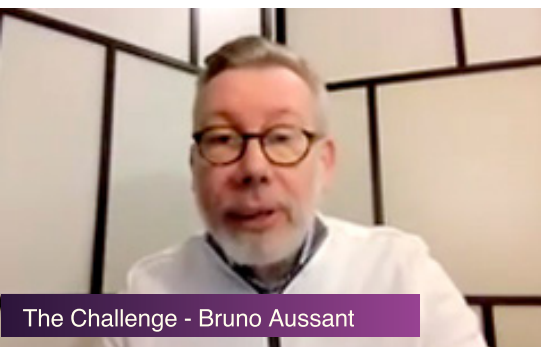


PRAISE & WORSHIP BY ENCOUNTER WORSHIP TEAM





Special Worship Dance by 2nd-Gens and young leaders



The Challenge - Bruno Aussant



Speaking to young Europeans - Esther Nett



Evangelising London - James Wood

Forum - "How to win the West again – Evangelism in Europe."



Reiner Schauwienold



Dr. James Kang

Words of appreciation for Dr. James Kang's graceful leadership of Europe UBF in the past four years and blessing prayers for the new coordinator for Europe, Reiner Schauwienold.



# OCEANIA

Love and Feed

Macquarie UBF

■ January 1-2, 2022





# REPORT

Moses Kang (Macquarie, Australia)

## Love and Feed



Macquarie UBF held a New Year Conference at Elanora conference centre (1-2 Jan 2022) with a title “Love and Feed”. Coworkers were unsure whether we would have in-person conference or not as recent Covid cases surged in Sydney. Director M. Mark Lee and Ruth Lee had to travel to Korea urgently due to a family event. Australia is known as a country of a successful Covid-19 pandemic management. However, the active cases was increased rapidly since the government decided to live with Covid-19. Our missionaries are mostly working in healthcare sector so this may affect their job and clients. Earlier the week, Christopher had a close contact with a positive case so he had to isolate for 7 days. Then M. Joshua Lee

of Canberra UBF enquired about participating in our conference. So we decided to run the conference in hybrid mode, in-person and zoom broadcasting for main programs to accommodate the needs.

We started our conference Day 1 with next generation team, called Good Trees, presenting a chapter of a book called “After salvation” by a renown Korean Pastor Youngsun Park. M. Mary Lee, Esther Kang Jr, Grace Jun, David Kang presented that our life with Christ is like a treasure in jars clay. Main lecture 1 was based on Isaiah 6 and M Moses Kang served the message, “Whom shall I send?” He emphasized that God didn’t force Isaiah to serve God but appealed to respond to God’s calling willingly based on God’s forgiving grace. Then few members shared their yearly reflections and key verse and prayer topics. After that,

we had a praising and prayer night praying for those who couldn’t join the conference in person and for global Covid-19 pandemic management.

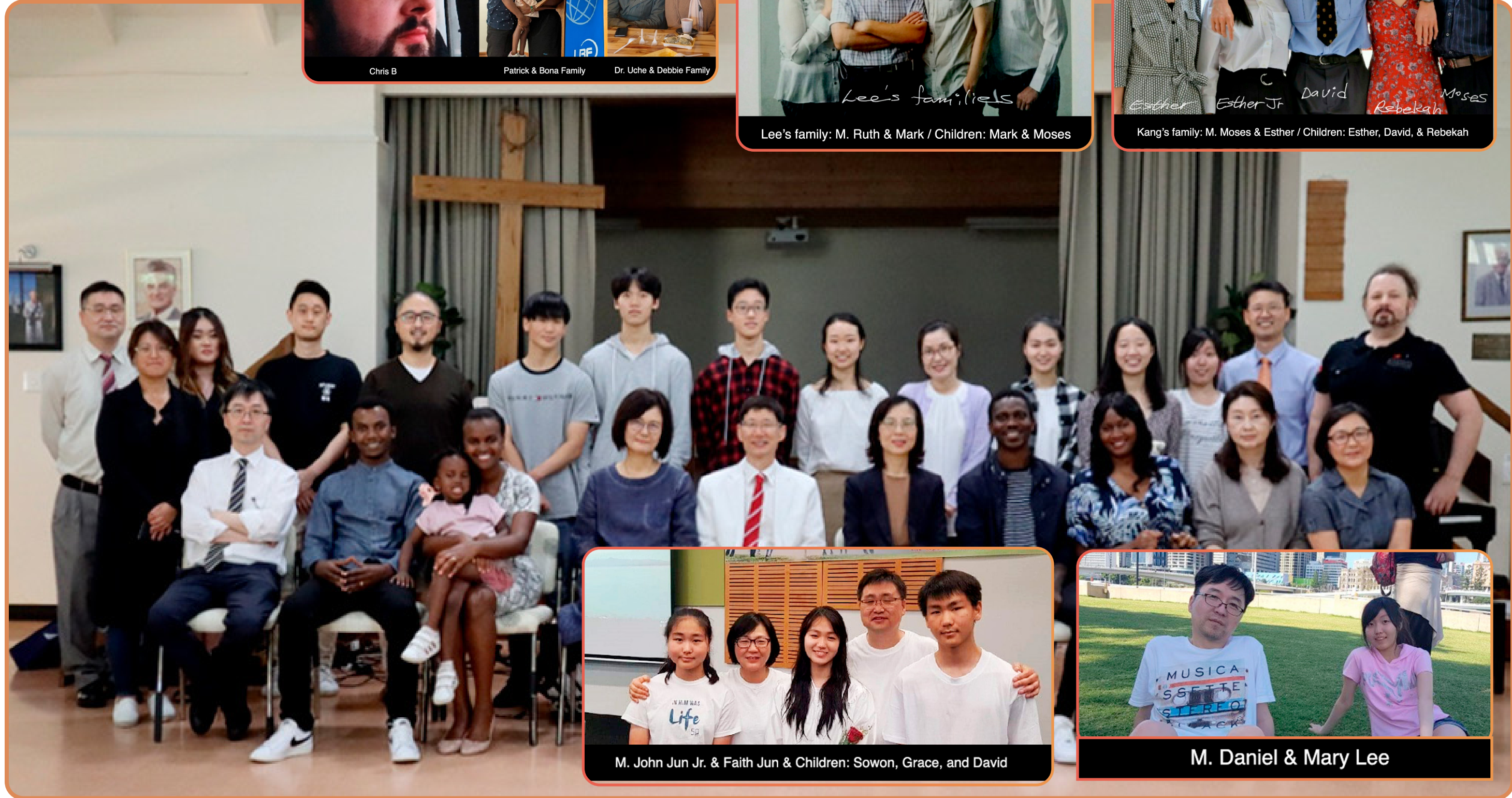
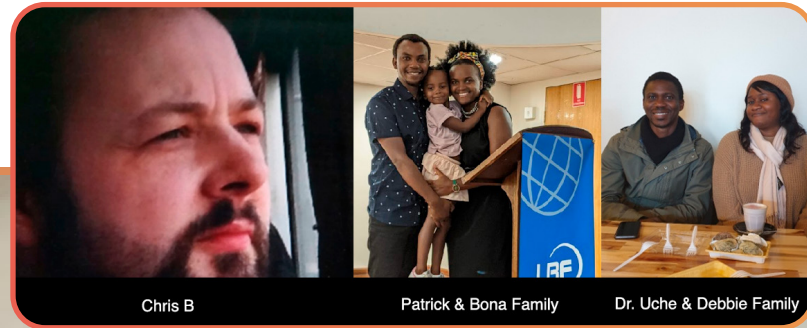
On Sunday, M. John Jun Jr. served the message, “Do you truly love me? Feed my lamb”. We learned that Jesus served Peter at the beach and restored his love relationship by his confession to Jesus. Then Re\*bekah Kang shared her graduation testimony testifying how God helped her to grow as a shepherd for Jesus’ flock. Another two members shared their yearly reflections after the message.

The lesson was clear through this conference that God wants us to serve him based on the grace of forgiveness and love, not as a burden. Please pray for Macquarie UBF ministry to serve campus mission and disciple making wholeheartedly.





# Macquarie UBF





# ASIA

## JESUS CHOSE THE TWELVE

December 30, 2021 - January 1, 2022





# REPORT

Paul Kwon (West Ulan Bator, Mongolia)  
Asia Coordinator

## Jesus Chose the Twelve

*Luke 6:9-19*

*Key verse 6:13, "13 When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles."*



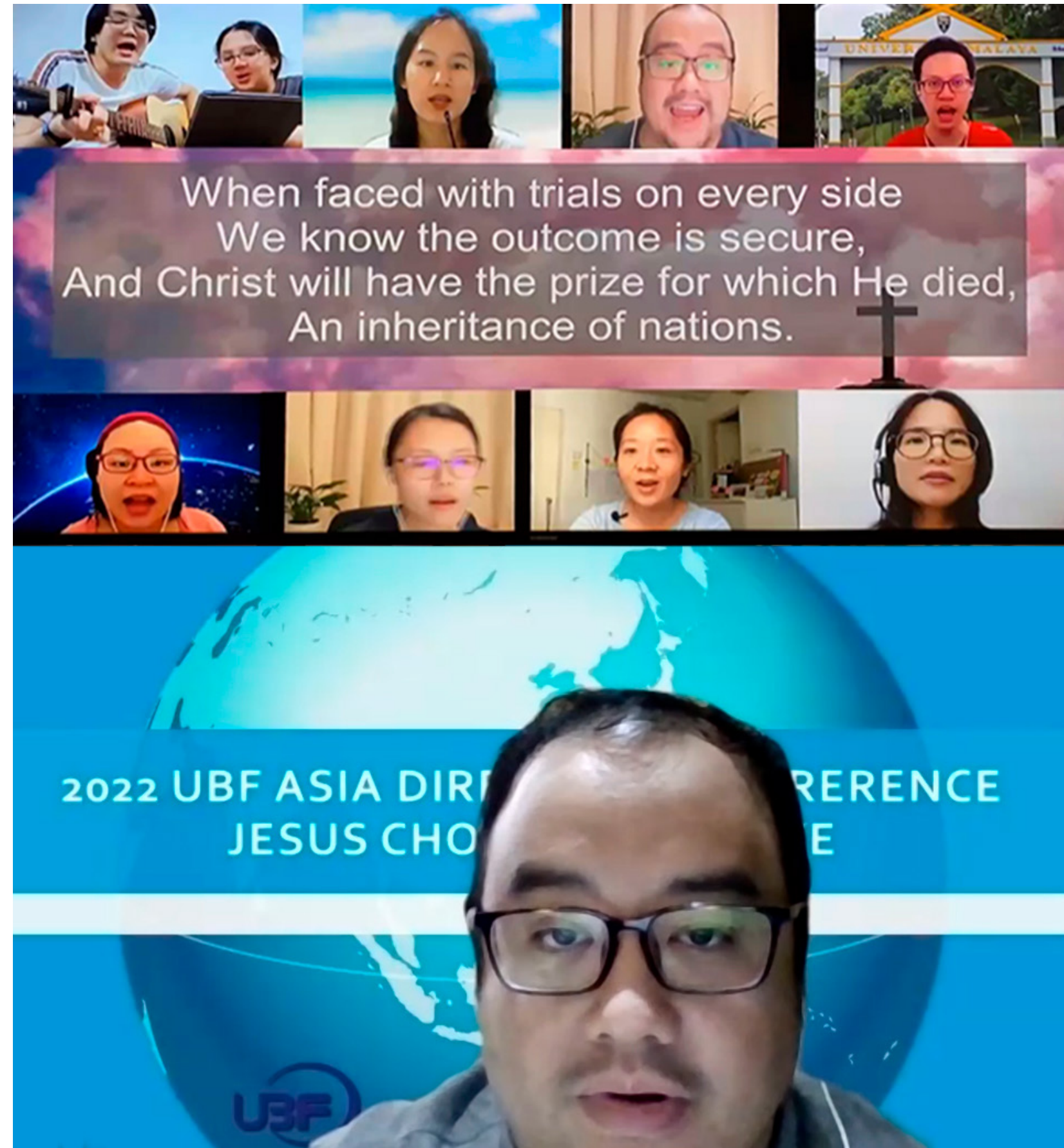
The Asia Directors' Conference was held online between 12/30/2021-1/1/2022. A total of 74 people attended (40-50 attendees were local leaders).

Paul Kwon delivered a message on Luke 10:30-37 with the title, "Take Care of This Man," and it was a reminder that it is Jesus' will for disciples to take

care of the wounded young people of this age. Pastor Moses Yoon delivered the New Year's message on Luke 6:6-19 and gave clear direction for prayer and discipleship in this dark and sinful generation. In his closing message, Mark Hui emphasized the importance of holding on to God's word and moving forward in faith (Matthew 14:22-33). Doyoung Choi (Korea) and Joshua Hong (USA) also gave special lectures. Mission reports from each country were filled with God's grace. Even in the midst of pandemic, God has been working mightily through His servants and His ministry.

### The Asia UBF's prayer topics are:

1. Prayer and discipleship in 2022 according to the New Year's key verse,
2. Pandemic may end so we can restore face-to-face meetings and campus evangelism,
3. To send missionaries to unexplored countries and tribes in Asia,
4. For the spiritual growth of 2nd generation missionaries and local shepherds,
5. For the recovery and health of sick co-workers in Asia.



Mission report by Ison Hong



# CLOSING MESSAGE

Mark Hui (Taiwan)

## Come, Walk on the Water

*Matthew 14:22-33*

*Key verse 14:28,29, "Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water." "Come," he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus."*



When I prepare this conference, I read many mission reports and pray for our missionaries. I come across one report which exactly matches with today's closing message. The missionary had many struggles in the mission field. Recently his house got flooding, full of water. Now he returned to Korea for Sabbath. Living in Korea was far comfortable than the mission field.

In my opinion, if he returns to his mission field, he will walk on the water, because there is flooding always at his mission field. Many challenges are waiting for him.

In today's passage, Jesus reveals to us that he is always greater than our challenges and problems. We can experience His power through challenges. May God open our spiritual eyes to see Jesus, the son of God.

### 1. It is I. Don't be afraid (22-27)

Before disciples getting into the boat, Jesus had fed more than 5000 people with five loaves and two fish. Jesus now became popular in Israel. Many people wanted Jesus to be their King to solve their food and political problem... Now Jesus had a chance to be a King without dying on the cross. Probably it is a big temptation for Jesus. But Jesus did not fall into temptation and satisfy the need of the crowd. Rather, he had a plan to train the disciples. He sent the disciples for a boat trip and dismissed the crowd to go home. Then Jesus went to the mountain alone for personal prayer. No more crowd, no more disciples. Jesus prayed and prayed till the night. Through prayer, Jesus got the comfort, encouragement and spiritual direction for the future ministry. Jesus also got the wisdom to train the disciples. Prayer is the sweetest time for Jesus, as Hymn says, "Sweet hour of prayer, Sweet hour of prayer."

While Jesus had the sweetest time with Abba Father, his twelve disciples had trouble on the boat. The boat can normally travel through the Galilee Lake in 2 hours. But the disciples rowed the boat probably from 9 pm to 3am (25). They struggled for more than 6 hours but they were still in the middle of the lake. How

come? Verse 24 explains that the wind was against the boat. The boat was tossed by the waves. Some disciples like me would probably vomit on the boat. Some complained, "where is Jesus?" "Jesus abandoned us in the storm." After a long struggle, the disciples felt exhausted and helpless in the storm.

Did Jesus abandon the disciples? No. Jesus knew their struggle and hardship. But Jesus waited a long time until he came. That is part of the disciple training. Do you realize that if you never meet a storm and you never know that you can handle a storm? You never really understand God's power until you are pushed to the limit and extremity. In fact, Jesus could stop the storm on the mountain top. He could also have made sure the storm never started, but he put the disciples to their limit through the storms, so that they would discover that God was there in their limit.

When the disciples felt most despair, Jesus appeared to them. Verse 25 says, Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. Normally a man cannot walk on the water, and this is the physical law. But Jesus is God. He created the law, and he can break the law. He can walk on the water. Now Jesus walked close to the boat and rescued the disciples. However, the disciples were in the darkness and they could not see Jesus. They saw an object moving close to their boat. They cried out in fear, "it is a ghost."

If I were Jesus, I will scare them. But what did Jesus say? Let's read verse 27 together. But Jesus immediately said to them, "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." Jesus' word is a great comfort to the disciples. His word removed all their fear, worry and complaint. Do you know what is the most repeated command in the bible? "Don't be afraid." It appears in bible more than 110 times. We easily think that we are alone in the trial. No one cares about us. But today, God commands us, "It is I. Do not be afraid." We are not alone. God is with us even in the most difficult time, like COVID-19. COVID is threatening all of us these two

years. Some coworkers have suffered from the loss of family members. Some are facing economic crisis. But, Jesus said today, 'Take courage. It is I. Don't be afraid.' God is still with us. God knows our hardship. God has already numbered every hair of our head. We are worth more than many sparrows (Mt10:30). Jesus understands our trials and saves us in His best time. When we hold on to His word, we can experience His presence and peace in the storm. May God's word and promise empowers us to take courage in the upcoming challenge.


### 2. Come. Walk on the water (28-33)

The disciple training did not finish yet. In this comfort moment, what did Peter say? Let's read verse 28. "Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water." Wah! Why Peter wanted to come to Jesus on water? For Fun? If Peter wanted to show off and walk on the water, he would directly ask Jesus, "tell me to walk on the water." With this motivation, Jesus would not let him come. But Peter got a correct motivation to walk on the water. What did Peter say? 'Tell me to come to you on the water.' Why did Peter want to come to Jesus on the water? Firstly, Peter loved Jesus, and always wanted to be with Jesus.

In Jesus' ministry, we always see Peter going with Jesus. Peter always followed Him. Even when Jesus was arrested, Peter still followed Him till the High Priest's courtyard. Peter loved Jesus. Peter always wanted to be with Jesus, because he knows there was security in Jesus. There was love and life in Jesus. There was strength and power in Jesus. Jesus is all in all. So Peter always wanted to be with Jesus.

Secondly, Peter wanted to know Jesus more, and experienced His power. Peter can stay in the boat and waited for Him, just as Matthew and other disciples did, watching Jesus walk on the water and then clapping their hands. (Great, Jesus!) But Peter had seen enough Jesus' power. Peter wanted to know his pow-





“It is I;  
“Don’t be afraid.”

er, not only in theory but also practically. He wanted to do what Jesus could do. He wanted to know Him more, just like Apostle Paul in Php3: 10,11, “I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.” Peter wanted Jesus. He wanted to experience His power. So Peter volunteered to take risk to come to Jesus.

Although Peter wanted to experience Jesus more, he did not directly jump into the water. He asked Jesus, Lord tell me, in NIV version. It means Lord command me (ESV). Peter acknowledged that Jesus as his Lord, and waited for the Lord to give him permission. How did Jesus respond for this risky request? Let’s look at verse 29, “Come,” he said. Jesus commanded Peter, ‘come’. Jesus was pleased with his request and let Peter come to Him. Holding on to Jesus’ word, Peter stepped out of the boat. By faith, Peter stepped into the great unknown. Peter walked on the water and came toward Jesus (29b). It is a big breakthrough in human history. Wah! An ordinary man can walk on the water!

What can we learn here? Should we go to seaside on a stormy day and walk on the water? This story does not teach us to test God for our selfish desire. However, based on God’s word, we can take risk for God. It is a radical disciple training. How could Peter step out of the boat and walk on water? It was his faith and obedience to Jesus’ word, which turned what is impossible to possible.

When we hold on to God’s word, we can step out of our familiar world and challenge new things for God. As human beings, we love to stay in the most comfortable place. No need to take risk. Trying new thing is stressful and scary. We fear something unfamiliar or unpredictable. We fear the unknown future. But the bible records thousands of people stepped out of their comfort zone and lived extraordinary life, like Abra-

ham. When God called him to go to the land where he did not know, he left his hometown and his father’s house. He held on to God’s word and became the Father of many nations.

In our UBF community, many lay missionaries hold on to God’s word and step out of the comfort zone. In daytime, we work to earn a living, while in evening we serve God’s mission. It is a very busy and stressful life. Sometimes I feel that I am one person working two to three jobs. Some of us face persecution from family, employee and even government, because of Jesus Christ. We all face many struggles, but we hold on to Matthew 6:33 and seek God’s Kingdom first. We experience His resurrection power, like walking on the water. However, this mission journey is still going on, and more challenges are coming. God may allow storms and trials in our life. More difficult situation in economic crisis, the threat of pandemic, or more troubles and persecutions in raising disciples. Where are we now? Are we the one to step out of the boat, hold on to His Word and experience the new and great power of Jesus? Jesus promised in John14:12a, “whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.” We can depend on God’s word and experience God more deeply. Amen.

Look at verse 30, “But when he (Peter) saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, “Lord, save me.” When Peter saw the wind blowing the water and his clothes, he was suddenly convinced of his human limitation. He began to doubt and began to sink. Peter failed because his eyes got off from Jesus and he focused on the wind.

When Peter cried out, “Lord, save me,” Jesus Immediately reached out his hand and caught him. Even though Peter is unfaithful, Jesus remains faithful yesterday, today and forever. Jesus saves us even when we fail. Jesus always sustains us and our mission, even when we are weak. However, Jesus rebuked



Peter, "You of little faith." Jesus helped Peter to learn and grow through his failure. The real enemy is not the wind, but doubt. In our mission life, we always struggle to focus on Jesus or the wind. When the wind scares us, how can we stay focused on Jesus? The most trustworthy thing in this world is Jesus' word. Even during storm, we must fix our eyes on Jesus through His Word. As we focus on Jesus through His word, our faith grows stronger and stronger.

Verse 32 explains when Jesus and Peter climbed into the boat, the wind died down. The disciples experienced Jesus' divine power, and their spiritual eyes were opened to know Jesus. The disciples worshipped Jesus as God, and confessed, "Truly you are the Son of God." Through this storm, the disciples knew more about Jesus and everything is at His hand. The disciples knew that Jesus is God. This is the goal of the discipleship.

3 years ago, we moved to this new center because of neighbor's complaint. We also refused the financial support from HK Centre. Leaving the comfort zone, we were challenged to walk on the water by only depending on God. God wants us to experience His great power. Then the storm comes this year. We face financial struggles in the family and ministry during the pandemic. Msn Gloria's part time teaching class has been stopped. Brothers and sisters also struggled financially. How can we support the ministry during the storm? God knew our needs when I hold on to his word in daily bread and pray every morning. God bless me and my research team to invent a new machine for monitor COVID-19 antibody. My research job reaches new height in the storm. God grants me extra bonus because of this work. Also, we do not tell others about our financial situation, God has moved the US, Hong Kong shepherds and a Taiwan sister working in China suddenly send offering and support our ministry. During the storm, I walk on the water with my dear Lord, Jesus. Actually, all this support and invention would pass away. The most precious thing

is I know my Lord Jesus more. He is the Son of God, who controls everything.

In conclusion, let's ask Jesus as Peter did today, 'Lord! If it's you, tell me to come to you on the water!' I pray that our missionaries and shepherds will experience God's power in our mission life by walking on the water. We may come close to Jesus and challenge great things for God in the New Year. As William Carey's motto, expect great things from God, attempt great things for God. May God help us hold on to his word to pioneer new campuses and new nations in 2022! Amen.

Watch Mark Hui's life testimony video at 2021 KOREA WORLD MISSION REPORT (English/Spanish)



[\\*Watch the video with Korean caption](#)



Women Coworkers Gatherings

**2022 ASIA DIRECTOR'S CONFERENCE**



# CIS

## LOOK AT THE FIELDS!

■ January 4-6, 2022





# REPORT

David Lee (Yekaterinburg, Russia)  
CIS Coordinator

## Look at the Fields!



We thank God for allowing us to have the CIS New Year's Leaders conference from January 4-6, 2022.

Even though the Covid-19 pandemic is still actively going on, all leaders attended this conference with a sincere spiritual desire. There were 90 attendees in total.

Point delivered a graceful 1st message based on John 4:2-38. These past 2 years due to Covid-19 people have made people become tired and narrow minded. But Jesus opened our hearts with His words to disciples: "I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest." He helped us to see with our spiritual eyes that it's the best time to harvest. We could hear these words and open our eyes to see fields that are waiting for harvesters. After the message, we gathered altogether with one heart to pray for CIS harvests.

After that, we had time to hear graceful mission reports from different districts. 12 chapters shared their mission reports. Last year, God heard our prayers and brought back many lost souls to Jesus and established them as His disciples. We give glory to God for that.

On the second day, we had group bible studies based on Luke chapter 6. Through the main message by M. Moses Yoon, we could learn from Jesus who didn't give up on the sinful generation but went to the top of the mountain to pray for the whole night. We learned that we shouldn't calculate, but just become spiritual leaders that pray for the whole night. Our battle is a spiritual battle with Satan.

Jesus called 12 disciples and raised them as spiritual leaders. The biggest problem of our generation is the lack of spiritual leaders. After calling, a true disciple need to become more like Jesus. We need to learn Jesus' love, power and prayer. Then we can become Jesus-like disciples. I pray God may raise 12 disciples

of Jesus in CIS. This generation has many worldly leaders, but no true shepherds. We believe that God will bring many spiritual disciples to grow and learn this year.

In the evening, we learned that we are Jesus' good soldiers through M. Paul Oh's message based on 2 Tim 2:1-13. Good soldiers are not just created instantly, but are tempered through spiritual training. We pray that we can obey our commander Jesus and become good soldiers, who can raise other good soldiers of Christ in this materialistic generation.

On the third day of our conference, we had bible study based on Matthew 6:19-34. Shp. Artyom from the Moscow chapter delivered a powerful message. It was a precious time when we accepted the word: "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." Even though we all have many different things to do this new year, we believe in Jesus' promising words that if we seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, all things will be given to us. We pray that we may live a life full of joy and victories this year through seeking His Kingdom and His righteousness first.

Next year leader's conference will be held from January 3-5, 2023. Even though the location is still to be decided, we pray that we can have it in Armenia. We also had a united prayer for the Covid-19 pandemic to be over.

After Artyom's message, we had a special message about the history of the first Christian church by John Park from the Kwangju-2 chapter. There was also a special message from shp. Daniel Zhivaev about the history of the first Christian church in Russia. Overall, it felt like a heavenly celebration because of these powerful living words of God. We are thankful for all the prayer servants around the world who pray for UBF world mission. Amen.



Paul Oh's Message (2 Tim 2:1-13)





# MESSAGE

James Point (Turkey)

## Look at the Fields!

John 4: 27-39

*Key Verse 4:35 35 Don't you have a saying, 'It's still four months until harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest."*



We live in a time of global deception. Even in Christendom, many people struggle to keep the faith. Some fell into a deplorable state because of temptations and sins, lust and shattered hopes. Many fell into financial difficulties, having lost their business or job during the pandemic. Many people die, and some become even more desperate, losing friends and relatives. All this creates the impression that there is no more hope, no mission, no development.

Today's word exposes this deception and tells us that we need to open our spiritual eyes and see the modern world through the eyes of Jesus. We all know how

Jesus helped a Samaritan woman who was thirsty and wounded. We know how Jesus helped her spiritually by humbly asking for a favor: "Give me a drink?" We know how the Samaritan woman asked Jesus to give her a fountain of water welling up to eternal life (15) and how Jesus helped her open her spiritual eyes to see Jesus as the Messiah (26). This is what this word says: many people, being in problems and being injured, need to open their spiritual eyes. The result of Jesus' love and service to the Samaritan woman was the whole Gospel flood of salvation throughout Samaria.

### 1. Disciples' attitude towards Jesus (27)

We know that since the Assyrians invaded Samaria and began to intermarry with them, the Samaritans lost the purity of the nation and became pagans. Jesus' disciples were surprised that Jesus was talking to the woman, but they did not say anything (27). We can guess that it was not particularly pleasant for them to be in those places. For example, Jesus' disciples once passed through Samaria, but the Samaritans did not welcome Jesus, who went to Jerusalem to suffer and be killed. Then John asked Jesus: "Lord! do you want us to tell fire to come down from heaven and consume them, as Elijah did?" (Luke 9:54). Jesus' disciples had strong feelings for the Samaritans, not with a plus sign, but with a minus sign.

This time, after a long journey, they came to Sychar. They had no food. The students could not overcome the feeling of hunger: it returned every 4 hours. With no choice, despite their strong feelings for the Samaritans, they went to Samaritan villages to buy some food. Their shopping in Samaria must have looked

like the disciples were a bunch of beggars. However, they did their best and received some food. Therefore, they happily returned to their Master Jesus. They were happy to share the food with Jesus.

But they saw that Jesus was talking to the Samaritan woman. Of course, they were very surprised, but no one asked: "What do you want?" or "Why are you talking to her?" (27) On the inside, they didn't like this territory and they didn't like these people and this woman, but they didn't argue with Jesus. The disciples knew that arguing with their Master was a sign of pride and rebellion. Obviously, there was a spiritual order between Jesus and his disciples. But apart from order, the disciples had a deep, trusting relationship with Jesus. They had a reverent attitude towards Jesus and His words. In terms of time, the disciples were still spiritually immature, they were just starting their path with God, but from the very beginning they had the right attitude towards the Teacher. So, you don't have to follow Jesus for a long time in order to love and respect Him with all your heart.

### 2. Evangelism of the Samaritan woman (28-30)

No sooner had the disciples of Jesus brought the food that they had bought in the Samaritan villages, than the woman left her jug of water and fled to her hometown, Sychar. The disciples were even more surprised. But Scripture says she went to her hometown to tell people about Jesus. She said, "Go see the Man Who told me everything I did: Isn't He the Christ?" (29) When Jesus gave her living water, flowing into eternal life, she truly became happy and free. She felt that the heavenly sun was spreading in her soul. Jesus truly quenched her thirst. Her joy from drinking living water so strongly influenced her inner change that people left the city and went to look at Jesus. Until recently, the woman was running away from them, fearing their ridicule. And now she called them with a big smile on her face.

She also left a jug of water behind. The water jug was a necessity for her, she couldn't just leave it. But it is said that she left it behind! So she was no longer thirsty. This indicates that she had drunk the living water welling up from Jesus to eternal life. And she began to preach. Sometimes a shepherd might think: how can I make my sheep willingly participate in the world mission, not from under a stick, but willingly, with desire. The answer is simple: the sheep must drink the living water of Jesus. But in order for the sheep to drink the living water of Jesus, the shepherd must drink even more of it.

Living water, flowing into eternal life, transformed this woman from the most despicable Samaritan woman into a woman of God. As you know, she was humiliated and ostracized. She could not communicate with neighbors. But now she was full of the spirit of courage to return to her townspeople. She became free. John 8:32 says, "Then you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." We want freedom. Living water, flowing into eternal life, washed away and forever carried away her lust, fatalism, selfishness, worship of men, bondage to sin, etc.

Moreover, she was free to confess her past sins. As we study history, we learn that all cowards and hypocrites have always put on a mask of holiness to hide their sins. But great people are those who confess their sins to God and live new lives. King David was a great man. He didn't need to confess his sin because he was king. He had an army and power. But he humbly confessed his sin before God (Ps. 51). Finally, from the seed of David, Jesus Christ was born in the city of David. The Samaritan woman knew her sins and also the sins of the people in her area, and how they worshiped idols. They despised her, but they were hiding their own sins. Yet now they went to Jesus due to the Samaritan woman, and invited Him to their city. Jesus spent two days there. The Samaritans listened to His word, repented and believed in Him no longer by the words of the woman, but by themselves seeing the



Son of God in Jesus. Verse 42 says that they learned that Jesus was truly the Savior of the world, the Christ.

### 3. “The food of Jesus is to complete the work of God” (31–34)

“Meanwhile the disciples asked Him, saying: Rabbi! eat ”(31). But Jesus told them (32): “I have food that you do not know.” The disciples were surprised, thinking: maybe the Samaritan woman brought him food? Or someone else brought (33). But their assumption was wrong.

Look at verse 34, “Jesus says to them, My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to do His work.” Jesus is here expressing His concept of mission. Food is the support of human life. Food is essential to live. When a person does not eat, he dies. Likewise, for Jesus it was the doing of the will of God. Feeding one sheep with the word of God was more important to Him than life itself. Such a deep sense of mission is completely incomprehensible to the people of this world. The average person spends the vast majority of their time in the hectic pursuit of food. Work and the pursuit of money have become the scourge of our time. But the tragedy is that even if a person solves the problem of food for himself and his family, he often loses the will and work of God. Many believers lost the work of God and began to do their own thing.

(34) “Jesus says to them: My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work.” Glory to Jesus, who did the will of Him who sent Him and the accomplishment of His work with His food! This is an eternal example for us how we can not get lost in the hustle and bustle. While the disciples walked through the Samaritan villages like a bunch of beggars buying food, Jesus saved one soul. While Samaritan men and women seek each other’s love, we must do God’s will and do His work. While Nicodemus is entangled in seeking knowledge, we need to seek the will of God and save one soul. While the tax collectors wander in

search of earnings, we need to accomplish the work of God, because we are disciples of Jesus.

### 4. “Lift up your eyes and look at the fields!” (35-39)

Verse 35 says that at that time there were still four months left before the harvest. But Jesus said in the last part of verse 35, “But I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, how they turned white and ripened for the harvest.” It was difficult for Jesus to acquire the Samaritan woman: it required tremendous humility, because she scratched and snapped. But Jesus showed humility and acquired her. Then she ran to the townspeople to tell them about Christ. Someone will say: just think, one sinner repented, nothing special ... However, for the Lord Jesus it was special: He saw a vision in this event. Jesus believed that through an individual Bible study with a Samaritan woman, He would be able to evangelize all the “Samaritan women” of the world. It was a very big vision, which is even scary for us to see, because if we see such a vision, we will have to work for it. But Jesus was not afraid to see the big vision. He rejoiced and said to his disciples: “Don’t you say that there are still four months and the harvest will come? But I say to you: lift up your eyes and look at the fields, how they turned white and ripened for the harvest” (35).

Now is a difficult time of trials and diseases. It is possible that it will soon be even harder. At a time like this, you don’t want to see a big vision, because it requires sacrifice. I just want to sit in my corner in the church and wait for the end of difficult times, which may never come. Instead, God’s word calls us to open our eyes and see that difficult times have always been a good opportunity for God to lead people to Christ. This opportunity for world mission and evangelism that the current situation is opening up to us may be the best and the last in world history. If at this time we sit in our homes or in our churches, we will miss this time and the reward will go to others. It will be a great shame



to realize that we have wasted such a harvest time for Christ.

Jesus invites disciples to the Great Harvest for God. Look at verse 36: “He that reaps receives a wage and gatherers fruit for eternal life, so that he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.” In ancient times, harvesting was a time of joy for all peoples. On the Feasts of the Lord, the harvest time fell between Pentecost and the Feast of Tabernacles. This is a symbol of a great harvest for Christ. In verse 36 Jesus says that the reapers of eternal life are very important and most precious. They receive a reward from God, just as a reaper receives his payment. Take a look at verse 37 “For in this case the saying is true: one sows and another reaps.” This verse talks about how God works to reap the harvest of lost souls. This cannot be done by one person. Pastor Oak said the number 4 condition for discipleship is that God’s work cannot be done alone. In the words “one sows and another reaps,” Jesus hinted that the conversion of the Samaritan

woman was a work of love for many people. The great harvest is the work of the true church of Christ.

Jesus also teaches us the concept of world history here. God spread the seeds of the harvest, beginning with Abraham, and then through many prophets, right up to John the Baptist. There have been many sowers in history, and now it is the time of the harvest. Spiritual harvest is the work of God. Throughout history, there have always been Samaritan men and women. But we must not lose heart. Instead, we should try to gather many Samaritan men and women. There is no need to be intimidated by the Samaritan women. We must see them as lost souls. We must see the fields ripe for the harvest.

Look at verse 39. “And many of the Samaritans from that city believed on Him at the word of the woman, who testified that He had told her everything that she had done.” It is amazing that although this Samaritan woman was once an object of contempt, now that she



spoke of Jesus, even the Samaritans believed in Jesus through her testimony. Jesus used one poor despicable woman for the history of the gospel. We are also weak and useless. We are also full of weaknesses. But the gift of eternal life that she received from Jesus gave weight to her words. The harvest occurs when we know that we are sinners, but by the grace of God, as we are, we drink the living water of Jesus. And God gives weight to our words, and we become reapers for the Kingdom of God.

In this passage, Jesus encourages his disciples to be diligent in their work because they are Jesus' co-workers and heirs of God's work. They should be workers like Him and take the work of God as their food. The harvest time is a time of vigorous activity, when all hands in the field are required to work. Even if everyone works for themselves, God's servants must work for God to save souls.

Let us remember that harvest time is not always freely available. This is a special opportunity in history, usually a very short, limited time that won't last long. Most people say that now is a difficult time due to the pandemic, and nothing needs to be done, and we just need to keep your health in order not to die. But this is not true. In fact, the opposite is true: this is the harvest time when we need to overcome our fears by faith and invite more sheep to be disciples of Jesus. In Jesus, the hardest time is the greatest opportunity. I pray that God would open my eyes to see that the coronavirus pandemic is a time of great harvest for us, a time of reaping harvest in every Bible Center in the CIS.

# MESSAGE

**Artyom Datsenko (Moscow, Russia)**

## Seek First the Kingdom of God

*Matthew 6:19-34*

*Key Verse 6:33, Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all this will be given to you."*



When people study Scripture, they face one difficulty: it seems that the word of God tells us one thing, but life in the real world requires another. And when we are faced with serious problems, we can become panic-stricken. But when we don't know what to do, the Lord has an answer, a solution. He wants us to see God, how He takes care of us, and so that among endless works we do not lose our main goal and have peace in our hearts. He wants to teach us with faith to seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness above all. May God teach us this faith so that we have the strength and joy to live and seek with God.

### 1. Treasure in Heaven (19-24)

Look at verse 19 "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on the earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal." Jesus spoke about a sensitive topic: the gathering of wealth. At that time, many people lived from hand to mouth in the slums all their lives. Every day they fought hard for life, just not to die. They were accustomed to saving even the smallest amount of money: the girls collected drachmas or myrrh as a dowry for a wedding; the men wanted to be successful fishermen or carpenters. They dreamed that one day they would be able to escape poverty and allow themselves to live without fear for at least one day.

The Lord knew their fears and sufferings, but He said, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth." The Lord tells us not to be gatherers of useless treasures. What are these treasures? In ancient times, silver and gold, good-quality clothing and horses were considered treasures. But all earthly treasures deteriorate over time: the fur coat in the closet is eaten by a moth, things get old, become dirty and rusty, and even the sturdiest of them break. Not only things, but knowledge and skills that are valuable today may be unnecessary tomorrow. With the collapse of the USSR, millions of specialists turned out to be unnecessary, now drivers and accountants are becoming unnecessary, we do not know who will be unclaimed tomorrow.

What do people value these days? For men, a computer or a car can be a treasure, but a car quickly loses in value, requires repair and can be broken so easily. A strong house that has been under construction for many years can be destroyed by floods and fire. Mothers call their children my treasure, but when the



treasure grows up, it can become a big problem. People accumulate gold as an invariable value, but then another trouble comes - thieves. They hunt for everything that is left unprotected. Recently a shepherd who was very much looking for work was deceived by crooks with cunning words; by the grace of God, a great disaster was avoided, but the family was left without money. There are many risks every day and for those who do business. We know well that what we have collected with hard work can be lost in an instant. And the more energy goes into collecting wealth, the more worries about how to preserve it all.

The treasures of this world are perishable and easy to lose. The world, things and people in it are prone to self-destruction. There is no treasure on earth that man can guarantee his future. The Lord points out the essence of the treasures of this world: they are all destroyed, lost, and even when they are unable to become reliable protection.

Maybe then we should not try, not plan and live care-free like a jumping dragonfly? Not! The Lord does not want us to become phlegmatic idlers, He wants us to understand that it is only a tool, and that is a true treasure that is worth collecting. Let's read verse 20: "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal ." The Lord tells us: collect! Collect your treasures in heaven! Think how old are you? How many more years will God give you on earth? The fact is that our strength and time are limited, we cannot afford to waste time and energy in the wrong direction. We need to collect what will never go bad in a place where no one can steal. The burial shroud has no pockets. We cannot carry gold or dollars with us into eternity. In heaven, it doesn't matter if we were respected, rich, educated. In heaven, it will only be important whether we have spiritual treasures that will remain in eternity. This is our most secure investment. What is the treasure in God's Kingdom? A treasure is something that will remain valuable forever, in eternity.

God is eternal, and therefore the treasure is the riches of faith, these are fruits, the Holy Spirit produces in our hearts: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, mercy, faith, meekness, self-control. We know and expect that after death, God will give us an eternal body, an abode in heaven, and many other unseen blessings of the Kingdom of Heaven. But our life with God will not begin later in heaven, it has already begun on earth. And the greatest treasure is to know Christ.

The Apostle Paul understood this well. Previously, he achieved a lot: when others vegetated in ignorance and poverty, he had the purity of the family, education, success. But when he met Christ, the old treasures suddenly lost their value and became like rubbish. He realized that the most valuable thing for him is to know Christ. He found the right goal and gave up everything for it. He confessed: "to know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and participation in His sufferings, conforming to His death, in order to achieve the resurrection of the dead" (Phil. 3:10-11). Abraham left his homeland, relatives and friends and followed God to an unknown country. But he became rich not when he acquired herds, but when he realized that God was his greatest reward (Gen. 15:1) Peter was a good fisherman and enjoyed authority in the area. His treasure was fish, family and the respect of his friends. But when He knew who Jesus was, He left everything and followed Him. Without Jesus, he had no one to go to. He could not leave Jesus, because he knew His value, could not stop loving Him, because he knew His unceasing love.

Our real home is not our apartment and not our country, our home is the Kingdom of God, and the abode that Jesus has prepared for His children. Our treasure is the garment of His righteousness, in which He clothed us, having washed us in His Blood and forgiving us all our sins. This is the precious Holy Spirit that He sent to all believers. We collect treasure when we acquire the Holy Spirit.

Once we have decided to build the eternal, then Jesus is the surest foundation of life and salvation. But although the foundation is the same, different people use different materials for construction: some gold and silver, and some wood and straw. Everyone will receive a reward according to their work. The fire of God's judgment will test everyone and burn everything that is unfit for eternity. When we, with the heart of a shepherd, help one person to know God and grow in him, despite the expenditure of energy and time, God accepts our work for eternity. When we educate people to be disciples of Jesus, it is work for eternity. When we do everything so that our family is not just a cozy nest, but a church where the Holy Spirit dwells and His truth is work for eternity. When we work for the churches to abide by prayer and the word of God, unity in Christ, and not human quarrels and ambitions, is work for eternity. This is work, because it is not easy to fight not only with your sins, but to find topics of prayer and help your neighbor come to God. You need to have a pastoral heart of Jesus that loves, does not give up, endures everything, does not get tired. We can live this way when we see Jesus who cares for us like the true Shepherd. May God help us not to tire of working for eternity, so that the invisible reward of God becomes visible on the day of the Lord.

The Lord tells us: "for where your treasure is, there your heart will also be" (21). Once mothers organized an event with children, and I was surprised to see a photo of the baby, on which this verse was signed. We have one heart, and it will unnoticeably cleave to what we in the depths of our hearts consider a treasure. It's like falling asleep on a mattress by the shore and suddenly waking up in the middle of the sea. May the Lord help us to keep our hearts, to know the value and love of Christ, in order to cleave to Him.

Look at verses 22-23a "The lamp for the body is an eye. So, if your eye is clean, then your whole body will be bright; if your eye is bad, then your whole body will be dark. "The Lord likened the eyes to lamps. Through

the eyes, a person receives up to 90% of the information. The eyes are like windows of the soul; and although windows are only a small part of the house, they greatly affect the atmosphere inside. It is very important with what eyes we look at everything that we see around us. When earthly treasures are important to us, then we look at everything with the eyes of profit, glory or pleasure, as through the eye of Sauron, but this is the way to find ourselves in darkness. But if we look at the world around us and the people next to us the way Jesus looks at them, we can learn to act like Him, to have the feelings of Christ, to know Him more deeply. When we believe that God loves and cares for us, we walk in His light and can not be afraid of the future.

God's Word says: "God is light and there is no darkness in him" (1 John 1: 5). "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (Psalm 119: 105) When we are in the light of the word of God, the word itself enlightens us, gives answers to questions and shows everything in its true light. Sometimes we can find darkness in ourselves there, which previously seemed light. The Lord knows this before we do. He gradually reveals Himself to us and more and more floods our life with His light, so that we change and become more and more His light for ourselves and others, so that our deeds glorify Heavenly Father.

Look at verse 24 "No one can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one and love the other; or he will be zealous for one, and neglect about the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. "We have one heart, so there is only one thing we can truly serve. In our time, people can be offended and say that they are not slaves and belong only to themselves. However, life shows how often people do not at all what they would like, because they have become slaves to sinful desires. There is a funny play by Goldoni "The Servant of Two Masters." She talks about the agile servant Truffaldino from Bergamo. He managed to simultaneously serve two masters, although he got



into all sorts of alterations. But in the spiritual world this is not possible. When a person does not serve God in order to serve himself, he will become a slave of Satan and an instrument in the hands of the devil. The life of many talented people is a sad confirmation of this. When a person decides to leave God, he will be led by unclean spirits. When we care about worldly things, we stop thinking about God. But the world is a cruel master. Like Kuprin's «moloch», he swallows people without pity, sucking out life without a trace. But the Lord is the Good Shepherd. Heavenly Father takes care of each day of His children and leads them on their own path to Himself. The most important commandment is to love God with all your heart and love your neighbors as yourself, as Jesus loved us. May the Lord give us a clear vision and a desire to serve only God alone, to have the right purpose and to lay up treasures in heaven.

## 2. Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness (25-34)

Let's read verse 25 "Therefore I say to you, do not be anxious for your soul, what you eat and what to drink, nor for your body, what to put on. Is not the soul great-

er than food, and the body more than clothing? "In the world, people have so many worries and concerns that they even get sick and turn gray prematurely. He doesn't want to be driven mad by worries and concerns about our daily needs. Jesus wants us to give up worry. Of course, daily bread, clothing, shelter and sleep are basic needs. But the Lord wants us to understand what is important and what is secondary. Jesus draws our attention to what we already have, what the Lord has given us. Soul, i.e. life is more important than food, our body, albeit flawed, is more important than clothing. Usually men think about food more often, while women think about clothes and beauty. But the Lord wants to help us see the wealth that has already been given to us.

The Lord asks us what is more important: soul / life or food, body or clothing? God gave us a life that opens up so many possibilities for us. Why do we worry and think only with the stomach? God gave us a body, it is more perfect than any mechanisms, through it we come into contact with the world and can change it. We don't have to worry about what to wear, because God will take care of that.

People often themselves do not know what they want, without thinking about what God has already given. In the 19th century, aluminum was more expensive than gold. Chernyshevsky dreamed of an ideal society where people sit in large halls and eat from aluminum dishes (Vera Pavlovna's 4th dream). In the 20th century, his dream came true in an unexpected way. We need to know what the true value is in order to see and appreciate what God has already given us.

The Lord tells us: look at the birds! Look at the lilies! They are alive because God cares for them. True, birds do not have storage facilities, they do not make plans for food security, but God makes sure that every bird that goes in search of food finds it. Lilies are beautiful flowers. Birds at least fly, and lilies just grow on good land. But God gives them rain and what is needed just for them to grow and flourish. God even cares about those we don't notice. And He asks us: if the grass of the field, which is today, and tomorrow will be thrown into the oven, God dresses like this, if only you, little faithful! (30) We are worried not because God has left us, but when we do not notice His concern and cannot trust Him with life. The Lord asks us to look at a small bird and a wildflower, so that our spiritual eyes are opened, and we learn to look at everything around with the eyes of faith. We need to see God who holds this world, to see Heavenly Father who holds the whole world in His hands and lovingly cares for us, even when we do not notice it.

If we don't need to care and worry about the future, then what should we do? Let's read verse 33 "Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all this will be added to you." What we need to look for is the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. What is God's Kingdom? This is the place where God reigns. We need to strive to ensure that God, and not desires or fears, govern our thoughts and actions. Our home is not on earth, but in heaven, our homeland is not in the country, but in heaven. Thy Kingdom come - this is our theme of prayer, when we try to have Him

reign in our lives and act from us in our neighbors. The truth of God is both His truth and His righteousness. Because of pride, a desire arises to have your own righteousness, to build your kingdom. But we can look at examples of the ancestors of the faith of Abraham, Peter, Paul and others. We can value God's righteousness and His righteousness above personal gain, male honor, or national dignity. This kind of life seems reckless, impractical, and even fanatical. But the truth is that God exists and rewards those who seek Him.

It depends on the daily routine that we are looking for first of all. When we put our lives in order, put God first, people next, and earthly needs then, then everything falls into place. Then God Himself satisfies our needs and sends what we need. Look how many times over the years the Lord helped us and sent us what we need. None of us starved to death. Everyone has a job and a roof over their heads, family and children. Each of us has 2 arms and 2 legs, and also a head, because God gave us all this. Scripture says: "Do not worry about anything, but always in prayer and petition with thanksgiving open your desires to God, and the peace of God, which is above all understanding, will keep your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4: 6- 7). Thanks be to God! We can have the boldness and grace to seek the Kingdom of God first, because God cares about us.

The Lord helped me look at my life again. The Lord gave me loving parents from childhood. He gave friends and teachers. When my soul was in turmoil, He, like the Shepherd, guided me and kept me from the troubles and defilements of this world. When I was an atheist and was looking for happiness on earth, He opened up and drew me to Him when I read the Gospel of Matthew in grade 10. He gave me the grace to enter the university of dreams and finish it. He drew me to church so that I could know Christ deeply, find answers to my questions and doubts. God gave me a family for joy, gave me a wise and active wife to bring up and 4 healthy children. For 20 years, he gave me a





good job, bread for every day and even an apartment in the suburbs.

I sought my righteousness even when I came to Christ. Through despair in my strength, God helped me to hope only for His forgiveness and justification. In 2006, I became very disillusioned with relationships in the church. Then I began to devote myself more to work, I decided to become a successful husband, make money, make my wife happy, expand my living space and give everything that children need. To achieve results at all costs, I worked day and night, squeezing everything out of myself. But I had no discernment in dealing with people and wisdom in work. Then I worked, while others were harvesting. As a result, in August 2018, I felt overwhelmed and devastated. When I was fired a year later, I was only glad: my suffering was over, but I did not know how I could provide for my family.

When I was devastated by the unknown, God began to take care of me. He began to send students in physics and mathematics, and by the end of 2020 there were more than 10 of them, so God gave us bread. I was surprised that someone might be interested in my lessons. God also sent me people, I started working for several companies. As a result, I began to earn more than in a regular job. I became needed by different people. I saw that it was not difficult for God to give me what I need, and I was moved by it. God helped me take responsibility and become the director and then the pastor of our church. I still need to learn to act like a pastor, to responsibly and quickly deal with all the issues, and not to slow down. Be a good shepherd for different members of the church, be able to resolve conflicts and earn authority. Due to the many things to do, it became difficult for me to keep up, and my health began to fail. Lord, forgive me, because of the hustle and bustle it is easy for me to wake up, rush into business, or seek rest in the news or entertainment content, and not in the word of God. May God preserve the correct goal in the morning and, above

all, seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness, knowing that then he will add everything else to me.

Look at verse 34, "So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will take care of its own: every day has enough of its own concern." The Lord does not say that we should leave all our worries and sit all day with folded hands. God knows we have needs and concerns every day. But the Lord says: there is enough for every day of his care. We can do what is in our power today, and give God the future, what only He can do.

Today we heard Jesus teach us to trust God, His love and His care. We need to maintain the correct order in order to seek first of all the Kingdom of God, and not our kingdom, to seek His righteousness, and not our own, to take care of the eternal, and not to plunge into current worries in the morning. When we have the right goal and are working to gather eternal treasures, God will take care of the rest of our needs. May God help us each day to seek His kingdom and overcome anxiety by faith. Then the Lord will change us step by step, cleanse our faith, make it more precious than gold, give us His eternal treasures: faith, wisdom, patience, heavenly joy and Himself. We will be able to bear fruit for eternal life and joyfully dwell in His kingdom.

“

**The truth of God is both His truth and His righteousness. Because of pride, a desire arises to have your own righteousness, to build your kingdom. But we can look at examples of the ancestors of the faith of Abraham, Peter, Paul and others. We can value God's righteousness and His righteousness above personal gain, male honor, or national dignity. This kind of life seems reckless, impractical, and even fanatical. But the truth is that God exists and rewards those who seek Him!**

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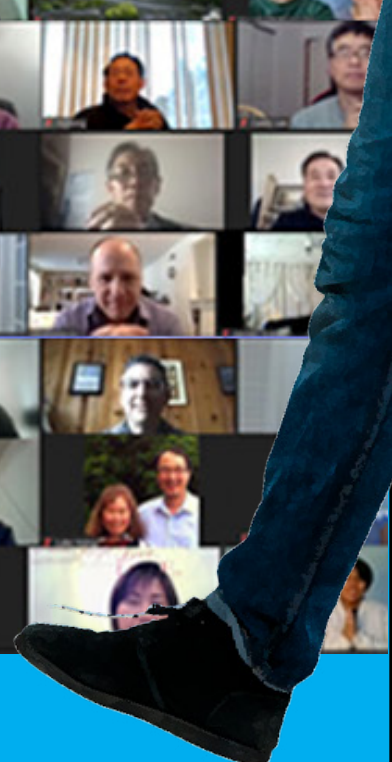
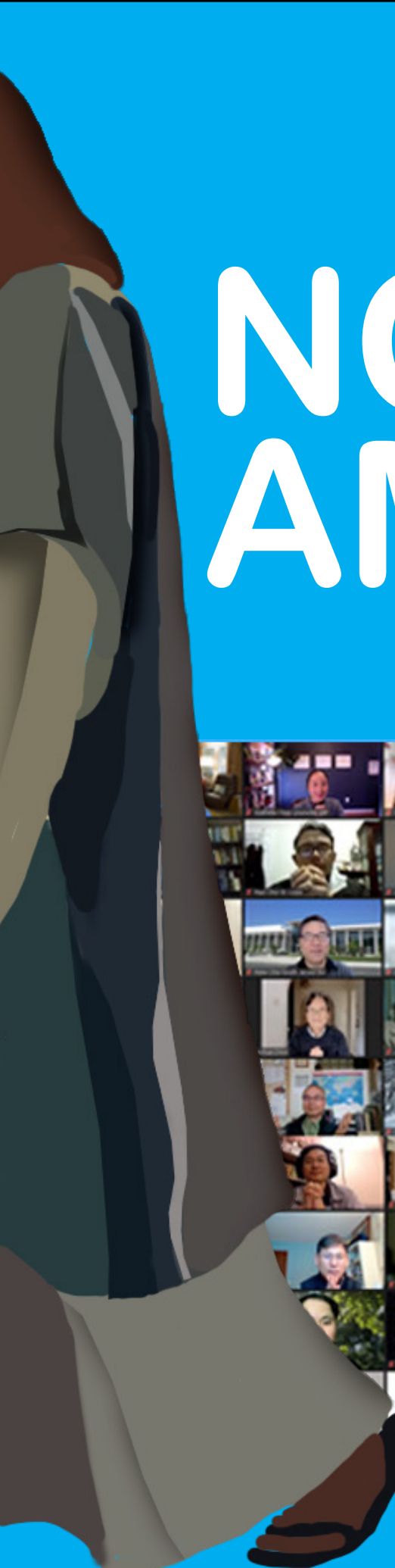
Lecture on the History of the First Christian Church by John Park (Kwangju-2 Chapter, Korea)



# NORTH AMERICA

JESUS CHOSE THE TWELVE

January 6-8, 2022





# REPORT

Yvonne Lee (Chicago, USA)

## Jesus Chose the Twelve

*Luke 6:12,13, "One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God. When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles..."*



The USA/Canada Leaders Conference was held virtually on January 6-8 with an attendance of 304 members registered from 87 chapters (67 from the US and 20 from Canada.) Messages were given by Pastor Moses Yoon, Pastor Teddy Hembekides, David

Chang (Edmonton) and Philip Wong (Montreal). In addition, there were 2 Bible studies covering Luke 6 and Luke 18, testimony sharing, and much prayer and fellowship in small groups.

On the opening night, North American Coordinator Pastor Teddy Hembekides delivered a keynote speech on the meaning of our conference to renew our grace and apostleship through Jesus and be equipped by Him to bring others into the faith for His Glory.

Next, UBF General Director Pastor Moses Yoon delivered his 2022 New Year's message on Luke 6:1-19, entitled, "Jesus Chose the Twelve." He encouraged us to learn from Jesus how to bring the dark situation to God deeply in prayer and have his vision to raise disciples. He said that we must fight the battle against the devil as Jesus did through praying with all our hearts and being empowered by the Spirit to raise disciples. Thus, we need to be a community of spiritual warriors fighting against the devil on the campus around the world and a disciple-raising community that prays.

On Friday morning, following a Bible study on Luke 6:1-19, David Chang, a second generation missionary and chapter director, gave a message entitled, "The Spirit of Prayer," based on Luke 18:1-14. He testified how his grandmother, a widow, prayed persistently and all her children became UBF missionaries and four generations are serving God. Those who pray persistently and rely on God's mercy are the chosen ones whom God can use. In the afternoon, there was a workshop on Discipleship in the Context of Community and 8 regional reports. In the evening, there were special reports by the World Mission, Education, IT, and Copyright Issues Departments, followed by testimony writing and sharing.

2022  
USA/CANADA  
NEW YEAR LEADERS'  
CONFERENCE

JESUS  
CHOSE  
THE

Twelve

	THURSDAY, 1/6	FRIDAY, 1/7	SATURDAY, 1/8
		9:00 am <b>*Praise &amp; Worship</b> <b>*Prayer</b>	9:00 am <b>*Prayer</b>
		9:15 am <b>*Group Bible Study I</b> (Luke 6:1-19)	<b>*Group Bible Study II</b> (Luke 18:1-14)
		11:15 am Coffee Break	10:30 am <b>*Praise &amp; Worship</b> <b>*Prayer</b>
		11:20 am <b>*Praise &amp; Worship</b> <b>*Prayer</b> <b>*Message</b> (Luke 18:1-14) By David Chang	<b>Passage Reading</b> <b>*Closing Message</b> (Acts 19:8-10) By Phillip Wong
		12:05 pm <b>*Announcement</b> By P. Teddy Hembekides	11:15 am <b>*Announcement</b> by P. Teddy Hembekides / P. Moses Yoon
		12:30 pm <b>*Prayer in Groups</b>	11:30 am <b>Prayer in Groups</b>
		LUNCH	
		2:00 pm <b>*Workshop on Discipleship</b>	
		3:40pm Coffee Break	
		3:50 pm <b>*Regional Reports</b> (8 Regions)	
		5:30 pm DINNER	
		7:00 pm <b>*Praise &amp; Worship</b> <b>*Prayer &amp; Special Music</b> <b>*Keynote Message</b> by P. Teddy Hembekides	7:00 pm <b>*Special Reports of *World Mission Department / Education / IT / Copy Right issue</b>
		7:30 pm <b>*New Year Message (Luke 6:1-19)</b> by P. Moses Yoon	7:30 pm <b>*Testimony Writing &amp; Sharing in Groups</b>
		8:15 pm <b>*Announcement</b> by P. Teddy Hembekides	
		8:20 pm 8:40 pm <b>*Prayer in Groups</b>	
		10:00 pm	

One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God. When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles (Luke 6:12, 13)





On Saturday morning, members studied Luke 18:1-14. Afterwards, Philip Wong gave the closing message on the passage, entitled, "A Faithful Minister of the Lord," based on Acts 19:8-10. Highlighting Paul's ministry in Ephesus, he encouraged us to live as bold, patient and faithful witnesses. In closing, Pastor Moses Yoon gave prayer topics and direction to shepherd one person with love and prayer, and then God will work. He also asked us to pray for the next general director to be chosen according to God's will. Lastly, Pastor Teddy urged us to grow as a loving community and to raise a new generation of shepherds and missionaries.

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**Shepherd one person with love and prayer, and then God will work!**

*by P. Moses Yoon (UBF General Director)*

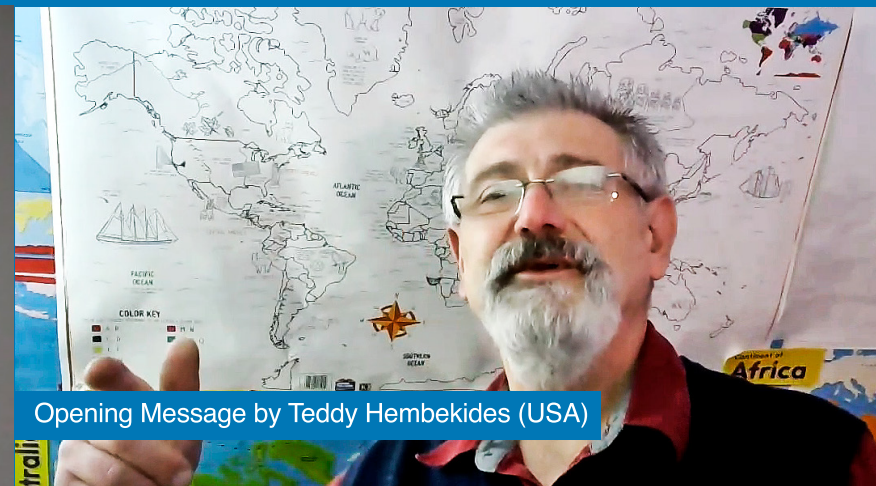
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Presider by Kevin Albright (USA)



Special Song by Gideon Bahn (USA)



Opening Message by Teddy Hembekides (USA)



Praise by LA UBF (USA)



Message-I by David Chang (Canada)



Message-II by Philip Wong (Canada)



# OPENING MESSAGE

**Teddy Hembekides (USA)**  
North America Coordinator

## For His Name's Sake

*Romans 1:5 “Through him and for his name’s sake, we received grace and apostleship to call people from among all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith.”*



Greetings to all of you precious coworkers who have made it to the 2022 North American Leaders' Conference. We thank God for all of you because you're here in spite of whatever difficulties and hardship and suffering you continued to endure during this long pandemic. The title of our conference reflects the direction the Lord has put it on our hearts to follow. The title of our conference is “Jesus chose the twelve”. Actually, it ought to be “Jesus prayed and choose the twelve” or

better yet, “Jesus prayed and God led him to choose those whom He would then raise to be the shepherds of the world.

It was the will of God that Jesus choose and raise Twelve Disciples from among the riffraff who followed him. And to be honest, that's exactly what we ought to be doing as well. I don't mean we ought to climb a mountain to pray then start looking for a dozen disciples to raise! But I do mean that we ought to be raising disciples just as the Lord did. And we ought to continue doing it through prayer and the ministry of God's word which the Lord entrusted to us and called us to carry on as well! Raising disciples is what every one of us was called to this ministry to do through prayer and the ministry of God's word and there's no running away from it! In fact, it's what every Christian born of the Spirit longs for and for good reasons too. It glorifies the Jesus by following his footsteps.

Throughout the endless concerns, warnings and frequent seclusions caused by the pandemic, many of us have had much time to contemplate a lot of things. Many in our small and large church communities suffered quietly in misery, while others slowly grew apart. Even strong bonds of faith seem to have been shattered by long term absences and a lack of fellowship. We've also had serious losses of dear life-long coworkers, friends and family members who were pillars of faith in our community. And the bitter taste of unforgettable and unfortunate events lingers on.

There came a time when I truly wondered if we could ever recover from what's happened to us! If we could ever go back to the life we obviously took for granted! If we could once again freely visit our mission fields to tell of the gospel of Christ to the students as we did

before to invite them to Bible study to spend our lives struggling with them and for them until they grow from sheep to shepherds! I also wondered if I myself could ever continue doing what I know God wants me to do to bring the good news of Christ to the youth of our generation and to do it with all of my heart! I wondered if I would slowly fizzle out in the background of God's great world salvation work!

Then I read an article by the Canadian Free Press with this stunning heading: “Will Christianity survive”? The author says, and I quote: “As militant atheism seems to creep across the face of Europe and much of our nation, the question ‘Will Christianity survive’? is one which many Americans must be asking”.... “The American college youth of today is largely unacquainted with the Bible. The Old and New Testament, to the mind of the average student, rank with the Bhagavad-Gita and Lao-tse among the venerable, but wholly unreadable works of Antiquity. Thousands of undergraduates have not even heard of the Sermon on the Mount.”

Honestly, both the title and many such quips in that offered alarmed me and they really angered me. The godless ask: “Will Christianity survive”? Of course Christianity will survive! It will survive not because the world is getting darker every day; it will survive not because there are still few Christians left standing to uphold the faith! It has survived worse times than these! And will continue to survive and prosper. Christianity will survive because the light it shines comes from God's Eternal Throne and can never be extinguished.

There came a time when I thought to myself “There's no way to recover my heart from the dark place this pandemic has taken me to perhaps it has taken many of us as well. Then this wretched article shook my world apart! If that's the way the world sees us Christians—as has-beens-on the way to extinction then something has gone terribly wrong with Christianity

and with Christians beginning with me with us! And something has gone terribly wrong!

We've lost sight of our calling and mission before God. Yes, we identify as followers of Christ. And we keep up pretty well with our religious routines. But a lot of us have resigned ourselves to a mediocre Christian existence surviving quietly among people hostile to the faith and to those who profess it. What else to do if not to resign?

We could open our eyes to see what Jesus saw. And we could open our hearts to do what Jesus did. Jesus saw the terrible darkness eroding society and the people of God. But Jesus also saw the Sovereign God still sitting on His Throne directing all things in heaven and on earth. And then Jesus saw hope! He saw the light of God's grace and truth vanquishing the darkness in the hearts of the people. And when Jesus prayed God blessed Him to overcome the hardship and the darkness. God blessed him to turn his heart to what's most important. And what's that? God's people needed shepherds like Jesus to shed the gospel light upon the people's hearts. So we could open our eyes to see what Jesus saw.

And we could also do something else. We could also share in the master's broken heart for our youth. They're starving to death not for lack of nourishment [Bibles] but for lack of shepherds—shepherds to share the Master's heart for what's imperative especially during difficult or impossible times. And what's imperative is the calling and mission we were all called to walk in the Master's footsteps.

Yes, I believe that like me, a lot of us have also lost sight of our own personal calling and mission and we need to reacquaint ourselves with them once more. And that's not the only thing we lost. Due to the unending hardship we've all had to endure, many have also lost our passion for the Lord's work. And in my own struggles to regain what was lost, God impressed



three things upon my heart that turned the darkness into light during these difficult times.

The first is this: It was something Steve Haga said in his report at the English Forum. When he lost his passion for the Lord's work and was pleading with God to get it back, a great revelation came to his heart [And I pray it comes to you as well]. What God required of him wasn't passion God required faith. "Yes, indeed" I thought! "The Lord isn't asking me for my passion; He's asking me for my faith."

The second thing God impressed upon my heart during most difficult times was Romans 1:5 our key verse [which we never got to till now]: "Through him and for his name's sake we received grace and apostleship to call people from among all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith." I remembered the first time my first Bible teacher taught me this. What we do, we do because of Him because of Jesus. What we have, we have because of Him because of Jesus. It was through Him that God poured out his blessing of grace and apostleship into our lives. And it was through Him that he also commissioned and equipped us to bring others into the faith. It was also for his name's sake that God did all this. It wasn't for my sake or your sake that God took us out of darkness into the light. It was for his son's name's sake and for his son's glory alone.

I never should have forgotten this! What God did, he did for his Son's name sake. And what I would do isn't for merit or for credit; nor is it for self satisfaction nor convenience. What I do- what we do— we do for his name's sake — not for ours. I know we're all very important people to God and dearly loved by Him. But God didn't prepare this calling and mission for my sake and yours. He did it for the Sake of His Son. It would be good for me to remember this. It lends me perspective, and keeps me humble and submissive to Christ.

The third thing that contributed to the light shining brightly in my heart was to study these passages we will all be reflecting on at this conference. I learned what Jesus did in difficult times. He teaches us not to give up but to pray persistently. And he teaches us that prayer opens a window into God's will. And his will never changes neither according to place nor time. His will for us remains the same. To uphold the name of Jesus and to follow in his footsteps of faith and mission. And for us it means to turn our hearts once again to being the Shepherds and Stewards of the North America continent's youth. God bless you.





# MESSAGE-1

David Chang (Edmonton, Canada)

## The Spirit of Prayer

*Luke 18:1-14*

*Key Verse: 18:1, "Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up."*



Happy New Year 2022! Although the pandemic seems to be stubbornly sticking around, our faithful God has brought us a new beginning without fail. Upon beginning 2022, what is your New year's resolution? Maybe to exercise more? To eat more healthy food? Perhaps spend less time on smartphones and read more books? What about any spiritual resolutions? How about 'more prayer' as a new year's resolution? In today's passage, Jesus teaches His disciples about

prayer, specifically about the 'Spirit' of prayer. Through His 2 parables, Jesus charges His disciples to always pray and not give up! At this time, may Jesus equip us with the right spirit of prayer to start the new year with new strength and humble repentance. Amen.

First, Spirit of Persistence in Prayer. (1-8)

Let's look at verse 1. "Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up." From P. Moses Yoon's message earlier, we learned how Jesus prayed and chose the twelve disciples. Now, the time was fast approaching for Jesus to go to Jerusalem to die on the cross. Though the twelve had been following Jesus for some time, they were still spiritually weak and unprepared. They had no idea what would happen to Jesus in Jerusalem. Jesus knew exactly what would happen to Him and to the twelve. There'd be tremendous difficulties, disappointments, failures and persecutions which the twelve would have to deal with. Knowing that, Jesus told the twelve a parable to prepare their hearts. Let's read verse 1 together again. "Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up." Jesus knew that at this critical time, the twelve had to pray and pray with the right spirit. Jesus Himself always prayed. Throughout the Bible, it is not hard to find the passage where Jesus is described to pray. On the other hand, we do not see much about the twelve praying in the Bible. They either fall asleep or quarrel with one another instead of praying. We might find ourselves easily getting distracted or falling asleep while praying too. Jesus says, we should always pray and not give up.

Let's look at verses 2-3. "He said: "In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared what people thought. And there was a widow in that

town who kept coming to him with the plea, 'Grant me justice against my adversary.'" In this parable, there are 2 main characters: a widow and a judge. We don't know exactly what a widow wants when she asks the judge for justice against her adversary. Anyway, her matter was unfair and devastating enough to make her keep coming to a judge with the plea. Here we have to note two things about these 2 people. First, a judge neither feared God nor cared what people thought. Second, this woman was a widow, meaning she had no husband and most likely had no social power or status to approach the judge. Humanly speaking, it was the worst set up and this widow had no chance. Most people in that kind of situation would not even bother to start, thinking it would be a waste of time and energy. However, this widow kept coming to this heartless judge with a clear request. I'm sure this widow was not stupid and already knew how the judge would react to her plea. But she persistently came to him with her plea. It could seem pointless to keep coming and there might have been some days when she felt really discouraged and felt like giving up. However, this woman was persistent and did not stop.

In this postmodern 21st century era, especially under the pandemic and the virtual world dominating, it could seem pointless or impossible to keep praying and coming to campus and inviting students to Jesus. Just like the godless judge and a helpless widow, it might seem like the worst set up and already a lost battle. Why waste time and energy on campus mission? During the summer of 2021, me and my wife Esther paired with some of our student leaders to go to the University of Alberta campus 2 by 2 every week to pray and invite students. We planted the seed of prayer and met some students here and there each week, but 9 out of 10 times, the answer was a big fat 'no' 'not interested!' Still, every week, we kept coming to campus throughout the whole summer and talked to students and prayed. At this point, you might wonder how it all turned out at the end of summer. Well, not even one showed up out of all those students we met

the whole summer! Students on campus were like that godless, heartless judge in a parable and we were like a helpless powerless widow. It felt like no one on campus seemed to care about God. To keep coming to campus felt like a waste of time, a lost battle. Why bother? It wouldn't work! Satan planted doubts and pessimistic thoughts. I felt burnt out and sometimes, it even felt like a waste of time to keep praying, keep preparing for Sunday messages and organizing Bible studies every week. Why bother? What's the point? I'm not even a real pastor nor a trained counselor. And the pandemic will never go away. Why bother? Why try? Why bother to keep going to a judge who will not even budge at my plea anyway? I should just stop talking to students and not do anything.

But, that's NOT how this widow was in Jesus' parable! That was NOT the spirit! Despite the judge's ignoring and repeated cold responses, she kept coming to him with her plea! She was determined to not give up!

This new year 2022, what are some of your prayer topics? Are there any prayer topics that you've been persistently praying for but have not gotten any answers to? How persistent is really persistent when it comes to prayer anyway? We do not know, but there are some examples of those who persistently prayed with the same prayer topic for years. Monica, St Augustine's mother persistently prayed for her son. St. Augustine who is a well-known theologian and a writer actually had a very wayward youth. He was sexually immoral to the point where he became a teenaged father of a child at the age of 17 outside of marriage. Then how could someone like him be converted and become such a devout and influential man of faith? His mother Monica persistently prayed for him in tears for 17 years. I just prayed for a few months last summer and thought I was persistent. 17 long years of persistent prayer of a mother moved God's heart. A bishop who heard about her persistent prayer commented that a child with this much prayer with tears will never perish. God hears the persistent prayer of parents for their



lost children.

Speaking of the parent's persistent prayer for children, I actually have an example from my own family. God answered the persistent prayer of my grandmother who was actually a widow and made all her 3 children and their 3 spouses UBF missionaries: my late uncle M. Daniel Park, my aunt M. Sarah Hwang in Mexico and my mother M. Grace Chang are all missionaries and I'm part of the next generation with my wife and my sister and her husband and some of my cousins and their spouses who are all UBF missionaries in North America too. Now we all have our own children, the 4th generation (total 10) who are growing as the future prophets and prophetesses of God as well. I usually take this for granted, but when I think about it, it is truly amazing that almost my entire family of 4 generations from my mom's side are all UBF missionaries in North America and in Mexico City. It certainly did not happen overnight and was not easy. Some almost didn't make it, including myself. I'm sure it took decades of persistent prayer from my grandmother who is now in heaven. I would certainly not be here serving campus mission and delivering this message, if it wasn't for her persistent and sincere prayer. Therefore, we cannot guess nor underestimate the impact of persistent prayer. We just simply can't imagine how much God will do through persistent prayer.

God definitely hears the persistent prayer of parents for their lost children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. And God hears the persistent prayer of shepherds for their lost sheep. There are so many spiritually lost children and students on campus in North America. May God help us to pray persistently for them without giving up because we know our God hears! Amen!

Now let's look at verses 4-5. "For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or care what people think, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets

justice, so that she won't eventually come and attack me!'" Initially, it might have seemed like a totally lost battle with no chance for this poor widow. However, as she kept coming and bothering him, the judge would deal with her request and even grant it! She did NOT stop! The Bible describes her as the 'persistent' widow. Persistent (by Oxford dictionary definition) means 'Continuing firmly in a course of action in spite of difficulty or opposition'. So, praying persistently means to continue to pray firmly despite the difficulty or opposition. There was difficulty and hostility from the judge, but this widow did not give up. With the upcoming death of Jesus on the cross and the threats of persecutions, the twelve disciples would have to deal with so many difficulties and rejections for sure. For us, with the pandemic and the ungodly and secular influences on campuses, there's challenge in serving campus mission. However, Jesus wanted to show the twelve and us that we should always pray and not give up despite the difficulties, rejections or oppositions, just like this persistent widow. Sometimes we might feel discouraged and question, 'why bother?' 'Why waste any more time and energy?' We might feel as if our prayers just hit the wall and fall to the ground. All summer, we tried and not even one new person showed up. We felt like our prayers just fell to the ground as if nothing happened. Well, here's a twist. Summer ended and September came. God graciously reopened the campus and the Clubs Fair and the classes were in-person again after a year and a half. I was still a bit skeptical based on my experience during the summer. But God proved me so wrong! Our prayer during the summer was NOT in vain. God was paying attention to our persistent prayer and showed us that there are so many students on campus who truly need and seek Jesus, about 80 signed up at the Club's fair. And each week, God sent new students constantly! These students were really looking for Bible studies and worship on campus and thirsty for the opportunity to have fellowship with Kingdom friends on campus! I was totally blown away by God's answer to our prayers. The best part is that our God is NOT like that godless cold-

hearted judge. God generously answered our prayers way beyond our expectations and imaginations. That is how our God is. Praise God!

Now let's look at verses 6-8. "And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?" Our God is generous, not reluctant, to hear our persistent cry. Sometimes when we do not hear any answer to our prayer, we could start doubting and panicking. Our enemy Satan is persistent too and keeps trying to lure us away from prayer life and make us give up, because even he knows that our persistent prayer makes God's heart move. And when God's heart moves and works on His children's lives, our enemy Satan would start losing his power over us. So he does whatever it takes to make us stop praying. We might be constantly distracted during our prayer by our phone, instagram, kakao talk etc. But more fundamentally, what weakens our prayer and makes us give up is our own unbelief! In verse 7, Jesus asks His disciples, "Will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night?" Based on this, God will answer the prayer from His chosen ones. In this parable, a judge seems to be in a much higher and favourable position than the widow. However, the chosen ones in Jesus' point of view are NOT the powerful big shots of the world like the judge. Rather, the chosen ones are the ones who persistently cry out to Jesus day and night like the widow who cried out by faith! In verse 8b, Jesus asks "...when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?" Jesus wants to find faith in our hearts. What ultimately motivated the widow to keep coming to the judge was faith. We must keep our faith in any situation, even when our prayer does not seem to get answered initially. Our prayer life is a spiritual battle. We must be equipped with the full armour of God! In Ephesians 6, on top of all the list of spiritual armours,

Apostle Paul lists one more in verses 18-19: "And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel," We must guard our hearts to keep our faith and keep on praying! Our unbelief, our own sin, past failures constantly interfere with our prayer and tempt us to give up. Life on this earth is a constant struggle and full of uncertainties especially with the pandemic. Life in 2022 might not always be rosy and smooth. I just heard the announcement from U of A that the January Clubs Fair for the new semester has been cancelled and the classes will go back online for 3 weeks due to growing cases. I was devastated. But, let us not lose faith and not give up! May God help us persistently pray with the spirit of perseverance and faith like the widow in this parable from Jesus, because we know our loving and generous God hears our prayer! Amen!

Second, Spirit of Humility & Repentance in Prayer. (9-14) Look at verse 9, "To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable:" This second parable was targeting a group of people who were self-righteous, most likely the Pharisees. Earlier, through P. Moses Yoon's message on Luke 6, we saw how Jesus was deeply disappointed by the Pharisees, however Jesus still wanted to teach them and help them through this parable.

Look at verse 10. "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector." Again in this parable, there are 2 main people: one a Pharisee and a tax collector. A Pharisee is the stereotypical self-righteous stuck-up snob, while a tax collector is a typical public sinner. They both came to the temple to pray, but with very contrasting motives and attitudes. Look at verse 11-12. "The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: 'God, I thank you that I am not like



other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.” His prayer was not really a prayer to God or about God, but about himself and comparing himself with others to show how superior he is. He does say, Thank you to God, but his thankfulness does not come from God but from his own achievements and from the fact that he is better than others. I doubt that anybody here prays like this. I certainly hope not. My dear brother in Christ, Spencer Luebben from Minneapolis is such a holy and awesome man of God that he might pray like this, “God, I thank you that I am not like this David Chang fellow from Canada, so incompetent and sinful...” Nah, I don’t think he prays like that. I certainly hope not! But while we might not necessarily pray like a Pharisee, it’s still definitely worth examining our prayer pattern and motive of prayer. Prayer should not be like a report on my own deeds and achievements or lists of to dos. While it is great to give thanks to God for the list of amazing things He did for us and He helped us do for Him, we must be careful that we do not list them and feel entitled for His compliments or blessings. In verse 9, Jesus describes those people as being confident of their own righteousness and looking down on everyone else. This Pharisee thought he was more righteous than robbers, evildoers, adulterers or this tax collector. He believed all the fasting and tithing made him righteous and better than others and gave him bragging rights. Again, we must examine our hearts and motives. I feel guilty that I sometimes become prideful. My wife M. Esther and I sometimes get into arguments because she feels that I act in self-righteous ways and judge her even for very minor errors or tiny mistakes. But the truth is I am certainly not righteous, very very far from it. No matter how many times a Pharisee fasts or how much tithes he offers at the temple, no matter how many Bible students or Sunday Worship service attendees we report, no matter how many messages we deliver at the conference or testimonies we write, based on God’s standard, we are all unrighteous. Romans 3:10-12 point out this fact. “There is no one righteous, not

even one; there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one.” This is the truth. We are all sinners before God. We are only ‘made’ righteous by God’s grace alone, not based on what we do nor how we are better than someone else. It’s pointless to compare ourselves with others as we are all the same in God’s eyes, all sinners who are equally in need of Jesus’ forgiveness and salvation.

Now look at verse 13. “But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’ Unlike a Pharisee, the tax collector looked at himself, his own sins. Thinking of all his sins, he felt too ashamed to look up. Unlike a Pharisee, he focused on his own guilt. Then, he beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’ His prayer was not based on his own merit. His prayer was full of humility and sincere repentance. He acknowledged himself as a sinner before God who is in need of God’s mercy. Earlier, we noted that there is no one righteous, not even one. That means everyone without an exception is in dire need of God’s mercy. Like this tax collector, we all do not deserve God’s forgiveness. Only thing we deserve from God is actually punishment and judgment. Therefore, we need God’s mercy which is freely given to sinners only out of God’s compassion. Some say that this whole pandemic and various natural disasters are God’s judgment against this corrupted and sinful world. We are indeed going through an unprecedented time. This past summer, some parts of Western Canada, including where I am, had very unusual heat waves and the temperature hit a record high. Where I am, we usually worry about being too cold, never about being too hot. Our God is the Almighty Creator God. If He wants, He can even make Canada scorching hot. He can let the pandemic cover the entire universe. Knowing that, we can’t help but kneel down before Him in awe and repentance, begging for His mercy. This time of pandemic and

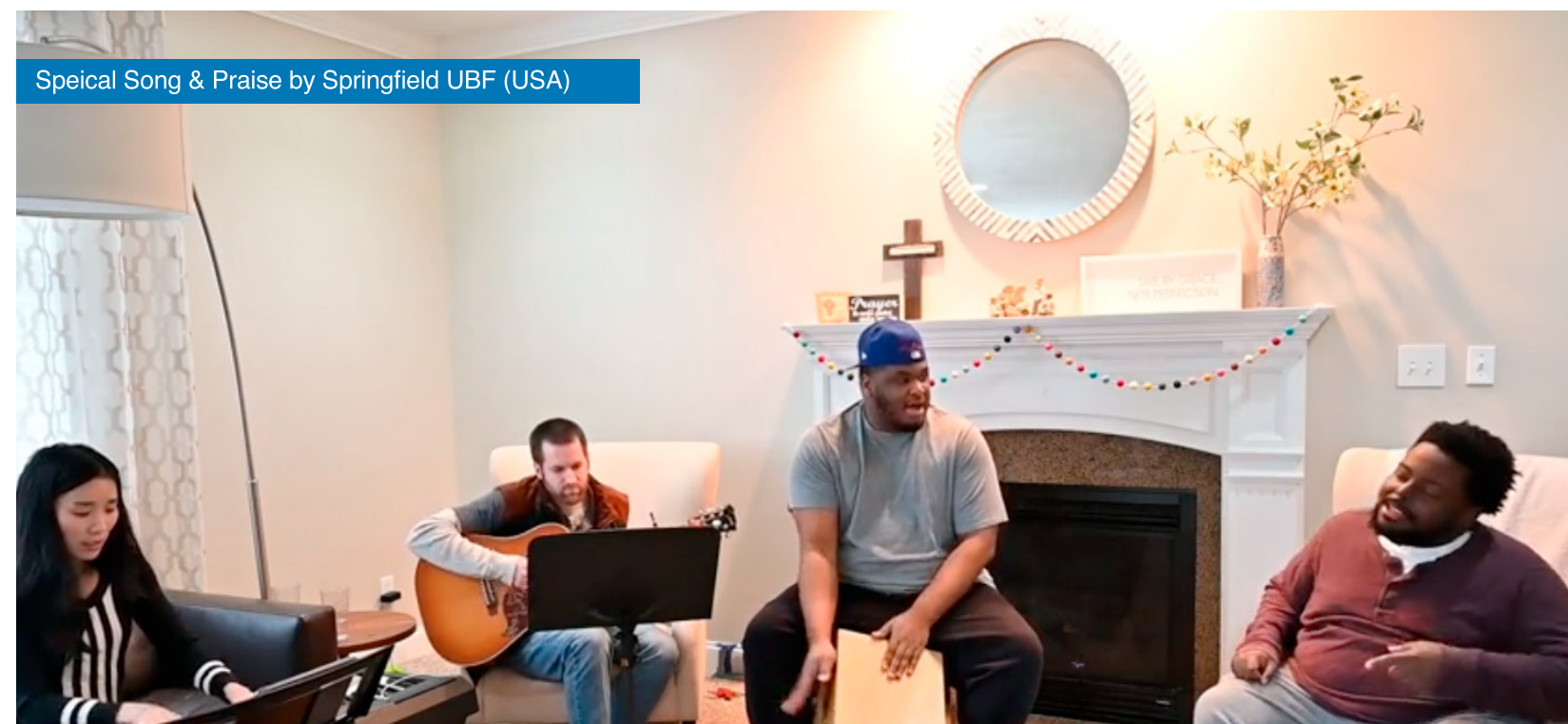
this whole situation of working from home and virtual classes etc might be good opportunities for us to pray more in self reflection and repentance. We must pray humbly for God’s mercy in this unprecedented time.

Now look at verse 14. “I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.” Outwardly, the Pharisee might seem much more holy and worthy than a tax collector, however in Jesus’ sight, the tax collector went home justified before God. Both of them were unrighteous and undeserving sinners before God who were in need of God’s mercy. The difference is that the Pharisee did not acknowledge the need of God’s mercy because of his own self-righteousness and the sense of entitlement, while the tax collector fully acknowledged himself as a sinner in need of God’s mercy.

Our gracious God granted us to have this precious North American Leaders’ conference. By God’s mercy alone, we are all here, called to serve as the leaders of North American UBF chapters. Personally, I think it is absolutely bizarre and even ridiculous that someone like me is here attending this conference, even delivering a message like this. I mean, how? Why? This is absolutely by God’s reckless love and mercy!

While meditating on this Luke 18 passage and preparing for this message, I felt like a tax collector. I couldn’t help but beat my chest and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, an undeserving and impossible sinner. How can I dare to prepare and deliver this message?’ I was very overwhelmed and even thought to ask P. Teddy that I’m really not worthy to do this, please let someone who is more worthy and capable do it. But, I’m here only by God’s mercy alone which justified me through Jesus.

In this new year 2022, Jesus chose us as He chose the twelve. And He tells these 2 parables to us. He is encouraging us to always pray and not give up! Also, He reminds us of who we really are: sinners in need of God’s mercy. He expects us to continue to come before Him in humility and repentance. As the leaders of NA UBF ministries, there could be times when we might feel discouraged, disappointed, exhausted and burnt out and feel like giving up. Our Jesus teaches us that we should always pray persistently and not give up! And He hears and answers in His way and His time! May God’s mercy and love motivate us this year and equip us with the spirit of persistence and humility to keep praying and repenting and serving the North American campus mission without giving up! Amen!





## NOARTH AMERICA REGIONAL REPORTS

### Canadian



### Mid-Atlantic



### Northeast



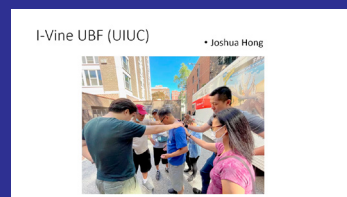
### Great Lakes



### Missouri Valley



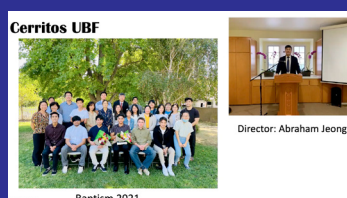
### Midwest



### South-Central



### West Coast



# MESSAGE-2

Philip Wong (Montreal, Canada)

## Faithful Minister of the Lord

*Acts 19:8-10*

*Key Verse 9b-10a, "He took the disciples with him and had discussions daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. This went on for two years."*



Happy New Year! My name is Philip Wong. I became a disciple of Jesus in 1995 when I accepted Christ as my Lord and Savior and have been serving the Lord in UBF ever since.

At this leaders' conference, we have servants of God who have been serving the Lord 5, 10, 20, 50 years and more. However many years we have served, as we look at Apostle Paul and his ministry in Ephesus

through our passage in Acts, we want to think about who is a faithful disciple of Jesus and minister of the Lord. Counting the amount of time is a quantitative measure of a faithful disciple, but there are also qualitative aspects, of a disciple of Jesus who is faithful to the end.

Paul planted the church in Ephesus during his second missionary journey (Acts 18:19). He was now on his third mission journey and had arrived to Ephesus. Upon arriving in Ephesus he met some disciples and baptised them (1-7). The next thing we see is Apostle Paul went to the synagogue where he met with people who were ready to argue his teachings about the kingdom of God. Verse 8 says he was arguing or disputing persuasively, reasoning and convincing them about the truth of the kingdom of God. Paul would come back to the synagogue over a period of three months. Again and again Paul would reason and explain and breakdown the truths about the kingdom of God.

Verse 9 says he did this because some of them became obstinate. Being obstinate means these men were stubborn in their unbelief and maligned the Way (name for Christianity), that is the gospel message and the way of Christ and how Jesus disciples must live. When you malign something, you are speaking evil of something. In this case, some Jews there were speaking evil against the gospel message and speaking evil against God. This is Satan's work: to distort the message of the kingdom of God.

For three months, Paul challenged the unbelief of the Jews. But after he said everything he had to say, he moved on. Of course, Paul would have loved to have won them over, but we are not going to win everybody over. Even our Lord Jesus did not win every single



person he met.

What did Paul do next? He went to the Greeks. He went to the campus of the “University of Ephesus”, to the hall of Tyrannus. This was a lecture hall most likely a place of education. But what is really unusual is how Paul went there every day, and it was not just to pop in and out of the hall, some writing sources says he spent some 5 hours each day, from 11am to 4pm teaching in the hall of Tyrannus. And on top of that he did this for two years. That is about 3650 hours of Bible study. If you have Bible study once a week for 1 hour, you need to come every week for more the 70 years! This is the longest amount of time Paul would spend in one place during all three of his mission trips.

Every day he would meet with pagan unbelievers to teach the gospel. Verse 10 tells us that after two years, all the Jews and Greeks living in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord. According to historical accounts, this means about 2 million people. The hall of Tyrannus was one of Paul’s last, biggest, boldest, and most successful ministry work. It’s the essence of what Jesus told his disciples to do (Mt 28:18).

What does this teach us about Paul and his ministry while he was in Ephesus. One thing is clear: Paul was a faithful minister of the gospel to challenge unbelievers and teach the message of the kingdom of God to everyone until a whole nation would hear the word of the Lord. In Paul we find three traits of a faithful servant of God.

First, a faithful servant stands boldly on the message of the kingdom of God. A bold message is one that teaches the word of God such that it will anger, offend, or disconcert some hearers because the Word of God will reveal our sins. That means, God’s servant must be courageous and strong in faith. Especially to do so in a hostile and unbelieving environment. Paul was faithful to preach with boldness of what he was absolutely convinced of. Ten years later, Paul would end up

in prison in Rome, at which time he wrote the epistle to the Ephesian church and asking the believers to pray for him to still boldly declare the gospel, as he ought to speak it (Eph 6:18-20). Circumstances will never keep a servant of God from faithfully and boldly preach the gospel message. We can boldly preach the gospel because of the how God has convinced us of the gospel truth. We are convinced of the power of the blood of Jesus that forgives us os all our sin. We are convinced of the resurrection of our Lord who conquered the power of death. We are convinced of the gospel that transformed each of us. In the end, it is by the help of God through the Holy Spirit that he enables his faithful servants to boldly preach the message of the kingdom of God.

Second, a faithful servant is patient. We see Paul teaching in two places, first in the synagogue and then in the hall of Tyrannus. We sense Paul’s patience when he taught and explained the truths of the kingdom of God because of the time he spent there. He spent three months in the synagogue and two years in the hall of Tyrannus. Relatively speaking for Paul, this is a long time when we see how Paul stayed in a place no more than one year during his missionary journeys. To be there such a long time and to spend that much time to explain and teach and help people grow in the knowledge of the word God, this requires great patience. This is the patience of a shepherd, lovingly and prayerfully shepherding God’s flock for the long haul.

These days, it seems like it takes so long to raise a disciple of Jesus. Sometimes we compare our personal experience and wonder “why are students today not growing as fast I did when I was growing as disciple?” The desire for growth and maturity in our church is a good and godly desire. Paul labored to the point of exhaustion to present every person mature in Christ. This zeal for the sanctification of others is one of the responsibilities of discipleship ministry. The problem arises when our expectations and desires are not sur-

rendered to the Lord’s. When people do not respond as quickly as we think they should. When ministries take longer to develop and mature than we had hoped. When leadership does not develop according to the perfect plan we had in our mind. Before we know it, impatience begins to grow in our hearts. Instead of love and joy in shepherding, frustration sets in because things are not happening as quickly as we desire. God’s timing and ways are often very different than our personal ambition, even if the intentions are good. At the root of such impatience in ministry is that ugly five-letter word: pride. It’s as if we are saying, “God, you are not doing what I think you should do—will you hurry up and get with it?” At this point the heart is exposed and God’s glory has taken a backseat to personal agenda. But a faithful servant of God will be humble to patiently shepherd the sheep. And we can be patient because of how the Lord himself is patient. We are patient because the Lord has been so patient with us. We are patient because God commands us to be patient. Therefore, can be the patient ministers of the Lord.

Third, a faithful servant perseveres. We are all bound to become discouraged when faced with life’s trials. Paul was in the synagogue for three months, spending a lot of energy unsuccessfully trying to convince unbelievers. This must have been very discouraging. But Paul did not give up. He found a new audience and a new approach to his ministry by going to the hall of Tyrannus. This is not something typical of Paul – to teach in a lecture hall. But he got this inspiration and God abundantly blessed it. Everyday for two years, he could be found in the lecture hall. At the same, Paul, as a lay servant, would also have to support himself and continue his tentmaking job. Paul was committed and persevered to do this every day.

In the end, how can Paul or anyone be a faithful servant and ministry of the Lord?

2Timothy 3:16-17 says, “All Scripture is God-breathed

and useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness so the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” When God prepares someone for servanthship and ministry, he trains them through the Word of God. He gives that person an deep desire for the Word of God, and enables him to study it faithfully.

I have been told that I am a faithful servant of God. This is only because of the God’s word working in my life. I first started Bible study in 1994. And over the course of 27 years, God has been molding me into his faithful servant beginning with his word. Many times, I became proud and tried to be faithful by doing things out of my own human effort. But my human effort is so limited. There have been situations which have been vey discouraged and days where I have complained felt like giving up whenever I rely on myself. Since the pandemic began, it has not been possible to go back to regular in-person worship as before, and serving online ministry has been challenging. When I relied on my own efforts, I complained and felt like giving up. This did not glorify the Lord. The Lord reveals this to me through his Word and reminds me that my faithfulness begins with God’s word of promise to me and my decision to obey God’s call for me to serve my Lord. From his word God’s word says to me, “Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him” (James 1:12). From the word of God, God calls us and works in us to be a faithful servant of the Lord. We obtain faith, and our faithfulness, by the grace of God. He is faithful to us, and as we humbly submit and live as a faithful servant to the very end, the Lord will gladly say to us, “Well done, good and faithful servant!” (Matthew 25:23).

Like apostle Paul, there are many examples of faithful servants of God in the Bible, none greater than Christ himself, who faithfully served and gave his life for sinners. And we also have many examples of faithful ser-



vants of God in our lives today. God has chosen each of us to live as his faithful disciples when the Word of God works in us. Faithfulness is not a gift that only some people can have, but it is a fruit of the Spirit through the work of the Holy Spirit in each of our lives. With boldness, patience and perseverance in living as disciples and living as ministers and shepherds of God's flock committed daily Bible study and raising disciples, God will make us a blessing to expand his kingdom as we pray, "your kingdom your will be done."

This passage is meaningful to me personally. My mother told me her pastor's wife prayed Colossians 2:15 over me at my dedication: that I would proclaim the gospel, triumphing over demonic rulers by the message of the cross. The way by which Jesus triumphed was through persevering in obedience to his Father, even dying on the cross. This way of suffering is the way Jesus pioneered for all who would follow him to victory. When we take up our cross to follow Jesus through hardships—even pandemics or social unrest—we will certainly share in his triumph! Because there is complete fullness in Christ, we don't have to fear losing anything in this world. Christ is enough, and nothing can separate us from his love.

Praise Jesus, in whom is divine fullness! Praise Jesus for his heroic sacrifice and overwhelming victory through which we can have fullness in him! May we take deep roots in Christ and, nourished by the gospel revealed in Scripture, live our lives in the fullness of Christ. And let us proclaim the message of Christ with sincerity and power, reveal competing philosophies as hollow and deceptive, and magnify Christ as the all-surpassing treasure that he is!

“

The way by which Jesus triumphed was through persevering in obedience to his Father, even dying on the cross. This way of suffering is the way Jesus pioneered for all who would follow him to victory. When we take up our cross to follow Jesus through hardships—even pandemics or social unrest—we will certainly share in his triumph!

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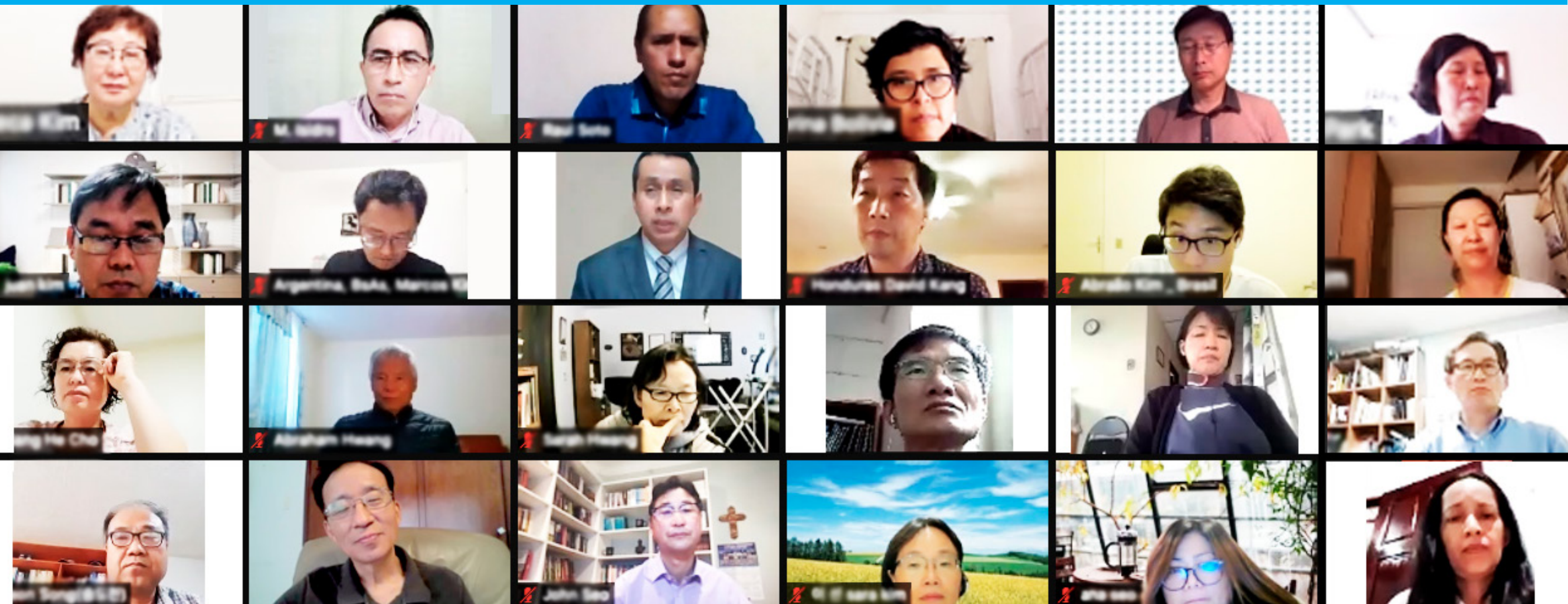




# LATIN AMERICA

JESUS CALLED HIS DISCIPLES

January 14-16, 2022





# REPORT

Esteban Cho (Bolivia)  
Latin America Coordinator

## Jesus Called His Disciples

*Key Verse: Luke 6:12-13, "One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God. When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles."*



We had the directors and missionaries' new year conference on January 14-16. Last year all the leaders were invited. But this year, only key members, chapter directors and missionaries were invited attended. A total of 110 people (local chapter directors and missionaries: 46, Korean missionaries: 64) attended. M. Moses Yoon delivered the first lecture, "Jesus who raised the 12 disciples" (Lk 6:6-19). Edwar Ti from Guatemala delivered the second lecture, "Son of man,

can these bones live?" (Ezekiel 37:1-14). The focus of the conference was to receive the New Year's message deeply and set the direction for the new year.

On the third day, we had conversation meetings. Before the pandemic, we gathered every year for the directors' conference. We studied the Bible together and shared our experiences of different mission fields. This allowed us to strengthen our sense of God's calling, to understand each other deeply, to be challenged, and to obtain the information and wisdom we need. However, due to the pandemic, we did not have this opportunity. So, we had conversation meetings.

The conversation meetings were divided into five groups as follows - "male korean missionary", "female korean missionary", "male local chapter directors", "chapter directors' wife", and "latin missionary". For example, the theme of the wife's group of the local directors was "the role of the wife as a helper". The wives expressed a lot about their difficulties in coworking of the couple. As the composition of our members in UBF grows more and more diverse, we have learned that the more specialized approach is required in each group.

And also 10 second-generation gathered and shared their New Year's directions and prayer topics together. Our second generation, raised by their parents' faith, are spiritually and intellectually outstanding. We pray that our second generation may grow up to be leaders like Daniel, Ezra, and Nehemiah of the Bible in Latin America. Closing the conference, we were able to hold back the following two prayer topics specifically for raising up the apostles.

First, we pray to double 1:1 Bible study. The 1:1 Bible

study is the basis of disciple training ministry. Currently, the 1:1 number of most chapters in Latin America is smaller than the number of Sunday worship services. We pray that in 2022, the 1:1 number would be double that of Sunday worship, so that tomorrow's apostles may grow among us.

Second, we pray to establish many house churches. To establish house church is a true worship of giving one's life to his (her) God. There are not many people who can offer such a worship service, so it is easy for us to despair. There are not many people who live a mission-centered after marriage, so it is easy to become discouraged. However, we pray that we may stand firm in establishing house churches.

“

**We pray that our second generation may grow up to be leaders like Daniel, Ezra, and Nehemiah of the Bible in Latin America.**

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# MESSAGE

Edwar Ti (Guatemala)

## Will These Bones Live?

*Ezekiel 37:3-4 NIV*

*3 He asked me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" I said, "Sovereign Lord, you alone know."<sup>4</sup> Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones and say to them, 'Dry bones, hear the word of the Lord!'*



This year began with a tribulation, the fourth wave of Covid-19. Apart from affecting health, it is causing more unemployment, poverty, inequality and individualism. We live confined to our homes trying to avoid more problems due to economic and political uncertainty, but amidst all of this, we must not lose

our hope in God.

In the book *Paradise Lost* by John Milton, it says that at the entrance to hell it is written: "From here, hope abandons you". It means that there is no hope there. Right in the valley of the dry bones there was no hope. However, Ezekiel prophesied and these bones came to life by the power of the Word of God. When the people of Israel were spiritually dead and living in exile in the land of Babylon, God sent prophecy to restore them. This scene reminds us that we must continue to proclaim the gospel of Jesus.

The valley can be related to the problems of life that try to frustrate us, such as illness, accidents or family quarrels; but this vision also encourages us to have a firm faith in Jesus Christ. I pray that through this word we will continue to proclaim the gospel with the guidance of the Holy Spirit and that the hope of the resurrection will continue to grow among us.

Verse 1: "The hand of the LORD came upon me, and he carried me away in the Spirit of the LORD, and set me in the midst of a valley that was full of bones."

The people of Israel had a beautiful time during the reign of David and Solomon, they were greatly unified and expanded. Afterwards, sin grew among them and a division was formed, the kingdom of the South (Judah) and the North (Israel) arose; idolatry and war was recurrent between the peoples. Around the 6th century BC, the Babylonian empire invaded and destroyed the city of Jerusalem and the temple was burned. In the midst of pain and suffering they were filled with sadness, anguish and complaint. Perhaps many times they repeated: "God abandoned us", they

lost hope.

In that time of crisis, the priest Ezekiel was taken into exile in Babylon; in the difficult situation he trusted in God and received prophecies about the judgment of Israel (Ch.1-24), about the judgment of the nations (Ch.25-32), and about the restoration of his people (Ch.33-48). D3 The crisis was not forever. God showed him a vision to restore the city and said: "The hand of the LORD came upon me, and he carried me away in the Spirit of the LORD, and set me in the midst of a valley that was full of bones" (1).

God took Ezekiel and placed him in a valley full of bones. The bones are the remains that are left after life, probably many came to that battlefield and were left dead. Death is synonymous with defeat, the consolation is the tombs to remember the moments of life. However, these bones did not have a proper burial, their end was dishonorable.

Ver.2 says that the prophet Ezekiel went through the valley and saw that the bones were many and were very dry, this was "the valley of death". Those bones became very dry because they were there for a long time, meaning that they were very dead. This valley shows us that death has a lot of power over the living, it takes away vision, joy and hope.

Now let us read ver. 3 and 4: "He asked me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" I said, "Sovereign Lord, you alone know."<sup>4</sup> Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones and say to them, 'Dry bones, hear the word of the Lord!'"

Who are the dry bones? The valley of the dry bones refers to the people of Israel, about this ver.11 says: "Then He said to me, "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They indeed say, 'Our bones are dry, our hope is lost, and we ourselves are cut off!'"

God knew the spiritual condition of the Israelites. They

lived on the face of the earth, but they were spiritually dead. Sin drove them away from God, consequently their people were destroyed and they lived as slaves far from their hometown. They were the dry bones without hope, for all their faults, they deserved that punishment, but God did not ignore the suffering of his people, on the contrary he had compassion on them, that is why he revealed to Ezekiel his plan of restoration and asked him: Will these bones live?

Do you believe that bones that are very dry can live again? All the bones were without sinews and skin. Has anyone ever seen a bone like this come back to life? Even though man has tried to research immortality, he has failed, meaning that from the human point of view, life in those dry bones was impossible.

Now look at Ezekiel's response: "Sovereign Lord, you alone know" (4). Ezekiel had no hope in the bones, but he did have hope in God, he recognized the sovereignty of the Creator and remembered that God formed man from the dust of the ground, and gave him the breath of life (Gen2:17). D5 Our God is the God of life, in that sense ver. 5 and 6 says: "This is what the Sovereign Lord says to these bones: I will make breath[a] enter you, and you will come to life. 6 I will attach tendons to you and make flesh come upon you and cover you with skin; I will put breath in you, and you will come to life. Then you will know that I am the Lord."

In our eyes, bones can no longer live, but God Almighty can give life to bones for the glory of his name. God reveals his power so that all may know who Jehovah is.

What is our role in bringing the bones back to life? Let us read again together ver.4: "Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones and say to them, 'Dry bones, hear the word of the Lord'"

Jehovah said to Ezekiel "Prophecy", for the first time. In this passage, to prophesy is to announce the Word



of God. It means to deliver God's message. The Old Testament prophets used the Hebrew word "Nabi" to distinguish the spokesmen of the true God, that is why Ezekiel mentions in ver.5 and 6: "This is what the Sovereign Lord says to these bones: I will make breath[a] enter you, and you will come to life. 6 I will attach tendons to you and make flesh come upon you and cover you with skin; I will put breath in you, and you will come to life. Then you will know that I am the Lord." Here the Lord speaks in the first person; it means that Ezekiel fulfilled the mandate to announce the Word of God and the Spirit gave life; this teaches us that our responsibility is to preach the Word so that the Spirit may work, therefore, where there is Word there is the work of the Holy Spirit. The Word is sown in the hearts like a seed that grows and bears fruit in its time (Psalm 1:3); because the Word is living, effective and full of hope (Heb 4:12). In this vision we can understand that death is not the end, because Jesus defeated it on the cross, and when we believe in him we recover our vision, joy and strength.

Sometimes we see unchangeable sheep, they study long enough and go into the world, in these cases we can lose faith because they look like dry bones with 0% hope, but we have to remain firm delivering the message of God, serving the Bible study, the daily bread, and in his time the Spirit of God works, just as he has worked in our life.

How can a life change happen? Prophesying. Although the people of Israel disobeyed the Word of God (Deut 28:26), they did not abandon it, on the contrary they prepared the restoration by prophesying and hearing the Word of God. In this commandment: "Prophesy over these bones, and say to them: Dry bones, hear the word of the Lord" (4). There is a command to Ezekiel to preach the Word, and a command to the people to hear the Word.

As missionaries and pastors, the command to preach is for us. When we see that the university campus looks like a valley of dry bones, we have to obey and

be Jesus' witnesses announcing the gospel of salvation so that our life and ministry will be a light to our families and to many university students.

When the sheep leave, some of us think that serving the Word is not enough, but there is no other way, we must persevere and wait for the power of the Spirit to work (Acts 1:8). The Word and the Spirit work together, therefore, it says: "Hear the word of the LORD... and I will put the Spirit in you, and you shall live" (4:6). Again I ask you: "Can these bones live?", Yes, the sheep can be born again in Jesus.

When Ezekiel prophesied about the dry bones, the people of Israel heard the Word of God, then there was a noise, a rattling sound, and the bones came together, bone to bone. 8 I looked, and tendons and flesh appeared on them and skin covered them (7-8). This was not the end, the Spirit was missing. We have to rely on the Spirit of God to see lives changed.

Jehovah said to Ezekiel "Prophesy", for the second time. Verse 9: "Then he said to me, "Prophesy to the breath; prophesy, son of man, and say to it, 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Come, breath, from the four winds and breathe into these slain, that they may live.'" 10 So I prophesied as he commanded me, and breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet—a vast army."

The power of God accompanied Ezekiel, he prophesied the second time and God fulfilled his promise, he breathed spirit into them, "they came to life and stood up on their feet—a vast army." This vision was so great that it formed a great army. The enemies of the Lord laughed at His hopelessly scattered people, but God raised them up to prophesy to the ends of the earth. They were like weak sheep who were spiritually dead, but when God gives them the Word and the Holy Spirit, they rise up as a very great army. All around us there are many spiritually dead, those who survive are few and weak; but we must go on because in this vision God promises to raise many dead, even

though they are dry bones, He will connect them one to another, He will put sinews, flesh and skin on them; then He will blow the Spirit of God. Thus the Holy Spirit has accompanied the missionaries and pastors of our ministry, they have announced the gospel of Jesus for 60 years in the university campuses of the world. Latin America is known for the corruption of its rulers and the poverty of its people, but in 1976 the first UBF missionary arrived, with the power of the gospel he rose from a dry bone to a region full of life, now there are numerous Latin American missionaries and directors, the Spirit of God raised them to establish disciples of Jesus in the world, God accompanies his people when they fulfill his commandments; and he will establish us as an army of faith in Latin America and in all nations.

Jehovah said to Ezekiel, "Prophesy," for the third time. Verses 12-13: "Therefore prophesy and say to them: 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says: My people, I am going to open your graves and bring you up from them; I will bring you back to the land of Israel. 13 Then you, my people, will know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves and bring you up from them.'"

The people of Israel looked like a place of graves. But when God's servants prophesied, God brought them back to life and fulfilled his promise to "bring them again into the land of Israel." Cyrus was the king of Persia when the Israelites returned to rebuild the city of Jerusalem under the leadership of Ezra, Nehemiah and Zerubbabel, after living scattered for 70 years in exile they had hope again.

We are also God's people, he chose us as his special treasure, about this 1 Peter 2:9 says: "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light." Suddenly there is a social or economic crisis in our mission field, shortage of medicines or many variants of Covid, we also hear nega-

tive comments "he is fearful before the prepared students", but in Jesus we are more than conquerors (Rom8:37). Jesus' disciples were fearful in the face of Roman oppression and denied their faith, but with the power of the Holy Spirit they rose up as mighty servants of God.

Verse 14: "I will put my Spirit in you and you will live, and I will settle you in your own land. Then you will know that I the Lord have spoken, and I have done it, declares the Lord."

When we feel that there is no hope or we believe that the expansion of the gospel stopped because of the pandemic, let us pray to see the opportunities, now there are many digital tools to announce the Word of the Lord, we have to get up to keep trying because nothing is impossible for God. (Luke 1:37), through him we can have a new heart and a new spirit (Ezek36:26). Thus the university fields will rise from a valley of dry bones to a valley full of life.

Because of my fleshly desire, and my foolish and proud heart, I have gone through tribulations in the family, economic and academic fields, for trusting in my own ability and experience I have been like a dry bone without hope. In 2011 I had a marriage failure and felt desolate I believed that God was not with me, in 2016 for pursuing economic success I failed in a business and was sunk in a debt greater than \$15000, for 5 years I worked only to pay interest; from 2007 to 2016 in the university they rejected my thesis several times, I thought "I was born not to graduate"; in every situation I cried, prayed and complained, I wanted to abandon the work of God to meditate and have more personal time, in reality I wanted to hide, I thought that serving was the same as problems and a waste of time. From the human point of view my life is disappointing; my nickname would be: "the damned failure".

Several times I screamed the direction Jesus gave to his disciples in St. Mark 11:22, "Have faith in God";



trusting in this Word the Spirit of God lifted me up with resurrection faith (John 11:25). In 2014 He gave me a beautiful suitable help, in 2015 my daughter was born, our faithful sheep; now they are my 2 precious collaborators in every activity of the ministry; although I was not worthy in 2015 I was appointed as Director to serve the work of Guatemala, in 2018 by the grace of God I managed to graduate from the University, in 2021 despite the complications caused by the pandemic I got an additional job and I was financially solvent, this year I finish paying all my debts. In every crisis, I asked myself: “who can help me?” Only the Spirit of God has blessed me and lifted me from a dry bone to an abundant life in Jesus.

I thank God and the servants who did not cross their arms and served me with Bible study full of patience, they prophesied trusting in God and now I can be here sharing the grace of God. My spiritual struggle is to announce Jesus in every Sunday message and in every Bible study so that others may know the power and love of God.

Going back to the question, “Will these bones live?”, with my human calculations I would answer, “It is not possible”, but by the grace of God, today I can say, “In Jesus, there is abundant life”. Therefore, I pray to continue delivering the Word like Ezekiel. If we prophesy the word of God with faith, the dry bones will have life and will rise up as a great army to fight and enlarge the kingdom of God in this spiritual warfare.

# CLOSING MESSAGE

**Esteban Cho (Bolivia)**  
**Latin America Coordinator**

## Stand Firm

*1 Corinthians 15:58, “Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.”*



Every year, we have a new year’s conference. The keywords for this year are “Prayer” and “Discipleship Work.” In the past year, all leaders were invited to attend the new year’s conference. But, this year only missionaries and chapter directors were invited. I am sure that all the key leaders of Latin America are gathered here at this moment. For this reason, today I can speak freely about some topics that could not be discussed in the presence of the sheep.

In the year 2021, we were able to send two missionar-

ies. M. Abigail from Venezuela was sent to Toronto, Canada; and M. Dannys from Venezuela to Ecuador.

This year, Noé from Puebla, Mexico is preparing to be sent to the Czech Republic as the first Latin missionary to Europe.

And three new pioneering chapters were established in the year 2021. The family of M. Sara Luz and Richard from IPN, Mexico started a pioneering ministry at the Universidad Panamericana; and P. Moises Mamani from Santa Cruz 1, Cochabamba the third largest city in Bolivia. The family of M. Pablo and Lidia Park from Guadalajara started a pioneering ministry in ITQ in the city of Querétaro, Mexico.

Three missionary house churches have been established in the year 2021. M. Paulin from Toronto, Canada established a missionary house church with Fr. Joshua Park from São Paulo, Brazil. M. Ester from the Kwanak 3, Korea established a missionary church with Noe Jeong from São Paulo, Brazil. M. Samuel Hong from New Jersey USA established a house church with Shp. Cindy from Guadalajara, Mexico. These three are very young missionaries of the new generation who are under 30 years old. We are very grateful to those who came from developed countries to serve the mission of A.L.

Pearl of Mexico C.U. obtained a Ph degree in chemistry at UNAM and works as a professor there. M. Juan Carlos de La Plata from Argentina was also hired as a professor at the University of La Plata through a competition. I pray that God may raise up among us many outstanding and influential professionals like Daniel, Ezra, and Nehemiah in the history of Israel.



Let us give thanks to our collaborators who have dedicated their lives to serve the works of Latin America. They are the five regional coordinators, the members of the Spanish forum committee, Natives Leaders' School committee, Korean missionary continuing education committee, IT committee, Daily Bread in Spanish committee, and the world mission news committee, etc. They are bi-vocational workers who are very limited in time and energy. I ask that we may pray for them and collaborate with them actively.

There are currently 45 chapters in Latin America. Most of them are ministry of one house church. There are 18 chapters in which Latin leaders are serving as directors, and in another 27 chapters, Korean missionaries are serving as directors. In the very near future, Latin leaders will succeed the leadership of these chapters. Three years ago, the leadership in the Santa Cruz 1 in Bolivia was officially succeeded. Several pastors had worked in ministry with me for over 20 years. Therefore, I thought that there would not be many problems after the succession. But, over the last 3 years, we found how weak was the foundation of the gospel in the congregation. Both myself and the local leaders were able to grow together, facing the problems together. Now we are in the transitory time of succeeding leadership of the Korean missionaries to the Latin leaders. I pray to God that we can work together to build our congregation pleasing to God.

We can learn two important points in light of this conference. First, we ourselves have to grow to the level of the apostles. Second, we have to establish our sheep at the level of the apostles. Now, what should we do specifically in order to achieve this goal?

First, we have to go out and actively preach on campus and engage in 1:1 Bible study.

At the world mission conference of last year, I heard someone say, "1:1 Bible study again! Why does UBF always focus on 1:1?" Despite these criticisms, why

do we need to engage in 1:1 Bible study? Because this is the basis of all our ministry. If the preaching and combat of 1:1 are not revived, we cannot expect anything in terms of fruits in the work of discipleship. The common point of all the growing and fruitful chapters of UBF is precisely the active preaching and the revived 1:1 Bible study. Today, there are not many countries where the gospel can be preached freely. They say that even in South Korea it is already very difficult to preach on campus. But how is Latin America? If I am not mistaken, except Cuba and Uruguay, everywhere we can all go out on campus and preach freely. In the eyes of the Lord Jesus, Latin America is like the fields that are already white for harvest.

In this pandemic, there are many thirsty souls on our college campuses. We hear from all over the world that our UBF coworkers are winning new souls through preaching on campus. I'm not good at fishing. Last year, I preached to a couple who were sitting close together on a bench on campus. God opened the young man's heart and allowed us to start the Bible study 1 on 1. This sheep is one of the thirstiest sheep for the word of God that I have ever met. On our campuses today, there are many people like the Ethiopian eunuch, and Lydia the seller of purple in the book of Acts. When we go out and preach by faith, God is going to send them out as our sheep of 1:1.

At last year's world mission conference, General director M. Moises Yoon gave us a prayer topic: The number of the E.B. of 1:1 may be double that of Sunday worship. But how is our situation? In most AL chapters, the number of 1:1 is much less than that of the Sunday worship participation. I pray to God that, in this year, the performance number of E.B. of 1:1 may be double that of Sunday worship, so that future apostles may grow up among us.

Second, we have to raise up many homes of faith. There are many misunderstandings about forming a house church in our congregation. Because of this, we

tend to avoid this theme in public. Despite all this, it is necessary to make it clear. What is a house church? Is it formed within UBF? Not all that were formed at UBF are house churches. House churches are the people that live their lives consecrated to the Lord and centered on their calling. It is the house church that live a happy marriage relationship in Christ and educate their children according to the will of God.

In the past year, two pastors left our church. As they left, they said, "I am leaving the church because of the marriage of faith in UBF." But when I prayed for them, I realized that the faith of marriage was an excuse. Their real reason was that they did not trust their God, nor did they have the faith to give their lives to Him. I repent that I had served them for many years, but I could not help them to trust their God and give their lives for Him. I repent that I have only tried to increase the number of house churches established in ministry, but I have not tried to help them to overcome their security problem and live a life centered on God's calling.

The marriage of faith is a genuine worship of giving our lives to our God. We are often discouraged by the reality that it is not easy to find such qualified people. Also, we easily get burned out in the course of helping existing houses to live calling-centered lives. But I pray that we can be steadfast and consistent in our work to establish house churches that live lives centered on God's calling.

The Lord established the twelve apostles after praying through all night. I pray that this yearning heart of the Lord may spill out into us. I pray that we can be firm and constant in our work of 1:1 Bible study and establishing house churches.





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