2017. 4. 16. Easter Morning Service

<Title> : “Resurrection ①”

<Passage> : <Acts 1: 11>

“They also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.”

<Introduction>

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, members of over 11,000 branch churches in Korea and all over the world, local sanctuary members, those who are attending the service on the Internet worldwide, GCN viewing audiences, <children of Sunday school>,

Let us celebrate the resurrection of the Lord! Let us give all thanks and glory to God the Father who has blessed us to run toward the kingdom of heaven with hope of resurrection.

The resurrection of the Lord is a sure fact. Romans 10:9 says, “...that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;” As said, you can be saved when you believe in the Lord’s resurrection in your heart. Also, when we have firm faith in resurrection, we can endeavor for holiness and faithfulness, longing for the day to meet the Lord.

Those who truly believe in resurrection in heart cannot help but live a renewed life. They will also preach the Lord’s resurrection. Those disciples who witnessed the resurrected Lord lived as witnesses of the Lord and finally became martyrs.

When we completely believe in resurrection, we will not compromise in any situation, and we’ll live as true Christians. Through this message, may you engrave the meaning of resurrection deep in your mind so that you can ride on the flow of whole spirit more vigorously having the faith and hope of resurrection, I pray this in the name of the Lord!

<Main>

Dear brothers and sisters,

**The meaning of resurrection, first of all, is that it is given by paying the price of sacrifice.**

Resurrection is the most joyful and glad event for all those who believe in the Lord. 1 Corinthians 15:19 writes, “If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied.” As written, if there is no resurrection and the end of this life is the real end, we are certainly most to be pitied.

But there is resurrection and the life to come as well. Therefore, we who are living in the hope of resurrection and the kingdom of heaven are the most blessed. Resurrection is the most essential element of our faith.

And for there to be resurrection, there has to be the process of death first. Our Lord, who is the first fruit of resurrection, first had to die before He received the glory of resurrection. Especially, He is the God in origin and the only begotten Son of God, and yet He had to die the most painful and most shameful of physical deaths.

Also, since the moment He came to this earth and until He died on the cross, He lived a completely selfless life. He lived a life of perfect sacrifice, giving everything He could give until His last moment.

The fact that He forsook all heavenly glory and came down to this earth in human body is a sacrifice that we as creatures cannot understand. Also, during His ministry, He didn’t have enough time to sleep well, eat, or care for His own body. Eventually, He gave even the last drops of His blood and water. He sacrificed everything He had.

What I mean basically is there was tremendous sacrifice until He received the glory of resurrection. Therefore, whenever we think about resurrection, we have to imprint the Lord’s sacrifice on our hearts. Then, we’ll be able to remember more deeply in our heart the meaning and value of resurrection.

And those who have the faith of resurrection will also live a life in which they sacrifice themselves following the way of the Lord. If you say you believe in the Lord but enjoy everything you want and take everything you want on this earth, then we can’t say you made any sacrifices. Those Christians who follow the Lord do not sacrifice themselves feeling forced and burdened.

And to the extent that we sacrifice ourselves, we will receive unimaginable volumes of rewards and glory in heaven, which can’t even begin to compare with the magnitude of our sacrifice on this earth.

Because I know this fact so clearly and believe it completely, I’ve been enabled to sacrifice myself since I accepted the Lord, and especially more since I opened this church. I’ve given everything again and again for the souls, and since 2010, I’ve been giving more than my physical limits repeatedly until now.

Why wouldn’t I know how to enjoy good food, good clothes or good sight-seeing places? I also might as well enjoy them very much! Also, why wouldn’t I want to spend more time with the church members? I miss my beloved believers and spend quality time with them more than you want to spend time with me. I’d like to dine with you, converse with you, and take a walk talking about heavenly kingdom at a beautiful place that has been created by God.

And yet, as you know very well, all I do in my life is face the wall and pray to God to communicate with Him all the time. I’ve spent countless days without even opening the curtain once. There are also so many days during which I wouldn’t come out of my bedroom once. Without any guarantee on when this process of filling up the measure of justice for you would end, I had to spend so many days alone, going through life-draining pains. I had to mourn for the souls day and night.

But I’ve never regretted such a life. This is the way of the Lord, and I know very well that at the end of this road awaits indescribable joy, happiness and glory. I hope you will also spend each day in happiness having this kind of hope. In so doing, I pray in the name of the Lord that you will enjoy the glory fully when you come forth as beautiful fruits of resurrection.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

**The second meaning of resurrection is that we’re given an eternal life through resurrection.**

The disciples witnessed the Lord’s resurrection firsthand. He certainly died and 3 days passed since His burial, and yet they witnessed He was alive again. When the disciples had last seen Jesus 3 days earlier, His skin was torn by the flogging. On His head was the long thorns; His hands and feet were nailed through, and His whole body was covered by blood.

His body was skinny because He hadn’t eaten or slept well for the past 3 years. It was almost like just skin and bones. Jesus was hung on the cross in this shape, and finally breathed His last after suffering from excruciating pain for 6 hours. And then, a solider pierced His side with a spear. Water and blood gushed out.

His body was wrapped in fine linen and buried in a cave that was freshly dug. It was complete death where there was no chance of revival. But Jesus did live again. He appeared before the disciples in the resurrected body and talked with them. He let Thomas, who doubted His resurrection, touch His scars of the nails and spear; He also ate roasted fish with the disciples.

After seeing this resurrection, which was completely impossible by human knowledge, what do you think happened to the disciples? They unsparingly gave their lives for the Lord and for the sake of the gospel. John 11:25-26 says, “Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?” After meeting the resurrected Lord firsthand, the disciples were so convinced of eternal life that they could boldly answer to this question of Jesus, “Amen, Lord, I believe!”

As they were convinced of eternal life, naturally the fear of death disappeared. And when the people heard this gospel that the disciples preached with strong conviction and having no fear of death, they also were convinced of resurrection and eternal life. And they followed the way of suffering that the Lord took. Even as they were being the prey of lions, they offered prayers of thanksgiving. They said good-byes to their children in their bosoms saying “We’ll soon meet each other in heaven.”

Christians were living in catacombs underground away from the persecutions against them. They were not able to see any sunlight their entire lives, but they were still full of hope waiting for the Lord who was to come back. Even though they had to bury their dead in that catacomb, those who remained had increased hope to meet them again in heaven.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-14 says, “But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus.”

And on the tombstones of the catacombs are written such hope of theirs as: “My dear son, do not cry. Death is not eternal.” “My husband Armelinus, God will revive you.” “My respected father, my dear mother, you will live again in the Holy Spirit.” To those Christians who believe in resurrection and eternal life, even the death, which is considered the end and extinction by the unbelievers, was just another step toward eternal life.

Brothers and sisters, 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 says, “For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.” As said, we are living each day of our lives with the hope that we will meet the Lord alive.

Especially, your hope is to have an eternal life in New Jerusalem among the many heavenly dwelling places. I’ve explained countless times what kind of life you can lead there. If you truly have this hope, you will never have any lingering attachment to this earthly life. 2 Corinthians 4:18 says, “…while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

And if you lost your eternal life being bound by the temporary life on this earth, how foolish is this? Therefore, I ask you in the name of the Lord that you will take the wise way to hope for the eternal life in New Jerusalem and take hold of it by force every day.

Dear brothers and sisters,

**The third meaning of resurrection is that the Father’s providence was fulfilled through resurrection.**

The Lord’s resurrection is the most important event in the entire human history. The Bible clearly tells us about the significance of resurrection in Christian faith. 1 Corinthians 15:13-14 says, “But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain.”

The way of salvation was completed by Jesus dying on the cross and then overcoming death and living again. If Jesus hadn’t resurrected, the way of salvation couldn’t have been completed, and we would have had to reach eternal death because our sins couldn’t be forgiven. The fact that Jesus resurrected proves that He died for our sins while being innocent, and He overcame death because He was sinless.

If we believe in this fact and accept Jesus Christ, we are saved and we become God’s children. Therefore, without resurrection we cannot discuss salvation in Christianity. In the book of Acts, which is a record about when the gospel first started to spread, we can read that resurrection is the core of the gospel.

For example, when they were selecting the disciple to replace Judas Iscariot, it is said that the duty of a disciple is to preach the resurrection of the Lord. Acts 1:22 says, “…beginning with the baptism of John until the day that He was taken up from us--one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection.” Acts 4:33 also says, “And with great power the apostles were giving testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and abundant grace was upon them all.”

Christianity is the religion of resurrection, which is built on the firm foundation of faith in resurrection. If we who believe in the Lord don’t have the hope to live again and enjoy heavenly glory forever after we die, why would we strive to live by the Word of God? Conversely, if we have hope of resurrection, we will not have any lingering attachment to the world and we won’t be afraid of any persecution or hardships. We will only live practicing the truth with all our lives.

Such people will eventually come forth as true children that God wants to gain through human cultivation. God will lead to New Jerusalem those souls who come forth as true children and share love with them forever. This is the providence of God that He harbored in His heart when He first began human cultivation.

I will also see the glory of resurrection soon in the providence of the Father. Once the power of re-creation is completed 100%, and my body is fully recovered, it will be completely different from the past. Then, the plans of the Father God that He wants to achieve through our church and me will be fulfilled greatly. I hope you will participate with faith in this ministry to fulfill the providence of God.

<Conclusion>

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

**I’ve explained that the meanings in the Lord’s resurrection are, first of all, resurrection was given by paying the price of sacrifice; second, eternal life was given; and third God’s providence was fulfilled.**

If you etch the meaning of resurrection in your heart, you’ll live a life to partake in the glory of resurrection. And in order to partake in the glory of resurrection, you should have faith of martyrdom first with which you can die. Faith of martyrdom is to put your ‘self’ to death and obey God’s will completely.

Only those who have such faith will come forth with the amazing glory of resurrection and enter New Jerusalem. May you my beloved believers stand firm in the faith of resurrection and come forth as glorious fruits of resurrection, I pray this in the name of the Lord!