

Osaka International Church Guest Speaker: Pastor Takashi Manabe

Biblical Passage: Gospel of Matthew 5:1-12

2022/11/27

Message Title: **“True Happiness to You!”**

Good morning, everyone. The tough pandemic has been in the world, and many precious lives have been lost because of it. When does this struggle of human being against this deadly disease come to an end?

In this kind of situation, we tend to incline to ask ourselves, “Am I living my daily life with no regret?”.

Today’s Bible Passage is called “The Sermon on the Mount”, and it is the beginning paragraph of the long preaching of Jesus Christ which follows. In it, Jesus Christ explicates and explains human life with simplicity and tenderness. This beginning paragraph of his preaching needs to be contextually connected to the core message of Jesus Christ in the preceding paragraph, i.e. “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.”(Matt. 4:17).

Any human being, without following the will of his Creator God, cannot have a truly happy and meaningful life. This message is the center of the sermon on the Mount by Jesus Christ.

Today’s passage can be outlined with the following three points:

“What is the true happiness?”

“How can a man obtain this happiness?”

“What is the content of this happiness?”

I What is the true happiness of human being ? (vs. 1-2)

This famous “Sermon on the Mount” starts with the Greek word “makarioi”. And this word appears in the beginning of each verse in vs.3~11. The word is translated in English as “blessed”(NIV). This word is considered to be a translation of the original Hebrew word, “ashree”. The original verbal form of this word is “ashar” in Hebrew, meaning “to walk straight as God intends human beings to walk”. And surely this kind of walk which is expected by Creator God is true and essential walk of human beings. And only this kind of walk brings forth true happiness for human beings.

This word “ashree” is frequently used in the Old Testament . Among those, The Psalmist declares it poetically as in the Sermon on the Mount as follows:

Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. (Ps. 1:1)

Blessed are all who take refuge in him. (Ps.2:12b)

Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.

Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord does not count against him and in whose spirit is no deceit. (Ps.32:1,2) (citations are all by NIV)

II How can a man obtain this happiness ? (Vs.3~12)

In the sermon of the Mount, Jesus Christ made it clear repeatedly that there is true happiness for a human being, and there is a way to obtain it.

Jesus Christ pointed out nine prerequisite attitudes of a man in order to obtain this happiness, namely,

- ① He may become poor in spirit (v.3)
- ② He may become mourner (v.4)
- ③ He may be meek (v.5)
- ④ He may hunger and thirst for righteousness (v.6)
- ⑤ He may be merciful (.7)
- ⑥ He may be pure in heart (v.8)
- ⑦ He may be peacemakers (v.9)
- ⑧ He may be persecuted because of righteousness (v.10)
- ⑨ He may be the one whom the people insult and persecute because of belief in Jesus Christ (v.11)

When we repent ourselves and become like those mentioned in the list, God will bless us greatly and we become truly happy.

Paul is a good example who has repented and has reached to this happiness as he himself has mentioned in the Scripture as follows:

But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things which we had done, but because of his mercy.

He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, when he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, (Titus 3:4~6)

This Bible passage makes it very clear for us that we can repent and become truly happy. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, has come and has done the redemptive work for us on the cross, so that the Holy Spirit of God who does the work of the Son has come close to us in order to compel us to repentance.

III What is the content of this happiness ?

Here in this passage, true happiness of human beings is explained in nine points , namely:

- ① to receive the kingdom of Heaven;

- ② to receive comfort;
- ③ to inherit the earth;
- ④ to receive fulness;
- ⑤ to be shown mercy;
- ⑥ to see God;
- ⑦ to be called sons of God;
- ⑧ to receive the kingdom of Heaven;
- ⑨ to receive great reward in heaven;

These are true characteristics of human happiness, aren't they?

CONCLUSION

Let us walk together on this royal road together with the prophets of the past! Only in this manner, we are able to taste true happiness and deep joy as human beings.