

For His Name's Sake

Mitsuko

Today, January 26, 2007, was the last Sunday in January for our worship service.

During the praise practice before the service, we sang, "Jesus Christ, My God." Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ . . . the name of the Lord was sung repeatedly. While praising, a thought came to me: How fresh and powerful the name of the Lord sounds no matter how many times I hear it! There were not yet so many people there, but the praise sounded very beautiful. The praise to call His name must be drawing out joy. It was then that I heard an inner *voice*:

***This is the name which I have given to you.
When you go out, carry only this name.***

"What?" was my immediate reaction. "What does it mean: the name given to me?" I then asked the Lord, "You tell me to go out, carrying only Your name, not Your praise?" I knew it was a silly question, yet still I wanted to ask. It seemed that the Lord was telling me, "You don't know what 'My name' is." I thought I did, though in my own way. I believed that to go out carrying His name was to carry the Lord Himself, which must mean the same as to carry His praise. So I was surprised, being told to "go out, carrying only this name." Then another *voice* echoed in my heart.

Praise is for My name's sake.

Once again I was surprised. Praise is for His name's sake. I agree, but what does that mean? What is the difference between "Praise is for His name's sake" and "Praise is for Him"?

There is the following verse in Psalm 23:

*He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of
righteousness for his name's sake. (Psalm 23:3 RSV)*

This is my favorite verse. I have often wondered about the meaning of "for His name's sake," but not contemplated much till now. It can be also said, "for the Lord."

When the temple of Solomon was built, the Lord said to Solomon, "I have consecrated this house which you have built, and

put my name there for ever; my eyes and my heart will be there for all time." (1 Kings 9:3 RSV).

The Lord said that He put His name there for ever. He could have said that He would be there forever.

By saying "His name," I feel that He is talking of what He desires most and His most precious and holy heart. And I believe that His name has the power to make His wish be done on the earth. To "go out carrying His name" is not just to carry His praise, but to go out, knowing that praise is to fulfill His name and His holy heart.

After the service, we had the time for individual prayers. As always, we prayed for those who visited our church for the first time and those who requested healing prayers.

A young woman stepped forward. Her prayer request was written on a card, which Pastor Peter read for me, but somehow it did not stay in my memory. While praying, I was overwhelmed by the deep and warm love of God, and more than anything I was surprised by the *interpretation* of the prayer.

I love you.

I also love your anger, your sorrow and your illness.

"Wow! God's love embraces everything, doesn't it?" I thought in my heart. Honestly, the *interpretation* shocked me.

She may have thought that she would be worthy to be loved only if she parted from her anger and sorrow or would feel being loved if she received healing.

To say that God loves anger, sorrow and illness is quite unusual. The Lord does not say that He loves us if we can get rid of our anger, sorrow and sickness. Instead, He does say that He loves us just as we are with our anger, sorrow and sickness. How wonderful! God loves our angers, sorrows and illnesses in which we cannot rejoice and against which we even have grudges, and moreover, He says to us, "I love you. I love everything in you." Once we know that we are loved by such God, our angers, sorrows and illnesses cannot bear bitter fruit as before.

Amazing! God loves us so much that He even melts our angers, sorrows and illnesses into His love. (God loves us so much that He even gave up His own life.)

Although I already knew it, I was stunned to be further reminded of it. For the person who was seriously pained, thinking

that she was not worthy to be loved, God dared to add, “I love even your anger, your sorrow and your illness,” rather than just said, “I love you.” Because otherwise she would not realize how much she was loved. I felt that I ought to tell her God’s heart, which was this amazing love. I wanted to convey His deep love and healing to her by all means. I spoke out the first *interpretation* without thinking much, but being surprised, I added words:

It is not that He does not love you because you are angry. He loves you together with your anger. Do not feel sad having your illness. He loves (and heals) you and your illness all together . . .

I believe that this is the “reconciliation” – the reconciliation between you and your anger, between you and your sorrow, and between you and your illness. The reconciliation is God’s healing.

I was so overwhelmed by His love that I was almost in tears. I really wanted to convey His love to her. Her heart seemed to be closed in sadness. That might be the reason the *interpretation* continued.

Your eyes are not for seeing sorrow or death.

Astonished, I looked at her eyes. Her beautiful eyes were filled with sadness and resignation. I felt the Lord saying to her, “Your eyes are for seeing Me.” He ardently wishes her to see Him and to know the joy of living. When He says so, the answer is already given. I felt that His healing had been done in her.

The Lord desires every person to live in joy. That is why He gave up His life. I said in my heart, “Lord, You will not miss a single soul. You will never give up wishing us to live in joy and to know the joy of living.” I was deeply moved, but still I must have wondered why He loved us so much. Then I heard another *voice*:

For My name’s sake

I thought I finally understood the unknown words in Psalm 23: “He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name’s sake.”

Lord, I praise You forever. For Your name’s sake.

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