

Phil.2:12 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;

2:13 for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.

2:14 Do all things without complaining and disputing,

2:15 that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world,

2:16 holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain.

2:17 Yes, and if I am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all.

2:18 For the same reason you also be glad and rejoice with me.

From today's sermon.

We want to learn today from the words of the Bible who is in the center of things.

During Paul's imprisonment, along with persecution from outside the church, there was corruption from within the church, and Paul was concerned and praying for the church congregation. In prison, he wants to encourage and strengthen the church, but he has no freedom. How would they be doing? Would they be shaken and lose their faith? And would all they have done be in vain? He was deeply troubled in prison. So he asked them to look to Christ, and he talked about the core of salvation. To have the same feeling as Christ, to be humble, to respect others, and to think of others, not only of himself. To be faithful to what we have been taught, even when Paul is not around. Do not relax until you have achieved salvation. As he speaks, he looks up to heaven. Then he again has comfort from heaven. God is the one who works in our hearts first. It is God Himself who causes the desire to work for the fulfillment of His good will to arise in our hearts. Then we will proceed without murmuring or doubting. No matter how crooked and wicked the times, we are like stars in the night sky without blame. It is God who is worthy to give his life. And our fellow man. Paul was determined to follow this path.

Good morning, everyone. It has turned into autumn and the mornings and evenings have become cooler. I hope you are doing well.

Whoever exalts himself will be brought low, and whoever brings himself low will be brought high.

Luke 18, New Testament

Shigeru Ishiba, who will soon become the 102nd Prime Minister of Japan, is a fourth generation Christian. His great-grandfather, Michimichi Kanamori, was baptized by Nijima Jo, the founder of Doshisha, and later became a pastor. Mr. Ishiba was baptized at a Tottori church when he was a high school student and taught the Bible to children at a church school in Tokyo. Mr. Ishiba always keeps in mind the following words from the Bible: "What is right and what is wrong?"

I wonder if any human being can know what is right and what is wrong. If the current Japanese politics is not according to His will, I want to be the kind of person who prays to Him, asking Him to change it.

The beauty of having faith is that we can always recognize that we are sinners. The Pharisee who always offers a tenth of his offering and prays, saying that he is a righteous person, and the tax collector who prays, beating his chest and asking God to forgive him for being a sinner. I always remember which one is righteous (justified) by God. We can admit that we are not good enough, that we are sinners, and ask God for forgiveness from the bottom of our hearts. I understand that this is the most wonderful thing about faith.

I believe that politics must be a party that weeps with those who weep, and that it must be a party that embodies the wishes of the people. I understand that it is the essence of conservatism to listen humbly to different opinions. This country will have to make choices that have never been made before. The church does not support any particular party, but I wish you success in your endeavors.

In this world where there are so many different thoughts, we are told in today's verse, "In the midst of crooked and wicked times, that you may become children of God without blemish. Hold fast the word of life, and shine in the world like stars among them." I deeply desire that you will guide me to live a life of "I am the Lord's servant, and I am the Lord's servant."

2:2 Please be of the same mind, have the same love, unite your hearts, and be of one mind to fill me with joy.

2:3 Do not do anything out of partisanship or vanity, but in humility of mind make one another better than yourselves.

2:4 Consider not yourselves only, but also others.

2:5 Let the same mind be in you one toward another, as you are in Christ Jesus.

How many times in human society have we been disturbed by the mindset of "self, self, self" and the mindset of "self first," putting others before ourselves. But we are taught that it is salvation, blessing, and life to be mindful of the mind of Christ and to follow God's good will

and purpose.

2:12 My beloved, I am persuaded that you are always obedient to me. Therefore be obedient, not only when I am with you, as you have always been obedient, but now that I am not with you, be more obedient, working out your own salvation with fear and trembling, just as you have always been obedient.

Now that I am not with you.” This must have been Paul's concern. How much it must have pained him to see the persecution from outside the church, and the rivalry within the church to take away what Paul had accomplished. I want everyone to look at Christ. With what kind of heart did Christ proceed? And how God the Father delivered and exalted and guided Christ Jesus from death afterward. Paul was in prison and was in agony, unable to rush immediately, and just kept praying for the association and for the congregation. With the fear that this my work would come to nothing, he continued to pray that it would not be so, that those saved by the Lord would not be separated from Christ.

2:12 O my beloved! Therefore, as you have always been obedient, so be more obedient, not only when I am with you, but also now when I am not with you, and work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

2:13 For it is God who works in you to cause your desire to arise and to bring it to pass, and it is God's good pleasure to do so.

So again Paul is reminded of an immeasurable truth by the Lord's comfort.

2:13 For it is God that worketh in you, and maketh your desires to come to pass, and it is God that worketh in you: for it is God that worketh in you, and maketh your desires to come to pass; and it is God that worketh in you, and it is God that worketh in you.

Oh, the one and only God is at work in the Church. He is working in us. God is like that. He would never abandon His Church, which He made precious by redeeming it with the blood of His Son. God does not abandon us, but works in us to bring us to completion. Paul reminds us again that God continues to work in us to complete what we desire and work for His good will and purpose.

God is at work in us. He is at work in our churches and in our lives.

Romans 8:28 We know that God works with those who love Him, those who are called according to His plan, to make all things work together for good.

1 Corinthians 10:13 And there is nothing in the tribulation which ye have met with, which is not of the world. God is true. Not only will He not put you through trials that you cannot endure, but He will also provide a way for you to endure them.

Do we believe that God is always at work in our lives? Do we think that our lives, our churches, have been abandoned by God and left to fall into ruin? No, that is not the case. God is working in us. He is working on us, and He is doing what we desire. What do we wish for? God is working in such a way that we desire to work for His wonderful, beautiful, good, and good will and purpose. God is leading us to make it happen. He is working in us to bring about His good will in us. He is doing this all the time, and by doing so, He is protecting us.

In prison, Paul was tormented by worries and anxieties, and he finally came to the conviction that God is at work in us. It was a joyful conviction. He was convinced that man is not only for himself, that he is not only being dragged down and corrupted, but that he can do his good will in the Lord and God will bring it to pass.

2:14 In all things do not murmur, do not doubt.

When confidence fades in us, anxiety can cause us to murmur and doubt. But let us look to Him who works in us.

2:15 That ye may be blameless and pure, and the children of God without blemish in the midst of crooked and wicked times. And ye shall hold fast the word of life, and it shall shine in the world like a star among them.

That ye may be blameless and pure, and the children of God without blemish in the midst of crooked and wicked times.”

How many are the schemes to condemn the children of light, to corrupt them, to make them lose their conviction, to make them lose their brilliance, to make them fail! A crooked and wicked age. It means a crooked, phony, deceitful, originally straight but now crooked and curved, warped, dishonest, crooked, twisted, unreasonable, off-the-beaten-path, wicked, unrepentant, obstinate, stubborn, and stubborn times. It must be difficult to live honestly and

genuinely, without blame, without error, honestly and without guile in such a dragging age. However, God is working with His good will to protect and guide those who believe in Him, making them unscathed in the midst of the times, shining as the stars of the world, and firmly holding the word of life in His hand. That is who we are. Why do we say “star” instead of “sun”? Is it because the world is in darkness? But even in the pitch black darkness, there are stars in the sky, twinkling and shining, shining with happiness and joy.

2:16 Thus in the day of Christ I can boast that my running was not in vain, nor my labor in vain.

All my hard running has not been in vain. All that I have worked so hard for on this path of faith has been empty and meaningless toil. There was a voice in my heart whispering to me. But it is not so. It is the day of Christ. The day of Christ's return. That day when it will be clear who the master of this world is. All will be made clear that what you have known was not in vain, and what you have labored for was not in vain.

2:17 And I will rejoice, even though My blood be sprinkled on the altar of your faith offerings. I will rejoice with all of you.

2:18 In the same way you also rejoice. Rejoice with me.

I will not hesitate a moment longer to go to the day of the manifestation of this honor. Even if my body becomes a blood offering on the altar and my life is poured out, I am willing. I am willing to give my life for this Jesus, and I am willing to lay down my life for my beloved church and its flock. I know that this is a teaching worth it. I can go on with joy, even to death. Because Jesus is there. Because the One who loved me that much is there. I will go there with joy. Please rejoice with me. And do not be afraid in the persecution or in the trials of darkness. For this God is at work in you.

I hope that we, too, will not be discouraged by difficulties, but will believe that this labor will not be in vain, that all our labors will be rewarded, and that we will be those who live more and more in His love in order to shine forth.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank you for today's worship service. Thank you for showing us where we should turn our eyes in the midst of worry and anxiety about the future and the shadow of trials and tribulations. What we should look to in every moment is God who is at

work in us. He has a good will and a good purpose, and He works in us so that we may desire to work for His good will. He guides us to stay on the path and to go on in blessing and life. Our efforts are not in vain; He makes us shine in the darkness and makes us stars in the night sky. Please lead all sufferers into God's salvation and peace. Bless our families and the people in our community. We pray in the name of the Lord Jesus. Amen.