

Spirit of Pharisee



John 5

After Jesus healed the lame at the pool of Bethesda, the Pharisees decided to kill him because Jesus healed the man on the Sabbath day. And he called God his Father, thereby making himself equal with God. If a man was healed after 38 years of sickness, we should celebrate the healing. Healing and restoration are the purposes of the Sabbath. Unfortunately, they could not see the real meaning of the Sabbath. They were bound by the inhuman regulations under the Law of the Sabbath, and they tried to kill Jesus.

If the Law of God is from God of love and life, then the Law is about giving love and life to human beings. The Law of God is to provide us with freedom. If the Spirit of the Law disappears, it becomes the prison that binds us. The Law without the Spirit becomes a religion that kills humans.

Jesus confronted such man-made Spirituality where the enemy camouflages with the spiritual cloth. It harms humans most powerfully. So, the religious leaders opposed Jesus, and Jesus opposed religious people. The same story repeated in the first Christian history and continues in our modern day. V 42 says it is because they do not have the love of God in themselves. What did the love do? They loved a title, a position, and a place to usurp. Without the Spirit of love, so-called Spirituality becomes the hard shell where the evil Spirit hides.

It can happen to us easily if we lose our relational passion for God. It created a legalistic, performance-based spirituality in an atmosphere of fear, pride, and doubt. The church is often captured by a sanctuary-driven spirituality that centers on meetings, studies, and activities that do not provide direct encounters with the God of grace, love, power, and magnificence. Where are we? What should we do? It is to come out of the functional paradigm of the church that teaches to serve.

Why do we stay there in the shallow place of Christianity? It is because they have never been shown the deep place in Christ. We need to experience becoming sons and daughters of God through ascended worship and deep prayer that sinks into the secret depth of contemplation and prayer. We need God, who is like a mother to a little child. Imagine that mother and child playing hide and seek.

When a mother hides behind a bush, the child first tries to find the mother. The child cannot find the mother and starts to cry. Then, the mother appears again from the bush, snatching and embracing the child into her bosom. Then the whole world of the child changes. All fear and anxiety of the child ends.

We do need that presence. If not, we lose the substance of joy and peace and are more prone to experience doubt, anxiety, and fear. All the little child needs is the mother. We cannot resist the joy and love from the mother. When the child is nourished and grows, the child will begin to understand the mother's heart. And naturally, the child does what gives the mother joy. Our identity shapes who we are as sons and daughters of God, who are wise, strong, kind, and powerful. Close your eyes and seek the beauty of the presence of the Lord!

Grace and joy,

Pastor Hae-Jeong