

John 12:1-8

Title: I love you, so break it / translated by Chungil Wi

1.

I feel the change of the seasons these days. Daytime temperatures have not dropped below 32 degrees for the past few days. When I told someone that spring would come soon, he said that spring had come. Come to think of it, it is true that spring has already arrived. The white snow covering the cornfields and grass is now mostly melting. I thought it was spring only when the flowers bloomed, but as the frozen ground began to melt, spring began. When I was in the military, the song I liked the most was Kim Myung-Sik's song 'Spring'. *"The past days I was worried about and the cold winter that seemed to last forever, there is no trace as the Lord promised, and I praise what my God has done forever."* The memory of comforting the arduous military life with listening to the song with these lyrics comes back to life with spring. May the warm grace of the Lord be with all those who have been exhausted physically and mentally from going through the winter of life.

The land of Palestine, the base of Jesus' activities, also welcomes a new season at this time of year. The rainy season begins at the end of October, and the rain that falls during this time is called the early rain. From this time on, there are many cloudy days, and most of the year's precipitation is concentrated from the end of October to the beginning of March. The rain that falls in early March is called the latter rain, and this is when the dry season begins. When the late rains in March stop, the harvest season begins in earnest. The harvest of olives, barley and grapes begins. During this season, Jews celebrate the most important holiday, the Passover. The Passover was a very important feast to commemorate the Exodus, which made them free from slavery in Egypt. They remember and celebrate God's salvation by sacrificing a lamb to liberate them. It is significant that Jesus died on the cross on the Passover, a major Jewish holiday. As the Lamb of God, Jesus had to bear the cross to save people who rebelled against God and turned away. To do so, Jesus had to go up to Jerusalem, and the place where Jesus stopped right before entering Jerusalem was Bethany. Next week is Palm Sunday, which commemorates Jesus riding a donkey into Jerusalem. Since the event that happened right before Jesus entered Jerusalem was the supper in Bethany, I want you to receive grace through this message today.

Before Jesus stopped by Bethany, we need to pay attention to where he was and why he should have been there. In John 10:39, "Again they tried to seize him, but he escaped their grasp." And it says that Jesus went and fled. John 11 tells us that after raising Lazarus, Jesus' enemies from then on were determined to kill him. "So from that day on they plotted to take his life. Therefore Jesus no longer moved about publicly among the people of Judea.

Instead he withdrew to a region near the wilderness, to a village called Ephraim, where he stayed with his disciples. (John 11:53-54)."

Jesus gifted new life to the sick by performing signs and wonders, but he was hated by his enemies. When the hatred of the enemies reached its peak as Jesus performed miracles, the Lord went to a lonely place to avoid the enemies. It looks like a hit and run operation. He performed the miracle of raising Lazarus from the dead in Bethany, but when the news reached Jesus' enemies, he rushed to kill Jesus. Jesus did good and set many people free, but the hatred of the enemies grew like a snowball. It would be good to understand that Jesus hit and run like this as he took a breather. Now, before going up to Jerusalem in earnest, he would have had to take a breath and refresh his mind. He needed to prepare his mind before drinking the cup of suffering that was too heavy for him to handle. After stopping at Bethany, which was only three kilometers away from Jerusalem, he will be heading to Jerusalem. When Jesus visited the village of Bethany again, the Lord was determined. Jesus must have visited Bethany with determination. But, unaware of this, the people of Bethany held a feast when Jesus, who performed miracles, returned to their village.

2.

There was a woman who sensitively caught the flow of Jesus' emotions in the heat of the festival of gratitude and joy. She was Mary. While everyone was excited about the party, only Mary read Jesus' mind. She had a hunch that Jesus was accepting his own death with his resoluteness. When she thought of His hardships when He went to Jerusalem, Mary must have lost her heart. She wanted to comfort the Lord with what Mary had. There was a saying, "A woman's hazy intuition is better than a man's clear reasoning." (This is what I said). A woman appears in the gap between the men who are drunk to the fullest. She had a hunch that this feast should be a rehearsal for Jesus' funeral banquet.

The reason she read the heart of Jesus like this is because she was a disciple of Jesus. Because Luke 10:39 describes it as "She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said." In Acts 22:3, Paul expresses that he "learned at the feet of Gamaliel." To sit at one's feet and listen to one's words was an idiom for being one's disciple. In other words, she was a faithful disciple who understood the meaning of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. Mary, who suddenly appears among the men who are drunk with their excitement, starts a performance she has prepared. Mary pours expensive nard perfume on Jesus' feet, equivalent to a year's wages for a laborer. Nard is a high-quality perfume collected from plants, and it was also a funeral perfume that was used at Cleopatra's funeral. Why does she pour perfume on his feet? Jesus went about preaching the gospel from place to place. Besides, he had to run to empty fields to avoid his enemies. Jesus' feet were

swollen and imperfect. Mary's gaze is fixed on her feet of Jesus and she pours perfume on them. She wanted to comfort Jesus.

What senses will be stimulated first when you pour perfume? It's the smell. In the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, it is further explained that this house was the house of Simon the leper. A leper is a person with a skin disease. Then, basically, I think the scent would not have been good. The Bible tells us that Simon the leper's house was suddenly filled with the smell of perfume. Mary did not stop by pouring her perfume on Jesus' feet, but began to dry her perfume by wiping it with her own hair. In this way she is preparing and simulating the funeral of her master.

Here, as a character in contrast to Mary, a disciple of Jesus named Judas from Iscariot appears. He did not understand what this woman was doing. She didn't just break the vessel of perfumed oil, he thought, she was breaking the mood. Above all, he couldn't understand why she was wasting such expensive fragrance oil. How much money is 300 denarii? Judas said that it would be better if he sold it and gave it to the poor, but actually the money was too precious to him. Although they are the same disciple, the feeling temperature between Judas Iscariot and Mary is quite different. One person has hot love and devotion towards her teacher, and the other person analyzes and argues with too cold reason.

What is Jesus' reaction? ""Leave her alone," Jesus replied. "It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial. You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me. (John 12: 7-8)." he supports Mary. Through Mary's actions, Jesus received considerable comfort. No, he rather gained great strength and courage. Jesus was also a human being, so he sensed the warm flow of his heart and was moved. He must have been tired of running away, hungry, and exhausted. Jesus could read the love that was deep in her heart. It is absolutely not a bad thing to do charity work with 300 denarii. But Judas' limit was that he did not know the sincerity of Mary's love for Jesus. If he had truly followed and loved Jesus, Mary's holy waste would not have been uncomfortable at all. However, he was the person who managed the money bag, and he was a thief who stole money from the money bag, so it was very difficult to read such love and the position was uncomfortable.

3.

Nothing is wasted on loved ones. It is a characteristic of people who love to be sorry that they have nothing more to give even after giving everything away. Think about when you were dating. I met my wife when I was a theological student without enough money, but I did not want to stop giving everything the woman I love. I remember saving money, going

to restaurants like VIPS and Out Back, and making reservations for tickets to places like Everland. When I first asked her to date, we met at a pasta shop on the 1st floor of Kyobo Book Center in Gwanghwamun. I was so happy that I went to the Hot Tracks of the Kyobo Bookstore on the B1 floor and bought her a watch for her. "My love for you is beyond time and belongs to eternity." I guess that was my intention. When you love, you just want to give more, but it's never a waste. Because nothing is wasted in a loving heart.

Judas Iscariot did not have this love in his heart. Your good deeds are never bad. But good works outside of Jesus are nothing more than a means to build up their self-satisfaction or self-power. Love for the Lord comes first, followed by good deeds. Judas Iscariot was not connected with Jesus' heart, and he did not love Jesus. He should have helped the poor man with 300 denarii, but it was just a political propaganda tool. Just look at how communism has spread and faded in the world. Their reliefs were so wonderful and beautiful. A beautiful world where everyone prospers through fair distribution of wealth was the value they pursued. But we know all too well how they fell and that the slogans they chanted were nothing more than ideals. George Orwell's "Animal Farm" is a novel that criticizes Stalin's communism. Animal farms were run by human owners. The novel describes in detail how the pigs, who said they would kick out humans and open a new era in animal farms, are ruined. The pigs who came to power exploited the labor of animals just like humans and enjoyed all the wealth for themselves. It started for the poor, but the love for the poor was used as a tool to build self-power. Loving the poor is not a bad thing, but history tells us that it can only be misused for self-power if it has not passed through Jesus.

4.

In Matthew 26:13, "**Truly I tell you, wherever this gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her.**" said Jesus. Why? It is because this woman's act was an act of understanding the meaning of Jesus' death. It is because Jesus now went up to Jerusalem and understood the essence of the great love that destroyed his most precious life. This woman breaking her nard and pouring it on her feet seems like a waste, but this is a rehearsal and simulation of an event where Jesus will break all of himself for us. What Jesus and this woman have in common is that they broke what was most precious to them. A person smells when they break something that is most precious to them. Scent comes only when you break the most precious thing. The life broken by a person who is full of me (ego) is not a fragrance, but only a stench. Because it is nothing more than a false performance broken for self-power. A broken life is meaningless without the dedication and resolution to completely break oneself and follow the Lord. Those who understand and follow the meaning of Jesus' death and sacrifice

completely destroy themselves. With his total self-denial, they put Jesus at the center of their lives. They can follow Jesus and break their lives because they understand that Jesus broke his life on the cross.

However, the powerful in Jerusalem drove Jesus to those empty places instead of bringing him to the center of their lives. Because Jesus is a dangerous existence that will break the foundation of their lives. "If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and then the Romans will come and take away both our temple and our nation (John 11:48)." The Romans are already plundering their people. What does this mean? They were concerned about a situation in which the temple system, where they could enjoy vested interests and extort people's money, could be seriously shaken. Jesus is only seen as a hindrance to them and a thorn in their eyes. It led to the act of kicking him out.

Judas is not much different from them. Judas, too, was not free from his self-centeredness. He said he was following Jesus, but he was following for his own sake. Because he did not fully deny and break himself in front of Jesus, he still could not escape from his self-centeredness. So he must have sold Jesus by joining hands with the powerful in Jerusalem. He followed Jesus to achieve his purpose, but it seemed that it would not come true, so he discarded Jesus.

The relationship between Jesus and the religious authorities in Jerusalem, and between Judas and Jesus, should not be seen as an old story. If we close our ears to the word of God that causes vibrations in our conscience and stop illuminating our conscience with the holy gaze of Jesus, we are no different from them. If we are far from reading the Bible that illuminates our conscience with the Word of God and praying to hear the voice of God, we are hiding Jesus and driving him out into the distance. The core of following Jesus is a life that completely denies and breaks me. The first priority is to enjoy the thrill of being filled with Jesus at the center of my life, which has been emptied by self-denial. How can you follow the Lord without any intention of surrendering to Him like the powerful men in Jerusalem? Lord don't come close to me, I don't want to live too tired, I want to live for my own benefit while enjoying myself in moderation, The life of listening to and obeying the Lord's words is a bit burdensome.... These people are driving Jesus into those voids. Loving Jesus is giving Jesus priority in my life. Only those who reflect their false conscience on the word of God can love Jesus. When those who deny themselves and are filled with Jesus break up their lives, the fragrance comes out.

5.

The church is a gathering of people who have broken their lives for Jesus. Therefore, it is only natural that the church smells of Jesus. But why does a modern church stink? It stinks

because I break myself in a show way to make a name for myself and attract people to the church without following the perfect Jesus. Many good works and mercy programs in the church should not be the goal. Following Jesus comes first, and connecting with the heart of Jesus comes first. If you love Jesus, you cannot help but love the poor. Because the heart of Jesus flows naturally to those poor people. As water flows down, the heart of Jesus flows towards the poor and the wretched human beings who suffer the contempt of humanity. Therefore, those who truly love Jesus have no choice but to love the poor. Only love and good works that have passed through Jesus are not misused as tools for building self-power.

Knowing the heart of Jesus, reading the heart of Jesus, and connecting with the heart of Jesus are the first priority. At the feast in Bethany, Mary was the only one who read Jesus' mind. And Jesus gave her great comfort by accepting her broken life.

I really like coffee. I came here and thought about giving up coffee for various reasons. However, I felt that the happiness of drinking coffee is greater than the deprivation of not drinking coffee. The reason I like coffee is because of its aroma. I love the scent that covers my entire being when I drink good coffee. When coffee burns himself as it drains his body of moisture, and when he has that dedication to crush his body into the grinder, he gives off a scent. What does it mean to break a life? If you say you break life, it's too abstract. I believe that the fragrance of life comes from character. If our lives are fragrant, it means that our characters are worthy of admiration. The life we break must become our character. But character is not just created. Just as high-concentration extracts squeezed from plants become perfume, character is acquired over a long period of time through constant effort and training. Good character can be said to be the character of Christ in which the life acquired through training is concentrated. In that sense, to break life is to break our character. Christians are people who spread the fragrance of the character of Christ everywhere.

Paul also said that all of us who have gathered in the church are the fragrance of Christ offered to God (2 Corinthians 2:15). Being full of fragrance means that love for the Lord is openly expressed through character. If you love Christ, you will become like Christ. As you become like Christ, you will naturally have a fragrance in your life. What a wonderful place the church is when people who give off fragrance in Jesus gather in the church! I hope that the home becomes fragrant because of you, the workplace becomes fragrant because of you, and the neighborhood becomes fragrant because of you. It would be great if the fruit of life we break would fill the whole world with the beautiful fragrance of the Lord's love. Like the old town of Bethany.