**“This Brother of Yours” 2016 03 06**

**Luke 15:1-3 and 11-32 Pr. Hitoshi Adachi**

Note: No Edit was made… I apologize this rough English.

May the Mercy and Peace of Jesus Christ be poured into the people who walk in the challenging situations of this Lenten season!

Is there anyone who can say to his/her parents that he/she has been never disobeyed to them and always served them 100 percent.

There was a conversation between a mother and her daughter. The mother, “Daughter, since you are not following my commandment, my hair is grayer.” Then, the daughter responded, “Why is grandmother’s hair so gray?”

There is no child who grows obeying his/her parents or foster parents 100% without causing any anxiety.

Let’s dive in the Gospel Luke 15:1-3 was read at first. These three verses were presenting an issue: Why is Jesus eating together with sinners like tax collectors? This was raised by Jewish leaders.

The responses to the issue were written in the three parables. Two of them were skipped in the reading of the Gospel. However let me explain briefly the first two.  The first one is: Because God is like the shepherd who looks for and care for the lost sheep and if he find, he celebrates greatly.  The second one is: God is like the woman who looks for the lost coin out of her 10 coins and if she finds it, she celebrates it with her neighbors greatly.  And in the third parable, because God is like the father who forgives his prodigal son who returned to him with repentance and have a great party. God is not interested in falling of sinners, but he is interested in someone comes back to God and lives in Him.

I have already talked the major point of the chapter 15.  However, I still do not have talked about one particular sinner. Do you know who he was? Like Jewish leaders could not understand why Jesus ate together with the tax collectors, the elder brother of the prodigal son could not understand why his father celebrated so much for the return of his brother.

Elder brother’s word in the verse 29, “Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command.” In these words, I think his sinfulness is appearing. He mentioned “like a slave” in which he was indicating that what he had been doing was just a labor of the father since he was the first son. Also I do not think anyone can say, “I have never disobeyed your command” to his/her father.

I believe that the father felt pain while listening to what the first son said. He insisted that he had never disobeyed the father’s commandment and he was like a perfect and righteous person, comparing his younger brother.

To respond, the father said to him “Son” which means “a child created by God.”  Then using the word “this brother of yours” he persuade him to understand father’s thought that “the younger son was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.”

What are we learning from the last part of the parable.  This portion is focusing on the relationship between the father and the elder son. Where are we in this parable?

Most of us come to worship every Sunday and sometime can we say like we are like this elder brother? We call ourselves as “we” and label people not worshipping every week or people do not come to church “they.”  Behind the way we describe them, are we segregating or sometimes judging them?

Today God is telling us, “Children, they are brothers and sisters of yours.”  You are created by your Lord and they are created by the same Lord as well. Why don’t you consider they are your brothers and sisters?

God is guiding us not to segregate them or not to judge them but we are to repent ourselves and turn to the Lord.  We are renewed by the Lord and walk into a new life with forgiveness and reconciliation that can be possible through Jesus Christ. During this Lenten season, each one of us are facing many challenging, injuries, illnesses, and chronic diseases, but may the Lord turn these challenges to opportunities for us to live new lives. Amen.