

**Daily Bread with Brother Hwa-Chi (Not reviewed by the speaker, for personal use only)**

**Luke 9: 43-50**

Brothers and sisters, peace be with you, this is Hwa-Chi. Thank God, it's time to read the Bible again. Let's continue to read Luke Chapter 9. We will read verses 43-50 today.

**Verses 43–44: “And they were all amazed at the majesty of God. But while everyone marveled at all the things which Jesus did, He said to His disciples, ‘Let these words sink down into your ears, for the Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men.’”**

The words Jesus spoke here—what words exactly? It should be when His disciples could not cast the demon out of the boy possessed by a demon, in verse 41: “Then Jesus answered and said, ‘O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you and bear with you?’”

Jesus defined this generation as a faithless and perverse generation. Because of unbelief, they could not appropriate the Lord's power and thus could not cast out demons. Because of perverseness, this generation deviated from God's will. Therefore all kinds of demons ran rampant, and there were many demon-possessed people.

And Jesus' disciples? They also could not cast out demons; the basic reason was unbelief. Because of unbelief, they could not appropriate Christ's power, so they could not be a shining testimony in this perverse age. Therefore Jesus said: “how long shall I be with you and bear with you?”

While the crowd was marveling and astonished that Jesus could heal this demon-possessed boy, what Jesus cared about was His disciples. Because His ministry had entered the later stage, after He left the earth His disciples would continue His

earthly ministry; therefore He charged them to let these words sink down into their ears, for the Son of Man was about to be betrayed into the hands of men.

**Verse 45: “But they did not understand this saying, and it was hidden from them so that they did not perceive it; and they were afraid to ask Him about this saying.”**

For the disciples, these words were truly not easy to comprehend, because they had just on the mount of transfiguration seen Jesus’ countenance change, His clothes become white and glistening—so holy, so glorious—and Moses and Elijah speaking with Jesus. And after coming down the mountain Jesus immediately cast out a demon. The heavenly on the mountain and the victory at the foot of the mountain—such scenes with the Son of Man about to be betrayed into the hands of men—seemed impossible to put together, impossible to connect. Therefore they could not understand the words Jesus spoke, because their meaning was hidden from them so that they did not perceive it, and they were afraid to ask the meaning of these words.

Many times, when God’s leading comes upon us and we are unclear, actually the best way is to come directly before Christ to inquire. Lay our real condition bare before Christ, asking Christ to help us; let us truly know His leading, His will. As long as we are humble, as long as we have a heart willing to obey, Christ is willing to reveal in our hearts, letting us truly understand the mystery of His will. But the disciples at this time still had some pride in their hearts, so they could not humble themselves to ask Jesus what it meant. On one hand they could not ask Jesus, but among themselves they began to argue.

**Verse 46: “Then a dispute arose among them as to which of them would be greatest.”**

I believe this is related to the experience that just happened. On one hand, on the mountain so glorious, so holy; on the other hand, at the foot of the mountain so victorious. They must have thought their Master was about to receive the kingdom; their Master was the coming Messiah. Since the Teacher was about to reign, then we students should serve at the Teacher's side—but who exactly would stand in front? Therefore it produced competition, and competition brought argument: who exactly would be greatest?

**Verses 47–48: “And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a little child and set him by Him, and said to them, ‘Whoever receives this little child in My name receives Me, and whoever receives Me receives Him who sent Me. For he who is least among you all will be great.’”**

Jesus knows all the hidden things in people's hearts; the disciples argued about who would be greatest, and Jesus very directly and concretely took a little child and set him in their midst, then said to the disciples: “Whoever receives this little child in My name receives Me.” The little child represents Christians who are immature in spiritual life, weak.

In the church, toward those who have just come, toward the weak, toward those just saved, we must receive such little children in the Lord's name, because whoever receives these little children receives the Lord Jesus Christ; and whoever receives the Lord Jesus Christ receives the Father who sent Him.

In ordinary worldly groups, people like to receive the great, the honorable, those with status, those with power. In God's household it is exactly the opposite: we must receive the weak, the small, the immature, letting them live and remain in God's household. Because whoever receives these weak and small receives the Lord Jesus Christ.

The secret of the church's prosperity is that every one who comes into the church needing help, needing care, can receive appropriate help, appropriate care. Not only helping solve outward matters, but more importantly building them up in

spiritual life: if he needs feeding, there is bread of life distributed to him daily; if he needs equipping, there are saints willing to lead him to learn to serve.

If every saint in the church can find saints younger than himself, weaker than himself, more immature than himself to care for, this church is one that frequently receives the Lord Jesus Christ and frequently receives Father God; God will surely add all His blessings to such a church. Therefore Jesus brought a conclusion: For he who is least among you all will be great. Because the least receives love, care, and support from all sides. In worldly groups they fawn on the great; in God's household we care for the small, therefore the least is the greatest.

**Verse 49: "Now John answered and said, 'Master, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow with us.'"**

John was known as a son of thunder; he had a hot temper and a very direct personality, so his question was very direct: He saw someone casting out demons in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ but not with them, so he said: "we forbade him because he does not follow with us."

**Verse 50: "But Jesus said to him, 'Do not forbid him, for he who is not against us is on our side.'"**

Today Christianity has many different denominations; different denominations have different practices, methods, even different in theological views and interpretations, thus often causing situations where churches attack each other. Jesus was not like that; He was very inclusive: "for he who is not against us is on our side."

The question John raised speaks of the narrowness of the human heart; people often demand outwardly that we have uniform practices, uniform methods. But Jesus is exactly the opposite—He is inclusive. As long as we are all in the name of the Lord, even if our ways of gathering differ, our worship songs' music differs, our

church practices differ—these cannot become conditions for us to attack each other, because he who is not against us is with side.

On the contrary, in 11:23 Jesus also said: “He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad.” At first glance it seems exactly the opposite of what is said here, so reading Scripture must look at the context. In 9:50 Jesus said, “for he who is not against us is on our side,” spoken toward those who cast out demons in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. In other words, they all believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, but they walk different paths and have different practices.

And in Luke 11:23, when Jesus said, “He who is not with Me is against Me,” these words were spoken toward those who said Jesus cast out demons by Beelzebub the ruler of the demons, those who came to test Jesus Christ. Toward those who test the Lord and oppose the Lord, Jesus said: “He who is not with Me is against Me.” So the principle is: toward our enemies we are severe; toward Satan’s attacks we do not compromise; but toward those who are also Christians we are inclusive.

Truly hope that saints in different denominations or with different practices can all hold to the principle established by the Lord Jesus Christ: he who is not against us is on our side. Under such a principle we can be harmonious and united. Augustine once said: in essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty, in all things charity. May God help us.

Let us pray together: Lord, yes, let us learn in the church to receive the weak, those in need, and recognize that he who is not against us is on our side. Help us, give us a broad heart to receive all who are likewise Christians. Bless us, let us all become disciples according to Your heart. Thank You. We pray in the holy name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.