

**“Everyone who believes in Jesus” Romans 10:5-13 / Luke 4:1-13 (3/9/25)**

As I shared before, I am the first person who believed in Jesus Christ in my family. And by the blessing of God, my whole family became Christians, and they are very dedicated to the church and God. My family did not understand why I wanted to be a pastor, and they were not really supportive of my dream to be a pastor. But now they are my best supporters, and sometimes, they are much more serious about the church and ministry than me.

When I shared my faith story of how I became a Christian, many people also wondered about my family’s conversion story. So, today, I hope to share my mother’s conversion story.

When I started to go to church in New Zealand, my parents opened a restaurant in South Korea. Since they were not Christians when they opened a restaurant, they opened and worked on Sundays. And there was a church with about 300 members just next to my parents’ restaurant. So, some church people came to my parent’s restaurant to have lunch between the morning service and the afternoon service.

In this church, there was an elderly woman who was very talented in bringing new people into the church. Her nickname in the church was “The Queen of

Evangelism.” One day, this lady came to my parents’ restaurant, and she was very impressed by my parents’ attitude. Since my father grew up in a very strong Confucianism culture, he respected, honored, and served elderly people really well with his heart and strength. My parents’ attitude toward this Queen of Evangelism touched this lady’s heart. So, this Queen of Evangelism targeted my parents and decided to make my parents to be Christians.

So, this lady came to my parents’ restaurant almost every day. She just possessed one table in the restaurant and started to keep talking about Christianity and God. At that time, my parents also did not like Christians, so they really felt difficult from this elderly lady’s pressures. This elderly lady talked about God so much that my parents couldn't work. My parents wanted to let her go out, but they could not because she was an elderly person. My parents respected and honored her well, even though she bothered my parents a lot every day.

While my parents were struggling with the Queen of Evangelism, I experienced the presence of God and met Jesus in New Zealand. So, I sent an email to my parents about my experience with the Holy Spirit. My parents were really upset about me after they received an email. They could not believe I decided to believe in Jesus. They were especially upset because I told them I would not inherit

the ancestor ceremony for my family.

My parents were very concerned about me at that time. They had nobody to share their concerned hearts. So, my parents made a huge mistake. They shared my story with the Queen of Evangelism. So, this elderly lady had some clue to make my parents to be Christians. She told my parents, “If there is someone in your family who believes in Jesus, you will be in big trouble if you do not believe in Jesus. You will have woe if you do not believe in Jesus while your son started to believe in Jesus!” Yes, it was almost a curse. My parents were upset in their hearts because of what this elderly lady said. But they did not express their emotion to her because she was an elderly person.

After this event, sometime later, my sister was diagnosed with a tumor in her uterus. I do not clearly remember if she had pain or if it was just a regular checkup. Anyway, she was diagnosed with a tumor. The doctor said to my sister and my mother that no matter whether the tumor was cancer or not. Anyway, she needed to have surgery to take off that tumor, and my sister would be hard to have a baby in the future. My mother was shocked and did not know what to do. She did not want to show her emotion to my sister, so she went to the hospital restroom and flopped down on the toilet, then suddenly said, “Lord.” Later, she told me that she did not

know why she found the name of the Lord at that time. Anyway, she told me that the first word after she was shocked was, “Lord.” It was not Buddha or Confu or the names of other gods. The first word was “Lord.” Then she started to pray. “Lord, if it is not cancer, and my daughter can have a baby in the future, I will be a Christian.”

Fortunately, the tumor was not cancer. My mother prayed for the baby, but she decided to become a Christian before my sister got married. Later, my mother told me the reason why she decided to become a Christian before my sister had a baby. She confessed that she went to the church before she got married. She became a Buddhist and followed the Confucianism tradition because my father's side of the family was Buddhist and Confucianism family. She converted to Buddhism for the peace of the family and to have one religion in the family. She said it was not hard to change her religion because even though she went to the church and offered tithe every month to the church, she did not know about Jesus; she just went to the church for religion and blessings. So, she thought there would be no difference if she could ask a blessing for the family to Buddha instead of Jesus. She believed that the Holy Spirit guided her to find the name of Jesus in the hospital restroom. Otherwise, it was not possible to call the name of the Lord before she found Buddha. So, she decided to become a Christian after my sister got well. Now, my sister is very healthy, too much healthy, fighting with fat every day. She had a baby after my mother

became a Christian, and this baby, my niece, became a middle school student last week.

According to the church doctrine that people know in tradition, my mother committed the worst sin that a human can commit against God. She left God and worshiped idols – She was also very passionate about Shamanism – and persecuted Christians. However, God was with my mother when she went to church when she was single, and I believe that God was with my mother even before that when she was born. Also, God was with her when she left God, and God was with her when she was scared by my sister's health issues. God embraced my mother when she returned to God. And God is with my mother and my family now. My mother became a warrior of prayer, and she helped more than 10 people to become Christians.

In today's Luke Scripture, we can read a very well-known Bible story, which is Jesus's temptation story in the wilderness. We might hear that Jesus defeated the devil with the Word of God, so we also, like Jesus, should make our faith stand firm on the Word of God to overcome our suffering and temptation.

This time, God made me think about why Luke wrote this story in the Gospel. This story probably was possible to make people misunderstand "Is Jesus real God? Then how does this God be tempted by the devil?" This story probably shows the

weakness of Jesus. I thought about why Luke wrote this story in the Gospel.

Luke positioned this story after the story of Jesus's baptism and the genealogy of Jesus and right before the story of Jesus beginning his ministry. So, this story of Jesus's temptation shows that Jesus was tempted after his baptism and before he started his ministry. Luke purposed to write the Gospel to show the universalism of the Gospel, which means the Gospel is for everyone in the world. So, Luke might emphasize Jesus's humanity rather than his divinity in the very first part of the Gospel. Luke showed that Jesus was also tempted; humans could be tempted, and people could overcome the temptation as Jesus overcame it. This story might help many Gentiles who had already committed sin, like idol worship or blasphemy of God's name, before they decided to believe in Jesus. At this time, Gentiles in the Roman Empire worshiped many idols and followed very sinful cultures. So, this story of Jesus's temptation might encourage many Gentiles to think they still had the chance of repentance and return to God from their sinful lives. Luke showed that everyone who believed in Jesus could return to God from their temptation as Jesus did.

The apostle Paul wrote a letter to the Church in Rome. The church in Rome had many struggles between Jews and Gentiles. Paul said in his letter, "Everyone

who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” Actually, both Jews and Gentiles were sinners in the church of Rome. Jews killed Jesus, and Gentiles worshiped and followed other gods. Paul did not say only Jews or only Gentiles would be saved. He said, “Everyone who believed in Jesus will be saved.” Since we are all Gentiles, I hope to apply this to us, “Everyone, whether someone had previously turned away from God, had sinned against God, or had denied God, everyone who confesses Jesus is Lord will be saved.”

Today is the first Sunday of Lent. Lent season is a very good time to make our faith grow and disciplined. But it is also a good time to return our hearts to our Lord Jesus Christ. I hope we can be free from the burdens of the past. Actually, blasphemy of God and idol worship is the worst sin that the Bible says. But God was with my mother, and God guided her to return to God. Through this season of Lent, I hope we can be free from our burdens and return to God, who is waiting for us to be in God’s arms. Everyone who believes in Jesus will be saved. Amen.