

The Person of the Covenant (Ac. 7:54-60)

May you no longer be oppressed by the coronavirus and restore the peace inside of you and truly give worship to God. If there is anything that suppresses your spiritual life you must truly get rid of that. It is because you must never exchange anything for God's blessing. Everything has come to an end so may you truly resolve in your heart as well too. Many people say that the coronavirus is the same as catching a cold. In the past when you caught a cold and were coughing you would still come to the place of worship. Many people are so oppressed by the coronavirus to the extent that they no longer even want to come in contact with anyone because they don't want to give it to anybody else. I do believe that this is a historical disaster but may we no longer be seized by it. It is because many of the churches are being defeated due to this coronavirus. Through the RU Latin America disciple course the lecturers that came from Korea said that at least 10,000 churches in Korea have closed down due to this pandemic. They can just re-gather at the place of worship however due to the pandemic and the churches closing down many have come to the habit of not going to the place of worship so they no longer go to church. Even if they may not be at the place of worship they should still give offerings to the Lord but yet many of the churches that have closed down no longer give offerings to the church as well. Rightfully, they should continuously give offerings to the Lord even if they may not be at the place of worship but yet they are not able to sustain the church. It is such a pitiful state. We are all the people of God. It's not just a commission that you have received to keep and protect the church. Of course, I believe that it's a very serious matter within the churches of America because of this coronavirus that is one the rise. Right now many of the spiritually weak believers are crumbling due to this matter. Of course for those who are continuously at the place of worship, they are here because of God's grace. Then rightfully so we must be able to hold onto the commission that has been given to them and save this age. You must not just let it simply pass by. May you not follow after the things of the world this has become another custom of the world. It's stated in Ephesians chapter 2 verse 2 and also in a hymn. In the hymn it says, "even if there are many changes that take place within the custom of the world I will continuously keep my faith". May this be the time of worship where you firmly hold onto the covenant and commission God has given to you and really save this age. May you not be swayed by what is taking place due to this coronavirus. May you not be like that. Until the second coming of Jesus you must stake your life and keep the gospel. For that reason, God has saved you. Do you believe that hell exists? Do you truly believe that all mankind will end up in hell? If you truly don't have that sense of that then you have no reason to know the importance of salvation. But yet by God's grace he has saved us all. We must never forget that. You must live an upright life. You must live by the gospel. You must be the one that relays the gospel. Today's message is entitled the person of the covenant Stephen. He was martyred. He was stoned to death as he testified the gospel. At that time his spiritual eyes were open to see the heavens opened and the Son of Man stand-

ing at the right hand of God. Of course, no one was able to see that only Stephen was able to see it. Also towards the end it says that as Stephen spoke of these words all those who stoned Stephen said that he had the face of an angel. It's truly outstanding; it means that God exists. Of course, God does exist but yet for many they are not able to believe that. For Christians worship is the greatest blessing. Of course, if God did not open the way for us to meet God there would not be a single second where we are able to meet God with our own strength. However, God sees worship very important. In the time of the wilderness God commanded the Israelites to build a tabernacle. Why did God want them to build a tabernacle so that God can sleep inside of it? This is what it says in Exodus 25 verse 22, "There I will meet with you and I will speak with you." There is similar content written in Exodus 29 verse 42, "It shall be a regular burnt offering throughout your generations at the entrance of the tent of meeting before the Lord." The burnt offering is the representative offering given before the Lord. As we give worship in the present time the burnt offering to them in the past was to give worship. "And the Lord God says there I will meet with you. Only at the time when you give the burnt offering to which it is the time of worship. And He said to speak to you there." If the people of God do not believe nor listen to the word of God they will become a complete mess. How much of an important time is it for God to meet his people the Israelites. If they continuously prayed yet God does not meet them what should they do? They must be able to hold onto the covenant as the word and continuously give worship because God will meet you at the place of worship. God you said that you would give me your word so give me your word. All you have to do is receive his word and his word will undoubtedly be fulfilled. No one can ever block his word. This is the mystery that you hold to and for the sake of that reason he tells them to build the tabernacle. In God's point of view this was very important. For the people of God what they believed was important was what to eat and to drink but in God's point of view worship and the word itself was more important. The fundamental solution to all of it which contains the bread was worship and his word. That is why may you give worship with a sincere heart please do not take worship so lightly. May you come to church early and prepare your heart in prayer as you wait for the worship to begin. Many people say that they are so burdened by the things I say regarding you to come to church early but may you come to church early for your own sake. We always proclaim that we are giving worship in spirit and in truth. We are giving spiritual worship, the worship of spirit and truth. We must be able to receive the word of God as the truth during the time of worship. So can you take worship lightly and receive God's word? Without receiving the word of God how can you receive the guidance of the Holy Spirit? May you truly place your heart in the time of worship it is very important. Worship is so important for your sake. What would happen if there was no worship in the church? There would be no function of the church. Do you agree with this? Of course there are many tasks that must be done in the church. If there is no worship in the church then there is no function of the church. That is why worship is important. Worship is very important to the church and to the individual lives. If there is nothing that you can ever do the

thing that you must do is give worship and to pray. What will happen if you fervently pray but yet do not give worship to God? Then all the prayers of the individual will all be in vain. Why? Because worship is fundamentally more important than prayer. Like I shared with you please do not be suppressed by the pandemic and the coronavirus. I hope that you will be able to see that it's merely just like a mild case of the cold so may you resolve this in your hearts. You must be able to get rid of and take care of the after effects of this corona pandemic. Is it right of the church to be defeated by the pandemic which is on the rise? May you hold your commission. God will be pleased with the heart of commission that you have and will bless you.

1. The Covenant

It is a very important aspect of the time when Stephen was stoned to death. He knew the history of what was taking place by the Word of God, as stated in Acts 7. He was testifying the covenant to which he was martyred. The covenant in other words in the gospel is Christ. To go in depth, it is the three offices of what he has done. The prophet, king, and priest is the gospel. Those who believe in Christ gain salvation. You must not believe in anything else, but believe in Christ to gain salvation. You will gain salvation when you believe that he is your prophet, king, and priest. As they live their life and hold to this, they will see God's authority. Isn't this truly amazing? May you hold to this as your covenant. At times it may not be easy, but if you struggle to hold to him as your covenant, God's authority will be upon you. It's truly amazing. That is His promise. God didn't say it will be done when it takes place in you first. God said you don't need full faith in this, but regardless, His word will be fulfilled. It is an amazing grace. You face problems. Some may ask and question why it is not taking place. Others may ask why they hold to the covenant, but nothing takes place. No one can ever state the true reason because they are not God but there is the most fundamental thing that must be done regardless of the reasons. It is the question stated after Matthew 16:13. Think about it and ask yourself who Christ is to you. When you come to an answer to this you can say you have come to a conclusion of Christ. Many people pass this by. They hear of it, acknowledge it, and never place it in their hearts. If they acknowledge it, they should believe it, hold to it to have complete victory over it, but they pass it by. May you not be like that anymore. You need the answer. You need a solution to your problems. God has given you the solution and that is Jesus Christ. God states in Matthew 6:33, hold to Christ and He will add everything to you. If you really think about it, isn't it such amazing work? You must ask yourself and do this. Last week, we read Deuteronomy 8. The core point of it is that the Lord said that it is not by bread, but the Word of God. Mankind seeks after bread, but God seeks His Word. That is because the bread is inside the Word of God. You need the Word, but you seek after the bread and that is the deception of Satan. Unknowingly, you are being deceived by Satan by having those thoughts first. When you pray, you must give the confession of Christ. You must rightfully confess to Christ and then give personal prayers to God. In most cases, you do not pray the confession of Christ, but only pray for your own desires. You simply put the

gospel aside and live a religious life. It is a pitiful state and you must fix yourself. In the introduction, I stated that God will meet you there. God said that He will speak to you. That is because God's Word is your answer. It is not done by bread alone, but is by the Word of God. I request to not let it pass, but hold to it. May you grit your teeth and hold onto this. If the word does not come inside of you, you will become strange. For 400 years before Jesus came, there was no prophet. There was never a case like this in the history of Israel. That is why Jesus came. God showed miracles that mankind cannot even imagine, but yet they did not come to know who Jesus was. Who was able to do the miracle of the five loaves and two fish? They simply wanted a king to reign, but never thought of confessing Christ. In the end, they nailed Jesus on the cross. If you do not receive the Word of God, you will be in this state. They completely overturned the Bible. They had their own ideology to which they overturned the eWord of God into a religion and went to the point where they thought it was rightful to nail Jesus on the cross. God has given the answer to which it is the solution that was derived from original sin. God gave a promise to be the solution to all problems ever since original sin. That is Christ. May your spiritual eyes be opened to Only Christ. God gave on promise after original sin and that is Only Christ. You need to challenge this. You must challenge yourself to see if this is the truth, to see if Jesus Christ really is your only answer. You must challenge it amidst your financial difficulties. Right now, my family is facing such a difficult problem, but is Jesus Christ truly the answer? You must challenge it. That is how you become a witness of Christ and become the one that comes to the answer of Only Christ. You must come to this answer to which all of your fears are cast away. How can Christ become your only answer? First and foremost, Christ must be your answer spiritually. That is through meditating on the Word of God. You must listen to the message and meditate on anything that hits your heart. Whenever you listen to the message, may you write down the message. I believe that you may receive grace from listening while moving around, but it will not be left inside of your heart. You must be able to write down the message so that it goes into your heart. Through the Word and meditation, you must ask yourself if Jesus is your Christ. After you come to the answer of Christ, you must hold to the covenant and confess. You must be able to confess that Jesus is your Christ, the answer to all problems. And when you do this, Satan will hinder you so much. If you continue this, you will spiritually come to the answer. When you come to the answer, spiritual power will come upon you. That is because you will have faith in him. You will have hope that it will be done. Along the way, there may be ups and downs of your spiritual state, but may you disregard that and continue this. Then little by little, God will give you evidence. When he gives you evidence, it will be spiritual inheritance that you can testify to. And you will continuously come to see that it is only Christ, and you will come to the complete answer of only Christ. Then, you will be able to go in the depths of Christ. To be honest, I don't have any concerns regarding my future. I was never like this before. To be honest, in the past, when I first began to worship with you all, I had so many questions about God. Of course, there are many pastors who, as they do their pastoral min-

istry, have many concerns and questions and anxiety about what to do with the church. As a pastor, they have many concerns. "What should I do about evangelism, mission, and the disciples?" And there are many pastors who get stressful about their ministry, and they ultimately give up. But I have not a single concern about it. It's because God has given me the covenant for it. And I believe that the covenant will be fulfilled. I don't simply have faith in it just because. I have faith because God has given me His word that is the covenant. Does faith belong to us? No, it does not. It is the gift that God has given to us. I am able to see the work that God is doing in my life. That is why I am able to have the full conviction that God will do it. And once in a while, I think to myself, "Wow, it is really only by God's grace that I am in this state." And once again, I am able to consciously and unconsciously confirm that it is because of the gospel of Jesus Christ. And I believe that my spiritual state is different from other pastors because I struggled to truly come to the answer of only Christ. In the past when I first gave worship with you all, I had questions I could not share with anyone. I was not able to express myself, but I had many questions to God, "God, why am I like this?" But now I don't have any of those questions. And now I no longer have the question, "God, why is it like this," but now, because I have the covenant, I am able to follow after the covenant of what he will do through me. Once in a while, I really think about it, and I'm really thankful because it is all by the works that God has done. Some may feel burdened if I share my honest opinion, but I do believe that the start of what took place in me was through writing the covenantal prayer. Of course, in the past, I continuously listened to the gospel messages. And because I am a pastor, I listened to the messages a lot more than others. I'm sorry to say this, but in the past, it simply ended with receiving grace. Yet, it was not my personal covenant. And of course, I received much grace to the point to which I was able to relay this grace in the bible study that I had with others. And regardless of my not-so-fluent English, I was able to testify the gospel, and many were able to stay and listen to what I had to say. But in the past, I simply knew the gospel. That was not my personal gospel. Does that mean we all have to write the covenantal prayer to be in the state that I am? No, I'm just saying that it was for my own experience. I was able to see the difference in my spiritual state when I was able to and not able to write the covenantal prayer. Of course, my prayer is still the same as it was in the past. And I'm not sure, but maybe it's just me. But I believe that we all must go in the depths of this gospel even more. One day, God gave me the grace to which I was able to give my sincere confession in Christ. Of course, there are times when we might simply write the covenantal prayer and it doesn't truly become our own to which we are able to make a sincere confession to God. And there are times when we don't even want to have the heart to pray. And in the past, there were times when I simply wrote the covenant once and simply fell asleep. But even if I didn't pray too much, as long as I was able to write the covenantal prayer, I felt reassured. Then, but God's grace one day, He poured it down to which I was able to make a sincere confession to Christ. And for a month, I really anticipated that time would come. I received much grace. But as time passes, I am now simply writing the cov-

enantal prayer because it has become a habit. But even right now when I do write it, it has much more spiritual power and authority compared to the past. And as I was continuously meditating on the covenantal prayer, God gave me my own personal covenant. Of course, when I first received it, I was so thankful to God. As time passed by, the covenant really went in the depths of my heart to the extent to which I was able to make this confession before God. And now I was able to understand what it meant for Joseph to receive the dreams from God. Of course, in the beginning, it was merely a dream. But could he have been able to ever forget the dream? He was in the process of holding onto that dream as his covenant, praying with that dream, and even questioning God about the dream. And as time passes by, the dream truly became his own covenant to which he was able to stand before God. That was God's sure covenant that he has made with Joseph to which, even if he was sold as a slave, it wouldn't matter. There are no records of Joseph grumbling or struggling. And in the past, when Reverend Ryu said to Joseph all that was to come, I questioned, "Did he really know all of this?" And I did understand, "Yes, that dream could have become his covenant and it could have been his faith." But I questioned, "Was Joseph truly able to conquer, receive, and enjoy all of that in advance?" But now I'm able to understand half of that. It's because I have what Joseph has. In the end, it's all faith. If you have firm faith in God alone, then even if you don't go there, even if the work has not yet been done, you will have faith that God will do it all. I believe this covenant alone is the greatest spiritual weapon in this world. And if God is able to give you all of the blessings, wouldn't anyone write down the covenantal prayer? That's why, even today, I write down the covenantal prayer. But the thing is, as time passes by, I see that I'm able to enjoy the breathing prayer. In the past, I was not able to be conscious of my breathing as I wrote the covenantal prayer to which I was not able to receive much grace. It takes me about an hour to write it, and when I'm able to do the breathing prayer, after some time, it disappears. But now my state has changed. I'm able to do the breathing prayer for an hour. Of course, my breathing is still rough. But it's a start. Why did God give me this grace? It's because I'm doing only Christ. Is there an answer outside of Christ? Of course, no one is able to do well in doing only Christ from the get-go. They struggle to hold onto Christ to which they are at the place that they are. So God has given the lifelong covenant, the lifelong prayer, and along with that, breathing to enjoy all of it. That's what it means to conquer in advance when that is continuously taking place in your life. Why am I able to share this with you all? It is because the word is unchanging. Regardless of whether you are good or bad, or regardless of ethics, it doesn't matter. If you receive the word, that is your lifelong answer. God's desire has no correlation with mankind's ethics. Regardless of the fact that you do well or don't, it doesn't matter. In fact, God will be glorified even more through you. Everything came to an end for Joseph when he received the dream. Was that a dream for him? No, it was the word of God. That was the covenant God had given to him. That was the prophecy for what was to come in the near future for Joseph. Everything else came to an end for Joseph after he received the covenant because God is almighty. Moses was able to receive the word of God at Mount

Horeb. That was his personal covenant. He was a very renowned figure as he was able to record the book of Genesis. He knew the sure covenant that it is the offspring of a woman that was able to crush the serpent's head and that was Jesus Christ. Yet for Moses, he lacked a direction in his life. He knew the gospel, yet had no choice but to wander. For all of us, we all know that Jesus is the Christ. Do you have your life direction? Is that where you're staking your life on? Is that truly your life? If you don't have the direction what will happen? You have no choice but to wander. You have no choice but to do the things that are not important. That is why you must receive the word. Stephen was able to receive the word. He knew the word to the extent that he did not misinterpret the word of God and was able to be stoned to death. To the very end, he prayed to God and testified of the gospel and prayed not to allow the sin to be against them. You must live this life as well. Especially for the remnants and young adults, shouldn't you live this life as well? What is so valuable in the world? You must enjoy Christ and receive the covenant. Regarding the pandemic, through this, many churches have closed down and American churches have already closed down. God has given us the gospel, should we just close our mouths and not testify of the true answer? Is it truly right of us to fight and cry amongst each other because of all the problems that are on the rise? Because the pandemic is coming to an end, we must overturn all things with the gospel. May you not be in fear just because you catch the virus, it is similar to a cold. I am not saying it on behalf of those staying at home with the virus, if you are not feeling well, of course, you should stay at home. What I am trying to say is to no longer be fearful of COVID and be deceived by Satan. The reason why I testify of the importance of worship is because of COVID, many people are changing on not being at the place of worship. If we are being suppressed by this virus, who will testify the gospel to those in the field who need it? I spoke about this in Friday service, if there is a special case where you need to stay at home, then rightfully you should give worship at home. For those who do not have a special case where they cannot come to the place of worship, is that true worship giving it through the screen? For example, if you are hospitalized, of course, you should worship on the screen. What I am trying to say is that the thought that it is alright to give worship at home because of the pandemic, you have been deceived by Satan. Little by little the churches have no choice but to close down and be defeated by the pandemic. If the church stays like this, many people will simply give worship through their phones and not be at the place of worship. Whenever I speak about offering, there are many who are quite sensitive regarding the topic. If someone lives far away, of course, they must give an offering online. There is spiritual meaning in the fact that you are giving your offering in person. You may simply give an offering through the online service, but the spiritual grace that you receive will diminish. Whenever we gather together, we are able to receive much grace unknowingly. That is why we emphasize gatherings. God prophesied in the Old Testament that we must stand before him at least three times a year. If you are simply alone, there is no effect from others. That is why the believer's fellowship is so important. May you once again confirm you have Christ and pray to receive his covenant. May you really come to

the answer of Christ and stand as his witness. Today we are giving a special offering for training located in Guatemala but when we go to Guatemala what should we do? We must testify that Jesus is the Christ and that people must believe in only Christ. We must stand as witnesses that our entire lives will be used to testify the gospel. May the blessing be upon you.

2. Commission

If you have the commission and the answer, you must enjoy it. When you receive answers, that is how you will live. You must live first in order to save others. That is what we call a witness. You must relay this answer to others. These are the committed workers, those who have the commission. The commission is not a task, it is an answer. That is why, whoever you may be, you must testify, "Lord I am here, please send me". It is the cross that is able to save all of mankind from curses. You must testify of the cross. This is what it says in Deuteronomy 8:1, "The whole commandment that I command you today you shall be careful to do, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land that the Lord swore to give to your fathers." You must first live, you cannot spiritually die. It is not the fact that you simply live, your entire life must be revived to the extent that you are able to multiply. God has already destined the future land that you must go towards. You must enter that. That is the answer. That is the blessing and that is God's plan for you. How can you enjoy God's plan? God has written it, you must be able to keep his whole commandment. That is how you will receive the answer. The end of the gospel is the law. The law and the gospel itself go hand in hand. It is not completely different. If there is the gospel without the law, it is only half of the gospel. If there is the gospel without the law, that is all in deceit. You have been deceived. This is what it says in 1 Corinthians 9:21, "(not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ)". There is the law inside of Christ. It is even more powerful. In the past, if one has stolen, they have gone against the law. If you simply have the slightest heart to steal, you would go against the law. What should you keep? You must firstly enjoy Christ and that could only be done through the ten commandments. Next, it is the four commandments. You must be able to keep it and be strengthened. That is the prayer, answer, and worship. We must go hand in hand together. Satan has his own organization. We must be able to reveal this as well. That is why we emphasize the importance of worship. What else should you do? What other value is there for you? May you all be the ones that keep it. May we be the church that is able to restore the pre-COVID state. This is what God has promised, if you do so, you will live. Your life will be restored and you will multiply. Your family and children will prosper. There is a promising land that God has prepared for you. You will be able to enjoy the blessing to enter the land. That is the answer. That is why you must keep it. I bless us all in the name of the Lord that we will be the church to overturn the after effects of COVID.