

The BEST and GREAT APNTS of the CROSS

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I. Words of Thanks

Dear brothers and sisters, I would like to open my inauguration message with words of gratitude. These words of gratitude to you may be short in terms of quantity but long in my heart in terms of quality.

First of all, I do give utmost thanks to my God who has called me to partake in His Life. It is God's grace that enables me to serve the entire community of faith through the ministry of our educational institution, APNTS. Surely God is so Good that He has loved me and that He gave His eternal Life through a revival meeting at Yee Cheon Church of the Nazarene at my home town in Korea in 1968 when I was 16 years old. From then until now, He has never forsaken me. Thus, I confess that "in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose" (Rom 8:28 NIV).

I want to thank all of you who are here now. Some of you came to APNTS by walking, by driving, or by airplane. For some of you it took less than one hour, for others perhaps more than twenty-four hours. But there is one common reason why you come here. That is, all your hearts are full of love for APNTS. Our professors, our staff, and especially our students (the future of our Nazarene Church) exemplify loving commitment to be part of this institution. Therefore, words are not enough to say thank you very much for being here during my inauguration as the sixth president of APNTS.

I would like to say thanks to Dr. Neville Bartle, the Chairman of our Board of Trustees, and to all the board members. They wanted me to be inaugurated on the thirtieth anniversary of APNTS last November. But

¹ Editor's Note: The following represents a substantial expansion of the original address, presented on January 7, 2014. A recording of President Im's address is accessible from http://www.apnts.edu.ph/media/chapel/?sermon_id=29.

they have been very patient until today. I give thanks to Rev. Mark Louw, Asia-Pacific Regional Director. He has given many words of encouragement to serve APNTS for the Nazarene churches, especially in the Asia-Pacific Region. I would like to say thanks to Dr. Daniel Copp, our Education Commissioner of the Church of the Nazarene, who gave me words of support and encouragement to serve APNTS. I would like also to express my gratitude to Dr. David Busic, our General Superintendent of the Church of the Nazarene. He was not only a pastor but also the former president of our sister school, Nazarene Theological Seminary in Kansas City, so he has special concern for APNTS as well. I believe that he is praying, not only for NTS in Kansas City, but also for APNTS continually. I would like to learn from his leadership.

I also would like to say thank you very much to all of our former presidents: Drs. Owens, Fairbanks, Nielson, Fukue and Cunningham. God has used all of these leaders so that APNTS could be what it is today. I believe that APNTS has been an educational provider faithfully serving the churches first in the Asia-Pacific Region and also throughout the world by nurturing the ministers whom the churches have needed for the last 30 years. At this moment I would like to give great thanks to Dr. Owens, the founder of the APNTS and my father in Christ, who is now 88 years old. He was determined to travel from the United States to APNTS for this particular occasion. He prayed for me while I served at Korean Nazarene University, the institution he founded in 1954, and he will also pray for me while I serve APNTS, the one he also founded in 1984.

I would like also to mention some names of those who came from Korea as my friends, my seniors, my mentors, and my supporters. The first one is Rev. Ryu Doo Hyun. He is the chairman of Korean Nazarene University. He was also my church's senior pastor, and he has been helping me like my elder brother. I would like to call my older friend, Rev. Hyun Hae Chun. He was also a former chairman of the KNU Trustees Board. He has been a model to me both as a Christian and as a theologian who loves the Bible as the unique foundation of his theology of sanctification. I would like to thank Dr. Shin Min Gyu who is the present KNU president. He and his church, along with KNU, have supported APNTS very much. I thank Rev. Han Gi Dong, the Korea National District Superintendent. He and I were junior high school students at the same school. I

want to thank Dr. Lee Key Suk who has encouraged me to persevere whenever I encountered very hard times for more than one decade. You may also know Dr. Kim Young Baek very well. He is the living history of the Korean Church of the Nazarene and has made great contributions, not only to Korean Nazarene churches, Korean Nazarene University, and the global Church of the Nazarene, but also to APNTS in many ways. Finally, I give thanks to my wife who has prayed for me with a loving heart from God, my second daughter who came from the United States, and my first daughter with her two children. I want to introduce also my first daughter's mother-in-law, who is taking care of my first daughter's second child. I have many other Korean friends here, but due to limited time I cannot mention all of you, I deeply apologize.

Lastly, I would like to give great thanks to our former president, Dr. Floyd Cunningham. I really respect his leadership, honesty, faithfulness, and scholarship. I think that he has shown a model life of an entirely sanctified Christian and genuine member of the Church of the Nazarene. Our Board of Trustees chairman conveyed already our appreciation, respect, and love, but once again I honor him: Thank you, Dr. Cunningham, for your great contribution to APNTS for the last 30 years.

II. The Ministry of the Great Commission to Dispense God's Life

Dear brothers and sisters, as I start my ministry to serve APNTS as a humble servant of God, I cannot but pray first: O, my God who is Good, help me so that the Life of the Father and the Love of the Son by the Power of the Spirit may overflow through my ministry at APNTS to the churches in the Asia-Pacific Region and throughout the world.

Thus, my ministry at APNTS should be a means to manifest God's eternal and ultimate will, which is nothing else than the dispensation of the Life of God in order to build the Body of Christ by making His children entirely holy as His people for His Kingdom, or making them entirely qualified to enter into New Jerusalem.

As I share with you my prayer request above, it must be first of all related to the ministry for the Life of God to overflow to the churches and all the nations in the Asia-Pacific Region. I may call this ministry, the ministry of the Life of God, the ministry of evangelism, the Great Commission, or simply Life ministry. As Jesus made the purpose of his coming

to the world clear in John 10:10, all Christians mission should be related to the Life ministry or the ministry of dispensing the Life of God: "I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full" (NIV). This ministry must be fruitful as blessed and commanded by God in Genesis 1:28. The reason why God created Adam and Eve has been implied here: that they must be multiplied to rule over the earth, which is "formless and empty" (Gen 1:2 NIV). Thus, APNTS was founded to be used for the Life ministry or the multiplication of the Life of God for His Kingdom. Here is the reason why those courses at APNTS like missiology, evangelism, church planting, church growth, and preaching must be treated as fundamentally required core subjects. I am strongly convinced that I have come to APNTS for the ministry of evangelism, or the Life of God for His Kingdom by helping the students to become capable pastors, missionaries, and educators for their ministry of sharing the Life of God.

III. The 21st Century as the Century of Two Kinds of Crises

When I say that I have come to APNTS to make our students Christlike disciples enabling them to share the Life of God, I feel that the 21st century is full of crises that have threatened our mission of evangelism more seriously than the previous ones. In order for our ministry to be fruitful, we may think about what these crises are. There are several types of crises, and these may be categorized into external and internal crises.

The first type of external crisis is related to the disasters that are beyond our simple thoughts of management. These are the problems related to the issues surrounding human lives, the disasters of nature, or the existence of the earth. These crises could be listed like environmental pollution of the earth, earthquakes, seismic tides, great floods, numerous kinds of war weapons threatening genocide, and actual wars due to the conflicts between nations. All of these make us feel terrified so much very often that it makes us think as if the end of the earth is coming near. South Koreans are tremendously afraid of wars threatened by North Korea and even by both Japan and China. The second type of crisis is related to human physical needs. The lack of daily bread and water, the lack of the basic medical treatment threatening human health and lives, the lack of conducive housing facilities to give shelter for people who are homeless, the lack of jobs to help families survive economically, etc. I was

born and grew up during the Korean War with these conditions. My mother passed away immediately after giving birth to her last son because my hometown had no good hospital to provide the blood my mother needed. Even after returning to Korea with a Ph.D. degree from Drew University, I had no place for my families to dwell. We know that many people, especially in the third world countries, have been threatened by such problems in their daily lives. Human beings in this condition could feel serious disappointments and anger.

The third type of crisis threatening human life is closely related to human minds or sociocultural and moral dimensions. These kinds of crises may be political and economical corruption, military oppression, social injustice, racism, sexism, child trafficking, chauvinistic patriotism, ethnocentrism, no chance of education, a clash of civilization, etc. These crises will also last until the end of human existence.

The fourth type of crisis is due to religious issues in the world. World history may be regarded as the history of religious conflicts. While this world has developed in the area of science and culture, some religions still seem to remain at a primitive level. Orthodox ways of thinking have become intolerant of those sects or religions with different belief-systems, orientations, and worldviews. This sectarianism often ends in persecution. Monotheistic religions could produce the most serious crises in the world in this 21st century.

While the first four types of crises are external ones, I want to call the fifth crisis an internal one, for it could come from the lack of the inner value of human dignity. People seek after peace, freedom, justice, righteousness, and compassion. They would like to be treated as “somebody,” not as “something.” They desire to enter personal relationship with and be respected by others. They would like to express emotions in personal forms and sympathize with those who are in tears and happiness. All of these could be expressed in one word, that is, love. They want to be loved and love others. Love could be the noun to convey all kinds of the fundamental components above so that “love” is always first in human life. If these inner components of love are given to the people whose daily lives are threatened by the four types of external crises above, they could be encouraged to endure even though their current lives are in the midst of miserable conditions due to the external crises.

From this perspective, the real crises are mainly related not to outside problems (the first four external crises) but to the inside one (the fifth one). When people are not treated as human beings, as “beings of love,” or when their lives are not guaranteed with love, they could be like a live volcano ready to explode quickly in many ways. All human beings want to be honored as “beings of love” by others. They want to be respected with the value of love. All human beings, regardless of their race, sex, age, economic condition, or nationality, wish to be treated with love. They are thirsty for love, that is, they are hungry for peace, freedom, nonviolence, joy, justice, righteousness, etc. These have been the fundamental components necessary to their daily lives.

At this point, we may say that if somebody falls with a groan, it might be, not only because they are under serious and heavy external crises, but also because they have not given internal values. Human beings who have not been treated with love might not have any power to endure external crises because they also lack faith and hope. If somebody thinks that the fundamental needs of love, like peace and freedom, could be interchanged with another type of fundamental need of human beings, like economic welfare or prosperity, it would be a great mistake and temptation. Even this need of love should not be regarded as if it could be interchanged with religious rituals or experiences.

While we emphasize the important role of love, it should also be remembered that human beings wish all of the three kinds of needs to be satisfied comprehensively and holistically as implied in 1 Thessalonians 5:23. Humans have physical and material need of bread and water with a healthy body; mental and social need of love (peace, freedom, justice, righteousness, joy, etc.), and supernatural or spiritual need of religious communication with the Absolute Being. After God created Adam and Eve, He promised them to provide what they eat: “[Every seed-bearing plant and every tree that has fruit with seed in it] will be yours for food” (Gen 1:29 NIV). Healing the daughter of synagogue leader, Jesus told them to give her something to eat (Mark 5:35–40). Thus, if one of these three types of needs (physical, mental, and spiritual) is disregarded, the Christian ministry of evangelism might be fruitless and ineffective. Or in some cases, the ministry of evangelism could unexpectedly produce actual crises. Faithful Christians who devote their lives to evangelism need to be

aware of these fundamental and holistic needs of human beings: bread, love, and religion. But Christian churches need to know that those Christians who emphasize Christ's great commission have to recognize that ordinary human beings in the 21st century are generally interested less in God, and more in silver or gold: environmental safety, economic prosperity, civilized comfort, and social and political stability.

If these fundamental and external needs are deprived of by special classes of social, political, and even religious groups, history shows that unaddressed needs engender some identifiable consequent problems. A society in which the rich become richer and the poor poorer is like a peaceful-looking huge mansion that has matches, oil, and bombs together in its basement. It will produce psychological fear, anger, and revenge against rich people, including Christian churches favoring prosperity theology or silver and gold. A society that allows political corruption, economical greed, or chauvinistic patriotism is to be explored with disasters. Unfortunately, religious dogmas and rituals or religious ideologies supplemented by philosophy and theology could even become possible weapons of genocide that might end up in mass murder. All religions, including even Christianity itself, could contribute to the production of internal and external crises if their ministries do not consider external needs and internal values. If Christian churches try to "keep Sabbath" rather than rescuing humans from their urgent needs, they are to be warned by Jesus as He did to the Jewish leaders. Internal value of humanity in terms of love should not be interchanged with the religious ministry of evangelism or world mission. The internal components of love are related, not only to the issues of culture, race, and nation, but also to issues like theology, evangelism, and world mission. Christian churches in the 21st century still seem to regard the external needs and their values lesser than the ministry of evangelism and religious conviction. There must be faith, hope and love, but first and foremost love. Without love, everything can be considered nothing, so to speak, as is strongly taught in the whole chapter of 1 Corinthians 13. Love may be regarded as the primary source of many types of human life values, such as peace, freedom, joy, nonviolence, reconciliation, compassion, justice, and righteousness, because all of these components of love have been universally accepted by all people regardless of culture and generation. While Chris-

tians do concentrate on their religious ministry of evangelism and world mission, they should not devalue these internal values and the external needs. We may say that the fundamental causes of the crises in the 21st century come both from the tendency of disregarding the inner value of love and from the lack of practice to love our neighbors. Without love, therefore, even the religious ministry of evangelism would be fruitless and, furthermore, could even produce awful tragedies to humankind as exemplified in human history. From this perspective, the lack of love could be pointed out as the crucial sign of the crises of humankind, especially in the 21st century.

Here is one example that once Christianity either concerned itself too much with silver or gold or disregarded the need of silver or gold of the common people, it could produce awful mistakes like what we have seen in the movement of Communism. And if religious communities do not consider the internal value of love but concentrate only on their religious value in terms of evangelism, this too will produce incredible tragedies. Once “the Soldiers of the Cross” in the Middle Ages killed with violence numerous of Muslims in order to extend their boundary. Now very recently we have been hearing that Muslims in the Middle East tortured and killed Christians in very cruel ways. Both sides have violated the value of the ministry of the Great Commandment in the name of the ministry of the Great Commission: they have taken revenge against each other, and it may persist until the end of the earth. They kill people simply because they have different religions. Whenever we see their lifestyle that disregards the value of love and admires only their enthusiastic ministry of evangelism, they will make us feel as if we are not human beings, but animals faithful to their own instincts. Do we really live in the 21st century, or in primitive ages? All religions need to admit first of all human beings are beings with body and heart, as well as spirit. All religions need to take care of the needs of the first two parts of humanity, if they are genuine, high religions. They need comprehension, communication, and cooperation at least for the world of love and for the sake of our next generation.

IV. The Prior Ministry of Love for the Ultimate Ministry of Life

We know that there will be no century without external crises, as the last

twenty centuries have proved. It is also historical fact that Christian churches have been stronger when they have been threatened by these external crises. On the other hand, Christianity has been abandoned by the people when they are free from external crises that make people fall with groans. From this perspective, when we say that 21st century is a century of crises, it is not simply because 21st century is full of external crises, but also because Christians may feel a lack of their internal value of loving others, which is the effective means for us to be able to overcome external crises. If Christian churches experience crises, it may be because they have emphasized too much faith and hope without fully practicing the ministry of loving neighbors in the midst of crises. It can be expressed conversely that when the ministry of love operates enough to manage and satisfy the external crises, Christian faith and hope seems to be authentic to the “Gentiles,” and these two components could be fruitful like the ministry of the first Apostles in the Early Church: “Praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved” (Acts 2:47 NIV). Otherwise the faith could be religious fanaticism and the “hope” psychological illusion. From this perspective, the production of the ministry of life (or the ministry of evangelism) must ask the prior ministry of love (or the ministry of compassion).

When Wesley emphasized the doctrine of sanctification, it conveyed always both “faith and hope” and the behaviors of “love.” To him sanctification is nothing else than loving God and neighbors in need. Wesley, who once in front of the Bishop of Bristol replied that “the world is my parish,” started his ministry in Bristol by taking care of poor children. Wesley emphasized always the great commission in terms of evangelism and simultaneously expressed the great commandment in terms of sanctification. Thus, the Christian ministry of love (or great commandment) is expected to come prior to the ministry of life (or great commission) as implied in John 3:16. And the two have actually been combined into one, as manifested and practiced throughout the ministry of Jesus for thirty years.

History teaches us that the ministry of love has been the constant means to rescue the people in the midst of external crises or tragedies. Our Lord commands us to obey, not only the Great Commission in terms

of evangelism or making disciples, but also the Great Commandment in terms of loving others. The Great Commission to make all nations His disciples must be accompanied with the Great Commandment to love even our enemies. Here could be great tension between world evangelism and the personal commandment of love, or between the evangelical ministry of Life and the compassionate ministry of Love. However, these appear as two principles outwardly but one inwardly and essentially, as implied in John 3:16: “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life” (NIV). Here it is very clear that the Love ministry and the Life ministry become one through our faith (“whoever believes in him”) with hope (“shall not perish”). Thus we are required to keep these two to fulfill the will of God. But if we lose one of the missions of “Love and Life” or even one of the means of “faith and hope,” our ministry might not be fruitful and might even bring unexpected disasters. When we emphasize the ministry of evangelism (Great Commission), we are also required to enhance the compassion ministry (Great Commandment). Evangelism ministry for the Life without compassion ministry of the Love could result in unexpected tragedies and disasters, as our history has proved constantly. Even when we fail to balance these two, Christian ministry should face times of crises. As our ministry starts with Love, the ministry of Life should be actually fruitful. Christian schools including APNTS, thus, are required to teach and discipline these two values simultaneously. Then the first commandment and blessing of God in the Bible (Gen 1:28) will be fulfilled in terms of ruling over the earth which consists of crises (or “formless and empty,” Gen 1:2). Thus love and life should be united together. These two values are not two but one. If the Life is an invisible value, then the Love may be the visible clothes of the invisible Life. If the Life is “wine,” then the Love is “skin.” These two are to be one, as clearly taught in Isaiah 43:4, and particularly in 1 John 3:1. From this perspective, APNTS needs to provide students with the opportunity to participate in compassionate ministry for the people in need. Students should go to the societies to provide what the people need for their daily lives. Not only classrooms and libraries but also streets and societies must be the best places for the students to learn how to become capable great ministers to be able to solve the problems of 21st century crises.

V. Do Not Fear the Crises that Make Us Fear

If we overcome our crises by emphasizing the Love ministry while holding the Life ministry as our ultimate ministry, we can gain another lesson from Isaiah for how to complete our vision of the kingdom. That is, we should not fear what makes us fear. In Isaiah 43, He told His people: “Do not fear” (v. 1); do not fear water (v. 2); do not fear fire and flames (v. 2); do not fear the sea and the mighty waters (v. 16); do not fear the wilderness and the wasteland (v. 19). Why? Because God makes a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland. God has used our churches to make roads in the midst of the wilderness and rivers in the midst of the desert. Here are the reasons why our faith and hope are required in order for the ministry of Life and Love to be fulfilled.

From this perspective the wilderness and the desert themselves are not simply crises; rather, they are the necessary and inescapable means by which we can manifest both the Life of God and the Love of God. If we are afraid of external phenomena like water, fire, wilderness, and desert, we could lose great opportunities to fulfill our ministry of Life and Love, and consequently it could produce other types of crises, such as feeling of fear, anxiety, disappointment, embarrassment, complaint, revenge, or temptation of suicide. We should be convinced that the external crises should be the means of manifesting the values of the internal essence in terms of life and love (which contains peace, freedom, nonviolence, justice, and righteousness.) The angel Gabriel told Joseph and Mary not to fear as they became aware of her pregnancy, and Joseph welcomed Mary to give birth to Jesus. Jesus very frequently taught His disciples not to fear anything in any circumstances. Paul confessed, “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?... Neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom 8:35, 39 NIV). Let us not fear anything but confront the trouble and hardship as the means to manifest His Love for the sake of the ministry of His Life. If we do not fear them and consistently practice loving His people in wilderness and desert, then we can have the time of seeing “roads and rivers.” But if the churches fear the Amorites, they shall not be given the Land of Canaan. If they fear the Goliath, they shall not overcome the threatening voices of the Palestine

soldiers. If Paul had feared the prison in Philippi, he could not have prayed and praised the Lord in the prison, nor proclaimed, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household” (Acts 16:31 NIV).

VI. Love the People Who Fear the Wilderness and Desert

As churches face the wilderness and desert, they should not fear them but should love the people in the wilderness and desert. If the people in the wilderness and desert have regarded Christian churches as no longer a loving community of God, then these needy people shall abandon the God of Life. If our churches are regarded as a community that is not full with Love, the Life of the Father both in Christ and in us will not overflow to the people in the wilderness and desert. The 21st century, which has been facing external and internal crises (or the “formless and empty”), will result in total confusion, chaos, and finally collapse. Once again, let us be reminded of John 3:16: its last word is Eternal Life, but it starts with the word Love of God through faith and hope. “Whoever believes in Him shall not perish” conveys the necessary gate for us to enter into the Kingdom where the King of kings dwells and reigns.

According to Wesley, Christian churches have been corrupted since Constantine proclaimed the Milan Edict, and from that historical point, the Church came to have no chance to face persecution. Rather, they received secular crowns: political power, financial abundance, popular honor, etc. These represent other types of crises to Christian churches. They have enjoyed silver or gold, but they have lost “the name of Jesus.” They have come to confront the external and internal crises simultaneously. The community of Love and Life in the Early Church (Acts 2:42–45) was the foundational ground to make the gentiles Christlike disciples; but as time went on, it was replaced by theological creeds, religious rituals, and political powers. Consequently, throughout the Middle Ages, scholastic debates confronted the crises of confusion, conflict, and collapse.

Martin Luther thought the Church of the 16th century was no longer Biblical. John Calvin argued the same in the 17th century and John Wesley in the 18th century. Dietrich Bonhoeffer in the 20th century who told us that the grace of God had been treated very cheaply, without costs. These statements could mean that the Love and Life centered ministry of Jesus

Christ has come to fear the atheistic spirits like religious rituals, sophisticated theologies, ideological dogmas as well as all kinds of humanism-oriented secularism: rationalism, romanticism, materialism, chauvinism, blind nationalism, modernism, racism, and both radical communism and democracy. Whenever these kinds of thoughts have appeared, churches have responded in five ways according to Richard Niebuhr. But it is also certain that whenever our churches have not feared them and actively participated in the ministry of Love and Life, they could function as Light and Salt, rescuing the world in the midst of wilderness and desert. Otherwise, they have been abandoned by the world as shown particularly in the last two centuries through Communism movements entrenched in Russia by Lenin and Stalin, in Germany by Karl Marx, in China by Mao Zedong, and in North Korea by Kim Il-sung.

VII. The Declining Churches in Europe, USA and Korea

Dear Brothers and Sisters, when we say that the 21st century is a century of external and internal crises, it is partially related to the declining tendency of our current churches. When we consider the churches in Europe during the Middle Age in the 10th century, they seemed to be very influential in many ways. But as the churches gradually began to turn their concerns from the daily bread of the common people to the religious clergy and political leaders, they also began to be rejected by the same people who were in the midst of wilderness and desert. Consequently churches had to fade in Europe.

It has been rare for us to see very active evangelical churches in Europe. The Protestant churches originated by Luther, Calvin, and Wesley have not been easily visible in Germany, Geneva, or England. The churches in the United States and Korea in the 20th century were once very powerful and influential. But it has been said that the churches in the United States which had sent numerous missionaries to many nations in Africa, Asia, Central America, and throughout the world have been decreasing in membership, barely increasing any more. The United States is no longer called a missionary-sending country but mission field that needs missionaries from other countries. Some say that Korean churches that once showed radical growth no longer have active children's Sunday School or have only a few children attending churches, especially in small

towns or the countryside. We must be aware of that the ministry of Jesus Christ is the ministry of Love and Life. If we only stress one side of these, it brings out crises and inevitably comes to result in the confusion, chaos, and collapse at any time. In responding to these crises, then, what shall we do?

VIII. How to Fulfill the Mission of Love and Life in the Midst of Fear

Dear brothers and sisters, I would like to introduce one person to teach us how APNTS will faithfully fulfill the Great Commission. How can the Life of the Father in the Son by the Spirit overflow through APNTS in the ministry of love and life to the churches and the nations in the world? I want to introduce one person who may teach us how to actually overcome the overwhelming crises in the 21st century. He is Peter in Acts. Peter's life and ministry can be a good illustration to help us learn how Christian churches may overcome the external phenomena that threaten us in the 21st century and fulfill the ministry of love and life.

In Acts 3:6 he proclaimed—yes, he proclaimed, “I have no silver or gold, but what I do have I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, stand up and walk” (NET). To the man who begged for silver or gold, Peter proclaimed, rise up and walk in the name of Jesus Christ who is the Power of Love and Life. He rescued the man who confronted crises from the day of his birth.

Then, when could Peter start to proclaim the name of Jesus and liberate the man from the crises of which he stood on the brink? Was it when he received his calling on the Sea of Galilee; was it when he saw Jesus walking on the water; or was it when he saw Jesus' transfiguration on the mountain? No! Peter who was once a fisher of fishes was totally changed into the fisher of people. It came to be possible through his many kinds of painful failures. It was after the denial of his Rabbi, Jesus who came to be crucified on the cross. It was after the Resurrection of Jesus who visited Peter in the midst of fear of the Jewish leaders. Consequently, it was after Peter received the Power of the Spirit. Thus, Peter was able to start his ministry of Love and Life after the Lord's faithful coming to Peter as the Spirit of Power. Yes, the Spirit of Jesus Christ is the Spirit of Life, Love, and Power.

Our current churches, at least in the United States and Korea, may

have enough silver or gold today like the churches in the Middle Ages, but they are very reluctant to proclaim, Rise up and walk in the name of Jesus Christ. They may be very conservative religious churches, faithful to the Great Commission of Evangelism. They may be very outstandingly moral churches, faithful to the Great Commandment of Love. And they may be optimistic churches preaching psychological ways to make church members cope with various kinds of inner oppression and outer threats. Especially, they have been educated very highly for many years.

Then, why can our churches that wear the religion of evangelism, morality of love, and psychology of fear, not actually rescue the person who has confronted internal and external crises from the day of birth? Here is the answer from the Lord Jesus: “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8 NIV). As Peter was totally changed after receiving the Power of the Spirit, our church needs to be transformed entirely by the Power of the Spirit. Our churches need to seek after the day of Pentecost like they did twenty centuries ago. Jesus was born through Mary by the Spirit. Jesus was baptized through John the Baptist by the Spirit. Jesus’ ministry was led by the Spirit. The first Word of the resurrected Jesus to His disciples was, receive the Spirit. The final Word of Jesus in this world was the promise to give the disciples the Spirit. Thus, the life and ministry of Jesus started with the Spirit and will continue until He comes back again. Here we may point out at this moment that one crucial element of our crises in this century is the tendency for churches not to ask after the Power of the Spirit! I wish all families to be “poor,” not asking “silver or gold” of theology or religion but, first of all, the Power of the Spirit for the ministry of Love and Life! The most serious crises threatening the Christian churches may be from neither environmental nor mental crises, but from the lack of seeking after the Spirit of Love, Life, and Power. Only when the Christian churches are inspired, anointed, and led continually by the Spirit, will they be equipped to overcome the external and internal crises threatening people who fall with groans in the wilderness and desert. Like the 120 of Acts 1 who all joined together constantly in prayer, let us ardently seek after being filled with Holy Spirit of Love, Life, and Power to fulfill the will of God, that is the dispensation of His Life to build the

Kingdom where the King of kings reigns.

O Lord, “as the deer pants for streams of water” (Psalm 42:1 NIV), we thirst for Your Spirit of Life, Love, and Power! We put our faith and hope in You. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven (Matt 6:10).

IX. The BEST and GREAT APNTS of the CROSS

Dear brothers and sisters, I wish APNTS to be able to nourish the faithful and capable servants who are filled with and anointed by the Spirit. I wish them to be able to perform the Great Commission of Life with the Great Commandment of Love by the Power of the Spirit. I wish the churches which they serve after their graduation may grow and be multiplied to rule over the crises from the wilderness and desert which are full of void, emptiness, and darkness that the church members confront every day.

For the sake of this, I would like to pray for APNTS to be the BEST and GREAT APNTS of the CROSS. Here is my prayer: may the Life of the Father overflow to the churches through the Love of the Son and by the Power of the Spirit. For the sake of the fulfillment of this prayer, I want to put four words in my thought which convey nineteen components for the ministry of the Life of God: BEST, GREAT, APNTS, CROSS.

APNTS shall be the BEST school to nourish GREAT ministers by providing the BEST education, discipling the students to live out the life of the CROSS. Yes! Let us make APNTS the BEST and GREAT APNTS of the CROSS!

APNTS shall be the BEST school providing the BEST education: 1) Bible-based education, 2) Ecclesia-centered education, 3) Society-relevant education, and 4) “To go To the glocal world” oriented education.

APNTS shall be a GREAT school by making our students GREAT ministers who focus on five areas when they serve their churches: 1) Glorifying our Good God ministry 2) Regeneration ministry, 3) Evangelism ministry, 4) Agape ministry, and 5) Transformation and Transfiguration ministry.

APNTS shall be a school of the CROSS by their discipling themselves to take the CROSS in John 17: 1) being Crucified [v. 1], 2) being Resurrected [v. 1], 3) becoming One among them [v. 11], 4) being Sanctified [v. 17], and 5) being Sent by the Father and Sending disciples [v. 18].

APNTS shall make its campus full of the five elements: 1) a campus of

Agape, 2) a campus of Prayer, 3) a campus of “No to evil spirits, but yes to the Holy Spirit,” 4) a campus of Trusting God with Total commitment, and 5) a campus of Spirit-filled integrity.

O Lord of the Life, the Love, and the Power, please come and help your little servant to serve APNTS, making your students to become great ministers for the Life of the Father to overflow through us and by the Love of the Son and the Power of the Spirit to the Church, the Kingdom, and New Jerusalem, which is full of peace, joy, freedom, justice, and righteousness. I pray in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

“May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful and He will do it” (1 Thess 5:23–24 NIV)

May the God of Love, Life, and Power bless all of you!

