

# From Praise to Praise

Mitsuko

*Kohitsuji no Mure* stands on the faith, “Everything is completed in praise.” I first heard this phrase during the opening service of the main church in Ashiya in November 1993.

The main church was built on the prayers and desires of those who had just met God. The place was rented, and we were appalled at how easily things moved on when the hands of the Lord were put on.

On the day of the opening service, our brand-new sanctuary had no piano nor window shades. Besides a keyboard, an overhead projector and a screen for worship, all we had was a carved wooden cross in the center of the sanctuary.

I prayed to the Lord during the service:

“There is really nothing here. Only You, the people to worship You and the cross.” It was then when I heard a resounding voice:

*Everything is completed in praise.*

I have written about this many times before, and every time I write I am deeply moved. At the time, I did not understand the meaning of the words at all. What is praise? What does it mean that everything is completed? Why can we say that everything is completed in praise? What is the desire of the Lord in it?

Although I am still on my way to understanding it, I can say that it aims at the faith in praise, which in short is

the faith, “Christ alone is sufficient.” We need nothing but Christ. We may have other things but do not rely on them. It is to stand thoroughly on this faith.

It is easy to say so, but to stand really on such faith is against our human instincts. For example, we believe that we do not need a sanctuary, nor anyone to preach the Bible, much less respected teachers, while people usually want those things. Even a married couple individually stands alone before the Lord, and a husband and a wife, each as an individual staff worker, are sent to separate evangelical trips. We are not attached even to our gifts given by God. Although people who play the piano or know music should be valued for praise-centered worship of *Kohitsuji no Mure*, they are asked, “Can you praise the Lord without the piano?” People who want to be useful to the Lord are not needed.

While it is we who work for God, we do not leave our existence so that only Christ can remain. What we learned and experienced in the past is no use. What we have done or what we can do is not important. We are asked only about what we see in faith.

New praise songs have been born to us one after another, and they seem to clarify what we are to aim and deepen our faith.

In those days, however, even people in *Kohitsuji no Mure* had a hard time to understand the faith, “Everything is completed in praise,” much less people outside the flock. “If singing songs is all they have to do, how easy it is! Their faith is bogus,” they would say. It had been believed that church should have respectable teachers to teach the

Bible and instruct faith.

Hearing of our faith-confession, some people took it in a bit different way, “We are happy to hear, ‘Christ alone is sufficient,’ because we are not bound by a teacher’s authority or the law, but we want to continue to prize great things such as healing prayers, intimate counseling, and instructive Bible studies.” However, “Christ alone is sufficient” means that we do not rely on people even in good things, because we believe that Christ gives us all things. Indeed, we know that Christ Himself gives us everything we need.

It does not mean that we discard Bible studies and deny counseling or prayers for healing only because we believe “Christ alone is sufficient.” Our faith is that we always give the first priority to Christ.

I am happy to tell you that the Lord has taught us how joyful a walk of this faith is. Our praise has also been advanced from a praise for us to offer from the earth to the one for God to give us from the heaven, raised to the heavenly praises which unite heaven and earth.

In January 2000, we started receiving the Revelation praises. Those heavenly praises are also called “sifting” praises, though I do not know who named it. They sifted all of us, as well as the flock as a whole. All unnecessary things were shaken in order for the only essential thing to remain. They opened our eyes more to the faith in praise.

The Revelation praises (including not only the ones with lyrics from the book of the Revelation but also all the Hato praises given following the Revelation praises) are the praises with “resounding tunes.” When we sing

Revelation praises, we resound with each other. It may be because they are given like spiritual songs.

Since we started singing the Revelation praises, we have come to know that man is an instrument to sound the resounding tunes. When people join to sing together one after another, they resonate with each other as if different instruments join one by one creating new resounding tunes. We have witnessed that resounding tunes change our voices and transform our faith. In fact, they change everything.

We have witnessed with our own eyes that indeed everything is completed in praise. I have come to say that we are called to be the witnesses of praise. Our staff workers are to go out to bring praises as the witnesses.

We are the instruments of praise to resonate with each other. When we started singing the Revelation praises, one of our staff workers said that to “love one another,” which Jesus commands us in the Bible, is to “resound with one another.” Indeed, in the midst of the praise we understand what it is like to love one another. Love does manifest itself in resounding tunes.

In May 2000, when I was on my way to the airport to fly to Sapporo, I noticed the Bible vibrating in a strange way in my bag. Sensing that the Lord was speaking something important to me, I prayed and asked Him what it meant. Then I heard an inner voice, “You shall see Me from now on.” Although I had always believed that the Lord was with me and that I saw Him, I thought I was told to see Him directly from now on, but I did not quite understand what it meant.

No man has ever seen God; if we love one another,  
God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.

(1 John 4:12)

That evening, I understood through this verse that to see the Lord means that the time would come for His love to be perfected in us. I believed that it was possible in the resounding tunes of the praise. We saw God's will in it, and started to have concerts wishing to deliver the resounding tunes of praise to as many people as possible.

As we praise, we are convinced of one thing. Praise is not for the joy of those who sing, much less for the preparation for worship. Praise is the worship itself. God has entrusted His praises to us for the healing of the earth at this critical time.

We have come to believe that the Revelation praises and their resounding tunes would heal the entire earth and bring true peace to the world.

We do not mind if people would think that we are exaggerating and crazy. We believe that singing praises entrusted by the Lord is to respond to His will. Through what the Lord has shown us thus far, our faith in praise has become solid and unshakable.

Since praises are given to my mouth, I know it better than anyone that not a single Hato praise (meaning praise given through me) was composed by me. (That is why they are not called Mitsuko praises.) I have no musical talent and do not read music. Until I met the Lord, I was not good at singing, nor liked it. In 2000, however, I became aware that everything had a resounding tune, and praises were

born when I attuned my heart to resounding tunes in flowers or the words of the Bible. The words of the Bible have the most beautiful resounding tunes.

I believe that we will bring praise to the end of the earth as the witnesses of praise.

In the year of 2001, we held five concerts, including the concerts held during the General Assembly and the Retreat. Every time we practiced for the concerts, we felt our faith in praise deepened and our praise renewed. In that year we learned to unite our “breath” in order to unite our resounding tunes. Man has the breath which God breathed into him when forming man of dust from the ground.

When each of us has one breath with the Lord, all our breath will become one. Through the “breath” we have come to know that we can be one with each other and also with the Lord. Our praise sounded so beautiful when our breath was united.

However, in order for our praise to become the heavenly praises, we needed a further step. It was the “circular breath.” When we knew that there was no break in praise and that the end of one breath was the beginning of the next breath, our praise became light like the wind and was freed from all human strength. The time when we were freed from our strength was the time when God’s power was revealed. This truth was verbalized when we were practicing for the Revelation Concert in May 2002.

I believe that this Revelation Concert opened up the heaven. We then became convinced more than ever that there was the will of the Lord in the praises entrusted by Him, and that He called us here as the people of praise.

Before the concert, the following words of the Lord came to my mind:

Yet a little while, and the world will see me no more, but you will see me; because I live, you will live also. In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. He who has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me; and he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him. (John 14:19-21)

The Lord says that the time we will see Him is when we will live (because the Lord lives). To live must be the same as to see the Lord. When we directly see the Lord, not just believing or feeling that we see Him, we are truly alive. It is when we stand on the faith in praise. The Lord manifests Himself in praise. Although we have not yet seen the whole picture, I feel we have entered a new time after the Revelation Concert.

The other day Pastor Peter mentioned the “baptism of the Revelation praise.” The old time has passed away. My old self has died. It is a new time to live in a new life.

Through praise, the desire of the Lord became clearer to us. We walk wishing that the will of God entrusted in praise will be done. From praise to praise, the desire of the Lord will surely be done. Everything is completed in praise.

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