

# One Flock with One Shepherd

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I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly. I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep . . . I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock with one shepherd. (John 10:10-11,16)

The *Kohitsuji no Mure* Church began in 1989, with a vision shown to Pastor Peter and Mitsuko when they prayed together. There were a vast number of sheep outside the fence, all wounded and wandering. The Lord said, “Go outside the fence and deliver My love and healing.”

I think “sheep outside the fence” refers to not only those who cannot fit into the fold of traditional churches, but also those who are unable to fit into any of the forms in this world and unable to find their true place anywhere on the earth. I was one of those sheep.

Deep inside me, there was something inexplicably dark. Life felt meaningless, and the world seemed gray. Wanting to change myself, I did a short-term homestay in America as a student, and there I had an opportunity to learn about the Bible. “You now exist here not by meaningless coincidence, but because God created you with a purpose. God forgave you through the cross and loves you just as you are.” This led me to the encounter with the love of Jesus.

I started going to church in Japan, but my heart became parched. That was when I encountered the *Kohitsuji no Mure* Church, where the love and healing of Jesus flow freely and abundantly just as in biblical times. It is the church of praise

led by the wind of the Holy Spirit, where each person listens to the one and only Shepherd, Jesus Christ.

I was filled with joy of the Spirit in praise and thought, “With such an amazing God, there is nothing to fear anymore!” However, after a while I began to feel pain, wondering, “God does exist, yet this world is riddled with so many problems and contradictions. Why?” In *Kohitsuji no Mure* they said, “Everything is completed in praise,” but it seemed to me that praise alone would not change anything. So I started trying to find an answer on my own and eventually drifted away from worship.

My grandparents came to Japan from Jeju Island in southern Korea. After World War II, they decided to return to their homeland and boarded a ship, but it went on the rocks. They barely went back to Japan alive. So I was born and raised in Japan. I did not know how I should live as a rootless reed neither Korean nor Japanese. I thought the answer must lie in knowing “my true self,” and I decided to study history, society and nation in order to know myself.

Then I learned about the massacre that took place on Jeju Island, my grandparents’ homeland. After the war, the Korean peninsula was divided into North and South. The people of Jeju Island desired unification and opposed the establishment of the South Korean government. They were labeled communists, and the military and police began a crackdown. Tens of thousands of people, including women and children, were killed indiscriminately.

On earth there are many differences, such as ethnicity, skin color, culture, gender and ways of thinking. I wished for a path to coexist, rather than fighting or excluding those who are different. I became involved in social activities, but feeling the limits of my own power and stuck, I finally returned to *Kohitsuji no Mure* praise worship. Like a fish returned to

water, I was deeply healed in praise. It was when we were repeatedly singing in worship, “Lord Jesus, my God,” calling on His name. A thought suddenly welled up from the depths of my being. “In praise lies my true self I have been searching for!” At the same time, I realized that answers to all problems lie in praise.

The Apostle Paul says:

Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church, in filling up what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions.

(Colossians 1:24)

Mitsuko says, “Is there anything lacking in the cross of Christ? No, not at all. Although nothing lacks in Christ’s afflictions, we in the flesh are unable to comprehend His afflictions, and mistakenly think that something is insufficient. Thus we continue to crucify him.”

The cross of Christ was completed once for all. Yet I murmured, “If God exists, why are there still these problems?” and searched for an answer that would satisfy me. I continued to crucify Christ, thinking His suffering was insufficient. However, what flowed from that cross was the love that just forgave and healed me.

To forgive all and give life, the Lord sacrificed Himself on the cross. And now *Kohitsuji no Mure* is overflowing with new praise pouring down from heaven like a flood. Praise is the power of resurrection, uniting in Christ those who can never become one by human power. In heavenly resonance, nothing is excluded; as we resonate with one another, life becomes richer and joy greater through differences. Even our mistakes and failures are made beneficial. Everything is turned to good and transformed into the joy of praise. Such a dreamlike world exists in the midst of praise.

Praise is indeed the “Body of Christ,” where all return to their “true self,” receiving deep healing of existence and resonating with one another in the breath of God. It is God’s love and peace.

In meditating on the cross of Calvary, Mitsuko had a vision of a flood flowing from the cross. “What is this flood?” she asked, and the Lord replied, “It is My healing, the flood of salvation.” I am overwhelmed by the love of the cross, as revealed through the words God spoke to Mitsuko:

*Do you think there is anything  
this flood of praise evades?  
Do you think there is anything  
My healing forgets or overlooks?* (October 7, 2018)

*There is nothing the flood of praise evades.  
The flood of praise covers all people, all things  
and all lands with life.  
It fills all “times” with life.* (September 8, 2024)

The flood of praise flowing from the cross leaves nothing and no one behind. From the cross of Christ flows abundant life, forgiving and healing all. Praise brings healing even to the darkest times of human history, giving life also to the dead. I have come to believe that the healing of praise reaches even the horrific history of Jeju Island. The true peace is in the cross of Christ.

The blood of Christ shed on the cross has the power to unite all things. I believe our wounds are where God’s uniting power works. Our existence is embedded with pain and sorrow we ourselves are unaware of. Even anger and madness lurk within us. The Lord Himself bore them all on the cross, so that all created by God may become “one flock with one Shepherd” and give praise.

May the flood of His risen life cover wounded people,  
lands ravaged by war, and the earth heading toward collapse.  
May praise fill the whole earth.

May 17, 2026

I am the good shepherd,  
and I know My own and My own know Me,  
even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father;  
and I lay down My life for the sheep.

I have other sheep, which are not of this fold;  
I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice;  
and they will become one flock with one shepherd.

For this reason the Father loves Me,  
because I lay down My life so that I may take it again.

No one has taken it away from Me,  
but I lay it down on My own initiative.

I have authority to lay it down,  
and I have authority to take it up again.

This commandment I received from My Father.

(John 10:14-18 NAS)

# Vision \*

Peter

Let me first speak about my personal story.

I was a pastor of the Japanese Christian Church of Philadelphia in the States and used to make missionary trips to Japan every few years. I started those missionary trips originally to visit the people who had become Christians in Philadelphia and returned to Japan. Being a pastor of the Presbyterian church myself, I visited them at their churches, and the Lord's blessings flowed as I preached and prayed. I testified the grace of the Lord at churches of different denominations from Evangelical, Liberal, Baptist, Pentecostal to Catholic. I was overjoyed to witness those Japanese churches experiencing the revival of the Holy Spirit.

In the 1980s whenever I visited Japan, I felt an expanding wave of the Holy Spirit, and had a hunch that a big outpouring of the Holy Spirit would surge over Japan in the very near future.

During my visit to Japan in 1989, I realized that the time had come at last. I do not mean that my missionary work brought about its arrival. I felt that after many people's long-standing prayer, the Holy Spirit began to kindle with the windows of heaven finally opened. We would harvest seeds which many people before us had labored and sowed.

Anyhow, the trip in 1989 was epoch-making in my missionary life. I traveled throughout Japan from northern Hokkaido to southern Kyushu. The last stop was the university town, Tsukuba in the Kanto region, where I asked Mitsuko to join me for the first time, and we prayed together for many

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\* Originally written in Japanese on February 20, 1994.

people.

Mitsuko, who had never been to church or read the Bible, was struck by the *White Dove* of the Holy Spirit in the States on December 3, 1987. It had since been only one year, so she was just a “baby.” I was stunned to see a tremendous gust of the Holy Spirit blowing through her who knew nothing much. What amazed me most, however, was the narrow road of the cross she was walking. This woman, seemingly carefree with a beaming face, had her flesh stripped away piece by piece, and her family as well as herself was nailed on the cross. Witnessing it before my eyes, I was utterly overwhelmed by the power of the cross of Christ.

The fire of the Holy Spirit, which was ignited in Tsukuba, further spread to Fukuoka, Tokyo, and many other places.

On my way back to the States, on the plane I was thanking the Lord. During two months of the missionary trip, several hundreds of people accepted Christ and many received His healing. I had never seen so much pouring of the Holy Spirit and was truly grateful to the Lord.

Looking at the white clouds from the plane window, however, I was overwhelmed by an indescribable sense of sadness. Despite my joy over the successful trip, it seemed that the sorrow of the Lord was engulfing me.

Lord, what is this sorrow?

*You are overjoyed to see*

*a handful of souls saved and healed.*

*Yet My people have gone astray*

*like sheep without a shepherd.*

*What do you think of those wounded sheep?*

I was stunned. And I began to pray for it.

While praying with Mitsuko on the international phone,

we received a vision from the Lord. We saw a fence on the right side, in which there were some sheep, but not many. Outside the fence, there were a huge number of sheep. On closer observation, we found them covered all over with wounds. Not knowing where to go, they were running around in confusion. Then the Lord said:

*Go outside the fence.*

*Go to the sheep without a shepherd.*

*Go and carry eternal life and love to My people.*

We were deeply moved.

Yet, what shall we do? The Lord told us to go outside the fence, but how could we reach out to such an enormous number of sheep? Through the vision, we were given the name *Kohitsuji no Mure* (meaning a flock of lambs), but did not know how to set about it.

In those days, I was quite content to be the pastor of the Japanese Christian Church of Philadelphia. Almost reaching my fifties, I did not want to venture into anything risky, but the Lord's desire got stronger day by day in me.

Gradually, the concept of "house church" developed in my mind. It was not totally new to me because I had been practicing it in Philadelphia for a long time. In my early ministry days we had gatherings at various people's houses since we had no sanctuary or organization. We simply praised the Lord, read the Bible, and prayed for one another without having any worship rituals. The love of Christ is trustworthy. I simply believed in the redemptive love of the cross and spoke of it, and people came to Christ one after another. In Philadelphia, there were many scholar families from Japan. When one of them was saved, the news spread by word of mouth to friends. In house churches, we could have real fellowship without being restricted by formality. We could

pray for specific matters and praise the Lord as much as we liked.

What I can do is limited, but if people have such praise worship at their own places as house churches, more and more people will surely be saved. Although the number is not important, many more sheep should come together when we worship and praise the Lord who was crucified and resurrected. The Shepherd is the Lord Jesus Christ. All we have to do is believe in His love and praise Him.

In the summer of 1991, I resigned from the Japanese Christian Church of Philadelphia to concentrate on the work of the *Kohitsuji no Mure* ministry. We had neither organization nor money. Almost all of my pastor friends and close friends whom I had known for years objected to my new venture. They said it was too idealistic and reckless for me to start something new outside the established organization without any support. Some clearly told me not to cause trouble for them, and others gave me well-intentioned advice that I should continue to visit their churches as a vessel of the Holy Spirit while remaining the pastor of the church in Philadelphia. However, I had an unshakable conviction that God's time had come. New wine must be put into a new wineskin.

*Kohitsuji no Mure* was born not just because we received the vision. The vision certainly triggered it, but what truly brought it to fruition was the Lord's desperate desire to save the sheep outside the fence.

Our wish from the start has been for *Kohitsuji no Mure* to be a flock of praise. Miraculous things such as physical healings, inner healings, prophecies and speaking in tongues happen, but those gifts are only supplementary. The essence is the love of Christ. We stand on the faith that the love of Christ alone is sufficient. We praise Christ who died on the cross and

was risen on the third day.

The Lord who dwells in praise pours His love upon each one of us in the midst of praise. Every time we praise, we go through the death of our old self on the cross. *Kohitsuji no Mure* is not another Christian denomination. It is a new flock and a new wineskin to praise the Lord, standing on the faith that His love alone is sufficient.

