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☞ **Prelude**

☞ **Invocation:** In the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit, we worship together on this Sunday Morning.

† **主祢崇高 Be Exalted**

♪ Oh, Lord! My heart will be stead-fast in You.
I will praise You with all of my soul.
Oh, Lord! My heart will be stead-fast in You.
Lift up my hands, to Your ho-ly place.
♪ Be e-xal-ted a-bove all hea-vens.
For You've done great things for all Your peo-ple.
Let Your glo-ry be a-bove the earth.
All that I am, ne-ver ceases to re-joyce in You.

† **震動天地 Shake the Heaven and Earth**

♪ Hallelujah celebrate, Hallelujah shout for joy
For you have won the victory
Hallelujah celebrate, Hallelujah shout for joy
For you have risen from the grave
♪ Lord, come again in power
Lord, come and shake the heaven and earth
Let every tribe and tongue return to you
Lord, come again in glory
Your glory fills the earth
Your peace and blessings rain upon our land

† **榮耀神羔羊 Glory to the Lamb**

♪ Glory glory glory to the Lamb
Glory glory glory to the Lamb
♪ For He is glorious and worthy to be praised
he Lamb upon the throne And unto Him
We lift our voice in praise The Lamb
upon the throne

☞ **Responsive Reading: Psalm 119**

41 Lord, show me your faithful love. Save me, as you promised.
42 Then I will have an answer for those who make fun of me for trusting what you say.
43 Let me always say what is true. I depend on your judgment to be fair.
44 I will follow your teachings forever and ever.
45 So I will live in freedom, because I do my best to know your instructions.
46 I will discuss your rules with kings, and no one will embarrass me.
47 What joy your commands give me! How I love them!
48 Not only do I love your commands, but I also honor them. I will study your laws.

☞ **Praise**

† **祢真偉大 How Great Thou Art**

♪ O Lord my God, When I in awesome wonder,
Consider all the worlds Thy Hands have made;
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,
Thy power throughout the universe displayed.

Chorus:

(Then sings my soul, My Savior God, to Thee,
How great Thou art, How great Thou art.) *2

♪ And when I think, that God, His Son not sparing;
Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in;
That on the Cross, my burden gladly bearing,
He bled and died to take away my sin.

♪ When Christ shall come, with shout of acclamation,
And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart.
Then I shall bow, in humble adoration,
And then proclaim: "My God, how great Thou art!"

☞ **Special Music**

† **讚美大君王 To the King Medley (Majesty)**

♪ (To the King eternal, immortal, invisible,
To the King eternal, to the only wise God;) *2
(We bring honor, we bring glory,
We bring praises forever, amen.) *2 forever, amen
♪ Majesty, worship His majesty;
Unto Jesus be all glory, honor and praise.
Majesty, Kingdom authority;
Flow from His throne unto His own;
His anthem raise
♪ So exalt, lift up on high the name of Jesus.
Magnify, come glorify Christ Jesus, the King.
Majesty, worship His majesty,

Jesus who died, now glorified, King of all kings.

♪ (We bring honor, we bring glory,
We bring praises forever, amen.) *2 forever, amen
(To the King) *4
All glory, honor and praise to the King!

☞ Scripture Reading:

Matthew 13

23 But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown." ...

25 But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. ...

31 He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. ...

33 He told them still another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour until it worked all through the dough." ...

44 "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.

45 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. ...

47 "Once again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was let down into the lake and caught all kinds of fish.

☞ Sermon:

Happy New Year, Invest In the Kingdom of Heaven

---Pastor Hsu

What is the wisest investment for this new year?

I. The beauty of the Kingdom of Heaven

1. Mighty Power — majestic restoration

Mat 13:32

Though it is the smallest of all your seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and perch in its branches."

The Kingdom of Heaven is like a **mustard seed**, which is the smallest seed in size, when it sprouts into a tree it can reach a height of a two- or three-story building in its branches birds perch.

It is like **yeast** that can make 40 liters of dough to rise that is enough to feed a hundred people. The Kingdom of Heaven starts like a mustard seed sprouting in a church, while unbelievers despise it the mighty power of the Gospel can renew and enlighten Christians' lives, bestowing on us with heavenly bliss!

2. Blessings — bless many

Mat 13

8 Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop--a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. ...

32 Though it is the smallest of all your seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and perch in its branches."

- i. A seed sown in **good soil** produces hundred-fold crop, in the same way we are blessed and renewed with fresh joy!
- ii. We may spread people around us with hundred-fold blessings and joy!
- iii. Once a **mustard seed** turns into a big tree, birds perch in it and many people may rest under its shade; historical examples are Abraham, David, Solomon's construction of the Temple of the Lord, the wide establishment of Christ's churches, now it is our turn to pass on the joy of salvation to our friends!

3. Joy — Joy and glory

Mat 13: 46

When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.

The Kingdom of Heaven is like **hidden treasure** or a **precious pearl**, a man with wisdom enthusiastically sells all he has to buy the land with the hidden treasure and pearl. Our worldly life is helplessly confined and our commercial investments are full of risks that glooms our life; on the other hand, our investments in the Kingdom of Heaven are always full of glorious value and joy! Be smart in discerning the precious from the worthless!

4. Glory — everlasting luminant

Mat 13:43 Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.

Mat 17:2 There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. ...

Mat 17:5 While he was still speaking, a bright cloud enveloped them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!"

2 Co 3:18 And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

Wheat, i.e., the righteous, will be separated from the weeds and collected in the Lord's barn in the Kingdom of Heaven, where the

righteous will be glorified in the presence of the shining Lord! Just like Jesus transfigured high up on a mountain where his face shone like the sun; we as Christians get to see the Lord's glory with our faces unveiled!

Unlike the worldly honors that are limited, the glory in the Kingdom of Heaven renews endlessly like Jesus!

II. Investment in the Kingdom of Heaven

1. Understanding

Mat 13

19 When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path.

20 The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy.

21 But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away.

22 The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful.

23 But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."

Mat 13

48 When it was full, the fishermen pulled it up on the shore. Then they sat down and collected the good fish in baskets, but threw the bad away.

49 This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous

50 and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

51 "Have you understood all these things?" Jesus asked. "Yes," they replied.

52 He said to them, "Therefore every teacher of the law who has been instructed about the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his storeroom new treasures as well as old."

The difference in the four types of spiritual soil is **understanding**. There are three counteracting forces prohibiting people from gaining understanding:

- i. **Satan's work:** **【Mat 13:19】** Through lies Satan snatches our seed of the Gospel; it

cheats people with traditional belief, rational science, and fashionable trend!

ii. **Persecution with sufferings:**

【Mat13:20-21】 Because lack of root, one does not make the effort to gain understanding and knowledge of Jesus, when pressed by trouble or persecution he gets stumbled and falls away from the word!

iii. **Worldly enjoyment:** **【Mat13:22】**

Luke 8:14

The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life's worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature.

A thorny field is a mind that is filled with worldly desires and concerns

2 Co 11:28

Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches.

Anxieties

1Pe 5:7

Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

personal desires and temptations of wealth!

The parable of **casting a fishing net** — the good and bad fish are separated, collecting the good while throwing away the bad.

As we organize our store-room we keep **the new** and good possessions while discarding **the old** and useless — so should we keep the good characters that pleases the Lord while parting with old and ungodly things!

2. **Sell one's valuables:** **【Mat 13:44-46】**

As one come across a **treasure**, he sells his all valuables to buy the pearl, the Apostles being summoned by Jesus immediately left the boat and their father and followed him.

No one can serve two masters neither is anyone who puts his hand to the plow and looks back fit for service in the kingdom of God; blessed is he who responds to the calling from the Kingdom of Heaven!

He who forsakes worldly treasures for Christ can see the glory of the Kingdom of Heaven! Reflect how much I am willing to sacrifice for the Lord? How valuable is the Gospel to me?

How do I come close to the Lord in the holidays of the Chinese New Year?

3. Wait

Mat 13:30 Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn." ...

Mat 13

39 and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels.

40 "As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age.

The owner of the field allows the weeds to grow along with wheat till the end of age when the Lord sends his angel harvesters.

The weeds, children of Satan, will be throw into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth; while the wheat, i.e., the righteous, will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

We are now living in the preparative, cultivating, and net-casting stage of the Kingdom of Heaven when the good is mixed with the bad.

When it comes to the inheritance, harvesting, and judging stage, each will be separated and receive his due reward or punishment!

Our hope in the heavenly righteousness and glory enables us tolerate worldly unfairness and sufferings, our faith in Christ and encouragement from a great cloud of witness surrounding us enables us run with perseverance the race marked out for us!

Actively participate in the church, be inspired by the great cloud of witnesses, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us to the end!

☞ Responsive Hymn

† 祢是我的一切 **You Are My All In All**

♪ You are my strength when I am weak
You are the treasure that I seek
You are my all in all
Taking my cross my sin my shame,
Rising again I bless Your name
You are my all in all

Chorus:

♪ (Jesus, Lamb of God, Worthy is Your name) *2
♪ Seeking you as a precious jewel
Lord to give up I'd be a fool

You are my all in all
When I fall down you pick me up
When I am dry you fill my cup
You are my all in all (chorus)

☞ Announcement

1. The theme of this morning's Beautiful Life Lecture Series is "Life is Like a Song 2 - The Life Story of Sister Hung", please invite the unbelieving relatives and friends to watch.
2. During the Chinese New Year, the morning prayer would be held as usual. Welcoming brothers and sisters to pray together, and to abide by the saintly criteria, diligently do house chores, fulfill filial piety, spend the quality time with God's words, pray, and draw close to God every day.
3. Encourage all the brothers and sisters to participate in the "Red Envelope Spreading Love" promoted by World Vision Association. Give children a blessing for brave takeoff. Sponsor children with red envelopes for education, health peace and hope. Please get us involved on the World Vision website.
4. The Bible Reading Plan this week is **Job 19-21**. Hope we all root our faith in God's words.

☞ Offertory

☞ Baptism

☞ The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed by Your name, Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

☞ Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise Him all creatures here below. Praise Him above, ye heavenly hosts. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

☞ Benediction

May the grace from Lord Jesus, the love from our heavenly Father and the guiding of Holy Spirit be with all of our brothers & sisters from now on and forevermore.

Today, our worship service together is coming to an end. Emmanuel! May our good Lord bless you!