Life Is Beautiful

Hebrews 3:2-6

Arkansas Loving Church, Pastor Sungtae Hong, 9/13/2020

One of the movies that had the World War II as their background setting was an Italian movie called, 'Life is Beautiful.' A cheerful Jewish young man named Guido was living at a village in the country side of Italy. He fell in love with a teacher, Dora, at a local school, got married, and then had a son named, Giosuѐ. Later, the Holocaust started, and both Guido and Giosuѐ were confined at a detention camp.

Guido, however, made sure that his son, Giosuѐ, did not feel the awful daily realities like the war, the detention camp, or the Holocaust. He told his son that everything was a game and that anyone who scored 1,000 points first would get a tank. Guido did his best until his last day. He was caught while escaping. At the moment of being shot to death by the firing squad, he put a face wreathed in smiles to his son. Thanks to the complete love of his father, the son, Giosuѐ, not only survived, but also could say that both his life and the life of his father were 'beautiful.'

This complete love is found not only in the movie, but also in today's main text.

[Hebrews 3: 2-3] 2 He was faithful to the one who appointed him, just as Moses was faithful in all God's house. 3 Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses, just as the builder of a house has greater honor than the house itself.

The writer of Hebrews shows a family in the text. God is Father, the eldest Son is Jesus, and Moses is a house servant. The Son, Jesus, is more faithful than the servant, Moses, and fulfills all of his tasks. It is expected for a servant to be faithful. However, why is the eldest Son so faithful to his Father just like a servant to his master?

[Hebrews 3: 5-6] 5 "Moses was faithful as a servant in all God's house," bearing witness to what would be spoken by God in the future. 6 But Christ is faithful as the Son over God's house. And we are his house, if indeed we hold firmly to our confidence and the hope in which we glory.

There is only one reason why the Son is faithfully submissive. That is because we could be adopted to his family through his faithful submission. In other words, he became submissive for us to be adopted to his family. Nonetheless, the traditional Jews say that Moses was great, but they do not say anything about God, the Father, or about the Son's submission.

[Isaiah 49: 14-15] 14 But Zion said, "The Lord has forsaken me, the Lord has forgotten me." 15 "Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you!

God wanted to be 'Father' through the submission and sacrifice of his Son. However, the people always refused. They talked about the prophets and the great figures in the Old Testament who were just antitypes, and they boasted that they were the descendents of those in the Old Testament. Also, they said that they got their privileges because of the Old Testament figures. However, in fact, they did not recognize God as Father.

We got adopted to his family because of the complete love of the Father and of Jesus, the eldest Son, the Heir who submitted completely to the will of his Father. Therefore, God is a complete Father, and Jesus is a complete Brother.

God as complete Father does his best for us. However, we are always weak and have a tumble. We often give up ourselves in despair as we see ourselves as such. So, we cannot say any positive words to ourselves. 'Are you a pastor? An elder? A deacon? A Christian?' The people who observe us send similar unspoken messages to us. How are you different from us? You may drink less, smoke less, go to church on Sundays, give offerings, and pray before eating. Other than that, how do you say that you are different from us?'

The other people may evaluate our children harshly, but there are no parents that give up their children. Real parents refuse the callous and objective evaluations about their own children. They just do their best in raising their children. Why? Because they love them. It's not by will, but by destiny. You cannot separate the parents and their children.

It's the same. People may say to us, 'Not a chance!' And the Satan may make sarcastic remarks to God, 'God, why did you kill your Son? Just to save those bums?' However, God still does not give up his fateful love toward us.

We all know this story well, the Parable of the Prodigal Son, recorded in Luke Chapter 15: The son demanded his father, who was still alive, of 'his share of the estate' because he wanted the inheritance of his father. What did the son say to his father when he returned to his father? 'I am no longer worthy,..." However, the father did not deny the fate. He could not give up the fateful relationship of father and son.

[Romans 8: 35, 37] 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? 37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

How come could Giosuѐ, who lost his father at the war in the movie, say 'beautiful' about his inflexed life and the life of his father who became a scapegoat of the Holocaust? That's because of the complete love of his father. That's because the love of his father saved his life. That's because his love made him shine.

Could our lives be still beautiful even though our lives are full of suffering, agony, despair, and the disappointment of ourselves? Yes, of course! That's possible because God is our complete Father. Because of his complete love, he bore all the sacrifices. He still leads us with his complete love. Later, when the time comes, I wish to confess like this in his bosom: 'Life has been really beautiful! Thanks to you, my life was a continuation of really beautiful days! Thank you so much!'