

Masaaki-sama's Message

No. 16

“Tetsuo Watanabe: my mentor”

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After completing my university studies in Australia, I came back to Japan, knowing that I had to look for a job.

I attended a number of career fairs and talked with people from various companies. But something didn't feel right. I felt like my life was prepared for something else. Then gradually, a feeling grew within me—a feeling that I wanted to help my father, Kyoshu-sama, and be of some use, however little, to the divine work of Meishu-sama.

And so, one day in March 2005, at the age of 24, I told Kyoshu-sama that I wanted to be useful to Kyoshu-sama, to Meishu-sama.

The first thing he said was, “We need to receive permission from Sandai-sama,” and then he said, “Once you have her permission, you have to see Watanabe sensei.”

The next day, Kyoshu-sama and I were allowed to meet Sandai-sama, and we asked for her permission—the permission for me to be involved in the divine work.

There, after granting her permission, Sandai-sama asked Kyoshu-sama, “What do you want him to do?” Kyoshu-sama responded, “I plan to have him meet Watanabe sensei, whom I trust, and start from there.” Sandai-sama then said—and I still remember this moment so vividly to this day—she said to Kyoshu-sama, and in a way indirectly to me, the following, “Let Watanabe sensei boil or bake him as he wishes. It will be good training for Masaaki.”

“Boil or bake as you wish” is a Japanese saying that means you can treat someone as you wish, freely, as you see fit. That is, Sandai-sama and Kyoshu-sama entrusted Watanabe sensei with the task of training and educating me.

A few days later, there I was with Watanabe sensei in a sushi restaurant in Atami, just the two of us. Before saying much, he reached into the inner pocket of his jacket and took out a bunch of papers. Then he said, “I give you this.”

I looked at it, and it was the most recent message of Kyoshu-sama. He said, “I already read it ten times, so you should too.”

I think it was a way for him to tell me that, first, he reveres and respects Kyoshu-sama deeply, but secondly and more importantly, it was a way for him to tell me, “Don’t take Kyoshu-sama for granted just because he is your father. From today, you must receive Kyoshu-sama not as your father, but as Kyoshu-sama.”

Toward the end of our meeting, Reverend Watanabe said, “Today, I came to tell you one thing.” Already nervous about meeting him for the first time, this made me even more so. He said, “Today, make a firm decision in your heart that you will be Kyoshu of this Church in the future. From today, you must see, hear and experience everything with this decision firmly set in your mind. Without making this decision, everything you are going to experience will be a waste.”

Not expecting at all to hear such a thing, I was stunned, speechless.

But then he continued, “So what do you say? Will you make the decision now? Yes or no?”

I uttered a not-at-all convincing “Yes” to him. Immediately he said, “I don’t accept that. Is that a yes or a no?”

For whatever reason, I felt kind of scared to say yes to him. I mean, I just graduated from university, and what he was saying to me sounded like such a huge matter—and rightly so, it was a huge matter.

But there, on the spot, I was required to make up my mind. After a few seconds of silence, which to me felt like several hours, I said, “Yes.” I did not say this with a loud voice or with conviction, but I remember saying this yes, feeling as if I were diving into something unknown, entrusting the whole of myself to that something.

I am not sure even today whether this yes satisfied Watanabe sensei or not, but still he accepted my yes with a quiet nod.

From then, my time with him began.

Until he passed away in 2013, he taught me so many things that it is impossible for me to recount all of them now. But it all comes down to one point, and that is *to serve*.

Through his words and attitude, he wanted me to learn the importance of serving.

When he reached his hand into his pocket, it was time for him to smoke. So, the moment he went for his cigarettes, I prepared an ashtray—before told, of course.

When he wanted to write something, I had to prepare a pen and a piece of paper—so I always had them in my pocket, ready to be used.

The two of us dined together so many times. Sometimes, he asked me, “What do you want to eat tonight?” But to me, this question was a kind of challenge from him that actually meant “Can you guess what I want to eat tonight?”

This way, instead of putting myself first, I was trained to think of what Watanabe sensei wanted. That is, I was trained to serve.

What does he want right now? What is he thinking? Does he want to drink coffee now or later? Does he want me to talk or be quiet?

To some, all this may sound old-fashioned. But to me, it was not. In this way, I was able to learn how to serve someone, and that someone ultimately was God. Through Watanabe sensei, I was able to learn the importance of serving God, the importance of leaving your wishes behind and living for the wishes of others, the wish of God.

And the key to this training is understanding that in order to serve God, you have to do so through serving someone in this physical world. Kyoshu-sama is the only exception since he is the one who serves the invisible, representing all of us. But for us, if we don't serve through someone in this physical world, we end up creating our own convenient image of God or Meishu-sama and say that we are serving them when, in fact, we are serving our own desires.

That is why the existence of Kyoshu-sama is vital for our faith in Meishu-sama. By leaving your desires aside and focusing on the wishes of Kyoshu-sama, you are able to learn how to serve. If not, even though you say “I serve Meishu-sama,” how can you know you are right? How do you know what Meishu-sama now wants? The voice of Kyoshu-sama is the voice of Meishu-sama. This was the philosophy, faith and principle that Watanabe sensei strongly held.

The years I spent with Reverend Watanabe have provided me with such a solid foundation to grow into a religious person. He taught me that it is only through serving your superior that you can serve Kyoshu-sama and ultimately serve Meishu-sama and God.

At times, he was very strict with me, but without him, I of today do not exist, and I am forever indebted to him for the love he gave me through his training.

If Watanabe sensei were alive during this Church purification, he would have been the very first to defend Kyoshu-sama. Those who say otherwise are blind, ignorant people who fail to understand his mission on earth.

He lived on earth to serve Kyoshu-sama. His mission was to serve Kyoshu-sama.

He always told me, “My father, Katsuichi Watanabe, served Meishu-sama, Nidai-sama and Sandai-sama. And me, I serve Sandai-sama and Kyoshu-sama.”

I think I heard him say this phrase at least a hundred times—such was his passion toward Kyoshu-sama.

It was unfortunate to see some people distort his legacy on earth, forging an image that he was not a Kyoshu-sama-centered person. In this way, they are denying the very existence of Watanabe sensei, someone who devoted his life to the divine work of Meishu-sama through Kyoshu-sama.

I mean, do they really believe that Watanabe sensei would be on the side of those who secretly follow and film Kyoshu-sama and Kyoshu-sama’s wife? What nonsense. Throughout his life, he fought against those people to protect Kyoshu-sama, and he was attacked so much by them for doing so.

But deep down, I believe they know. They know that they are betraying Watanabe sensei by abandoning Kyoshu-sama. To them, I only have this to say: Watanabe sensei is watching you, together with Meishu-sama, Nidai-sama and Sandai-sama, and waiting for the day you repent.

In Brazil, you who inherited the spirit of Watanabe sensei stood up, and those who abandoned Watanabe sensei left the true Church of Meishu-sama.

In Africa, you who inherited the spirit of Reverend Francisco, also known as Chiquinho, who was one of the principal disciples of Watanabe sensei, stood up.

Watanabe sensei, the seed you sowed—the seed of Kyoshu-sama-centered faith you sowed—has now grown and is starting to bear its fruits.

Sensei, my mentor, my only mentor, my gratitude to you, forever.