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Longing for Light –MATTHEW Chapter 5: 15-16

Alan Brady

Outline

1. Singing the hymn LONGING FOR LIGHT
2. The reading : Matthew Chapter 5 : 15-16
3. What is this LIGHT we long for?
 - a. the removal of darkness, uncertainty, confusion, evil
 - b. the removal of for example, sexism, racism, bigotry, prejudice and discrimination, egocentrism, ethnocentrism
 - c. the GOOD, doing GOOD, being GOOD
 - d. God, Godly, God's love for us through Jesus Christ
 - e. The power(s) essential to life
 - f. The first step in the creation of the world according to GENESIS 1 : 3 Let There Be Light
4. Verses in the NT (New Testament) with the word LIGHT (76)
5. LIGHT also as Mastery For Service in terms of being charitable, in being aware of others' homelessness, poverty, lack of freedoms, lack of food and water and shelter (a 3 Cs of CARING and a Responsibility to and for society (Forbes, 2005)
6. PRELUDE
7. Two main points concerning my teaching and research ; Murukami's character in COLORLESS TSUKURU TAZAKI, the KYOTO Forum held on Sunday Nov.29
8. POSTLUDE

PRELUDE

The motto of Kwansei Gakuin is, as we all know very well, MASTERY FOR SERVICE. Now it is debatable whether KGU is the only or the most prominent higher educa-

tional institution to avow and say they practice “mastery for service.” It is my opinion that all educational institutions, whether of the higher variety or not, as well as all socially responsible organizations and socially responsible individuals and groups do in fact, or at least should in fact, avow and practice mastery for service. So let us consider what this service is, and who and what it is for? Let us imagine that mastery for service, at least from a sociological point of view is, as has been argued by some sociologists (e.g. FORBES 2005), service and responsibility *to and for* society, the former being an individual and or collective responsibility to ensure that society goes on as it has and that its cultural and political and spiritual and economic aspects remain vibrant, Service to and responsibility for society is akin to individual and collective group efforts to ensure greater fairness and equality in society, to ensure that there are changes to people’s mindsets and behaviors that add to the vibrancy and progress of a society.

MAIN Points

1. The main character in the 2014 novel written by MURAKAMI Haruki and which I have just finished reading is called *COLORLESS TSUKURU TAZAKI*. Tsukuru has constant doubts whether or not he has anything of value to offer others and the world; in fact he even has doubts that he has anything to offer himself. He believes for the most part that he is truly colorless, thus the title of the novel. But in the course of his maturing from a high school teenager to the 36 year old we are introduced to for much of the story he begins to realize that he may very well have had something to offer both himself and others. When meeting one of his very close high school friends for the first time in 20 years his friend tells him that he (Tsukuru) was the glue that kept the group of five friends closely together, that it was Tsukuru who gave the 4 others the freedom to be themselves to relax and both think of and practice their mastery for service. This group of five had initially come together in order to do charity work, and although Tsukuru was the only “colorless” person – his four friends were named AKA, AO, SHIRO, and KURO, he was far from being a no body sort a person who had nothing to offer others or the world at large.

2. A couple of weeks ago I attended an Oxford University Press sponsored Forum on globalization and education held at Kyoto University. In the closing session of that Forum one of the speakers offered that it is the role and responsibility of

higher education and education in general to help young people figure out what it is that they can offer themselves and others and the world, that is how they can conceive of and practice mastery for service to themselves, to others, to the society and the world. One woman from China who is teaching at an educational institution in Japan, I now forget which one, asked at that same session what is the educational meaning of globalization. No one including myself had any ready-made answer to her question, but now thinking about it and mastery for service and MURAKAMI'S novel it occurs to me that we all have light to shine on others and society and societies connected to one another, and the global world at large. This troubled world of ours suffering from climate degradation, terrorism and related issues, poverty and inequality, gaps between rich and poor people and societies needs more light; we are always in fact longing for light. Thus it is relevant that we follow the example spoken in MATTHEW 5: 15-16 and practice the words sung in LONGING FOR LIGHT as we, students and teachers and administrators and others connected to KGU conceive of and practice our mastery for service.

POSTLUDE

Christians indeed all people like you and me and Tsukuru Tazaki get lost on their journey through life. Christ is that Light sent into this world to show us ways out of darkness and uncertainty and confusion. We long for light and Jesus is that Light coming into the world as we prepare to meet and greet him on his human birth as the Son of God. In this season of Advent let us prepare to meet and greet him by helping to light the lives of others or as we perhaps too often say here at KGU practice mastery for service.

We all have Light within us though there are times it may not shine brightly or brightly enough to light the world for others. I will soon retire and seek to serve others in similar and different ways as I have for almost three decades here at KGU. I have done my best to serve students and the academic community these past 27 years and yes I shall miss practicing **that** mastery for service. A new stage begins in my senior age life from April and like yourselves I will seek to keep and continually long for Christ's Light shining within me and also to help shine his Light on others.

(社会学部教授)