

January 15, 2017

KIBC Sunday Worship Service

Messenger: Pastor Teiichiro Kuroda

Title of the Message: "Live a Life for Today"

— What is **the** Secret to Live the Present? —

Text: Hebrews 3:12~15

3:12 See to it, brothers and sister, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God.

3:13 But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called "Today," so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.

13:14 We have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original conviction firmly to the very end.

13:15 As has just been said: "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion."

Introduction

- Today is called '**The Age of Excess Information**'. We easily get various kinds of information through the internet. Before the half century, we couldn't even imagine that we could get every piece of information **from** over the world at home, **the office desk and on our phones too!**
- We are surprised how **convenient the internet** is, because we can get precious information in an instant. When I was a student at Bible college, it was an important lesson to look for the meaning of the biblical terms. For example, when I wanted to look up a term 'love' in the Bible, I went to the library and read many books to find its meaning. Then, I found that the term 'love' has four different meanings so I wrote them in my notebook. However, nowadays if we click a term, we immediately come to understand its meaning. We live in really convenient days. This is a good point of the internet.
- On the contrary, the internet has a different side. It gives right information but at the same time it gives false information, and in addition, it can **give too much** information so it is difficult to find out the right one. Some people suffered heavy losses in business because **they** believed the wrong information. It is said that the presidential election in **America last** fall was shaken by these plus and minus points of the internet. Therefore, we need to choose the right things.
- By the way, we need to choose the right information in our Christian life. If we are not good at choosing right things, we fail to discern between God's voice and Satan's voice. We live the present, today. It is important for us to distinguish the right voice. **Then, where is the secret to do?**
- Last Sunday, our Lord spoke to us through His Word, "Today, if you hear his voice, do

not harden your hearts.” Let’s continue to listen to His voice from today’s message entitled, “Live a Life for Today.” We **will** study the following two points.

Main Points

1 . Develop the Ability to Discern Things.

- What **do** we need to live **in the present**, today? We need to begin with listening to the Word of God. His Word is, “**Yes and Amen**”. The Word of God has power to discern things.

4:12 For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

Hebrews

1) Read the Word of God by the help of the Holy Spirit.

- When the Israelites traveled the wilderness for 40 years, they heard the voice from God and Satan. Therefore, they must have discerned the voice. If we want to discern the voice of God, we need to read the Bible, the voice of God. The important thing is to read the Word of God by the help of the Holy Spirit.
- If we don’t ask the help of the Holy Spirit, our attitude is apt to **merely** study the Bible. The more we store our knowledge the more we become boastful. As a result, we try to judge other people with our biblical knowledge.
- Then, what attitude **do we need to study** by the help of the Holy Spirit? It means that we apply the Word of God to our life by the help of the Holy Spirit. If we always read the Word and lead a Christian life according to the Word, we can distinguish the voice of God and the voice of Satan.
- I don’t say that we always hear voice directly. (Of course, some people directly hear His voice. I know such people.) However, God’s voice often works to motivate our will and desire. It means that when we want to do something or to go some place, the Word of God encourages us to do.

4:12 For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

Hebrews

2) We should accept warning.

- The Israelites often heard the voice of God during they traveled the wilderness. However, they scarcely followed it because they turned away from God. Whenever they were suffering from a shortage of water and food in the wilderness they remembered the days in Egypt. They doubted God who derived them from Egypt. On top of this, they tested and tried Him. If their hearts turned away from God and when they had hardships, they easily gave up.

- We need to learn from the history so that we may not repeat **it**. Even today, many Christians easily give up when they have a small problem. It is because that they don't learn lessons from the past and they also don't have a strong fellowship with God. They grumble, "Why does God allow me to have such a problem?" They separate from God. They don't understand God. If they **understood** Him, who saved us, we hardly come to doubt Him.
- If we have some kind of a gap between God and us, we come to doubt Him. It is natural that even though they hear the voice of God, such a Christian life results in disbelief in Him and **a hardened** heart. Therefore, we should learn from the history of the Israelites so that we develop our ability to discern things. The Bible teaches the secret of leading a life. Let's study the other lesson.

2. Encourage One Another.

- It is very useful for us to learn lessons from the history of the Israelites. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews teaches to live for today as below —

3:13 But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called "Today," so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.

1) We can't lead a Christian life alone.

- We need friends to lead a Christian life. The best friends are Christian friends in church. Church is a spiritual home and our faith grows sound. Man needs **a** home to grow healthy. If a child grows in a broken family, he **might** be badly affected. Like this, those who don't belong to church, a spiritual home, have difficulty growing sound and tend to become selfish **Christians**.
- Brothers and sisters should encourage one another so that they can lead a sound Christian life. Therefore, we need to have a gentle and flexible heart to accept encouragement of other brothers and sisters. To harden a heart means to close one's mind. Firstly, it means to close one's mind to God. Secondly, it means to close one's mind to exhortation and advice of brothers and of sisters. Therefore, I just say that those who have a strong relationship with God are those who have a gentle and flexible heart. **1Thessalonians**
- **5:11 Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.**

The verse above teaches the following two things.

① To encourage one another

- What does make us encourage? It is the truth of the Word. The Word of God is alive today. God's **word** comes to reveal our **hearts** and it encourages and gives power to us. As a result, we bear testimony. These things encourage **us**.

② To edify one another

- If we build each other up, we grow in faith. What does it mean to edify each other? A term edify (Oikodomeo in the original language) refers to build up. It means to

build a house and a tower. We easily find a negative point **in** other people. (We don't pay attention for ourselves.) To edify means not to speak an unfavorable thing but to speak a good thing about other people.

- The attitude above is quite contrary to the worldly life. However, do you know that we find truth in a paradoxical idea? The worldly life is to seek an advantage over others by hitting a weak spot and a defect. Therefore, there are continuous conflicts over the world. On the contrary, the Bible teaches to build each other up. This is a considerable point we should **not overlook**.

2) **Hold our original conviction.**

- **3:14 We have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original conviction firmly to the very end.**

The important thing **is to hold our** original conviction firmly, when we **first** believed Jesus Christ. Some people may think that salvation is like a certain belief. The conviction refers to the one of salvation. The Bible records that man is saved when he believed Jesus Christ and he is given eternal life.

**The Gospel of
John**

6:47 Very truly I tell you, the one who believes has eternal life.

- Therefore, the important thing is not dependent on our will or how **strongly we feel** **but** to focus the promise of God and His Word. We should hold our conviction according to the Word of God. John records as below—

1 John

5:13 I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.

- John writes that we are able to have conviction that we have eternal life. And if we hold our conviction firmly to the very end, we will receive the grace to enter the Kingdom of God.

2 Peter

1:11 and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

- Let's remember again the Israelites of the Old testament. They were **delivered** from Egypt and made a journey to the Promised Land. They became free from slavery and went on in the wilderness to the Promised Land. However, they hardened their hearts and acted against God.
- All people who were adults when they left Egypt died in the wilderness except Joshua and Caleb. They couldn't enter the Promised Land. Even Moses, who led about 2 millions Israelites in the wilderness, could only come to Mt. Horeb. (Deuteronomy 20:2~13)
- The Israelites in the wilderness teach lessons to Christians who lead a life today.

Canaan was the Promised Land for the Israelites and the Kingdom of heaven is the Promised Land for us. It means that Canaan, the Promised Land for the Israelites, refers to the Kingdom in heaven that is the real Promised Land, the Kingdom in heaven.

- If the Israelites hold faith, all of them could have entered the Promised Land. However, those who entered the Land were only Joshua and Caleb. People who were still children when they left Egypt could enter the Promised Land and also those who were born when their parents were **traveling** in the wilderness for 40 years entered the Land.
- If those who were adults when they left Egypt **held their** faith, they could have entered the Promised Land. However, they were not allowed to enter because of their unfaithfulness. We are not an exception.

The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews records,

- **13:14 We have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original conviction firmly to the very end.**

Let's learn lessons from the Israelites so that we don't turn away from God. The Bible encourages as below —

- **13:15 As has just been said: “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion.”**

A term today firstly refers to the days of churches, the days of grace, and secondly does to today, every present day. Then, how do we live today (January 15)? Do we learn lessons from the historical facts? If we don't learn from history, we keep repeating mistakes. Do we choose information and learn from the Word of God by the help of the Holy Spirit? Let's take time and consider today's message.

Conclusion

Title of the Message: “Live a Life for Today”

— What is **the** Secret to Live the Present? —

- Today we listened to the voice of God from the message entitled “Live a Life for Today.”

Today is very precious for us because we can't repeat it again. **How** should we lead a fruitful life according to God's promise of grace?

- ① To hold **the conviction of salvation** according to the Word of God
- ② To **apply** the Word of God to our Christian life by the help of the Holy Spirit

- If we follow the above two points, we can discern the voice of God and the voice of Satan at any time.

* God bless you!