

February 5, 2017

KIBC Sunday Worship Service

Messenger: Pastor Teiichiro Kuroda

Title of the Message: "To those who Seek a Real Rest in God"

—To Faithfully Lead a Life before God—

Text: Hebrews 4:1~10

**4:1 Therefore, since the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us be careful that none of you be found to have fallen short of it.**

**4:2 For we also have had the good news proclaimed to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because they did not share the faith of those who obeyed.**

**4:3 Now we who have believed enter that rest, just as God has said, "So I declared on oath in my anger, "They shall never enter my rest."**

**And yet his work has been finished since the creation of the world.**

**4:4 For somewhere he has spoken about the seventh day in these words: "On the seventh day God rested from all his work."**

**4:5 And again in the passage above he says, "They shall never enter my rest."**

**4:6 Therefore since it still remains for some to enter that rest, and since those who formerly had the good news proclaimed to them did not go in because of their disobedience.**

**4:7 God again set a certain day, calling it "Today." This he did when a long time later he spoke through David, as in the passage already quoted:**

**"Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts."**

**4:8 For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken later about another day.**

**4:9 There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God;**

**4:10 for those who enter God's rest also rest from their own work, just as God did from his.**

### **Introduction**

- We lead very busy lives. The term "busy" written in kanji means that one's heart dies. We spend time saying, "I am busy. I am always busy". However, do we understand the real goal of life? If our heart is content, it is no problem.
- On the contrary, if we lead a life by having anxiety (fear), it is troublesome. Today we are living in a difficult days to look further ahead of life. Therefore, we have various kinds of anxiety and fear about the future. Human beings unconsciously want to take a rest someday. God prepared a rest for us. It is not just a simple rest day in a week.
- God prepared a worship day so that we feel relaxed in God's hand. We will physically recover if we take a rest but it is difficult to restore mental life. As human beings are made in God's image, they will not have the true rest until they return to God.

- In this point, we come to understand that it is important to lead a life faithfully before God.
- By the way, the author of the epistle wrote in Chapter 1 and 2 that Jesus Christ is superior to angels and he also wrote in Chapter 3 that He is superior to Moses, who was the greatest leader of the Israelites. And he continues to record the right to enter God's rest in Chapter 4. Let's study to enter the true rest that is the right that God has given to us according to the following two points from today's text.

### Main Points

## 1 . A Rest for the People of God

### 1 ) The rest at the beginning of the Creation

**4:4 And Abel also brought an offering—fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The Lord looked with favor on Abel and his offering, Genesis**

- On the seventh day God rested from all His work of creating the heavens and the earth. It means that the God's rest was prepared for all human beings as well as the Israelites.
- We have already taught that we should learn a lesson from the attitudes of the Israelites in the wilderness. Their goal was to enter the Promised Land and their journey in the wilderness was just a process toward that goal. Our life in faith has also a goal that is to enter the Kingdom in heaven. We will be given the true rest there. The Bible teaches that, **"We who have believed enter that rest." (4:3)**

The author records in Chapter 10.

**4:10 for those who enter God's rest also rest from their own work, just as God did from his.**

- "Those who enter God's rest" refers to Christians who lived a life by completely trusting in Jesus Christ and who have been given His salvation.
- The author must have recalled Stephen who already went to heaven, James Jesus' brother, James John's brother, Peter, Paul and many other saints.
- It is the amazing privilege to enter the Kingdom in heaven that is given to those who trust in God. No one can describe how wonderful the Kingdom in heaven is. However, we can experience glimmers of it in this world. Those who believe in the Lord lead a life with joy, praise and thanksgivings.
- This happy and joyful life is quite different from a life with anxiety and fear. The previous life was fettered by the past and was a slave of sins. It was also captured by rumors and controlled by fate. Human beings cannot have freedom or joy in such a life.
- When they come to know Jesus and are made free from those things, they are given true freedom so they begin to praise God with thanksgivings and joy. This is a Christian.

## 2) The Israelites

- The Israelites repeatedly muttered during the journey in the wilderness for forty years. They acted against God and wouldn't listen to his voice, yet God had kept protecting and guided them.

### Deuteronomy 29

**29:5 during the forty years that I led you through the wilderness, your clothes did not wear out, nor did the sandals on your feet.**

- In spite of God's protection, the Israelites muttered many times and went against Moses and did not trust in God and Moses. Therefore, God finally got angry.

### Psalm 95

**95:11 So I declared on oath in my anger, "They shall never enter my rest."**

- As a result of their unfaithfulness, the Israelites were not able to enter the Promised Land except Joshua and Caleb. What was their unfaithfulness?

The author of the epistle records as below—

**4:2 For we also have had the good news proclaimed to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because they did not share the faith of those who obeyed.**

- The verse above teaches us that we should learn a lesson from the Israelites who did not share the faith of those who obeyed so that they were not able to enter the Promised Land even though they heard the Voice of God (the Gospel).

## 3) The saints in the New Testament days

- My friends, we, God's people in the days of the New Testament, are also given God's rest. God's people in the days of the New Testament refer to both Jewish and Gentile Christians. The final goal that is promised for the Christians is a new heaven and a new earth that John recorded in the Revelation. Let's read the following verses.

### Revelation

**21:1 Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth, •for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea.**

**21:2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.**

**21:3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.**

**21:4 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more Death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away. •**

- "A new heaven and a new earth" is the place of rest that we finally enter. And it is given by the God's grace according to only faith, not by our efforts. Therefore, we are given joy so

that we praise God and give thanksgivings to Him. This is the rest (peace) that God gives us.

## 2. God's Word and His Rest

- Those who live in the days of the New Testament receive revelation about salvation through Jesus Christ the Son of God. We are promised the greater rest than that of people in the days of the Old Testament.

### 1) A Spiritual rest

- A spiritual rest is greater than that a Sabbath-rest. It is gained by growing in faith. It is the rest given through God's grace, God's comfort and God's purification. Jesus said as below—

#### John 14

**14:27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.**

Jesus the Lord promised His disciples to give peace before His crucifixion.

- We can't get peace (rest) by our own power. It is given by God. However, we need to clear some condition to get it. That is that we lead a faithful life, pursuing God. If we follow him faithfully, we consequently come to be given peace (rest) in God.
- On the contrary, if we continue committing sins, God's peace (rest) will pass away without notice. The rest (peace) is given to God's people who meet the condition that requires to be faithful to God. This is a principle of the Bible.

### 2) An Eternal Rest

- Happily, the rest that God gives us is really experienced in this world but the Bible also teaches about the days ahead (future). It means the eternal rest that we experience in the Kingdom in heaven and it is fulfilled when Jesus Christ comes again to this world.
- The Israelites who left Egypt were not able to enter the rest that God promised. We can learn from their failure. God's promise to enter His rest is still valid today. Those who receive the promise will absolutely enter the eternal rest whereas those who become unfaithful will fail on the way like the Israelites. Do we share the Word of God with faith?

**4:2 For we also have had the good news proclaimed to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because they did not share the faith of those who obeyed.**

- Then, what does it mean to not share the Word of God with faith? It means that they did not faithfully accept it. Even though they hear the Gospel, they do not seriously accept it and think it valueless. There were such people in the days of the early church.

#### Acts

**17:32 When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some of them sneered, but others said, "We want to hear you again on this Subject."**

- Regrettably, there are such people today. What does it mean to share the Word of God with faith? I think that the following two points are important answers.

**① To lead a life faithfully before God**

- We can't hide anything before God. He sees everything. Therefore, we must explain what we did before God.
- If someone thinks that they can hide what he did before God, it means that he begins to separate from God. We need to live faithfully before God because we cannot hide anything before God and He knows everything. It means to lead a faithful life and whenever we commit a sin or evil act we settle them before God.

**② To trust in God**

- Trusting in God refers to faith in God. Such faith brings out a feeling of awe. Everything begins with a trust relationship. God created the heavens and the earth. He also created me and He is the Lord who saved me from sins. Faith means to accept this as true.
- If we really appreciate it, our attitude toward God gradually changes. We come to have faith that God is the Sovereign and rules everything. We receive a miraculous power from such faith.
- By the way, the faith in God is first fostered in our mind and it delivers thoughts, attitudes and results in actions. From this point, we come to realize that the attitude of mind is firstly questioned before utterance or outward actions.
- The faith in God brings up from fellowship with God who is love and forgiveness. Our daily devotion (quiet time) is the key to the faith in God. We believed in Jesus Christ the Son of God and became children of God. If we faithfully lead a life before God and confess our sins and pray for forgiveness, He will absolutely forgive us. How happy we are! We must not listen to the Word of God (the Bible) without paying attention. We need to accept it in faith.

**Conclusion**

Title of the Message: "To those who Seek a Real Rest in God"

—To Faithfully Lead A Life before God—

- We studied the privilege to enter a new heaven and a new earth from the message entitled, "To those who Seek a Real Rest in God". How about today's message? Do we seek the real rest that the Bible teaches? Do we faithfully lead a life before God? Let's take time and consider what we studied today.
- The following verse teaches an important point.

**4:2 For we also have had the good news proclaimed to us, just as they did; but the**

**message they heard was of no value to them, because they did not share the faith of those who obeyed.**

- What does it mean to share the faith through His Word?
  - 1 . To faithfully lead a life before God  
It means to reveal ourselves before God who sees everything.
  - 2 . To have a firm faith in God  
Faith in God is to trust in God. Trusting in God Almighty encourage us and gives us comfort and incredible power.
  
- \* God bless you!