

May 7, 2017  
 KIBC Sunday Worship Service  
 Messenger: Pastor Teiichiro Kuroda  
 Title of the Message: "Leading a Life for Better Things"  
 —Joy of Taking Forward —

Text: Hebrews 6:9~12

- 6:9 Even though we speak like this, dear friends, we are convinced of better things in your case — the things that have to do with salvation.**
- 6:10 God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them.**
- 6:11 We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure.**
- 6:12 We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.**

### Introduction

- Last Sunday, we learned God's deep love. The author of the epistle gave a stern warning to the Jewish Christians not to lead an unfaithful life after they received *God's five graces*.
- **6:6 and who have fallen away, to be brought back to repentance. To their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace.**  
 When some people read the Scripture above, they think desperately that it is impossible for those who committed a certain sin to be brought back to repentance. They think if those who have once believed in God have fallen away, they couldn't return to God again.
- However, I don't think that the author literally means what he wrote. He gave the stern *warning* to Jewish Christians so that they would not stray from God's love. To understand this completely, we need to interpret the meaning of the Word from the context, not only from the given Word. ⇒ From the general point of the Bible, we clearly understand that God is love and He doesn't want human beings to perish.
- God is love. However, certain people may think that they are helpless because of concern that they have committed an irrevocable sin. He may feel desperate for a long time. However, God is not a fearful God but He is God of forgiveness and love.
- Therefore, we have hope. The Bible records as below—  
**"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."** **1 John 1:9**
- If we confess our sins before God, we are purified with Jesus' blood on the cross, who is the Son of God. If we confess our sins from the heart, God forgives us with His infinite love. What great grace God gives us!
- The author goes on to discuss *leading a life for better things* in more detail according to the following two points.

### Main Points

- 1 . What The Author Is Convinced Of**
- **Hebrews 6:9 Even though we speak like this, dear friends, we are convinced of better things in your case — the things that have to do with salvation.**
  - The author records "**we are convinced of better things in your case.**" We understand from the passage above that the warning of the author that we studied last Sunday (Hebrews 6:4~6) is not a mere word of threat. He gave a warning to Jewish Christians who

left faith in Jesus to encourage them to self-examine. We come to know that the warning leads them to deeper faith.

⇒ Maturity of faith

- As we learned last Sunday, God has a coaching note. It doesn't record a goal three and half years later but it records our goal of the Christian life. How thankful that we are given such a great coach (God)!
- **"Better things"** means that God's salvation will be fulfilled for the readers of the epistle. Those who believed were certainly saved. Therefore, he encouraged them that they should appropriately behave according to the fact that they were already saved and they should serve as saints. This is the content of his word of encouragement. God is the One of forgiveness, of salvation and of love.

{Illustration} **A Certain Unsound Church**

- **I have heard a story of a certain church in Japan.**

**A pastor of a certain church in Japan had an absolute authority and the congregation believed that God spoke His will through his sermon. On top of that, the pastor often preached a sermon from Hebrews, Chapter 6: 4~6. Those who believed and were saved were taught if they committed a serious sin, they had to be thrown into hell. And the serious sin that the pastor referred to was depending on his mood at any given time.**

- **My friends! Christians who kept listening such a message became paralyzed with fear. Some of them thought if they committed a sin, they could be never saved and they had to go into hell. As a result, they were filled with a feeling of desperation. The pastor controlled the congregation by making them afraid.**
- **My friends. The way to control the church by fear is quite different from the image of God in the Bible. It is quite far from God's love. God in the Bible so loved us that He gave His only Son. God is full of grace and He accepts sinners who repented.**
- Paul said as below—

**2 Corinthians 6:1 As God's co-workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain.**

It is God's grace that we are forgiven and accepted by Him.

## **2. We should Understand Our Merciful God.**

- Now let's remember how our God is merciful and full of grace.

### **1) Salvation is God's grace.**

- The Epistle to the Ephesians in the Bible records as below—

**2:8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God ·**

**2:9 not by works, so that no one can boast.**

- Human beings are saved by God's grace through faith in Jesus. There is no way to be saved.

**Acts 4:12 Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name given under heaven by which we must be saved.**

- *Grace* in the Bible (chairs) ⇒ One of God's natures

God's *grace* has various characteristics as below:

1. His grace is unilateral. (the rich→ the poor) There is no opposite direction.
2. His grace does not need to be returned. (It is impossible to give it back.) To receive for nothing
3. His grace is equally given to everyone without doing any good deeds. (Everyone receives it equally)

### **2) God does not forget.**

- **6:10 God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them.**
- God never forgets any small work that we do in His name. It is important for us to listen to God's warning of judgment. On the other hand, we should take greater interest in God's promises that are full of hope and compassion. It means that we should lead a life by focusing on these two things.
- If we immerse ourselves in God's grace and get used to it, we become so insensitive to it. I also get used to His grace. We must not take God's grace for granted. (Human's weakness)  
We should become a saint who leads a life before God.
- **Matthew 25:35 For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, 25:36 I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me. 25:40 "The king will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'**
- God doesn't forget our deeds of love that we unconsciously did for brothers and sisters.

### 3) **God's promises are surely fulfilled.**

**6:11 We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure.**

**6:12 We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.**

- God's promises will be surely fulfilled for those who keep waiting with faith and endurance. The Bible records many examples of believers who received the promised things through faith and endurance. Father Abraham is a representative example. Don't you fear a message of God's judgment? If your fear is greater than thanks for God's grace, your faith is not a normal one.
- It is good that you have a sound fear in faith, however, you should rejoice that you are saved by the grace of God. You should remember that God blesses those who follow Him with faith and endurance. Let's pray to God so that we are able to lead a life to get what has been promised like Abraham.

**{Illustration} A Converted Muslim' Word:**

*God of Judgment and God of Love*

- **More than 3,000,000 refugees left Syria and Central Asia that came more and more to Europe. Approximately 1,150,000 refugees flowed into Germany and approximately 2,000,000 refugees flowed into Turkey. Many Christians in Germany gave a helping hand to those who left their homeland with nothing but the clothes.**
- **Christians give them clothes, food and daily necessities. Many of the refugees were surprised at their kindness and said, "Why do they help us like this?" Christians told them about God's love.**
- **A certain Muslim refugee from Syria said, "The Islamic god was fearful one. He didn't forgive those who broke the law. I came to understand that the God of Christianity is the God of love."**
- **My friends! Many refugees came to know the God of love. They believed in Jesus Christ and were baptized one after another. What an amazing work of God! God of**

**forgiveness and love ⇒ He is the true God who created the heavens and the earth.**

- The author of the epistle encouraged Jewish Christians to lead a life with faith and love. He also wrote them to imitate those who faithfully followed the Lord.

**6:12 We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.**

- What is God like?

**6:10 God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help him.**

- The author of the epistle wrote about God's nature to Jewish Christians and encouraged them to follow the Lord.

### Conclusion

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—Joy of Taking Forward — ???

- Our God is not the One of judgment or a fearful God. He is the God of grace. It is important that we should remember our merciful God and always keep His grace in mind. We are able to experience the following three points at a daily devotional time.
- Let's remember the following points.
  1. God's salvation is *His grace*.
  2. God doesn't forget *our voluntary deeds* of love.
  3. God surely *fulfills* His promises.

\* God bless you !