

July 30, 2017

KIBC Sunday Worship Service

Messenger: Pastor Teiichiro Kuroda

Title of the Message: "God Provides His Grace for You"

—God Cleanse Us to Serve Him—

Text: Hebrews 9:11~14

9:11 But when Christ came as high priest of the good things that are now already here, he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not made with human hands, that is to say, is not a part of this creation.

9:12 He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption.

9:13 The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean.

9:14 How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!

Introduction

- I watched a TV program entitled "Super Doctors of Medical Care" a few days ago. The program introduced doctors who earned a reputation as being good doctors.
- Prof. Dr. Takahiro Oto is the director of the Transplantation Center of Okayama University Hospital. He is the expert doctor for lung transplantation and a thoracic surgery. He visits 70 or 80 patients in the country in a year.
- A lung transplantation is a very important treatment for seriously ill patients. More than 300 patients are waiting for their turn. Prof. Oto and his transplantation team achieved a 82 % five-year survival rate and a 100 % success rate in the recent 50 surgeries. Their achievement is unlike any other in the world.
- Prof. Oto performed an operation on one-year-old girl in this May. It was a lung transplantation on the girl who was the youngest patient yet. She was born with a lung disorder. There was no other way to live except a lung transplantation. A TV documentary reported the fierce and courageous battle of her parents and doctors.
- A lung donor was found in Fukuoka city on a certain day in May. The donor was a child who was brain dead. A lung was taken out and sent to Okayama immediately. At the same time, the girl was brought into an operating room to have the transplanting surgery. The situation was urgent.
- The surgery was spectacularly successful. Prof. Dr. Oto said to her parents, "This was the first experience for me to perform a surgery on one-year-old child but it ended in a great success. Congratulations!" Her parents bowed deeply and said, "Thank you so much, doctor! We cannot find the any words to express our feeling. Thank you very much."
- The parents of the girl wrote a letter to the donor's parents. The program showed the content of the letter. It wrote, "Your child's lung is alive in my daughter's body. She received a treasure that no one can buy it. Thank

you very much...” It was the quite moving documentary.

- My friends. The girl and her parents received an organ for nothing. No one can buy it. And also a receiver can't send a special present to a donor in return but he or she just receives it. How thankful!
- The gift that God has given us is like this. The precious gift is eternal life. Jesus Christ forgave our sins and redeemed us by His blood.
- Therefore, we are allowed to come before God and glorify His name. How blessed we are! We owe everything to God's work on the cross.
- The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews records as below—
9:14 How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!
- Today, we study about the gift (treasure) of God according to the following two points.

Main Points

1 . The Blood of Jesus Christ

9:11 But when Christ came as high priest of the good things that are now already here, he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not made with human hands, that is to say, is not a part of this creation.

- The author has taught us many times how blessed the new covenant of Jesus Christ is and he teaches it again here. It is not a tabernacle made with human hands, but it is the perfect tabernacle by Jesus Himself.

9:12 He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption.

- Jesus who became the High Priest shed His own blood, not the blood of animals.

9:13 The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean.

- Jesus shed His blood only once so that He saved us forever. He no longer needs to shed His blood again. What we need is that we just receive His precious grace with thanks. If we thank the Lord from the bottom of the heart, we come to praise His name spontaneously.
- This is the power of Jesus' blood. We are able to receive God's blessing in faith.

2 . The Grace Given by the Blood of Jesus Christ, the Lord

- The first law could not perfectly clear our hearts that was our consciences.

9:9 This is an illustration for the present time, indicating that the gifts and sacrifices being offered were not able to clear the conscience of the worshiper.

1) The blood of Jesus

- My friends, if we wash a broken car, we just wash its outside. We can't get it repaired. It is impossible to do by washing the outside only. The problem of human beings is in this point. Our important inward parts aren't restored.

- Why aren't they restored? The reason is that we don't want to show our inward parts (invisible parts) to other people. When we can't tell our worry, pain, conflicts and troubles, we are under a lot of stress and feel tired. Did God want human beings to be like this? No, His purpose was quite different.
- The blood of Jesus on the cross makes our inward parts clean. It gives us the eternal forgiveness (redemption). Let's read Verse 12 again.

9:12 He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption.

- The blood that Jesus Christ, who was sinless, shed by His sacrifice, cleanses our consciences perfectly. We rejoice by receiving perfect forgiveness of sins and peace with God. The blood of Jesus did not only cleanse our sins but also gave God's life to us.
- Our acts are changed by God's grace. We lead lives toward life, not toward death. The blood of Jesus cleanses our acts so that we are able to serve the living God. This is the gift of treasure (property) that God has given.

2) The faith of hope in the days of the Old Testament

- The law indicated the way to come close to the Holy God. Human beings, who were sinful, were forgiven of sins by slaughtering animals in place of them. This is the law of the days of the Old Testament.
- The animals must have been without defect. It means that they were sinless. When the priest laid his both hands on the head of the animal, he imputed his sin to it. Therefore, the animal offerings refers to the redemption of Jesus Christ on the cross.
- Those who offered an animal to sacrifice at the temple were cleansed and were allowed to stand before God by slaughtering the animal and sprinkling its blood. However, it was impossible to clean their consciences. The blood of Christ is different.

9:14 How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!

- Jeremiah and Ezekiel, the prophets in the days of the Old Testament, didn't speak only about regulations of the law but also referred to human hearts.

Ezekiel

36:26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.

- **The Psalms** also record,

51:17 My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart you, God, will not despise.

- These verses show that God already spoke about the heart in the days of the Old Testament. God said that the consciences of human beings were cleansed. The saints in the days of the Old Testament were saved through the faith in hope by offering animal sacrifices. It was *the example* that refers to salvation that would be fulfilled through Christ in the future. On the other hand, people in the days of the New Testament understand more clearly about it through the salvation that Christ has already accomplished. They are saved by faith in what Christ has already done.

3) The Saints in the New Testament in a more favorable situation.

- Looking forward, people in the days of the Old Testament had constantly

performed regulations according to the example as of salvation of Christ in future, that God gave them to do for forgiveness of sins. However, we who live in the days of the New Testament look at Christ behind us and we understand His sacrifice (the cross) of the One who is perfect and without defect.

- People in the days of the Old Testament had to follow the regulations (the law) that had no life. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews demonstrated that they referred to the example and shadow. On the other hand, we who live in the days of the New Testament are given Jesus Christ who was the perfect High Priest. It is no longer the example or shadow. The true Savior (the Messiah) came to this world so that we are freed from lives to follow the law. Therefore, we should be able to lead Christian life with joy and full of life.

9:14 How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!

- If we are still bound with legalism, “I must ~”, Christ’s death on the cross comes to be in vain. As we are made free from the law, we should lead active Christian lives with joy.
- My friends, please don’t misunderstand what I mean. I don’t mean that as we are free, we allowed doing whatever we want. On the contrary, those who received the true freedom and have cleansed consciences, how could we live selfish lives? We lead fulfilling lives with love and joy. They are joyful lives focusing on the Kingdom of Heaven.

① By the way, what does God want from us? Or, what can we do for God? Should we help other people? Should we work for society where we are living? Should we do a lot of voluntary work? Should we donate a lot? Yes, all of them are important and helpful. And God is pleased with them.

- However, what is the most important thing that God wants?
⇒ It is the faith (trust) in God.

The Epistle to the Hebrews records as below—

11:6 And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.
Hebrews

- What did God expect Abraham the Father to do?

Hebrews

11:8 By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going.

11:9 By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise.

11:10 For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

11:11 And by faith even Sarah, who was past childbearing age, was enabled to bear children because she considered him faithful who had made the promise.

11:12 And so from this one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore.

- The word “By faith” repeatedly appears in Chapter 11 of the epistle to the Hebrews.

② Jesus also questioned His disciples about their faith.

The Gospel of Matthew, chapter 8 records that Jesus and His disciples were on the boat. Suddenly a furious storm came up on the lake of Galilee, so that the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was sleeping. Then,

8:25 The disciples went and woke him, saying, "Lord, save us! We are going to drown!"

8:26 He replied, "You of little faith, why are you so afraid?" Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm.

8:27 The men were amazed and asked, "What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!"

- Jesus asked the disciples' to have faith in Him even in a storm. Why? It is natural that the disciples feared under a trial. We sometimes face a storm (trouble, pain, battle) in our lives and many of them are difficult to avoid.
- Some person may say, "I know that the Bible teaches great things. However, it is impossible for me to have my faith in a storm." Yes, we can. God knows you exactly and understands how weak we are.

{Illustration} **Jakob Esau, A World Evangelist**

- **Rev. Jakob Esau was really a man of God, who was sent in a labor camp in Siberia for 25 years and was put in prison 4 times. He experienced various trials and told me as the following.**
- **"Now I am living without any troubles and blessed life in the Western world. When I remember the days in the labor camp in Siberia, I feel as if I am dreaming." He continued, "If I will have that persecution again I am not sure if I could survive or not (storm) . However, I know that my God gives me necessary power to survive when it comes".**
- **1 Corinthians**
10:13 No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to us all. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.
- **We should lead lives in faith.**

③ My dear friends ! I have heard that faith is like *a point-to-point connection*.

Each trial, pain, fight and conflict refers to *a point* and each point connects to become *a line*. And the line leads to the goal (the Kingdom in Heaven).

- When we accept a storm in life with faith in God and that point leads to the next one, our Christian life goes forward and our faith gradually becomes stronger.
- Then, what should we do? What do we need in the storm?

⇒ **We need faith (trust) in God the Almighty.**

God's great master plan was fulfilled by Jesus Christ.

This is the privilege that is given to the saints in the days of the New Testament.

9:14 How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!

- We are cleansed in our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God. We didn't achieved it by ourselves, but God did His work. God first wanted people to *be clean* because He is holy One, so He can't accept sins or unrighteousness. Jesus as the High Priest cleansed our sins by offering His body. He completed every work. We glorify and praise His name.

Conclusion

Title of the Message: "God Provides His Grace for You"
—God Cleans Us to Serve Him—

- We listened to the precious Word of the Lord today. Let's sum up today's message.

9:14 How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!

1 The blood of Jesus on the cross works on our consciences.

2 We should respond to God through faith.

- Let's accept the points of our lives in faith and follow Him wholeheartedly. We should pray to God so that we can walk to the Promised Land with joy.

* God bless you!