

August 27, 2017

KIBC Sunday Worship Service

Messenger: Pastor Teiichiro Kuroda

Title of the Message: "Living a Life with Joy, Thanks and Praise"

—To lead a Life in God's Grace—

Text : Hebrews 10:1~10

10:1 The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming — not the realities themselves. For this reason it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship.

10:2 Otherwise, would they not have stopped being offered? For the worshipers would have been cleansed once for all, and would no longer have felt guilty for their sins.

10:3 But those sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins.

10:4 It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

10:5 Therefore, when Christ came into the world, he said: "Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me;

10:6 with burnt offerings and sin offerings you were not pleased.

10:7 Then I said, 'Here I am — it is written about me in the scroll — I have come to do your will, my God.'"

10:8 First he said, "Sacrifices and offerings, burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not desire, nor were you pleased with them — though they were offered in accordance with the law.

10:9 Then he said, "Here I am, I have come to do your will." He sets aside the first to establish the second.

10:10 And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Introduction

1) I read a book entitled *You Can Predict Making Mistakes* (Written by Prof. Masayuki Nakao, Kobunsha-Shinsho 313) because I often make mistakes these days. Failure is common throughout the course of life. How about you? Can you honestly say, "I have never made mistakes?"

However, there are all sorts of mistakes: a mistake that results in a serious accident in which many people may be killed, a daily mistake such as oversleeping so that you would be late for the entrance examination or the recruitment examination. We can give plenty of examples. This happens to me, too. I also make many mistakes. The author of the book gives various examples of mistakes and categorizes them to learn lessons.

He thoroughly examined historical accidents and events and scandalous affairs of domestic companies by giving many examples such as the Titanic disaster, Chernobyl nuclear power plant accident, September 11th attacks in USA and so on.

He finally categorized these mistakes into 41 patterns. He says that we repeatedly make mistakes. He also demonstrates some preventive measures against making mistakes. I recommend you to read his book. It is a worthwhile book.

2) By the way, a common saying goes, "History often repeats itself." People also repeat mistakes. When we look the Israelites who repeatedly made mistakes, we realize it is true. Jesus Christ came to this world and fulfilled God's salvation through Jesus' death on the cross and His Resurrection. Then Christian Church was founded. The church, its head is Christ, has endured up to the present time. However, we have been making the same mistakes for about

2000 years. We should have learned through from history, but we didn't. We have repeatedly made mistakes.

{Illustration}

- **I studied at Trier University in Germany. Trier is the oldest town in Germany (It was founded B.C.15) that is located by the Mosel. The remains of ancient Rome abound in the town and old coins of that time are still found. It was a well known town of approximately 100,000 people. It was the Catholic town, so there was only one Protestant church at that time.**
- **There was a house where Karl Marx was born in Trier, who advocated Communism. His parents were Jews. He saw the actual situation of the Catholic Church. The Church became very wealthy by Church taxes that was paid through the sweat of poor wine yard workers of Mosel wineries. As he realized the contradiction in society, he became a leader of atheism. The spiritual corruption of the Catholic Church spread not only in Germany but also throughout Europe.**

3) According to History of Christianity, the Revival Movement began by the Puritans in the 17th century in England. In the long history of England, the Christian Church became a state religion and its important worship services gradually became traditional and customary. The building of the church existed but precious life disappeared.

Then, John Owen, the leader of the Puritans grew in faith and began Revival Movement. He appealed to people to return to true faith, not a lukewarm revival. The Puritans sailed to America on the Mayflower to seek the new earth. It is Puritan Revolution. The history of the United States of America was started by the Puritans who arrived in America.

It is said that John Owen loved the most the Epistle to the Hebrews. He faithfully taught the Bible based on the God's Word. The other reformers who stood on the God's Word also liked reading the epistle and studied it deeply so that they could avoid returning to the ritual worship of the Old Testament.

Then, why should we not return to worship of the days of the Old Testament? Today's text teaches the precious two points.

Main Points

1 Worship of the Days of the Old Testament

1) The worship that became traditional and customary

My friends. The Christian churches in England and Europe became traditional and customary. They didn't give worship by offering animal sacrifices like the days of the Old Testament era. However, their worship gradually changed and were not focused on Jesus Christ over the lapse of a long time. The Epistle teaches if their worship does not focus on Christ, the worship is no different from the one of the days of the Old Testament.

10:1 The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming—not the realities themselves. For this reason it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship.

In the days of the Old Testament, they gave offerings to worship God. However, the forms of worship became a traditional and habitual practices and their sense of guilt and

forgiveness of sins gradually faded away. They repeatedly gave worship like this. Their sins were formally taken by laying them on animals. However, such worship was substantially useless and their sense of guilt wasn't taken away. This was worship in the days of the Old Testament.

Their worship only took a part to show the true worship of Christ. The author of the Epistle wrote it helpless, because Jesus came into this world and fulfilled eternal redemption on the cross.

2) Conscience that is not cleansed

The sacrifices of the days of the Old Testament could not take their sins away. On the contrary, they must have realized their sins when they offered sacrifices. They were never freed from the twinges of their consciences. The traditional and habitual faith is in danger of losing life.

Many religions repeat helpless work. They want to be forgiven of sins and forget the past. However, they still have unclean consciences. Therefore, they try to be forgiven of sins by training and human efforts.

The Old Testament records, "How human beings should live their lives." in detail. The fundamental idea is written in Leviticus as below —

19:2 "Speak to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them: 'Be holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy.

Moses and the Israelites exerted all possible efforts *to be holy (to be sinless)* according to the verse above. However, it was impossible. They couldn't become holy.

Some Christians have the same experiences as they did. They confess their sin, however, their discouraging feeling is not taken away even after confession. Paul, who achieved a lots of works in the days of the early churches, records as below —

Romans 7

7:18 I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature.

For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out.

7:19 For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do — this I keep on doing.

7:20 Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.

7:21 So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me.

7:22 For in my inner being I delight in God's law;

7:23 but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me.

7:24 What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?

7:25 Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in my sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.

When Paul realized his nature and really confessed, his spiritual eye was opened. He became to look the cross of Christ with tears of thanks. Those who understand forgiveness of God filled with joy, thanks and praise, not with helpless feeling.

2 Worship in the Days of the New Testament

1) Significance of Incarnation

When Jesus came into the world from heaven He took a human body so that He offered His body for sacrifice on the cross. Animal sacrifices were practically useless. Whereas, the Son of God, who is eternal, came into the world in appearance of a human and sacrificed His body on the cross so that He fulfilled the eternal redemption.

The author of the Epistle quoted Jesus' Word on the premise that Psalm 40 demonstrates Jesus the Lord.

Psalm 10:5 Therefore, when Christ came into the world, he said: "Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me; 10:6 with burnt offerings and sin offerings you were not pleased. 10:7 Then I said, 'Here I am — it is written about me in the scroll — I have come to do your will, my God.'"

Jesus told about Himself in the Gospel of Luke as below —

Luke 24:44 Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.

It means that both the Old Testament and the New Testament are written according to God's master plan.

My friends. Please don't misunderstand sacrifices of the Old Testament. They should not be disregarded. People offered precious things to God. It means that they tried to come close to God with their love and self-sacrifice.

However, they came to think that they could come close to God by offering sacrifices without notice. They made a method more important than its purpose. This is weakness of human beings. We are also like them.

Do we think we are OK because we go to church, we serve at the church and we pray? No, we are not. Faith means that we trust in Jesus' work on the cross and accept it.

2) The true sacrifice

- Samuel said as below —

1 Samuel 15:22 But Samuel replied: "Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the Lord? To obey is better than sacrifices, and to heed is better than the fat of rams."

- David said as below —

Psalm 51:16-17

51:16 You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings.

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

These two great men of God lived in the days before Christ was born. It was the day before Messiah (Jesus Christ)'s coming. However, they recorded God's will correctly. As I told you before, people of the Old Testament lived by looking towards Christ (the Messiah) ahead

of them. Those who live in the days of the New Testament lead lives by looking Christ (the Messiah) in the past. We all live by focusing Christ Jesus.

My friends. Jesus Christ, who came to this world, lived a completely faithful life to God the Father. Even though Jesus had authority as the Son of God, He didn't just use it for doing miracles. He followed only God's will and used authority as the Son of God. The greatest one among His works was death on the cross.

- The Word of God teaches us as below—

10:10 And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Yes, those who believe in God are made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ.

My friends. Jewish people desperately tried *to be holy* before God. However, human deeds, such as sacrificing animals, having many religious ceremonies and training ourselves do not help us to be holy before God.

The Bible teaches that we live in *the days of grace*. We don't need to live like people in the days of the Old Testament. Yes, we live in the days of grace. How do we receive the amazing gift from God? Let's accept it with a simple mind like a child.

Conclusion

Title of the Message: "Living a Life with Joy, Thanks and Praise"

—To lead a Life in God's Grace—

- God taught us how blessed those who live in the days of grace are.
Let's remember the following two points.
 - 1 . The true sacrifice was offered according to God's will.
 - 2 . The saints are given privilege to live in God's grace.

* God bless you !