

September 24, 2017

KIBC Sunday Worship Service

Messenger: Pastor Teiichiro Kuroda

Title of the Message: "Those Who **Live** with God's Promise Are Blessed"

—Grace and Perseverance—

Text: Hebrews 10:26~39

10:26 If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left,

10:27 but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God.

10:28 Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.

10:29 How much more severely do you think those deserve to be punished who have trampled the Son of God underfoot, who have treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified them, and who have insulted the Spirit of grace?

10:30 For we know him who said, "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," and again, "The Lord will judge his people."

10:31 It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

10:32 Remember those earlier days after you had received the light, when you endured in a great conflict full of suffering.

10:33 Sometimes you were publicly exposed to insult and persecution; at other times you stood side by side with those who were so treated.

10:34 You suffered along with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions.

10:35 So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded.

10:36 You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.

10:37 For, "In just a little while, he who is coming will come and will not delay."

10:38 And, "But my righteous one will live by faith. And I take no pleasure in the one who shrinks back."

10:39 But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved.

Introduction

- We studied *a close relationship* and *a distant relationship* last time. Our relationship with the living God is *a close relationship*. It refers to the close relationship like parents and their child, not like the relationship of master and servant.
- A parent -child relationship is a very close one. It is not like a relationship between other people. Jesus said in the Gospel of John as below—
15:15 I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.
- We are made children of God by His grace. Then, how should we lead a life as God's chosen children?
 1. To keep confidence in faith
10:22 let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.
10:23 Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.
 2. Spur one another on toward love and good deeds.
10:24 And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds,
- It is recorded, **"Let us consider how we may spur one another"**. It means to **study hard by competing with each other**. As we are given privilege to enter the Promised Land, we are able to lead a life with hope. This is what we learned last time.
- Now let's begin today's text.
 Now it gives one question here. The question is "Can Christians ever lose faith after they once trust in God," or "Are they punished by discarding faith after they had faith?"
- What do you think about it? This is an old argument. Some people say that once they are saved they never fail to God's salvation. Other people say that even though they are saved, if they lead an unfaithful life, they fail to God's salvation and are punished by God.

- The latter people demonstrate by quoting the Scripture of today's text as below.
10:26 If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left,
10:27 but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God.
 - On the other hand, the former people demonstrate by quoting the Scripture of the Epistle to the Romans as below—
8:1 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,
8:2 because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death.
- The Scripture above teaches that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ. They both argue according to the authority of the Bible.
- Then, what do you think about their contentions? The Bible supports both arguments. We need to carefully judge these arguments and apply to our Christian faith. Let's study the following two points today.

Main Points

1 . If We Deliberately Keep on Sinning...

- The author of the epistle records that there were Jewish Christians who dropped out at that time.
10:25 not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.
10:26 If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left,
10:27 but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God.
- The author continued that those who rejected the law of Moses experience fearful consequences.
10:28 Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.

Therefore, the Scripture teaches that those who reject the great grace, that was of incomparable worth to Moses' law, will be sentenced the more serious punishment.

1) Those who were chosen by God

- When we read the Scripture, we should first understand that Christians are one who are chosen by God to be saved since His plan in the eternal time. As God is perfect, He never fails in choosing people. He doesn't leave His chosen people just because they are hopeless.
- However, we shouldn't be content with the present Christian life as we are chosen by God. We should strive to lead a faithful Christian life. The more we understand the precious Gospel of forgiveness of sin, the more we want to lead a faithful life before God. We voluntarily live faithfully.
- We see a person who had eagerly trusted in God become lukewarm in faith and won't try to understand God. Or, we may misunderstand that someone has real faith through human eyes, but he really doesn't have faith through God's eye.
- It teaches us an important thing that if we lead an unfaithful life, we are ultimately judged. We should keep it in mind and not underestimate God's grace. The Bible warns us with strict Words.

- Some people seemed to be lukewarm in faith and left God at that time.

10:26 If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left,

I think that the author uttered a severe word as a warning to such people.

- As we are weak, we sometimes commit sins after we are saved. However, the verse above refers to people who hardly fear to commit sins or repent or feel the twinges of conscience. If they deliberately keep on sinning, no sacrifice for sins is left for them.

2) Why are they judged?

- We should understand why there are such kind of people. The reason is that such people take lightly the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross, even though His sacrifice is a surprising event. If they take the amazing sacrifice of the Son of God lightly, they *trample the Son of God underfoot*. It is natural that they deserve to be severely punished.

3) The Spirit is the Advocate.

- It goes without saying that if they despise God the Spirit, they deserve to receive a severe punishment.

The Gospel of Matthew

12:31 And so I tell you, every kind of sin and slander can be forgiven, but blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven

12:32 Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.

• We are saved by amazing sacrifice of the Son of God. However, we are very weak and we are like a child who is taking tottering steps. We easily stumble and commit a sin. God, who knows our weakness, sends the Spirit to us and helps us not to commit sins. The Spirit is the Holy Spirit and He is the Advocate.

The Gospel of John

14:26 But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

- When we read the Bible, God speaks to us through the Bible. When we pray, God shows us His will. When we stray and are at a loss, God shows the way through the Spirit.
- We, who are weak and selfish, do not always seek help of the Spirit. We try to choose an easier way by ourselves. Our nature always seeks an easy way. Therefore, it is important for us to seek God's Word and live by help of the Spirit.
- On top of that, we should be careful not to judge people.

10:30 For we know him who said, "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," and again, "The Lord will judge his people."

10:31 It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

- Just remember, no one has right to judge others. The author gave a very strict warning so that the people, who were chosen by God, may not fail in faith. Let's study an important thing for us who are weak according to the following point.

2. To Keep on Trusting in God

- The following two points are very important for us to live in faith.

1) We should always remember God's grace.

God prepares the way of grace for His people. However, it is the way to go through hardships. It seemed that many of the readers of the epistle lived out their faith in severe persecution.

10:32 Remember those earlier days after you had received the light, when you

endured in a great conflict full of suffering.

10:33 Sometimes you were publicly exposed to insult and persecution; at other times you stood side by side with those who were so treated.

10:34 You suffered along with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions.

- They must have violently persecuted. Therefore, the readers were immediately reminded of their hardships when they read the epistle.
- We also have various kinds of hardships. We sometimes are insulted and troubled at workplace, at school, in family because of our Christian faith. We are tempted to think my treasure is more precious than Jesus the Lord. We also tempted to think our status and fame are more important than the Kingdom in Heaven, the eternal treasure.
- We are questioned if we have faith that we look up the treasure in heaven and we have faith to voluntarily throw away worldly things like the saints in the early days. We are asked if we lead a life like that.
- They focused on heaven rather than the worldly things. They understood that their real possessions were stored in heaven so they could overcome hardships.

10:35 So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded.

Let's study another important point.

2) We should lead a life with perseverance.

10:36 You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.

- We need perseverance. We think the term perseverance in Japanese just means to bear something. However, *perseverance* (hypomone in Greek) here originally means *to hold its own ground and to keep standing on one place*.
- The power of Satan tries to make us go with the current of the world. It is easy for us to go with current than to go against it. However, if we do it means to finally perish. We must not to be swept away.
- We may be almost swept away by the flood in this world. Then, what should we do? ⇒ Our hope is blood of Jesus on the cross. Blood of the cross gives us power to persevere and not to drift away.
- We need to have confidence in entering the Kingdom of Heaven. We are given a secret to keep standing. We are not able to do by ourselves but we are able to do it by faith in Jesus. It is perseverance.

The author continues as below—

- **10:37 For, “In just a little while, he who is coming will come and will not delay.”**
- **10:38 And, “But my righteous one will live by faith. And I take no pleasure in the one who shrinks back.”**
- People who *shrink back* refer to people who don’t walk in faith. When people have faith, they began to learn from the Word of God and trust in God’s promise and go forward. Abraham believed in God’s command and promise and left his home and began to start a new life when he was 75 year-old. He finally received great grace.
- Faith is a unknown world for us. However, God promises and guarantees. Therefore, we have confidence and feel secure. God guaranteed by sacrificing His Only Son.
 - { **Illustration** }
 - **A teacher of a certain junior high school gave a difficult problem to his three students. He said to his students, “Solve this problem. It may be difficult, but you can surely find the answer.”**
 - ① **One student tried many times. However, he finally gave up, and said “It was impossible for me!”**
 - ② **The second student also couldn’t solve the problem. However, he said with smile, “I know that we can solve it. Because I have seen someone who solved it.”**
 - ③ **The third student worked hard to solve it. He had a headache and got confused but continued solving the problem. He said with confidence, “ I believe that I can absolutely find the answer. Because my teacher said so.”**
 - **My friends! This is the faith. We should not focus on visible things but trust in God’s Word.**
- God abundantly blesses those who lead a life in faith. Firstly, He gives forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ. Secondary, He gives power to endure persecutions during our journey in this world.
- When Jesus comes to this World again, this world ends. Salvation of Christians is fulfilled and Christians live in the Kingdom of Heaven forever. Jesus will come soon. This is our hope.
- Those who live a life in faith according to God’s promise are blessed. Because they

have perseverance even though they go through the violent flood. God is the One of truth. He never fails promises that He made. Therefore, the author said as below.

10:39 But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved.

Conclusion

Title of the Message: "Those Who Live with God's Promise Are Blessed"

—Grace and Perseverance—

- Today we listened to the Lord's voice. We sometimes drift away in a storm of life. Our faith sometimes becomes weak and we may not think that we have right to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Those who have faith in Jesus' Second Coming are blessed even though they go through hardships. The Bible teaches as below—

The Epistle to the Romans

8:1 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,

8:2 because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death.

- Then, how should we live today?
 - 1 . We should always remember God's grace.
 - 2 . We should lead a life with perseverance.

* God bless you!