

September 9, 2018

KIBC Sunday Worship Service (Memorial Worship Service)

Message by Pastor Teiichiro Kuroda

Title of the Message: "Where Were You, Lord?"

—The One Who Is Always with Us—

Text: John 11:17~27 (Verse 25)

11:17 On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days.

11:18 Now Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem,

11:19 and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother.

11:20 When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home.

11:21 "Lord," Martha said to Jesus, "if you had been here, my brother would not have died.

11:22 But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask."

11:23 Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."

11:24 Martha answered, "I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."

11:25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even though they die;

11:26 and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

11:27 "Yes, Lord," she told him, "I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who was to come into the world.

Introduction

I have heard a story about a life insurance that is very creative and unique. It is called “Living Needs” insurance in America and Canada.

A death benefit is generally paid after the insured person dies. However, the insurance company believes that people must need money before their death, so they planned a life insurance called “Living Needs” insurance.

For example, if a certain person is told he only has six months more to live by a doctor, the life insurance company pays him a part of the insurance according to his “Living Needs.” In a sense, it is a good idea, because insurance is useless for the said person after his death. He needs money when he is alive.

However, an ordinary life insurance policy doesn’t pay him when he is still alive.

The Bible records a similar story.

It is the story of Lazarus in Bethany. He had already been in the tomb for four days. Many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them.

Jesus also came to see them. Martha said this to Jesus—

11:21 “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.

11:22 But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask.”

Martha knew that Jesus could heal the sick. Therefore, she thought if Jesus had been there, Lazarus would not have died. It means that Jesus came too late. Jesus didn’t come when they were in need.

However, Jesus said to Martha who was overwhelmed by grief,

11:23 “Your brother will rise again.”

11:25 “I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even though they die;

11:26 and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?”

Then, Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead.

* We also experience situations in our lives, when we don’t have any help from man in times of need. But, Jesus is our true helper.

Jesus made three promises to those who trust in Him.

Main Points

1 . I Am the Resurrection. (Resurrection)

11:25 Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even though they die.”

The Verse above records the life that is able to defeat death.

Let’s focus on Jesus Christ. He was born approximately 2,000 years ago in Bethlehem in Israel. When He was about 30 years old He began to start a public life and performed many signs and works for 3 years that testified that He was the Messiah (the Savior) who was sent by God.

However, the leaders of the Jewish society at that time hardly accepted Jesus. They felt an urge to kill Jesus. They arrested Him and brought Him to court for trial and finally had Him crucified by the Romans. He was buried for three days and rose again. He overcame death just as He said He would when He was alive.

11:25 Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even though they die.”

Only God defeats death. Jesus, thus proclaimed that He was God and rose from the dead to prove it.

2. I Am the Life. (Hope)

11:25 Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even though they die.”

Man must surely die. Our physical bodies are not immortal. However, our soul continue to live on after we die. The Bible is very clear about this. Our soul will live on after we die, either in heaven or in hell. And the life that Jesus is taking here, the life we can have even after we die is life with Him for all eternity. It is eternal life with Jesus, not in hell. Man really lives by the eternal life.

3. Anyone Who Believes in Me Will Live. (Desire)

11:25 Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even though they die.”

{Illustration}

Dr. Parker, who worked for a Christian medical ministry in China, returned to England in August, 1858. The man who succeeded him at that hospital was the famous missionary Dr. Hudson Taylor. He became the founder of the China Inland Mission (now OMF), one of the greatest missionary organizations in the world.

Dr. Hudson Taylor wore the clothes of the Chinese people, ate the same food they did, and lived like them. He literally became a Chinese. He lived together with them in the hospital. One time, they had run out of funds for the hospital, so they prayed desperately to God for help. However no money was given.

The patients in the hospital came to know about the situation. One morning, the cook told him, “Our rice is almost gone. We opened the last bag of rice today.”

At that time, Dr. Taylor said in faith with joy, “Then the Lord’s time for helping us must be close at hand.” And before that last bag of rice was empty, Dr. Taylor received a letter. In that letter, he found a check for 50 pounds more than enough money to buy all the rice they needed.

My friends, this is a true story. What would you have thought if you were Dr. Taylor’s shoes?

- ① Would you have cried out, “Oh no, the rice is gone!”?
- ② Or, would you have cried out, “The Lord’s time for helping us must be close at hand!”

Friends, Jesus has promised that He will prepare for our, “Living Needs”. The God of the Bible isn’t far from us. He will never forsake us, as it says in Hebrews 13:5.

Martha thought “Where were You, Jesus?” But Jesus’ response was,

11:25 “I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even though they die;

Conclusion

Title of the Message: “Where Were You, Lord?”

—The One Who Is Always with Us—

We have our memorial worship today, when we quietly remember the deceased who went to heaven a little before us.

Jesus, in whom Martha was trusting, came to her four days after Lazarus died.

Martha said to Jesus at that time.

11:21 “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.

11:22 But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask.”

Jesus replied to her,

11:25 “I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even though they die.”

Jesus raised people from the dead and He himself rose from the dead.

Jesus gave us promises in today’s text, and they are three blessed promises.

* God bless you!