

January 27, 2019

KIBC Sunday Worship Service

Message by Pastor Teiichiro Kuroda

Title of the Message: "Do You Know What I Want to Show You?"

—Practicing Love—

Text: James 2:18~20

2:18 But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do.

2:19 You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.

2:20 You foolish person, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless?

Introduction

We have studied about **faith** and **deeds** several times. James taught us about **true faith** and **dead faith**.

As I mentioned before, James taught why this is so, but I will omit the details. However, it was true that there was **dead faith** at that time.

And worse, those who had **dead faith** without deeds claimed that they had faith. James couldn't accept the faith without deeds that they claimed. It is also true today.

Someone may say, "I believe God and go to church, therefore I am a Christian." It is very good and blessed, however if their faith doesn't have **deeds**, what does James say about them?

James was Jesus' brother and he should know Jesus best. He really accepted Jesus as the Messiah after His Cross, Resurrection, Ascension and Pentecost. He really believed that Jesus, his brother, was the Messiah that God has sent them and his life was quite changed.

It was said that the number of believers of the church of Jerusalem was approximately in the tens of thousands and James took full responsibility of that church. On the top of that, he taught practicing love in faith, not keeping the formal faith that was bound by tradition to the Christian people who dispersed over the entire Roman Empire.

James emphasized that the faith that was derived from love was the true faith that had deeds.

Now, let's study **what James wanted to show us** today.

Main Points

Let's read the Scripture first.

2:18 But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do.

2:19 You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.

2:20 You foolish person, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless?

Let's think about the following two points.

1. Show Me Your Faith.

1. Two Faiths

The following is a summary of the Scripture above.

Two people claim that they have faith. However, one of them cannot prove his faith because his faith has no deeds. The faith can not be seen, nor be touched.

Then, another one says as below—

2:18c “I will show you my faith by what I do.”

Faith and deeds cannot be separated. It is true that a man is saved through faith by God's grace. However, if his faith does not have any deeds, it is not enough to lead to salvation.

And James said that it was not enough to believe there is one God. It is very important confession for the Jews that there is one God. They pray, “Shema Yisrael! (Hear, O, Israel!)” now same as before.

Deuteronomy 6:4 Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.

Jewish people still pray, **“The Lord our God, the Lord is one.”**

James records that even the demons believe that **God is one** and shudder.

The Gospel of Mark records as below—

1:23 Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an evil spirit cried out,

1:24 “What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!”

James teaches that even if a man believes that **God is one**, but his faith has no deeds, his faith is useless (It is the faith that does not lead a man to be saved.)

2. The Useless Faith

2:20 You foolish person, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless?

Faith bears fruit.

Matthew 7:17 Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit.

7:18 A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit.

It is recorded in John Chapter 15 that Jesus taught by the parable that Christians would bear fruit.

15:5 I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

Therefore, it is natural to bear fruit if a man remains in the vine.

Let's clear what we studied now. We can't see faith, however it bears fruit. We are able to see that fruit. James insisted on showing faith by deeds. It was what James argued.

Let's consider that faith bears fruit.

2. Faith that Practice Love

Please let me tell you again that James teaches that faith has **deeds**.

James said, "**I will show you** fruit that were born by faith." He did not mention it against his will. In fact, it is faith that bears fruit. Then, how can we have faith that bears fruit?

1. In Jesus Christ

First of all, it begins to believe that Jesus is our Savior. It means that we accept that we are sinful beings and receive forgiveness by Jesus' redemption on the cross. It is the work of the Spirit of God.

God so loved us, who are sinners, that He gave us His begotten Son. We come to be able to love people by receiving His love.

What we need are not theology or doctrines, but practicing love of Christ.

Practicing love was important in the days of James as well as today. Troubles that happen over the world and crimes around us are caused by the lack of love. Christians who are given salvation in Christ voluntarily do **deeds** of practicing love.

By the way, what was the first Christian church like?

2. The Church of Jerusalem, the First Church in the World

Acts 2:41 Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

2:42 They devoted themselves to the apostles - teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

2:43 Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles.

2:44 All the believers were together and had everything in common.

2:45 They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need.

2:46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts,

2:47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Let's look at its characteristics first.

I pick up 4 points: They had everything in common, they gave to anyone who had need, they met together in the temple courts and they broke bread (the Communion service). And the Lord blessed them!

These characteristics are surely not **deeds** for the sake of deeds.

The Bible records what happened before this event as below.

1 Peter said as below—

2:36 Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.”

What the reaction of the people heard this?

2:37 When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

2:38 Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

And the Acts records as below—

2:41 Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

2:42 They devoted themselves to the apostles - teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

It means that their **deeds** were that they had everything in common, they gave to anyone who had need, they met together in the temple courts (worship) and they broke bread were voluntary derived from their faith. They are natural deeds.

People were cut to the heart by the word (message) of Peter who was a uneducated fisherman in Galilee. They said, **“Brothers, what shall we do?”(2:37)** God’s Spirit penetrated their hearts. And people accepted the word of Peter.

It is that they were cut to the heart by the Peter’s word so they believed the message. It is the faith. They were new born people by God and they practiced services (deeds) of love.

James wanted to show the amazing **deeds** that were done by the faith of the saints

3. Christian Faith Puts Love into Action.

{Illustration} The Family Orphanage -

A Report from *The Voice of Mission* January 2019

Igor & Ljudmila Schischkow, who are long time missionaries, continue to do a precious work on the northern part (near the Arctic Circle) of Russia. They have two children and also accept children who are under hopeless circumstances. They offer their house as a family orphanage and take care of them like their own children.

Children who are abandoned by their parents live together in the family orphanage of the Schischkows. Most of their parents are drug addicts and alcoholics and repeatedly cause criminal cases. Parents of some children are missing so they can not contact them. These children usually are taken to orphanages and the Schischkows Family Orphanage also accept those children.

The Schischkows accepted 13 children in recent years. Eight of them came of age and

left the family home. Now five children (10 to 16 year-old) live together with Mr. and Mrs. Schischkow.

I was really impressed that they literally put God's commandment, "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 19:18), into practice. We easily preach love for neighbor that the Bible teaches, but it is not easy to practice Jesus' Word "Go and do likewise." (Luke 10:37) Children spend happy days by experiencing love of God through Mr. and Mrs. Schischkow.

On the top of that they visit a nursing home with children. The director of the home said, "It is very helpful that Mr. and Mrs. Schischkow come to us with children, because they cheer the aged people up by singing hymns, reading poems and reading the Scripture."

Mr. and Mrs. Schischkow also visit a facility for the disabled. They are encouraged that the orphans who have miserable backgrounds are loved and grow up quickly and healthily. Their testimonies and praise to God inspire the disabled people. Some of them are moved to tears.

The Schischkows also do another voluntary work. They visit a prison and share testimonies to the offenders about the Living God. Their stories about children who lost parents and met the Father in Heaven and were given a true place inspires prisoners. They regularly visit the prison and also have an evangelical gathering.

Mr. and Mrs. Schischkow talked to the municipality to use a bigger room. They asked the municipality to hang Christian pictures and pasted the Scripture on the walls. People around them were interested in the new room and came to gather to see it. Like this, the seeds of the Word are being sown. Their precious work does not derive from their hard effort. They are just faithful to the Word of God and practice what they can. Their precious work comes from their faith. I have to take my hat off to them!

The faith that James wanted to show to the Jewish Christians was not faith by the law. It was voluntary **deeds of love** (service) that was caused by the faith in Jesus Christ. I think James himself was a **believer who showed great faith**.

What do you think about faith? We understand that faith that is also practical. Faith in Jesus Christ is not the law, but it is the faith that is practical and has precious deeds of love (service, welfare, charity, etc.).

My friends. Please don't misunderstand what I'm saying. I don't mean to say that we should do the same things like what Mr. And Mrs. Schischkow and James have done. **Deeds of love** should be derived from faith.

We can not behave like them, however we believe in the same God like them.

I believe that God expects us, who are God's precious tools, to show **what He wants us to show**.

We are loved by God and made His children. God wants us to reveal something (the Lord's glory) by using us. What a great privilege we are given! Let's keep walking with our great God.

Conclusion

Title of the Message: "Do You Know What I Want to Show You?"

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We listened to the Voice of God today.

I would like to conclude today's sermon with the following Scripture.

James 1:25 But those who look intently into the perfect law that gives freedom and continue in it—not forgetting what they have heard but doing it

* God bless you!