

February 24, 2019

KIBC Sunday Worship Service

Message by Pastor Teiichiro Kuroda

Title of the Message: "Those Who Do Not Make Mistakes with Their Words"

—Self-Examination—

Text: James 3:1,2

3:1 Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers and sisters, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly.

3:2 We all stumble in many ways. Those who are never at fault in what they say are perfect, able to keep their whole body in check.

Introduction

A short time ago, Naomi Osaka won the Australian Open in women's singles and became World No. 1. She won a second straight Grand Slam title. She must have experienced a large amount of suffering until she reached the top in the tennis world. I respect her for her hard work.

There must be great dramatic stories in her life. I was impressed with Sascha Bajin, who was Naomi's coach. She inspired her by saying, "Go for it, Naomi! You can do it!" Sascha Bajin is a good coach who trained three professional women tennis players who won the Grand Slam title.

Mr. Bajin has been the Naomi Osaka's coach ahead of the 2018 season. He brought Naomi her first victory at the BNP Paribas last March and in September also led her to win the Grand Slam women's singles in U.S. Open Tennis Championship. He was chosen as the first coach of the year by WTA that is the principal organizing body of women's professional tennis.

I think that Naomi Osaka has great ability as a tennis player and at the same time Mr. Bajin worked so hard to inspire Naomi. He was not just a teacher but a coach who trained and guided her. He always encouraged her in words.

Words are a very important tool to communicate each other. Words encourage people but sometimes hurt them.

James writes in his epistle how to use the tongue in detail and explains that is an organ to

utter words. He writes in Chapter 1 as below—

1:19 My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry,

We learned last time that James taught that the faith should be put into practice.

In today's text, **he teaches us** how to practice **this** by **tackling** a familiar problem that is about **the tongue**. He first **uses the** example of **duties of a teacher** and **how they use words**.

Let's study the following two points today.

Main Points

1. The Duties of Teachers

3:1 Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers and sisters, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly.

An animal may have some kind of language to communicate, however, it is human beings that use language in the strict sense. **The Japanese kanji shin** (信) means 'to believe'. It is made up of two parts. **One** of them means **a human being** and the other means **a word**. The **kanji** character seems to have a meaning that **a person** should trust in the words **in their** relationships **with other** human beings. However, ironically, it is quite different in real life

We sometimes hear that **people** hardly believe in the words of ministers and politicians who administer **the** affairs of Japan. It is no exaggeration to say that it is a Japanese tragedy. Human beings should live trusting in each other. I believe that the Scripture is also spoken to me.

1) A Warning to Teachers

As James wrote **we**, it is obvious that he thought he was one of teachers. He, who **was** a teacher, gave a warning to **other** people who presumed to be teachers.

Teachers **explain** the Bible to the believers by using words. Teachers need **the** gift of teaching to faithfully perform their duties. Teachers should correctly interpret the Bible and teach. It is reckless of him/her to be a teacher without the gift. **However, it seemed that there were many people who wanted to be teachers in those days.** (We **will** study about its next time.) James acts as a brake to their desires.

My friends. **teaching** here refers to teaching in public. It doesn't mean to teach personally. Teaching personally should be done mutually.

We should avoid **appointing** anyone as a teacher in church, because **a teacher will be judged more strictly**. A teacher needs **the** gift of teaching. We should remember it.

Then, we should do the following things.

2) What We Need to Do in Church

① Self-examination

If anyone wants to become a teacher, they need to examine if they are given the gift of words. It is very painful to serve without the given gift. As a result, people around them fall into trouble.

Then, how can one understand if they have been given the gift? They should put it into practice, then they will clearly come to know if they have been given the gift or not. In this case, the gift refers to human ability (talent).

In addition to human ability, teachers refer to people who are given the spiritual gift from God. What we need to do is to pray for them.

② To Pray for the Teachers

The important thing is to pray for the teachers who already serve as teachers at church. We should pray for them so that they faithfully use their gifts as teachers.

The teachers who are prayed for and supported are blessed because their work is to serve God. The church that their teachers are supported by prayer is blessed.

2. Faith and the Words

3:2 We all stumble in many ways. Those who are never at fault in what they say are perfect, able to keep their whole body in check.

1) A Person Who Makes Mistakes in Many Ways

In the epistle, James uses the word **we** which includes himself. Teachers also make a lot of mistakes. They also experience stumbles that interfere with their spiritual growth

Usually, people expect teachers not to make more mistakes than laymen. However, they also make mistakes. To stumble means not to do their duties or make a mistake and commit a sin. They are not fatal mistakes, but they hinder their spiritual growth.

They often make mistakes by using their **tongue** (words). Today's text focuses on the words of teaching and of advice of teachers. However, the same thing can be said about the words that are uttered by the church members in their daily lives.

It is not easy to use words appropriately. People by nature are like a rough-hewn carvings. As an engraver keeps working on the carving, it is finally completed. It is a really a blessed

experience.

My friends, how can we know that we are able to control our words? We come to realize how when we put them into practice. We see if we have self-control through practice.

2) A Person Who Doesn't Make A Mistake in His Words

James continues, “Those who are never at fault in what they say are perfect, able to keep their whole body in check.”

A perfect person means he who does not commit a sin and has reached the goal of spiritual maturity.

Only God is that person. James records, “We all stumble in many ways.” It means that we all are imperfect beings and stumble. However, James doesn't focus on the perfect God, but does on us, human beings. Even if he is imperfect, he who has faith in Christ Jesus is able to approach perfection through faith that directs toward the perfect man (God).

Controlling our words is the fruit of faith. He who does not make a mistake in words comes to be able to keep their whole body in check through the same faith. It is that he comes to control every respect of his life.

He who comes to be able to control his words and his life is the person who reaches perfection as a teacher. Such a person does not make a mistake in the field of teaching. It is our supreme goal, indeed.

Then, how can we become a person who does not make a mistake in word through faith? We need to grow in faith through fellowship with Jesus Christ the Lord. This is the point. We are imperfect by nature and make many mistakes. We who are imperfect beings receive lots of blessings from God and our inner selves are able to grow by God.

Then, we come to realize that our old beings are changed by the Lord. It is God's work. How blessed we are! The Bible records as below—

Ephesians 2:10 For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Conclusion

Title of the Message: “Those Who Do Not Make Mistakes with Their Words”

—Self-Examination—

Today, we listen to God's Word through the sermon entitled *Those Who Do Not Make Mistakes with Their Words*. There is no human being who does not make mistakes in their words. James

gave a warning to teachers who taught the Bible at church **to be careful of their words.**

James taught them not to become teachers, because they would be judged more strictly. Nobody can **completely** tame the words from **their tongue.**

We know how many problems happen with words in this society. We are able to control **our** words by faith. We are changed to control our tongues (words) by God's help.

Ordinary church members should be careful about their tongues (words) as well as teachers. Then, what should they do? They are able to be changed by faith and through a fellowship with God. An imperfect man grows into a perfect man and God makes it possible. It is God's work.

Let's conclude today's message with the following Scripture.

James 1:19 "Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry."

* God bless you!