

April 28, 2019

KIBC Sunday Worship Service

Message by Pastor Teiichiro Kuroda

Title of the Message: "What Should We Do?"

—Our Inconsistent Tongue—

Text: James: 3:9~12

3:9 With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness.

3:10 Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be.

3:11 Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring?

3:12 My brothers and sisters, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.

Introduction

Let's review what we have studied the Epistle of James so far. He encouraged believers in Chapter 1, "Do what it says." (1:22) and in Chapter 2, he taught about **faith and deeds**. He took the problem of the tongue (words) in Chapter 3 and taught what the tongue was like.

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.

3:3 When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal.

3:4 Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go.

3:5 Likewise, the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark.

3:6 The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole person, sets the whole course of one's life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.

3:8 but no one can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.

By the way, just when we were studying the problem of the tongue, the problem of a slip of the

tongue (words) occurred at the Diet, the highest legislative organ in Japan.

On April 5th, Deputy land minister Ichiro Tsukada resigned after using contentious wording “sontaku” to claim he had upgraded a road project which will link the home towns of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Deputy Prime Minister Taro Aso.

On April 10th, Japan’s Olympics Minister Yoshitaka Sakurada resigned over comments that Hinako Takahashi, a member of the House of Representatives, is more important than ergon’s recovery.

Their comments were inappropriate for a minister and a vice minister who occupied important posts in the government.

A short time ago, Kazuya Maruyama, a member of the Upper House, resigned from the Commission on the Constitution by taking responsibility for his comments about President Obama. It was a black slave remark insinuating that he has a bloodline of black people who were slaves. There are many more examples of this.

The problem of the tongue (words) does not change even though the times have changed.

Why doesn’t it change? James records as below—

3:11 Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring?

3:12 My brothers and sisters, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.

My friends, these things **never happen**. Then, why do these **impossible things** occur?

Today’s message’s title is “What Shall We Do? Our Inconsistent Tongue”. The problem of the tongue is not only the problem of ministers but also our problems.

Let’s come closer to God to listen to His voice about the following two points.

Main Points

1. The Inconsistent Tongue

1) A Praise and Curse

3:9 With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God’s likeness.

3:10 Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be.

James teaches in today’s text that the tongue is inconsistent. No one can affirm that their words

that are uttered by the tongue are absolutely all right.

James records that it is the eternal problem of human beings over races, languages, positions and times.

Verse 9 records, “We praise our Lord and Father” with the tongue. **The Lord** emphasizes His authority (a master and servant relationship). **Father** emphasizes His love and mercy and praises God. The tongue praises God the Lord in heaven.

However, we curse human beings with the same tongue. It is also a problem for every human being.

At every Sunday worship, we praise God and give thanks and pray to Him.

However, if we immediately speak evil of someone after worship with the same tongue that we just praised, gave thanks and prayed to God with, James says it should not be like that.

James wrote to Christians, not to those who did not have faith. It means that there were such things happened among believers that James knew. It is regrettable that it happens among us. If we find such things among our brothers and sisters, it must be very sorry.

2) We Who Have the Original Sin

Human beings were originally made in God’s image. Therefore, they should not be like what James record in verses above. However, since human beings committed sin, the image of God was broken, and a relationship between God and us was also broken. As a result, **an unbelievable thing** happens when we praise and curse from the same mouth.

This is **the original sin** that we hardly handle by ourselves. Human beings who do not follow God’s commandment they sin by nature.

To curse human beings who were made in the image of God means to curse God the Creator. It is a sin indeed.

James said,

3:10 Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be.

Those who have the original sin are hopeless, aren’t we? No, not at all. The broken image of God can be restored. James encourages us to look at the consistent thing, not the inconsistent one.

2. The Consistent Natural World

3:11 Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring?

3:12 My brothers and sisters, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.

James compared the inconsistent tongue with the consistent natural world and taught how greatly consistent it is.

1) **Water and A Fruit Tree**

Fresh water refers to **drinking water**, and salt water is water that we **can't drink**. Two different kinds of water do not flow from the same spring. James also gave an example of a fruit tree. A fig tree does not bear olives. A single tree never bears two kinds of fruit. However, such impossible things really occur. That is the fact of the tongue. How fearful the tongue is.

2) **Laws of Nature Have Consistency.**

Creatures in nature follow the laws of nature, and they act consistently. However, the tongue is different. The two sides of the tongue are indeed proof of the two sides of our mind.

Then, what should we do?

I would like to mention the following three points.

① **To Get Rid of Poison in Our Mind**

The word exposes what we have in our mind. The most important problem is what we have in our mind.

3:8 but no one can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.

The verse above records the word **poison**. If we have poison in our mind, it comes out together with our words we utter.

Of course, some people may deceive themselves with pretty words by having poison in their minds. On the contrary, he who has a sharp tongue is not always a man who has poison in his mind. Even though he has a sharp tongue, he is honest and warm-hearted. Anyway, it is true that the condition of our heart has a great effect on our words.

We should get rid of the poison in our mind. It means that when our sin is solved, our words are changed. If our mind is always peaceful, our words are absolutely affected by peace in mind. When our mind is restless and feels uneasy, our mind must be filled with poison more than we expected.

Therefore, it is very important for our mind to be newly molded by Jesus Christ. We need to keep peace in our mind that Jesus gives us. It is very difficult to change words unless our mind is changed.

Colossians Chapter 3, Verse 16 encourages us as below —

Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly.

Let's ask God for filling us with His word every moment. It is very important for our Christian life.

② To Follow the Guidance of the Holy Spirit

Jesus made us the promise as below—

John 14:6 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever.

The advocate is the One who is the Holy Spirit.

First of all, we should keep in mind that we are imperfect so we should always be careful when we utter words. Our misunderstandings and mistakes are caused by the insufficiency of each other and sometimes leads to a critical tragedy.

For example,

A certain man was involved in a traffic jam (渋滞 jutai in Japanese pronunciation), so he realized he would be late for an appointment. He called and told the reason for being late. However, the receiver misunderstood that someone was critically ill and hopeless (重態 jutai in Japanese pronunciation, which sounds similar and is a homonymy). I don't know if it became a funny story or a tragic story. However, things like this sometimes happen by an exchange of words. It may completely break up human relationships. This happens because of the problem of human insufficiency and weakness.

However, the Holy Spirit abides in those who believe in God

3:8 but no one can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.

The word **tame** appears in the verse above. The Holy Spirit works on our minds and works to mold them.

When the Holy Spirit speaks to you, “You said too much,” do you follow His advice or keep on a conversation?

The hour that the Holy Spirit guides does not mean the situation when we get angry (to burn with anger). It is really strange, but when we get angry or burn with anger, we utter rather appropriate words.

We should make up our minds that we are incomplete and weak and we should ask the Holy Spirit for His help. It is the privilege that is given to Christians.

Please remember that we are helpless to be free from falsehood and self-contradiction by ourselves.

Therefore, we need the help of the Holy Spirit.

My friends, we have studied that the small tongue causes serious problems. At the same time, a single word brings grace and blessing to other people.

It must be wonderful if my single word encourages someone.

If we can speak about Jesus to people around us, how happy we are! How blessed if my small tongue and my words are used to glorify God.

My friends. The tongue is one. Then, what is the difference? It is the difference of persons who use the tongue.

I hope that our mouths may not utter words of a curse that makes God sorrowful. I really pray that the Holy Spirit guides us to bring joy and happiness to people around us.

In order to do that, we first of all need to ask God to get rid of the poison in our mind. We need to be cleansed our sin and our mind by the Lord. Then, everything will start from there.

Conclusion

Title of the Message: "What Should I Do?"

—My Inconsistent Tongue—

We studied very important things today; how can we control our inconsistent tongue. There is no one without a mistake who uses words.

No one can control their words. The tongue is full of deadly poison.

However, God prepares us the way to restore in Jesus Christ. Then, how can we speak words of praise, not the words of cursing?

- 1 . To get rid of the poison in our mind
- 2 . To receive the help of the Holy Spirit

* God bless you!