

September 8, 2019

KIBC Sunday Worship Service (Memorial Worship Service)

Message by Pastore Teiichiro Kuroda

Title of the Testimony: "Leading a Life in Hope"

—Do You See Light? —

Text: John 11:17~27

**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,**

**In 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

Japan's centenarian population hit a record-high of 69,785 last September. The figure has risen for the 48th straight year and it represents 1.9 times jump from a decade ago. Japan is becoming an aging society.

The female centenarians numbered 61,454, and it is 88.1% of the total. Ms. Kane Tanaka from Fukuoka city, who was 115-year-old, was recorded as the oldest living woman. She was recognized by the Guinness World Records as the world's oldest woman.

Longevity is a great joy. The Health, Labor and Welfare Ministry discovered that the major factor causing longevity are the baby-boomer generation is the progress in medical technology.

My friends, it is said that we live the 100-year life. It sounds very happy, however, everyone must die even though we live very long. No one can avoid death.

The Bible records about **death** in today's text. In Bethany, Israel there were three siblings: Martha, Mary and Lazarus. Unfortunately, Lazarus died.

Mary and Martha were greatly disappointed and devastated by grief. Jesus came to see them and said as below—

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

Jesus said a mysterious thing, "**Anyone who believes in me will live, even though they die.**" It means that Jesus holds the key to **death**. It also tells us that He is God who created the heavens and the earth and human beings.

What an amazing light (hope) it is even though we die!

Those who believe in God are given light (hope).

Let's think the following two points today, the memorial worship day.

## Main Points

### 1 . **There Is Hope Even in Grief.**

Those who trust in God are given hope. We often face sorrowful things in our life.

There are many unreasonable things in the world. There are many people who do evil things and thrive. Those who live earnestly may become a loser. Therefore, if we look each event separately in our life, we come to feel our life is so painful.

Countries stand in opposition and races also oppose each other. People gradually become exhausted. Many people worry and think about when they are able to live in peace.

Now let's think about our lives. You and I are able to live only once. Don't you want to live your precious life meaningfully and with hope?

Jesus said,

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

What a hopeful (with light) word He said.

Jesus called Lazarus who died after He had said this.

**11:43 When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!"**

The Bible records further as below—

**11:44 The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face. Jesus said to them, "Take off the grave clothes and let him go."**

**11:45 Therefore many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary, and had seen what Jesus did, put their faith in him.**

Jesus really makes the dead alive. It was one of the times when He revealed authority of God.

## **2. There Is A Hope in Jesus' Word.**

Then, how could Jesus say this?

① **Because, it is the fulfillment of the Old Testament.**

The Bible prophesied that Jesus (the Savior) came to the world and were killed.

Isaiah the prophet prophesied approximately in 8 B.C. as below—

**53:3 He was despised and rejected by others, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem.**

**53:4 Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted.**

**53:5 But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.**

**53:6 We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.**

The Bible is a mysterious book. It is said to be an eternal best-seller. It is also one of the oldest books ever written. The Bible is translated in more than 2,700 languages and it is continually translated even today.

What is the Bible and why is it said to be so? Because the Bible is the book of God that never changes. Therefore, it keeps God's authority.

The Bible teaches that God is love. God who is love comforts us and gives courage and power. Therefore, we Christians read the Bible every day.

② **Because Jesus defeated death and won a victory.**

Jesus Himself was crucified and died, however, He defeated death. Therefore, Jesus who won a victory, has authority. The authoritative word of Jesus gives hope.

My friends, we need to have faith to trust in Jesus' Word, because it means to trust in the One who is invisible. The important thing is

→ To believe Jesus' Word (the Bible). It is faith.

I'd like to tell you about a certain woman who trusted in Jesus' Word and has passed away.

**Her name is Mrs. Ruth Powers. Some of you may remember her who visited KIBC a several times from America.**

**We remember the impressive worship service that she brought that Amish People to us and let them share the unprecedented testimony. A horrible incident occurred in which a certain American man suddenly attacked an Amish elementary school and children were killed and wounded. The testimony was that Amish parents, whose children were killed, forgave the criminal. It was the really impressive testimony.**

**By the way, Mrs. Powers founded an organization named "American Home Life International" in Lancaster, Pennsylvania and acted as a bridge between Japan and America. AHLF welcomed students who came to learn a language and their homes to stay were of all Christians. The number of students who received favor of Mrs. Powers probably were more than tens of thousands. I know some of them entered a seminary and became pastors.**

**Mrs. Powers had cancer and passed away on August 24 (Sat.) at 2:35a.m. after a life of fighting illness. According to her family, she decided to stop any further treatments for**

**the cancer the day before her death.**

She clearly understood the place where she was to go.

Scripture that she loved all her life was as below—。

**Philippians 1:21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.**

He who says **to die is gain** is blessed. We have hope. What a precious word of hope!

Jesus Christ said,

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

What do you think about today's message? We are able to live only once. Let's have hope and live a meaningful life. Such life is given by trusting the Word of Jesus.

#### Conclusion

Title of the Message: "Leading a Life in Hope"

—Do You See Light? —

Let's conclude today's message by reading Scripture below.

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

\* God bless you!