

November 17, 2019

KIBC Sunday Worship Service (Open Church Worship)

Message by Pastor Teiichiro Kuroda

Title of the Testimony: "Is Your Life OK?"

—Turning to the Blessed Life—

Text: John 14:6~12

14:6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

14:7 If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him."

14:8 Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us."

14:9 Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

14:10 Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work.

14:11 Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves.

14:12 Very truly I tell you, all who have faith in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.

Introduction

We want to express a hearty welcome to you, who came to our church for the first time and also who come to our church every Sunday. I'm incredibly happy to hold morning service together with you.

The theme of my today's message is "*Is Your Life OK?*". If someone asks us this, we can't help thinking about it, "Is my life OK?" Because, we know that there are some anxiety factors in our lives.

The other day, Typhoon 19 and the torrential rains that hit Chiba prefecture and

Fukushima prefecture caused extensive damage. The Meteorological Agency issued a warning many times, however, a natural disaster that was beyond what they expected occurred. It is very regrettable and my heart aches for those people affected.

One month's worth of rain fell in a half day, so the rivers flooded after the heavy rains. People who were suffering from a disaster thought, "It's probably OK." (Japan is a typhoon country) However, it caused great damage.

My friends, we meet **unexpected** things in our lives. Some of you work extremely hard, some of you manage your business or some of you study hard. Some women do hard house chores and raise children. Everything is very precious and helpful, however, is your life OK?

It is good and precious to work hard by putting your sweat and blood into your work. However, overwork is a problem. When you overwork, you become fatigued and build up stress and finally become sick

My dear friends, if there is God who created the heavens and the earth, do you think that God wants us to become overworked as I mentioned?

No, He doesn't. He wants us to be freed from stress and lead a life that is **joyful**.

Then, how can we lead a life that is **joyful**? How can we attain a life that is not exhausted but efficient? Jesus said,

John 14:6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

Jesus teaches three important things here. They are:

➡ the **way, the truth and the life**.

These three things are very important things for people to lead a joyful life.

Let's think together the following two points today.

Main Points

1 . The Word of Jesus Christ

"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

John 14.6a

Jesus said a strange thing.

1) I am the way.

Many people in this world are seeking “the way” to live.

I have heard that young people now are not able to find what way they should take, and that has become one of their characteristics.

{Illustration} From an Advice Column of The Yomiuri Shimbun, Osaka Edition ('19.11.1)

The following letter is from a certain male teacher of mid-twenties at a preparatory school. He writes that he feels frustrated that he should start something.

“I had a dream to be a medical doctor, so I entered a combined junior high and high school and then a medical college. However, I couldn’t get used to the college and came to have mental disorder. I finally left college this spring.

After that, I became a preparatory schoolteacher so that I made good use of my experience. I give thanks to the school that employed me as a full-time worker. However, the school asked me to attain to high level results, so I am not sure that I will be able to keep working. I don’t think that any company will employ me, who has no formal education and career.

I began to study to get a license of a labor and social security attorney to increase my personal market value. On the other hand, I know that such shallow thinking is useless. My parents and friends warmly receive me, however, when I remember my friends who became doctors and government bureaucrats, my heart aches by their brilliant positions. I need your harsh words to make me calm down, who still remain a child in practical manners of life.”

My friends, this is merely one example. If anyone seriously thinks about his life, they are surely worried about it. How many people are able to say that it is my way to live with confidence?

Jesus said, **“I am the way.”** Which direction does this way lead to? It leads to the happy land (the kingdom of God). This is the way for our lives. Jesus continues.

2) I am the truth.

Many people don’t understand the truth and it seriously bothers them. The truth also refers to justice. Injustice is rampant in this world and those who commit injustices are endless. Some of them cunningly do injustice and lead regular lives. This world seems very unreasonable.

Executive officers of the leading companies, ministers of Japan, teachers who educate precious children and leaders who stand before people and lead them do evil things (crimes, incidents). Their injustices are exposed to light these days.

It seems to be the social structure of Japan. Who in the world can show this is the way to live? Those who try to think seriously and live honestly become exhausted.

My friends, God is the only One who declares, "This is the way to live!", because, all human beings are imperfect and make mistakes and do evil things. Therefore, such people never declare "This is the way." Jesus said, **"I am the truth."** The truth refers to righteousness. This is very heavy word. Jesus said another important thing.

3) **I am the life.**

My friends, the most precious thing for human beings is **life**. It is said that human life outweighs all life. It is true, isn't it? Life refers to another meaning. ➡ It is a period of being alive. These two have common features that are given only once.

A man is given only one life and is also allowed to live only once. Therefore, our lives are very precious.

The Bible records as below—

Isaiah 43:4 Since you are precious and honored in my sight, and because I love you."

Our lives are precious and honored.

Jesus said, **"I am the life."** It means that Jesus has the source of **life** to live. What we are really seeking is life that is alive, not a dead one. God who created the heavens and the earth is alive today and He reigns over everything.

{Illustration} A Certain English Atheist and a Pastor

Professor Richard Dawkins of the University of Oxford is an atheist. One day, 800 campaign buses ran around the city of Oxford by proclaiming, "There is probably no God. Now stop worrying and enjoy your life." The slogan was made by Professor Dawkins and his supporters at their own expense.

At that time, Professor Charles Pzarov proposed to Pastor Prize Fuzu to hold an open discussion about atheism and Christianity.

Pastor Fuzu accepted and said, "I will bring 100 persons whom I taught Jesus. They believed, were changed, found the purpose in thier lives and now they have willingly given even their lives to Jesus. He continued, "You should also bring 100 persons who became atheists and their lives were changed. If it is impossible to bring 100 persons, you may bring 50 persons and if it is impossible 20 persons will do."

“Furthermore, if you know a person who lost meaning of life and converted to atheism from desperate and frustrated life, please bring that person.” Professor Charles Pzarov became speechless and canceled his proposal.

My friends, there are many people who met Jesus and received the true **life** and their lives were changed. Jesus said, **“I am the way and the truth and the life.”** If Jesus isn’t God, He cannot utter such words, rather, He commits the sin of blasphemy. Is it really true? The New Testament has been taught for 2000 years. Because it is the Word of God.

Jesus said another important thing.

2 . How to Get Happy Life

“No one comes to the Father except through me.”

John 14.6b

There are three important things in our lives to get happiness.

1) We should stop for a while in our lives.

You may be busily moving and working, however, let’s think a little.

Tokyo Olympic 2020 is coming soon. A full marathon is the highlight of the Olympic games. The runners run approximately 42 km and those who breast the tape are brilliant. Even though, they can’t keep running forever. Yes, if they run with full force, they will quickly be exhausted.

If we compare our lives with runners who run at an athletic field, we understand that we can’t keep running forever. However, we lead extremely busy lives as if we are runners who keep running.

Then what should we do? ➡ **Stop for a while**

We are able to have time to return to one’s old self by stopping for a while and find a place and look our real selves.

Therefore, I encourage you to stop for a while.

2) We should put our lives in order.

Those who move and work busily, please consider a little. If you keep running without stopping, you will be exhausted and cannot run any more.

Then, the important thing is to put your lives in order. You should become quiet and clear yourself. The important things are,

1. Standards for putting your life in order ➡ **the Bible** (a ruler) 「

② Putting in order every day is effective ➡ To have a room in one's mind (richness, a place to become comfortable)

Christians call it **devotion time**.

{Illustration} One's Place That They Belong To

Many people go to a cafe or a coffee shop in Japan. Young people take a break by drinking coffee at Starbucks. Taking a break seems to be mentally highly effective. Why? They take a break and clear their minds in their own way.

How about you? Where and how do you clear your mind? Yes, Starbucks is not bad, however, the happiest thing is to become quiet before God. We should put our day and a week in order. Christians come to church on Sunday (the first day of a week) and put our mind in order.

It is a happy and blessed event.

3) To Recognize the Direction of Life

You may be busily moving and working, however, let's consider a little.

Is your life OK? Do you have a correct guide of life?

{Illustration} If You Lose Your Way

A certain Jewish wise man (rabbi) asked a question to his disciples, "If a traveler lost a way during his trip, what should he do?"

One of his disciples answered, "Teacher, it is easy to find the way. If he has a map, he can find the correct way." Another disciple said, "The map is not useless in the desert. It's a magnet. If he has a magnetic compass, he can find any correct way."

Finally, his oldest disciple answered, "How silly you are! What do you do when you don't have a map or a magnet? The stars! They can find the correct way by watching the movement of the heavenly bodies."

However, any answers weren't enough to make the rabbi satisfied. He began to speak slowly, "The map, the magnet compass and the stars are all good idea, however, they are temporary solutions. The most useful solution is to return to the starting point and carefully consider the correct way. Why did they set out on a trip? What for and where to go? When they go back to the starting point, it tells them the correct way by itself."

Where is your starting point of your life? The Bible is a compass for life.

Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”
John 14:6

Then, why could Jesus declare, **“I am the way and the truth and the life”**? The reason is that He died on the cross. He risked His life. The Bible records that the Holy One (Jesus) who didn’t commit a sin was crucified as a sinner. This is because we, who don’t know the purpose of life and its meaning, are made free from sins, saved and receive the purpose of life.

Jesus has risen on the third day from the dead. It means that He defeated death and won a victory. Therefore, the word of Jesus has authority and power to save human beings.

My dear friends, the purpose that God created us for is to bless us. What do you think about today’s message? I encourage you to put you and your life into Jesus’ hands. He so loved you that he was crucified and gave His life.

Let’s conclude today’s message.

Conclusion

Title of the Testimony: “Is Your Life OK?”

—Turning to the Blessed Life—

Today, we listened to the important thing to lead our life.

Is your life OK? Jesus said,

Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”
John 14:6

I encourage you today to believe in Jesus and put your life in His hand!

* God bless you!