

January 5, 2020

KIBC Sunday Worship Service (The New Year Worship)

Message by Pastor Teiichiro Kuroda

Title of the Message: "The Prayer of A Righteous Person Is Powerful." (1)

—Amen, Hallelujah—

Text: James: 5:13~18

5:13 Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray. Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise.

5:14 Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord.

5:15 And the prayer offered in faith will make them well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven.

5:16 Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

5:17 Elijah was a human being, even as we are. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years.

5:18 Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops.

Introduction

About 2 months has been passed (November 10, last year) since we listened to the Lord's voice from the Epistle of James. Therefore, let's make a short review what we learned.

The title of the previous message was ***Simply Say 'Yes' or 'No'***. The Bible teaches us not to swear and the reason why we should not swear. Do you remember the previous message?

And we, who cannot keep our oath, also studied how we should lead a life.

We remembered Verse 5:12 as the conclusion.

5:12 Above all, my brothers and sisters, do not swear—not by heaven or by earth or by anything else. All you need to say is a simple "Yes" or "No." Otherwise you will be condemned.

We would like to lead a life where we simply say “**Yes**” or “**No**” It was the problem of our words that we uttered. (Please read my message for more details.)

Let’s continue studying about the word like the previous one. Before that let’s make the point clearly.

James picks three kinds of word in his epistle as below.

① The word from God to us

It is the word of the Bible and we learned about it in Chapter 1.

② The word from man to man

James teaches what we should deal with the problem of the word in Chapter 3.

③ The word from man to God

It is the opposite of ①. The word from man to God refers to **prayer**.

Let’s study about the word ③ that is **prayer** today and next time according two points.

Main Points

1 . He Who Leads with “Amen”and “Hallelujah”

5:13 Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray. Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise.

Scripture above is amazing because it teaches two words that Christians should remember. They are **Amen** and **Hallelujah**. Amen means “Yes, it is. It is true.” It is recorded “**Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray.**” **To trouble** means to struggle against adverse circumstances. We say Amen by concluding prayers but we should not do habitually.

Scripture above records “**Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise.**” Being happy means that he is satisfied spiritually and mentally and he is in a Hallelujah situation. Hallelujah means “I praise God. I glorify God.”

My friends, if we don’t understand God, we may be filled with grumbling and doubts. Even though we trust in God we sometimes grumble and have doubts.

Let’s remember the Israelites.

Deuteronomy 28:67 In the morning you will say, “If only it were evening!”and in the evening, “If only it were morning!”—because of the terror that will fill your hearts and the sights that your eyes will see.

The New Testament teaches,

Philippians 2:14 Do every thing without grumbling or arguing,

When man is under trouble and look away from God, he will be caught by grumbling and doubts.

We are always affected by our surroundings, phenomena, events and people's responses unless we have true victory through God in our heart, or rather we become discontented with everything. However, we do not always give thanks that even our surroundings changed to what we hoped.

On the other hand, even if we look back the previous situations, we are not always satisfied with it. We keep complaining. In the real sense we never gain victory in our heart without asking God to change our nature.

On the contrary, when we are happy but we look away from God, we eventually become self-complacent. We just become to think, "I made it by myself!". We forget to give thanks to God or glorify Him and become self-complacent.

The attitude of true Christians is to take everything before God even if they have trouble or they are happy. When they take their trouble before God, they begin to **pray**. When they take their happiness before God, they begin to **praise** God. What do you think? Do we deal **Amen** and **Hallelujah** with a correct way in leading Christian lives.

In a sense, these attitude are the secret of Christian life. I think these two things are two sides of one thing. It is the one thing because we take both **trouble** and **happiness** to God.

We may have pain and happy things in this year. Let's remember Verse 13 on each occasion.

Let's read it together.

5:13 Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray. Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise.

2. He Who Leads Life by Prayer and Faith

1) Prayer Asking for God's Healing

Verse 13 records about **he who is in trouble** and **he who is happy** and then it records about **he who is sick**.

55:14 Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord.

5:15 And the prayer offered in faith will make them well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven.

In those days, they seemed to have a custom to anoint with olive oil and pray. They called the elders of the church to pray and anoint with oil in the name of the Lord. The churches at that time were led by several elders.

We also pray for sick people. God responded to our prayers many times. However, not all prayers were answered. We keep praying by trusting in God even though He didn't respond as what we expected, because we believe that He fulfills the best things for us.

My friends, there are many good books about prayer. We are able to study in various respects. The KIBC Prayers Meeting study the elders' attitudes in faith by a book about **prayer** once a month. We, who are believers in God, need to study about prayer as long as we live.

God saves the sick, therefore we need to keep studying not only intellectually but also practically.

2) The Four Responses to Prayers

I think that God responds to our prayers according to the following four ways.

① A prayer that is immediately answered

It is a great joy. The prayer that is 100% quickly answered encourages our faith. We willingly say, "**Amen**".

② A prayer that is answered later

God sometimes doesn't answer immediately, however, He responds later. For example, the prayer of an owner of the VIP Kansai Center Building for a new tenant was answered later.

We prayed for the most suitable tenant for 2F of the building. The owner, who is a Christian, did not want to rent the flat for the tenants that serve alcoholic drinks, of a casino or an entertainment facility.

Surprisingly, Indonesian church rented the flat after we kept praying for about a year. It is God's answer to our prayer and it is a great encouragement for us.

③ A prayer that is answered in another way

Jesus gave a sincere prayer at Gethsemane.

Matthew 26:39 Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My

Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.”

Jesus completely trusted in God the Father in heaven. The verse above shows the Jesus' attitude that trusted in God the Father. The cup of passion was not taken from Him, however, the work of God was fulfilled that all human beings were given God's salvation.

God sometimes prepares the better and amazing answer for us. We just see things before us but God, who sees through the future, responds us from His viewpoint. It is God's grace.

Our prayer turns out to be answered in another way even though our life doesn't go as what we hoped and prayed.

④ A prayed that is not answered

God sometimes doesn't answer our prayer.

God doesn't answer our prayer when we have bad and unrighteous thoughts. That is that our sins block God's response, therefore, we should begin to pray after we repent every sin we remember before God.

It is very important for us to be lighted by the Holy Spirit. It means to keep good fellowship with the Lord. As the Holy Spirit is our Helper, when we kneel down before the Lord and ask for His guidance, He absolutely lights us.

My friends, when we look ourselves, we sometimes come to think that we are helpless. We have something that we can't manage by ourselves or even asking another people for help. However, we are thankfully allowed to take them to God.

We should not work by ourselves, but we pray to God and ask Him to work. It was the blessed way, isn't it? Let's examine our prayer life in every respect.

Let's ask the Lord for His help, especially for the sick in believing that the prayer in faith helps the sick recover.

Is there anyone who has trouble or who is happy? Let's take them before God.

Let's lead a life with praying **Amen** and **Hallelujah**.

Conclusion

Title of the Message: "The Prayer of a Righteous Person Is Powerful." (1)

—Amen, Hallelujah—

In this new 2020, we would like to be Christians who keep praying **Amen** and **Hallelujah**

before the Lord. Then, what should we do? We should worship God and follow the Word faithfully. We should put ourselves before the Lord.

Let's conclude the message with the following Scripture.

James 4:10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

* God bless you !