

April 26, 2020

KIBC Sunday Worship Service

Message by Pastor Teiichiro Kuroda

Title of the Message: "Let's Have a Living Hope"

—The True Hope—

Text: 1 Peter 1:3~5

**1 : 3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,**

**1 : 4 and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you,**

**1 : 5 who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.**

#### Introduction

We begin to study the First Epistle of Peter again. In the beginning of Chapter 1 (verses 1-2), Peter sent a **greeting** to the Jewish Christians who were scattered throughout the world.

He continues as below—

**1 : 3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!**

Peter continued, "**Praise the God and Father,**" after he wrote this greeting. Today's theme is focused on why Peter could praise the God under hardship.

He said, "**the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ**" as the object of praise. God the Creator is the Father of Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ was an actual person in human history. God is invisible. When we hear that God created the cosmos, we can not realize it right away. However, do you think, it is easy for us to understand that God is the father of Jesus Christ who was an actual man? He is not far from us.

People who do not know God sometimes say, "I pray!" Listening to what they say, I sometimes want to ask them, "To whom do you pray?" In that sense, we are blessed because we can pray to the true God and praise Him who created heavens and the earth.

By the way, we understand what God is like by watching Jesus Christ.

Jesus said as below—

**John 14:9 Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Phillip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.**

We are even happier because we, who join with Jesus Christ, are allowed to call Him **Father in heaven**. It is amazing that Jesus taught us this in the beginning of the Lord's Prayer as below—

**Matthew 6:9** “This, then, is how you should pray: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed

For this reason, Paul said, **“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!”** Let us give thanks to God because we can praise God the Father as Peter praised Father of Jesus Christ.

Let's listen to God's voice from the following two points today.

### Main Points

#### 1. A Blessing of New Birth

Peter said what God has done for us.

**1:3 In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,**

God made us born again. He has given us a new birth into a living hope.

We can study the following three points about the gift of new birth.

#### 1) The Basis of New Birth

We are not given a new birth because we are worthy of it. It was God's mercy as Peter said, **“In his great mercy”** The basis and foundation of our new birth is God's mercy.

We have lost the spiritual life that God has given. We left God and died spiritually. We were hopeless by ourselves. God had mercy on us who were perishing.

Mercy is one of God's natures. Those who were given God's salvation are those who were given God's mercy. For example, when two blind men heard that Jesus was going by, they shouted, **“Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!” (Matthew 20:30)**

Mary who was informed of her pregnancy praised the Lord in **Mary's Magnificat** as below—

**1:49 for the mighty One has done great things for me—holy is his name.**

**1:50 His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation.**

God's mercy never changes, in the past and today. The sick, the weak and the small ones cannot live without relying on others. They have no choice but to depend on mercy. It means that those who understand mercy recognize what they are.

What do you think about that? How much do we understand ourselves before God? We should firstly be honest ourselves to recognize ourselves. Those who become honest before God are those who recognize themselves. If we really understand ourselves, we

must ask for the Lord's mercy.

My friends, the basis of new birth is on God's mercy.

## 2) The Way to Be Born Again

Peter records how to become born again as below,

**"...through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,"**

The way to be born again is only in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus was crucified and rose from the dead on the third day. And this fact makes us possible to newly born.

Paul taught that we died with Christ and we resurrected with Christ.

**Romans 6:8 Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.**

It means that our new birth is God's gift that is given to those who died with Christ and live with Christ (the resurrection). The Life of Christ who rose from the dead is given to us. Therefore, if there is no resurrection of Christ, we are not given salvation or the new birth. Peter continues to teach the outcome of the new birth.

## 3) The Outcome of New Birth

**1 : 3 ...he has given us new birth into a living hope...**

The outcome of new birth is to be given a living hope. You may think that even if you hope something, it is difficult to make it come true. Because, hope is sometimes fulfilled, but sometimes it is not.

However, the hope that the Bible teaches is different; it is the hope that isn't fulfilled now, but it will be surely fulfilled in due time. Therefore, Peter called it **a living hope**.

We are given **a living hope** through Jesus Christ because God never makes a mistake or fails. He absolutely fulfills what He says.

Being born again in God is,

- 1) We have a solid foundation.
- 2) Jesus' resurrection guarantees the foundation.
- 3) We are given **a living hope**.

The hope is given only to the people who are born again. Then, what is the living hope like? What is the content of the hope specifically?

Let's look the second point.

## 2. A Living Hope that is an Inheritance

Peter said as below—

**1 : 4 and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you,**

**1 :5 who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.**

As we understand, the content of a life is **to inherit the property** in heaven. We have the inheritance that will be given in the future. How incredible! Peter records three points about **the inheritance**.

### **1 ) The Inheritance that Can Never Perish**

**1 :4 and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you,**

Firstly, our inheritance **can never perish, spoil or fade**. Everything that we get in this world can perish and fade, none of it is eternal.

On the contrary, the inheritance that God has given can never perish, spoil or fade. Then, why can't the inheritance that God prepares for us perish?

### **2 ) The Inheritance Kept in Heaven**

It is written that **"This inheritance is kept in heaven for you,"**

The phrase **"for you"** refers to those who were born again by Jesus. How blessed they are! The inheritance that never perishes **is kept in heaven for you**. It is the privilege that is given to people who believe in Jesus Christ.

The phrase **is kept** is written in the perfect tense, therefore we don't need to store anymore. Yes, the inheritance is already kept. Those who believe in Jesus are given the inheritance, a living hope.

Generally, parents open a saving account for their children and deposit the New Year's money gift and congratulatory money even if they are a small amount of money. However, their children do not know about the account that their parents prepared for them. The parents who love their children make deposits even if they do not know.

{Illustration}

By the way, let me tell you about certain parents. They have a daughter who is a cute little girl. Their daughter could not keep a marriage life for some reasons. So the daughter's parents prepared for their granddaughter who was in preschool.

Later, I heard that they deposited money for their granddaughter, that can support her for her lifetime. I cannot imagine how much money can support one's life, but they had such financial power. I was surprised that there are rich people in the world.

**Their granddaughter does not know about the money. Her grandparents loved their granddaughter deeply.**

My friends, if we save money for our children and grandchildren even though we are not perfect parents, how much more must God who loved and gave His only Son, save for us. Yes, He prepares an inheritance in a heavenly bank. The heavenly bank never goes bankrupt.

We are freed from sin and prepared for joyful fellowship with God and a relationship with each other that is filled with love.

Peter said that people who were born again will be given a greater promise.

### **3) God's Protection on Earth**

**1 : 5 who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.**

The inheritance that God gives is not only stored in heaven or only given at the end of the day but we also receive its benefit in this world.

① Peter said, **"... who through faith are shielded by God's power..."** The word **shield** is a military term. It means that God surely protects us by setting guards around us. The New Testament repeatedly teaches it. We who are shielded can lead lives steadfastly.

#### **Psalm**

**121 : 3 He will not let your foot slip— he who watches over you will not slumber;**

**121 : 4 indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.**

**121 : 5 The LORD watches over you— the LORD is your shade at your right hand;**

**121 : 6 the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night.**

**121 : 7 The LORD will keep you from all harm— he will watch over your life;**

Another reason is taught as below—

② The Japanese Bible translates **"to be given salvation (1:5)** And the Lutheran Bible translates **"to be given God's blessing"** The word **salvation** (originally Greek) means a blessing. Yes, it is the blessing that man is given salvation, therefore, Luther translated it in this context **"to be given God's blessing."** It is easy to understand, isn't it?  
**John 10:28 I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand.**

Christians who trust in God are given the promise of eternal life.

## Conclusion

Title of the Message: "Let's Have a Living Hope"

—The True Hope—

Today we studied the blessings of Christ. Those who are in Christ:

1 . Realize how amazing the hope that is given to us! We have the inheritance in heaven. We worry about a pension and providing for our old age. Yes, a preparation for our old age is important. If it is so, the preparation for eternal life is more important. How blessed we are that we are given the eternal promise and the blessing!

2 . Everything is based on God's grace and mercy. God made us born again. We have the living hope. God made us inherit the property that will never perish. It is saved in the heavenly bank. We are protected by God's power. They are of God's work and grace.

My dear friends, how happy we are! Let's give thanks with joy to God that we are given the privilege. Let's be courageous and walk in the life that is given to us

God bless you!