

July 5, 2020

KIBC Sunday Worship Service

Message by Pastor Teiichiro Kuroda

Title of the Message: "Love One Another"

— An Encouragement of Love —

Text: 1 Peter 1:22~25

**1: 22 Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart,**

**1: 23 since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God;**

**1: 24 for "All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls,**

**1: 25 but the word of the Lord remains forever." And this word is the good news that was preached to you.**

#### Introduction

Good Morning, my dear friends! I give thanks to God that we come to before God and worship Him together today.

**One of our big issues is to love family members. It is necessary for children to grow up by a parent's love. However, we often hear of child abuse. Some children who are weak and incapable to resist are abused by adults.**

**Generally, it seems that there are four types of child abuse: ① physical abuse, ② sexual abuse, ③ neglect and ④ psychological abuse**

**The number of cases where Child Consultation Centers across the country were contacted over alleged abuse in fiscal 2018 came to 159,850. This is the highest on record according to the Health, Labor and Welfare Ministry on August 1, 2019.**

**There were 159,850 cases where 212 Child Guidance Centers were consulted over suspected abuse in 2018, up 26,072 cases from the previous fiscal year (2017).**

**The number of consultations is continuously increasing and setting record highs for twenty-eight consecutive years since 1990. It is very regrettable.**

**There must be a good reason for things, however, there is no excuse for the child abuse.**

**An assailant maltreats a child from his or her selfish standpoint. Those who are separate from God are selfish beings.**

My friends, there is nothing more blessed than a life to love and be loved, isn't it? Children want to be loved by their parents. Yes, adults also want to be loved too. Human beings thirst for love. When God created man, did He make him a selfish being?

Absolutely not. The Bible teaches that man was made in God's image. God is not the One who abuses. He is the One of love.

A relationship to love and to be loved is a correct one. However, it is not easy to love close people. How about you? Do you love the people around you like yourself?

Peter, the author of the text, tells us, **“Love one another earnestly from a pure heart.”**

Let us study the following two points today.

#### Main Points

### 1 Love One Another

**1: 22 Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart,**

The central teaching of the Scripture is to love one another. It is a very important thing for us. The believers in those days came to have brotherly love because their souls were purified by their obedience to the truth. It means that their souls(hearts) were purified by God. Being purified is a prerequisite of brotherly love.

Jesus said to His disciples in His last message as below,

**15:12 “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. John**

Peter repeated the Lords' commandment in his word, **“Love one another earnestly from a pure heart.”**

The Scripture above is written containing three important words as the following.

### 1 ) Love...from a pure heart

If our soul is not purified in God, we cannot love one another from a pure heart. Our heart is always filled with selfish desires. If our heart conceives anger, jealousy, grudges, distrust, egoism, it becomes poisoned.

Such heart cannot love with brotherly love. Our love usually hides impure motives and it sometimes is one of conditional love.

The heart firstly becomes pure by following the truth. Our heart is made pure by Jesus Christ and then we are able to love one another from the pure heart.

## 2) Love one another

Love does not ask in a unilateral manner. We expect the other people to love us first. A wife complains about her husband who does not act as what she expects. We are more interested in my friend's kindness to us rather than we care for our friend. However, the Bible teaches to love one another.

## 3) Love ... earnestly

A word earnestly means to stretch. It means **to stretch one's arm, to stretch one's leg and to bend oneself forward.**

It means to do what other people want or to do helpful things **putting other people first.** How about you? Do we live with such as earnest love? Do we earnestly love our husbands, wives, parents, children, friends, and co-workers?

My friends, my story may hit your sore spot today. Please don't think that you should stop listening my message anymore. Keep listening to the following points. Peter clearly teaches how we can get love that we hardly achieve with our flesh.

## 2. Where Does Love Come from? (The Source of Love)

Peter eagerly advises us by sending the word, **love one another earnestly from a pure heart.** The word love here is a verb, not a noun. It is not easy to love. Can we practice doing love that the Bible teaches? Yes, the Bible shows us the way that we can practice it. Peter shows the following two points.

### 1) By Following Brotherly Love

**1: 22 Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart,**

We are taught our sin. We came to know that God loves sinners and gave Jesus Christ the Savior. It is surprising to know that the Savior gave His life for us on the cross. We are very astonished by the truth that we were forgiven by His sacrifice that we accepted salvation. We obediently follow the truth that God taught. As a result, our sin was forgiven. We are given peace for our souls and our souls were purified.

On top of that, we come to **have a sincere brotherly love.** **Brotherly love** is the one for people who have the same faith. Those who received the salvation of Jesus Christ come to be concerned about other people.

They come to have feeling and consideration for friends in faith. God makes us change like this.

Therefore, He tells us **to love one another**.

## 2) **By the Seed of the God's Word**

**1: 23 since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God;**

Peter continues writing about the reality of brotherly love. We who were born again by Jesus Christ form God's family. This is not through blood relation, but we become brothers and sisters through Jesus Christ. **Brotherly love** is the one that loves one another.

**Imperishable seed** in Verse 23 refers to **the living and abiding word of God**. When seeds are sown, they will soon sprout and bear fruit. Like this, God's eternal Word works in us and we come to bear a new life in due time.

Therefore, we are born into new lives. How blessed we are! God kindly made us born again by His Word.

Peter quoted Isaiah's word in the Old Testament (Isaiah 40:6~8)

**1: 24 for "All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls,**

**1: 25 but the word of the Lord remains forever." And this word is the good news that was preached to you.**

Isaiah Chapter 39 records a prophesy of **the Babylonian Captivity** where the Israelites would be taken to Babylon. Chapter 40 records a prophecy that they would eventually be freed from the captivity.

Babylonia was at the height of its prosperity in those days. Its wealth, culture and military strength were overwhelming to Israel. However, Isaiah taught that human beings were like grass that withered even though they looked flourishing and brilliant. They are only things to wither.

On the other hand, God's people are given the eternal Word of God, even though they may look poor, powerless, and miserable. Isaiah the prophet said that when they trusted in the God's eternal Word, they became prosperous.

In fact, where is glory of Babylonia? The days when Peter wrote the epistle, Israel was under control of the Roman Empire. Where is glory of the Roman Empire which was the strongest country in the world? They are only ruins now.

The Eastern Roman Empire lasted until 15 Century after the Western Roman Empire collapsed. However, it was destroyed by the Ottoman Turks in 1453.

Meanwhile, there are people over the world who trust in the Bible as the God's Word and follow it. They receive the new life by the God's Word. How blessed they are! Therefore, we can love one another.

We feel sorry that we don't have love in us, however, we are given **power to love people** from God so that we start a life to love one another.

My friends, we are able to receive **the power to love people** from God's Word. The Bible teaches the God's Word, the imperishable seed. Therefore, we should be obedient to the teaching of the Bible. Choosing God's Word is to choose life and love. The God's Word is a guideline for our life and the way of salvation.

### {Illustration}

**We went on a tour to Israel and visited Jericho this February. It was a really blessed tour and I gave thanks to God. I got a rose of Jericho at the city of Jericho. It was a withered plant. (We are not allowed to take fresh flowers or plants out of country.)**

**The flower was brown and withered. However, an instruction writes to put the withered rose of Jericho in water. After I came back to Japan, I put it in water with doubt.**

**It was strange. When I put the rose of Jericho that seemed to be withered in water for a while it began to sprout and was gradually growing.**

**My friends, the flower of Jericho had life in it, therefore it sprouted. It is strange from the human point of view that the withered flower sprouts. However, if it has a life, we understand it's sprouting.**

God's Word is the same. It is just like the withered **rose of Jericho** for those who do not have faith in God. However, when the water of the Holy Spirit is poured over it, God's Word comes to sprout. It is **the imperishable seed**. It has power in it.

The Bible records as below,

**Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.**

How about today's message? We are very blessed because we are given God's Word, the imperishable seed. The source of the brotherly love is in God's love. It is in love of Jesus Christ. Those who receive God's love change into people who practice real brotherly love. It is the gift of God.

### Conclusion

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God gave us His blessed Word this morning.

**1: 22 Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart,**

To love one another is a blessed privilege that is given to God's children.

Then, how can we practice brotherly love and love one another?

#### **1. We should be purified in God.**

We are given the brotherly love on the premise that we should be purified in God first. We are purified of sin with the blood of Jesus' cross. God blessed those people.

#### **2. We are given the power to love others by the God's Word.**

God's Word is the imperishable seed. If we accept it in faith, it will absolutely come to sprout. It is God's grace.

\* God bless you!