

August 16, 2020

KIBC Sunday Worship Service

Message by Pastor Teiichiro Kuroda

Title of the Message: "Living as God's People"

—A Blessed People—

Text: 1 Peter 2:7~10

**2:7 So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe,**

**"The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,"**

**2:8 and "A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense."**

**They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.**

**2:9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.**

**2:10 Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.**

#### Introduction

#### {Illustration}

I have heard a story about a testimony of a certain Korean man. He was physically weak, grew up in a bad home environment and had no formal education, so he had severe inferiority complex.

He was brought up on Jeju Island (an island of Korea) and he changed schools three times because of his father's work circumstances. He went to high school in a remote country town and changed schools many times. He entered the local university after having failed the yearly entrance examination.

When he met a person, who was raised by decent parents in a rich family, he felt awkward. He was seized by a sense of defeat. "After all...I am nothing. I don't think I can do anything good." However, one day he met Jesus Christ and believed in Him.

He began to see himself with new eyes. He accepted himself, "I am loved by God. He thinks of me as precious." Since then, his life changed to **I am something** from **I am nothing**.

He had believed before that life was predetermined by fate. However, when he met living God of the Bible and began to follow Him, he could find value of his life.

Then, he decided not to work for a leading company but decided to become an evangelist and preached the Word of God to young people who could not find a purpose of life and were straying. He said he felt excited when he preached the Gospel of Christ even after he reached 70 years of age.

He said that his hardships and tears were definitely not a waste, when he studied the Bible with young people and listened to their story that their lives were totally changed. He shared his experience that no matter how much he felt inferior, and weak, he could still live a valuable life by God.

My friends! We can never predict what will happen in life. The young man who was physically weak and had an inferiority complex met Jesus Christ and his life was greatly changed. He felt excited and greatly rejoiced when he preached love of God to people who were straying.

The life to where we meet God and walk with Him is a blessed one.

The apostle Peter said,

**2:4 As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious,**

The Scripture refers to a paradoxical truth. Jesus was rejected by people and crucified. Nevertheless, this indeed fulfilled God's plan for the salvation of human beings.

In that sense, Jesus was the **precious and living stone** in the sight of God, even though He looked like nothing in the sight of people.

Peter records as below—

**2:6 For it stands in Scripture: "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame."**

#### Main Points

### **1 . A Precious Stone and a Stone of Stumbling**

**2:7 So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe,**

**"The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,"**

**2:8 and "A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense."**

**They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.**

#### **1 ) The Precious Stone**

The stone is **the cornerstone** that support people and **the living stone** that gives life. Some people give thanks and trust in Jesus, on the other hand, some people reject and stumble because they do not understand its preciousness.

Those who trust in it, they understand its great value, but those who do not accept it think it only **the stone of stumbling** and **the rock of offense**.

Why do they stumble like this? Peter said,

**2:8 and “A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense.”**

**They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.**

Peter pointed two important things here: “Disobeying the words” and being “Destined to do” by God

① **To disobey the word** depends on one’s freedom to choose (self-responsibility).

To obey the Word or not is one of choices. However, with freedom comes responsibility.

God gives freedom of choice to human beings, however whatever one sows, that will he also reap. The Bible teaches this.

**Galatians 6:7 Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap.**

② Another point is that **“ as they were destined to do.”**

The verse above is quoted by those who insist Predestination. It is God’s plan that He previously decides people who are saved or not. It is a way of thinking. You may think it true if you read the Scripture.

Let us consider **Predestination** now. Those who believe in Predestination think as below—

- a. If God previously decides people to save, we do not need to preach the God’s Word.
- b. God cannot blame human beings. God is heartless.

I do not agree with **Predestination** in that sense.

**Then, why did Peter teach this?**

- a. To be chosen by God is a great thing to receive God’s blessing.
- b. When we study what the Bible teaches, we should look out over the entire Bible (not only a part of it).

**1 Timothy 2:4 who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.**

The Scripture tells us His will.

The reason that Peter records this is to teach that God's choice is a special blessing (It is not a natural thing.) You are specially chosen. Not all people believe in God, rather there are many people who do not believe. I think that Peter wanted to teach it is an amazing blessing.

## 2) The Chosen People

**2:9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.**

The Scripture points out 4 given names here: **a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession,**

They are names that were given to Israelites, God's people, in the days of the Old Testament.

As we read carefully, we come to understand the situation of Christians in the days of the New Testament.

### ① A Chosen Race

A chosen race implies how the Israelites became God's people. The Israelites were descendant of Abraham. They were exactly **the chosen people**. They were related by blood.

Christians in the days of the New Testament have a common point that they were forgiven by the blood of Jesus Christ. Christian churches are consisting of every race and people. And they share the spiritual life that is connected by Jesus' blood. How blessed!

### ② A Royal Priesthood

A priest stands between God and people. He intercedes between them. We also give prayers of intercession to God. We pray to God's compassion and grace for the world that stray away from God.

On the top of that, we are priests who are **kings**. The kings are not controlled by the world. We only follow **the king** who is the true God. The most important thing is to serve the King of Kings, who created all creatures. (It doesn't mean not to serve people.)

We come to work for the needs of the world in the real sense by serving God. We reign in the world with responsibility.

### ③ A Holy Nation

**Holy** means to become God's property that is distinguished and separated from other things

and offered to God. **A holy nation** means the one that is separated from other ones.

#### ④ **A People for his Own Possession**

A people for his own possession means to belong to God and have identification with Him. We are very special beings, precious treasures, and God's people.

Jesus said,

**John 10:28 I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.**

**10:29 My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.**

\* The common point of these 4 expressions is the relationship with God. It means that we are chosen by God, we serve God, we are belonged to God and we became special beings to God. How blessed we are!

## **2. A Mission and Privilege of God's people**

### **1) The Mission of God's people**

**2:9 that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.**

We worship God together and serve one another. We are the God's people who live by loving one another. When we look back our life, we were in darkness. God has chosen us as God's people and made us holy and His priests through Jesus Christ. It is God's amazing work.

My friends, people in this world are indifferent to each other. They fight and hurt. Among them, we testify God's **glory** more than anything by showing our lives as God's people. It is our mission.

### **2) Characteristics of God's People**

**2:10 Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.**

Please read the Scripture above carefully. Peter emphasizes that the Scripture refers to the unusual things. He contrasts **once** with **now**; **once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.**

**1 John 3:1 See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him.**

\* My dear friends. It is not an everyday occurrence that we are here now. As we read Chapter 2, Verses 7 and 8, there are many people who are taught about Jesus the Savior, however, some of them stumble and reject Him. It is only with God's mercy that we are saved.

### Conclusion

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Each of us a Christian is surely connected with Jesus the Lord. God speaks to each of us, so we can live as the God's people.

For that purpose, we are chosen and given life, belong to the church, the spiritual house, and built and grow. We are not separated individually. We live as **the God's people**. We support each other and live.

Paul records as below—

**Ephesians 4:16 from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.**

Let us remember the following two points today.

1. We should realize that we are God's people and live as such.
2. We should serve to one another with love.

It is the God's people who connected with Jesus the Lord.

\* God bless you!