

October 11, 2020 2

KIBC Sunday Worship Service

Message by Pastor Teichiro Kuroda

Title of the Message: "Remain with the Good Shepherd" (2)

—The Good Shepherd—

Text: 1 Peter 2:21~25

2:2:21 For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.

2:22 He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth.

2:23 When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.

2:24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

2:25 For you were straying like sheep but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Introduction

{Illustration}

I have heard interesting news the other day. It is the **"Israel 2040 Tomorrow"** Project.

The Israel Government assumes that the population of Israel will increase to 13 million in 20 years. There is 9,190,000 today. This is caused by Jewish people who return home to Israel from all over the world. Now, the population of the Tel Aviv metropolitan area is rapidly increasing, so the area where people can live is now decreasing.

On the top of that, two-thirds of Israel is a desert and a wilderness. The neighboring countries are all the Islamic countries. The political and military tensions between them are getting higher.

The government of Israel is planning the megaproject. It is a massive project where the government develops the Galilee region and Negev region into a land that people can inhabit. The project provides employment for 1,500,000, houses, education, infrastructures, medical and welfare facilities in the Negev Desert. They face mounting challenges.

The big issue is how to innovate in future. It is the **"Israel 2040 Tomorrow"** Project.

David Ben-Gurion, the first Prime Minister of Israel said, **"The future of Israel depends on how much we plant trees on the desert."** The Negev region, the desert area, is an important place where the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob have done many works through their father Abraham.

On the top of that, the land was the place that God's prophets spoke God's word to the Israelites. It is a fantastic idea that the desert region can be reclaimed and developed to become a residential place from now on, however, we come to see that this is a prophecy fulfilled.

Ezekiel the prophet spoke as below (read the context),

36:34 And the land that was desolate shall be tilled, instead of being the desolation that it was in the sight of all who passed by.

36:35 And they will say, "This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden, and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are now fortified and inhabited."

Now, we see the future of Israel. I opened both the "**Israel 2040 Tomorrow**" and the Book of Ezekiel of the Old Testament and I came to fear God. It is the word of the Bible, God's book. It is a very realistic thing. I understood that the Bible is the book of God. How wonderful!

Let us get to the main topic of today. Last week, we studied that Jesus had suffering and endured it. We also studied the reason why He suffered. It is for us that we might be forgiven and live to righteousness. At the same time, we studied that we are healed by His wounds.

Let us study further the precious **grace** that Jesus Christ gave us according to the following two points.

Main Points

1 . We Have Been Healed

2:24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

1) Receivers of the Epistle

As I mentioned before, the receivers were Jewish Christians who were exiles and slaves (servants and housekeepers). They were slaves who became Christians.

Some of them were treated unjustly by their masters. Some of them were beaten even though they lived righteously. They may have been flogged unjustly and had a red welt on their skin like Jesus Christ. Peter wrote them, "**By his wounds you have been healed.**" We understand their real lives.

It is not only slaves but many of the first Christians were under suffering. Peter records as below in Chapter 1.

1:6 ...now for a while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials.

Peter also records in Chapter 3,

3:14 Have of fear of them (those who do evil), nor be troubled.

We understand that they were under such severe situations. However, surprisingly they had joy in them even though they had suffering.

2) They Had Joy

1:8 Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy,

Why did they have joy in them? ⇒ They were receiving the salvation of their souls as the end result of their faith.

Peter said,

1:9 for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

They really had troubles, however; they experienced joy because they came to understand the real God. They came to realize that God made a great the sacrifice and prepared the way of salvation. They can be said that they experienced God's healing through things that He had done for them.

God not only reached slaves 2000 years ago but also reaches our souls and gives compassion and healing to us under troubles. It is possible for us to have such experience. We are given compassion and encouragement in our hearts and are healed.

For example, we have organs as below.

- ① **Our eyes: We see faults and mistakes of other people very well, however, we overlook our own faults and mistakes. Aren't we all ailing?**
- ② **Our ears: Our hearing ability is often reduced to hear inconvenient matters. Aren't we all ailing?**
- ③ **Our mouths: It is our words that we utter. We criticize and utter words that hurt other people. We speak inappropriate words and make a slip of tongue. Aren't we all ailing?**
- ④ **Our hands: We reach our hand toward a thing that we should not have. Aren't we all ailing?**
- ⑤ **Our hearts: Our hearts are also hurt and angry so we cannot forgive others. It does not work properly. We cannot love other people. Aren't we all ailing?**

My friends. What are the causes of these wounds and diseases in our heart and body? It is because of sin. It is sin that we reject and ignore God. As a result, all kinds of symptoms are occurred. However, we can be healed.

The operation for healing is performed by Jesus Christ, our doctor. Jesus sacrificed His life and removed our focuses (sin). Our sin is forgiven. We may not understand what happened, but we are surely healed.

As a result, **our eyes** are seeing little by little. We can see that God works on our daily lives. **Our ears** regained hearing little by little. We hear God's voice. The word of thanksgiving and praise to God and consideration for others are uttered from **our mouths** little by little.

And we come to feel peace and power all over our bodies. It is because **"By his wounds you have been healed."** (2:24) How blessed we are! However, don't we need to be healed more?

2. Returning to the Shepherd of Souls

2:25 For you were straying like sheep but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Peter records, **"You were straying like sheep."** He writes I Chapter 4,

4:3 For the time that is past suffices for doing what the Gentiles want to do, living in sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry.

They refer to desires and pleasure that we loved. We were slaves to them.

My friends. As we are created in God's image, when we lost fellowship with God the good Shepherd, we feel totally uneasy and empty. Nothing has filled our heart up. Even if we drink like a fish or we are obsessed with a game till very late at night, we are just distracting our minds.

We can forget emptiness and fear for a short time, however when we become sober, we feel more fearful than before. It is impossible for us to be completely satisfied.

1) Returning to the Shepherd of Souls

Now we must return to the Shepherd and Overseer of our souls. God is our Shepherd of our souls.

Jesus Christ said as below,

John 10:11 I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

He continues,

John 10:14 I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me.

Jesus Christ is the Shepherd of our souls and He is **the good Shepherd**.

Let me point the characteristics of **the good Shepherd**.

① He seeks the lost sheep

He is the One who left 99 sheep and goes in search of the one that went astray. He thinks each of us are precious.

② He comes to gather sheep and makes them in one flock

We are not isolated. We are gathered to the Shepherd. We have companions who help and are helped.

③ He cares for sick and wounded sheep

The good Shepherd never leave His sheep.

④ He protects sheep from enemy

He risks His life to protect us. Yes, He sacrificed His only Son and made us return to Him.

⑤ He leads us to the pasture and feeds us

My friends. We could return to **the good Shepherd** like this. It was only by God's grace. How wonderful!

2) Returning to the Overseer

2:25 For you were straying like sheep but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Peter changed **the Shepherd** into **the Overseer**. Why did he do this? The Overseer means a guardian and protector.

The good Shepherd of souls cares for each sheep. **The guardian** watches each sheep so that they do not stray. It is the job of the guardian.

How about today's message? Did we return to God who is **the Shepherd and Overseer of our souls**? Do we realize that we are healed?

On the other hand, do we hide our diseases and wounds? Are our hearts feeling uneasy because of differences between our attitude at church and home?

Let us ask the good Shepherd who is the Lord of healing for the treatment of our wounds. Let us ask the Lord for a touch of His healing hand. The first step is to honestly speak your feelings to the Lord.

Let us read the Scripture.

2:24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

2:25 For you were straying like sheep but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Let us expect that the Scripture really fulfilled in us.

Conclusion

Title of the Message: "Remain with the Good Shepherd" (2)

—The Good Shepherd—

Today we studied **the grace** that is a gift from Jesus Christ. The saints of the early churches had joy even though they were under suffering and troubles. That joy was given as the gift by removing focuses (sin) through His wounds.

Forgiveness of sin gives joy, comfort, courage, and power to our hearts. How blessed we are! On top of that, Jesus Christ who is **the Shepherd of the souls** and **Overseer** walks with us. Therefore, we worship and praise Him.

Let us read the Scripture again.

2:24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

2:25 For you were straying like sheep but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

* God bless you!

