

February 21, 2021

KIBC Sunday Worship Service

Message by Pastor Teiichiro Kuroda

Title of the Message: "Be of the Same Mind"

—Jesus Christ—

Text: 1 Peter Chapter 4:1,2

4:1 Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,

4:2 so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God.

Introduction

In Germany, there is a training system called **the Meister apprenticeship (a vocational training and capability evaluation system)**. It has a long history and it started from a handcrafting guild in the middle ages (B.C. 4,5~ 15). The current Meister apprenticeship started in the 1900s. A craftsman in Germany works for two or three years as an apprentice under his Meister. During that time, he goes to a technical school and get a vocational qualification.

Nowadays, the job categories are divided into 5 fields and there are about 170 individual jobs. For example, there are bakers, florists, shoemakers, tailors, dry cleaners, electric store managers, stationary store managers, bank clerks and so on. Each job needs a vocational qualification in Germany.

Those who want to be the Meister should produce results for three to five years after getting the vocational qualification. The examination to be a Meister seems very strict and difficult. In Germany, they get the qualification first and then they get a license for operating business.

The **Meister apprenticeship** was established for the purpose of leaving excellent techniques behind. Therefore, whoever wants to get the vocational qualification, should not only study their Meister's skills but also **their way of thinking**.

It is said that an attractive point of the traditional **Meister apprenticeship** in Germany is hidden there and the reason why they produce things of high quality.

In Germany, whoever wants to be a Meister is asked to have **the same way of thinking** as their Meister.

Peter taught the Jewish Christians under suffering,

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.

4:1 Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,

Peter encouraged the saints who were under suffering to arm themselves **with the same way of thinking as Christ**. To arm implies that there is fighting. How should we arm ourselves in the days of the COVID-19 pandemic? Let us study the following two points today.

Main Points

1 . Christ Suffered in the Flesh.

4:1 Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,

1) Christ as A Man

Jesus Christ is the Son of God. The One, who is God, became a man and lived. In this point, He is different from us. Please do not misunderstand. **“Christ suffered in the flesh.”**

The epistle to the Hebrews, Chapter 4 record as below,

4:15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

Jesus Christ had a flesh-and-blood body like us. He did not commit sin; however, He had the weakness of the flesh like us. Why did Christ go that far?

There are two reasons.

- ① To die to redeem us.
- ② To restore our true nature.

Christ died so that we human beings, who are sinners and cannot glorify God, can come to return to God and glorify Him. The purpose of the incarnation of Jesus Christ was to make us restored to God and reveal his nature.

2) A Starting Line of Restoration

Therefore, Peter said,

4:1 Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,

God expects us to **arm ourselves with the same way of thinking as Jesus**.

My friends, if we believe in Christ and become Christians, it means that we stand at the starting line of our lives and change our hearts and restore the image of God.

It means that our lives are changed step-by-step to have fellowship with God the Father like Christ, to have love and compassion, and to have wisdom, courage, and peace.

Paul records in 2 Corinthians, Chapter 3 as below,

3:18 And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into

the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

How we are blessed! How great the grace of God is!

3) Arm Yourself

Peter said,

4:1 Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,

Peter advises us to arm ourselves with the same way of thinking as Christ. Some of you may imagine a war if you hear the word arm. Yes, indeed. There is a battle going on.

We human beings easily make compromises and give up. Then, there is a danger of leading an unchanged life without receiving God's grace, even though you became a Christian. Therefore, you should be aware of the fact that there is the war and **arm yourselves**.

We sometimes cannot avoid going through the way of suffering and hardship. Therefore, we need to prepare for it. When we arm our hearts, our Christian lives become a different thing.

Then, what does it mean to arm our hearts? That is the same thing that Christ was armed with, God's word. When Jesus was tempted by Satan at the beginning of His public life, He repulsed him with the word of God. It arms and protects us. We need to store the word of God.

Please open the Epistle of Hebrews, Chapter 4.

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.

2. Be with the Same Way of Thinking

1) Having the Same Suffering on the Cross

4:1b for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin.

The German Lutheran Bible translates the verse above in the perfect tense. It means that when we trusted in Christ and accepted Him, He on the cross and we are made one. According to this fact, we, who were controlled by sin and subjected to sin, **are made to be cleansed from sin** and live life of the new resurrection. (See Romans, Chapter 6)

Another translation of the verse above is written in the present tense like the Japanese Bible (2017). It means that Christians, who accepted to receive the sufferings of Christ, they **are cleansed from sin** and live godly lives.

In fact, these translations teach that Christians **have been cleansed from sin** (the past tense)

and live by continue to be cleansed from sin (the present tense). We turn from selfish way of life and live a new way of life.

2) Living for the Will of God

4:2 so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God.

① Human Passions

We lived by following human passions before we believed in Jesus Christ. They were selfish passions. We thought that we were the center of the world and our success, our joy, our plans, and our pride were the center of our lives.

However, there is no true satisfaction, true peace, or true joy there. If everything will not be the way we want it to be, we become irritated, get angry, hold a grudge, and become spiritless.

② The Will of God

Therefore, it is God's grace that we, who were subjected to **human passions**, are made to live by following **the will of God**.

He who does not understand the grace of life by trusting in Christ, may think that life according to the will of God is very uncomfortable. However, that is not true.

If we live by seeking the will of God, we are made free from clinging to ourselves, our pride, and fear, we are given the freedom of our hearts. It is freedom from an exhausted life by taking our heavy burdens by ourselves. It is the blessed way of life.

Life by seeking **the will of God** is not the way of life of reading the face of a man of power and pleasing him. God gives us the courageous power, so that we positively judge and decide to live the way we choose.

③ Your Will Be Done.

When we start a new day, we pray **the Lord's Prayer**.

Matthew 6:10 Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

We ask the Lord "What should I do?" in the various situations of battles. On the other hand, we pray, "Lord, help me so that I can help him." We pray to Him who supports our days and leads them. We give thanks to Him because He responds to our prayers. These prayers are a barometer of trusting God who is with us, even if everything will not be the way we want it to be.

4:2 so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God.

My dear friends. Our lifetimes are limited. We do not know how much time we are given.

Suddenly the end of life may come. Therefore, let us live by following the will of God. Let us start a day by praying, “Your will be done.” ¥

Conclusion

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—Jesus Christ—

Peter sent the epistle to the Jewish Christians in diaspora to encourage them. The secret to win a victory in hardship is to have **the same way of thinking** of Christ who is the Lord.

Then, what does it mean to have **the same way of thinking**?

1. To arm oneself

4:1 Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,

2. To live in the will of God

4:2 so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God.

* God bless you!