

July 25, 2021

KIBC Sunday Worship Service

Message by Pastor Teiichiro Kuroda

Title of the Message: "What is the Foundation of Your Christian Life?"

—The Amazing Hope—

Text: 2 Peter 1:16~18

1:16 For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

1:17 For when he received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased,"

1:18 we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain.

Introduction

On July 23rd, the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games started. It was supposed to be a splendid sports festival and the world, including Japan, would have been very excited. However, it is quite different from a typical Olympics because of the opening in the midst of Covid-19 pandemic. This is probably an unheard of incident.

As you know, Tokyo announced its fourth **state of emergency**. In Osaka, **priority measures to prevent the spread** was extended. As a result, our mental and economic losses are immeasurable. **Tokyo 2020** started in this circumstance.

The most serious problem was whether or not Olympic Games could be held in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic. All **athletes** worked hard by setting a goal to reach the Olympic games. The facilities, hotels and its employees who accept athletes were also concerned about whether the Games would be held or not.

The reason for the anxiety was that the date of opening was not clearly announced. We keenly feel that human beings are powerless against Coronavirus. The goal had not been set, therefore it made people felt uneasy.

On the contrary, hope in God is not like that. The goal that God gives us is to enter the kingdom of heaven. As it is quite different from this world, there is no sin in it, and it is the place where God's peace continues eternally. We walk toward the kingdom of heaven and finally enter into it. It is our goal.

The goal that gives us hope encouraged the Jewish Christians under suffering and gave them power to live in hope. Peter wrote a message of hope to the Christians in that era. Now he tries to teach in today's text that how certain that hope is.

My friends, those (Christians) who walk holding onto the assured hope are really blessed people.

Let us study together how great and blessed the hope in Jesus Christ is, according to the following two points.

Main Points

1. The Saints Who Live in the Amazing Hope

1:16 For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

The Scripture above includes 4 key words.

1) The Power of the Lord Jesus Christ

Peter writes, **"We made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."**

He records in the beginning of the epistle as below,

1:3 His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence,

It means that Peter had testified the authority of God that entrusted in Him.

2) Jesus' Second Coming

"We made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The word 'coming' is the noun '**appearance**' in the original language. Jesus fulfilled the work of redemption through His suffering on the cross. He promised His second coming. He made a promise with the disciples that he would fulfill the

kingdom when he returns. Since then, the Christian Church has faith that one day we will see the Lord Jesus Christ in His time. Many have preached on that hope. It is the hope that Peter taught.

1:16 ...we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

3) Devised Myths

1:16 For we did not follow cleverly devised myths,

Devised myths (mythos in Greek) are fables. In those days in Jewish society, there was a genre of literature called **fables**. A fable is a usually short narrative teaching a lesson or a satire and often employing characters as animals. The purpose is to teach truth through it.

A recent example is The Chronicles of Narnia by C.S. Lewis. Its value as a literary work is not denied. It is a good literary work and a good way to present truth.

However, Peter says that the Gospel that God entrusted us should not be mixed up with a fable or a fairy tale. The Gospel of the hope should not be changed so that it satisfies the understanding of human beings. Peter says that the message that Peter has spoken is directly given from God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth.

4) Eyewitnesses of His Majesty

1:16 we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

The days that the Jesus' disciples walked with the Lord Jesus were days to look at His love and the revealing of His majesty.

John 1:16 For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.

Peter lived with near to Jesus and said, **"We were eyewitnesses of his majesty.** Being Jesus' disciple, Peter witnessed Lord Jesus' public life and was an eyewitness of His cross and resurrection. He was convinced that God fulfilled salvation and gave him hope. **He was an eyewitness of God' majesty.**

It is the hope of life that is given in the forgiveness of sin and resurrection of Jesus. Our lives do not end up with death. No, not at all. We are given an eternal hope. If there is no hope of life, there are too many absurd things in this world. However, God comes in His time to complete His kingdom.

We have the hope that those who believe in the Lord and faithfully live will be absolutely rewarded. It is not an idea that develops from a literary form of a **fable**. On the contrary, the Lord's disciples testified that it was the real thing that they could see with their own eyes, hear with their own ears and touch with their hands.

1Peter 1:1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life— 1:2 the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us:

We come to know now that the saints of the early church lived in this amazing hope.

2. An Occurrence at the Mountain of Transfiguration

1:17 For when he received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased,"

1:18 we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain.

1) Blessings of at the mountain of transfiguration

Peter records an occurrence at **the mountain of the transfiguration**.

Matthew 17:1 And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves.

17:2 And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light.

17:3 And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him.

17:4 And Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah."

17:5 He was still speaking when, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him."

17:6 When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces and were terrified.

17: 7 But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Rise, and have no fear."

17:8 And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only.¹

If we are allowed to divide the term of the public life of Jesus into two, the first term is the days of Jesus' preaching around a region of Galilee and latter term is the journey to Jerusalem toward the cross. In the first term of His life, Jesus preached and taught the Gospel of the kingdom and revealed His glory to the disciples. The first term is overwhelmingly longer than the latter one because the disciples would eventually be eyewitnesses and testify about Him.

The ministry in the first term was over and before Jesus began to walk toward the cross, Jesus appeared to His three disciples (Peter, James and John) and testified about Himself. Peter records it.

Let us read the Scripture again.

1:16 For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

1:17 For when he received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased,"

1:18 we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain.

I was especially moved with the following Scripture.

1:17 "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased,"

When Jesus was baptized by John in the Jordan, the following things happened.

Mark 1:9 In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and

1:10 And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove.

1:11 And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."

Actually, the Scripture above is associated with a Messianic prophecy in the Old Testament.

Psalms 2:6 "As for me, I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill."

2:7 I will tell of the decree: The LORD said to me, "You are my Son; today I have begotten you."

Isaiah 42:1 Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations.

The word, **“You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased,”** that Jesus’ disciples heard in a vision assures us that the One is the Messiah who reigns the kingdom and redeems His people, which the Bible prophesized.

2) Peter’s Testimony

Peter records as below,

1:18 we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain.

The ministry that entrusted in Jesus Christ is based on the word of prophecy that was spoken by God. It is not a fable that human beings made but it is based on a fact they saw with their eyes, they heard with their ears and touched with their hands. Peter said that he could speak with confidence, because it is the hope that was based on the definite foundation.

There is a well-known saying, **“Seeing is believing.”** There is nothing better than a story with an experience where someone saw with their eyes, heard with their ears, and touched with their hands.

How about you? We are encouraged and given power if we have an experience where our prayers were answered. An experience of being healed of a disease makes people encouraged and strengthened. The experience of God’s real presence and His help make us encouraged and gives us power. The precious experiences in God become encouragement and power. Real experiences have power.

{Illustration}

I have been given the privilege to have various experiences in God. One of the most unforgettable experiences of my life is my ministry work in the Communist countries. Young people of today may not get the point. It was similar to what now occurs in North Korea, Myanmar, Afghanistan, and so on.

My work was in the former Eastern Europe. I entered by car into the countries of

Eastern Europe. In those days, these countries, such as Russia, Romania, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia (now defunct) and others, were controlled by communism, socialism, despotism, and so on. These ideologies deny the presence of God.

God showed me the lives of the saints who were suffering in these countries. God allowed me to meet Christ's evangelists who were greatly persecuted. They were **living witnesses** (now, most of them have gone to heaven) of the days of Acts.

In those days, spiritual revival had taken place in these countries. One of my unforgettable memories was the day when I baptized 86 people with water in Siberia. On top of that, a church building was filled with people and there were many people outside of the building who could not enter. I could watch God's remarkable work. I have experienced God who was alive and worked even in hardship.

In fact, these experiences were what I have saw, heard, and experienced. Their testimonies made me encouraged and gave me power.

I truly studied the word of the Bible.

Romans 10:13 For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

The Scripture teaches that whoever calls God for help will be saved.

Psalms 37:24 though he falls, he shall not be cast headlong, for the LORD upholds his hand.

It is true that God's word has authority and there is encouragement, and power.

Peter said,

1:16 ...but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

Peter was the living witness.

Let us remember the following precious three points.

① **The experiences of the grace of God are precious treasures.**

We are given encouragement and power from the Lord.

② **They become the foundation of the living witness.**

Missionary work starts there. In the days of the early church, preaching the Gospel of Christ started there. However, it is not enough.

③ The saints are supported by the reliability of the word of the Bible.

The word of God should be the foundation of our Christian lives.

Conclusion

Title of the Message: "What is the Foundation of Your Christian Life?"

—The Amazing Hope—

The Lord spoke to us today. Peter taught where our foundation is. He also spoke to us about the goal and the hope of our lives.

Then, how should we live?

1. Living life in the hope in the Lord Jesus Christ

1:16 For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

2. Our lives (experiences) are protected by the word of God.

Psalm 37:24 though he falls, he shall not be cast headlong, for the LORD upholds his hand.

* God bless you!