

August 15, 2021

KIBC Sunday Worship Service

Message by Pastor Teiichiro Kuroda

Title of the Message: "Fake News Is the Biggest Problem"

—Identifying the Truth—

Text: 2 Peter 2:1~3

2:1 But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction.

2:2 And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of truth will be blasphemed.

2:3 And in their greed they will exploit you with false words. Their condemnation from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.

Introduction

{Illustration} A Heart-breaking News

The other day, I read a heartbreaking article in a newspaper.

On June 19th at about 4:20, in Higashine city, Yamagata prefecture, approximately 100 kg (500,000-yen worth at the current market price) of expensive cherries were stolen just before harvest. A man (66 years old) who grew the cherries found it and dialed the police station.

The 100 kg of cherries that the farmer put a lot of work into growing were stolen by someone before he finally began to harvest them. It is a very heartbreaking case. When I think about the man, **my heart aches** for him. That should never happen.

According to my research, **peaches, gingers, green peppers, loquats, Buntan**

oranges, tomatoes, and so on were stolen many times in the past 15 years or so.

They are really **heart-breaking** cases of fruits and farm products are stolen just before harvest.

The Bible records that God is displeased as below,

Isaiah 59:15 The LORD saw it, and it displeased him that there was no justice.

59:16 He saw that there was no man and wondered that there was no one to intercede; then his own arm brought him salvation, and his righteousness upheld him.

The Scripture records that when God looked upon His people, He found that truth was lacking so He was displeased that there was no justice that should be there.

It is written **it displeased him** and it means that **it was evil in God's eye, and it was not good.** God thought it evil.

The Scripture means that God was displeased that there was no justice in the Israelites, where there should be.

In this day and age, the problem is **fake news**.

Fake news refers to news that is incorrect, false, and fictitious. False news comes into Christian Church in the days of Peter and also today, so that God is displeased.

We also find such false and heartbreaking news around us. We lead lives among a lot of fake news. God **is displeased** by looking at our dark society that is full of injustice, evil, hypocrisy, and fake news.

Then, how should we lead lives now?

Let us listen to God's voice according the following two points.

Main Points

1. Remember the Restoration of Humanity.

Let us remember when God created the heavens and the earth.

Genesis 1:31 And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.

1) God created the best things

The Bible records that things that created were very good. This is a very important point of view when we look ourselves. We see God's joy there and at the same time it shows the meaning of our existence. It means that we are originally created as good.

We should remember that God created us as the special ones who are different from other creatures.

Genesis 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

What does it mean **the image of God**? It means that we are like God, and it reflects God's nature. That is that human beings have fellowship with God; human beings are given a nature to live among the blessed fellowship of God.

We are created as the beings that share God's love, God's truth, God's holiness, and God's righteousness. Therefore, we are precious and honored in God's eyes.

2) Human beings lost humanity

However, we were enticed by our own desire, lured, tempted and finally lost God. As a result, we are damaged in our nature. My friends, the Bible records it in the first book, Genesis. The whole contents of the Bible make clear what the Bible deals with, where it focuses on, and where God leads them to.

By the way, when God looked the earth, He could not find any good things there.

Isaiah said,

Isaiah 59:16 He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no one to intercede;

It does not mean that there were no human beings on earth. (Many people lived going this way and that.) It means that God did not find any human beings who were created in His image.

God created human beings in His image so that He could have a personal fellowship with human beings. However, He asks where those human beings were. Let us remember Adam and Eve who committed sin. What did God do?

Genesis 3:8 And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

3:9 But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?"

God said, "Where are you?" It is the first question that God asked. God is the One who keeps searching. Human beings lost the place where they were supposed to be. As a result, all human beings lost their way like them.

{Illustration}

A lot of the news that we see and hear in the newspaper, TV, radio, and YouTube is heart breaking. There is a certain person who causes someone trouble and damage but makes a selfish excuse.

The incidents where precious lives are trampled upon occur almost every day. However, we should know that the same problem is found in us even though we do not commit serious crimes.

Most of crimes occur when they ignore other people. Their own desires and their self-defense take precedence over other people and their personalities. Don't you think this can happen to us?

When we think about how carelessness the words that we speak are, we come to think that we should be more careful. If we realize the other person's importance and their precious personality, we realize that we shouldn't have spoken to them in such a manner. We should have spoken more carefully and thoughtfully.

How many people are not treated as living human beings in their offices under the burden of profit-seeking? Their personalities and value are ignored because of their organization's profit. Are their own existences so worthless?

No, certainly not. However, we human beings try to live by giving priority to our own things. Even though we are good at taking advantage of people, we do not have enough patience to serve other people. If we come to realize that it is ourselves that is actually lacking humanity, we are blessed.

We have lost humanity. We need it to be restored by God and He completes it.

3) Restoration of humanity

Isaiah 59:16 He saw that there was no man and wondered that there was no one to intercede; then his own arm brought him salvation, and his righteousness upheld him.

God's own arm brought him salvation, and his righteousness upheld him so that He restores our humanity. It means that God allowed Jesus Christ to be crucified and laid our sin on Him. God sacrificed His Son Jesus Christ and opened the path to salvation so that our true humanity is restored.

Christians have their true humanity restored by Jesus Christ. Therefore, we should keep watching God the Creator.

If we turn away from God, how much is He displeased with us? If we depart from God's love that surpasses human knowledge and live without God's true creation, how much is He displeased with us?

It is very important point that we should understand.

Peter continues teaching another important thing. It is a warning to the Jewish Christians.

2. Peter's Warning

2:1 But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction.

2:2 And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of truth will be blasphemed.

2:3 And in their greed they will exploit you with false words. Their condemnation from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.

We give thanks for having Christian lives in God's grace and peace. However, if we look outside of our church, we find trouble that the Bible records.

An NHK TV program [A Second-Generation Believer of Religion](#) was on the air the other day. It was repeatedly on the air because of a critical social issue that is of heresies. It is a problem of Jehovah's Witnesses that is called themselves one of the Christian denominations, but their teaching is unrelated to the Bible.

My friends, some groups and their activities which are heresies were found from the beginning of Christian Church. Generally, they were sincere and earnest people. However, in their eagerness they ended up with an unbalanced teaching. They emphasized some parts of the Bible and omitted inconvenient parts for them and finally formed a new religious group.

The Jehovah's Witnesses religion is based on a movement that was started in the middle of 19th century by Charles Russell when he was 18 years old in America. He was taught at Presbyterian church at the beginning; however, he couldn't get used to the ceremonious atmosphere he couldn't satisfy the church and left there, and he gradually formed a group of his own style.

He was an earnest man. The fact that he felt unsatisfied with worships means that there was possibly a problem in the church that he belonged to. Then, he did his own studying and began to study the Bible.

However, he did not read the Bible correctly, but did it in an unbalanced manner. The more he studied the Bible the more he began to fail to identify the One whom was the center of the Bible.

The Bible teaches as below,

Proverb 19:2 Desire without knowledge is not good, and whoever makes haste with his feet misses his way.

The heresies of all the ages began like this. There also are teachings that are called heresies today and new cult religions occur one after another and delude peoples' hearts.

Isaiah 59:15 The LORD saw it, and it displeased him that there was no justice.

In the days of Perter, various kinds of heresies were brought into church. Therefore, Peter wrote the epistle to advise them. A certain biblical scholar thinks that the center of the epistle is in the chapter 2 and Peter explains about the heresies of

those days.

The reason that Peter taught the living hope of Christ to the Jewish Christians was that the heresies denied Christ and taught people to doubt promises of Christ.

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3) Heresies

Let us think about heresies.

A heresy originally refers **a party** and **a group**, so it has no particular meaning. However, when it is founded according to a special intension in church fellowship, it comes to mean **a faction** and **division**.

It is written in 1 Corinthians, Chapter 11 as below,

11:19 for there must be factions among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized.

Fractions is written in order to identify the genuine Christians. The epistle to Galatians, Chapter 5, Verse 20 means **people who gratify the desires of the flesh**, not people who walk by the Spirit.

Therefore, heresies are different teachings that mean groups, fractions and divisions that are secretly founded in church.

Peter also teaches about false teachers. The false teachers (the false prophets) mean a leader or a coordinator of the group.

2:2 And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of truth will be blasphemed.

As it records here, **many will follow their sensuality**, they are people who have an influence on many people and let them perish. They damage church, the body of the Lord, and the way of truth is blasphemed.

Let us summarize what we have studied now.

We studied how heresy has occurred until now. Heresy occurs when people emphasize a certain part of the Bible and also omit another certain part of the Bible. The sound teaching of the Bible is based on the balanced reading of the Bible.

As the Bible is an example of our faith and Christian lives, if our translation of the Bible is unbalanced, our walk becomes unbalanced. If our standard of life deviates from the truth, our Christian lives are put in danger.

Peter records as below,

2:1 ...even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction.

4) True and False

We who live today need to wake up and also firmly stand on the truth of the word. We lead lives in our society with various falsehoods, injustices, and fake news. We should see through the falsehood and the truth so that we are not displeased with God and live with restored humanity.

Then, what should we do?

⇒ Practice self-examination.

① We should examine ourselves by the light of the God's word.

We should examine if our comprehension of the Bible is unbalanced. If our Christian lives become in our own style.

② We should examine our Christian lives to make sure we do not walk by denying the Lord.

We need to know the importance of self-examination. We should come close to God, who completed salvation for us, with brothers and sisters in the beginning of the week to examine if we lead correct Christian lives. We should do self-examination by the light of the word of God.

Conclusion

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The Lord taught us many important things this morning. Let us give thanksgiving to God!

In this day and age, like the days of Peter, there are heresies, false teachers and fake news all around us. The devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking Christians to devour.

We studied the following two important points to lead lives.

1. We should do self-examination by the light of the word of God.
2. We should do self-examination to make sure we do not lead lives by denying the Lord.

* God bless you!