

September 5, 2021

KIBC Sunday Worship Service

Message by Pastor Teiichiro Kuroda

Title of the Message: "The Correct Viewpoint is Important."

— An Attitude of Faith —

Text: 2 Peter 2:10b~14

2:10b Bold and willful, they do not tremble as they blaspheme the glorious ones,

2:11 whereas angels, though greater in might and power, do not pronounce a blasphemous judgment against them before the Lord.

2:12 But these, like irrational animals, creatures of instinct, born to be caught and destroyed, blaspheming about matters of which they are ignorant, will also be destroyed in their destruction,

2:13 suffering wrong as the wage for their wrongdoing. They count it pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are blots and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions, while they feast with you.

2:14 They have eyes full of adultery, insatiable for sin. They entice unsteady souls. They have hearts trained in greed. Accursed children!

Introduction

A while ago, when I was strolling around the quiet lakeside of Lake Toya in Hokkaido, wildflowers on the roadside caught my attention. I was very impressed with them, even though I usually hardly pay attention. Each wildflower seemed to beautifully bloom to the fullest. I praised the great work of God's Creation.

I remembered this Scripture at that time,

Matthew 6:29 yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

Then, I shuttered unconsciously. Jesus said, "**Even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these,**" when the queen of Sheba visited the king Solomon

the wise. I have read the Scripture many times and I have seen wild-flowers many times.

However, I have never been so impressed like that time. Why? It was God's secret that I better understood when I had a quiet time at the lakeside. I had not really turned my eyes on them till then. So our **view point** is very important.

My friends, we should know the important points when we read the Bible. It is how we should establish our viewpoint.

You may know the hymn Trust and Obey. Let us read the words of the first stanza carefully and appreciate.

Trust and Obey

When we walk with the Lord in the light of His Word,

What a glory He sheds on our way!

While we do His good will He abides with us still,

And with all who will trust and obey.

The words above show the author's view point of the Bible.

What is the Bible like? The Bible is the most blessed book according the following three points.

- ① It shows the important viewpoint that we should keep.
- ② It testifies about God who loves us.
- ③ It shows the living hope to those who are wandering in darkness.

If you keep reading the Bible, which looks difficult to understand at first, you may hear a message that you need at that time. Let us continue reading the Bible patiently.

By the way, in the second epistle of Peter, he records some heresies, where the Bible was not understood correctly. It was the serious problem that churches confronted in those days.

Let us continue studying heresies and listen to the Lord's voice today according the following two points.

Main Points

1. A Real Image of Heretics

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.

1) The heretics of the present age

In those days, there seemed to be a large number of people who were caught by the heresies. Those who believed in the teaching of heretics also began to follow their way of lives.

{Illustration} Heresies in Korea

At the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic in Korea, a certain religious group (heretics) that called itself a Christian church became a serious problem of virus infection. It is called the **Shincheonji Church of Christ** in Teague and its founder is Mr. Lee Man-hee. He declared that he was the second coming of Christ the Messiah and it was said that he smuggled agents into established churches.

Shincheonji Church of Christ was founded in 1984 and 95 churches were founded in 2008 over the world and its believers grew to over 200,000. It founded a base of operations near Waseda University in Tokyo. It is said that its believers increased in the tens of thousands. The group built a temple in 2019 in Wuhan, China.

The agents disguise themselves and sneak into churches. They are taught to gain the trust of the pastor. And they gradually get new friends in the church, control the deacon's meeting and finally dismiss the pastor and take over the church completely.

Unification Church and a heresy group called "**Providence**" that was separated from Unification Church went into hiding and still keep doing religious activities (in Osaka).

Like this, considering our present situation, the reason that Peter felt a sense of crisis and made a desperate appeal is not irrelevant to us.

It is never a story in the distant past.

2) The real nature of the heretics

Then, how did Peter call the believers' attention to the heresy of those days?

2:10b Bold and willful, they do not tremble as they blaspheme the glorious ones,

Peter said that the heretics were bold and willful, they did not tremble as they blasphemed the glorious ones. Their attitude was very impudent and it compared themselves with the angels.

2:11 whereas angels, though greater in might and power, do not pronounce a blasphemous judgment against them before the Lord.

Quite lot of the content of the epistle of Jude overlapped with the epistle of Peter as below,

Jude 1:8 Yet in like manner these people also, relying on their dreams, defile the flesh, reject authority, and blaspheme the glorious ones.

1:9 But when the archangel Michael, contending with the devil, was disputing about the body of Moses, he did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgment, but said, "The Lord rebuke you."

1:10 But these people blaspheme all that they do not understand, and they are destroyed by all that they, like unreasoning animals, understand instinctively.

Jude records a Jewish saying that when even the archangel Michael contended with the devil, he did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgment, but said, " If it is so, we realize it as a warning that we should not carelessly speak about spiritual beings without knowing

We understand from these two epistles (Peter's epistle and Jude's epistle) that the heretics in those days carelessly spoke about the existence of spirits according to their own way of interpretation. Therefore, we should be careful about this point.

People who are called psychics pretend that they have the ability to see spirits and drive away and control it. Peter sees their arrogant attitude as a problem. They are fearless and haughty and carelessly speak about the spiritual beings and do not fear them.

They do not have any fear because they know nothing about it. They believe that

they can control the power of the spirit. However, they do not know that they really are used, ruled and controlled by that existence. It means that they are blind to their own selves.

Then, the important point is how we should live.

2. The Important Thing is the Viewpoint of Faith.

Peter records that attitudes of people who are controlled by heresy are revealed by their lives.

1) The attitudes of heretics

2:13 suffering wrong as the wage for their wrongdoing. They count it pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are blots and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions, while they feast with you.

2:14 They have eyes full of adultery, insatiable for sin. They entice unsteady souls. They have hearts trained in greed. Accursed children!

The Scripture above records their characteristics.

① They seek pleasures.

2:13 suffering wrong as the wage for their wrongdoing. They count it pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are blots and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions, while they feast with you.

They should do works of God in the daytime (John 9:4), however the heretics drink and make merry during that time and became like blots among a love fellowship of the saints.

② They indulge themselves in adultery.

2:14 They have eyes full of adultery, insatiable for sin. They entice unsteady souls. They have hearts trained in greed. Accursed children!

Jesus said,

Matthew 5:28 But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

Peter clearly says that those who indulge in adultery are **accursed children**. Being cursed is quite opposite of being blessed. They incur God's curse by themselves and

stand on the path of destruction. On top of that, they are wicked beings who play a curse on people around them.

2) The attitudes of the saints

Then, how should we live, who live in this age that is not different from the one of Peter?

Paul records the battles of the saints as below,

Ephesians 6:12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

6:13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.

6:14 Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness,

6:15 and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace.

6:16 In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one;

6:17 and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,

* The Scripture above shows the way to live for the saints here.

My friends, we should not forget that we easily go astray like sheep. If we take our eyes off Jesus Christ the Shepherd we immediately go astray. Our society is not so simple so that we should underestimate the work of the evil. We should not think the work of spirit so lightly.

The Scripture advises us as below,

Hebrews 12:2 looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

Our Lord is the great One. We are weak and easily go astray, but our Lord is strong and absolutely rich in kindness.

Conclusion

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Our Lord spoke to us today. The modern age (and the evil spirit that deceives the saints) is not so different from the days of Peter approximately 2000 years ago. The evil spirit blinds the eyes of the saints and entices them away from God's teaching.

There are people who are seeking pleasures and indulge in adultery.

Peter teaches that our viewpoint of faith is important.

The One whom we must look towards is Jesus Christ alone. Let us walk carefully, not taking our eyes off Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd of our souls.

Hebrews 12:2 looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith,

* God bless you!