

October 17, 2018

KIBC Sunday Worship Service

Message by Pastor Teiichiro Kuroda

Title of the Message: "You Should Stir Up Your Memories "

— The Word of God —

Text: 2 Peter 3:1,2

3:1 This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved. In both of them I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder,

3:2 that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles,

Introduction

Social networking on our personal computers and smart phones is wildly pervading nowadays. We are able to see world news immediately with these things. On top of that, everyone is able to spread news and information by themselves. It is an amazing time. It owes to the remarkable development of the computer. Therefore, elderly people find it hard to keep up to young people because of the further development of the computer.

I remember the days of 40 years ago when I studied at the theological seminary in Germany. In those days, social networking was not around, so when we needed to know the meaning of the biblical terms (such as love, peace, trust, joy, perseverance, grace) we went to the library to consult with dictionaries, concordances, and reference books. Then, we wrote down the meanings on our own notebooks. I remember well that those words that appeared in the examinations.

A certain teacher said at that time that they would one day refer to the biblical terms only by one click because of the development of the computer. I could not believe it, but it is actually realized now. J-Bible is one of examples.

We can easily find an appropriate biblical term among hundreds of thousands of terms by only one click. It is unbelievable that we live in such days.

It becomes a very convenient age. However, it has demerit points because it becomes remarkably busy. We are too busy to become quiet, to read a book, to have a good, relaxed time with friends. One of the reasons may be because we are spending too much time with social networking.

People developed social networking. At the same time, man is controlled by social networking. People lose precious their selves, don't they? Are they addicted to overflowing information, aren't they?

Thinking about these things, people who lived about 50 years ago mainly wrote letters. They took a pen and wrote the letter. That single letter encouraged people, gave power, and inspired them. They sent a love letter. I think that the age was really good.

Approximately 2000 years ago, it probably took lot of time and effort to write even a single letter in the days of Peter, the writer of the epistle. Peter, one of leaders of the early churches, wrote the second epistle. It is that text that we will open and study today.

What does he want to teach? Let us study the following two points.

Main Points

1 . **Stir up Your Memories**

First let us read the text.

3:1 This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved. In both of them I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder,

3:2 that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles,

Peter called the readers **you, beloved**. Peter used it for the first time. When we read chapter 3 further, this expression appears 4 times in Verses 1, 8, 14, 17.

According to an oral tradition, Peter was **in prison** in Rome at that time. The epistle sent to churches in Asia Minor (Turkey today). It is a love letter to them.

Asia Minor is located on the eastern part of the Mediterranean Sea, far from Rome and Greece. They had no social networking like us. They probably felt it far from Peter. In addition, Peter came to realized he was near the end of his life. He records

as below,

1:14 since I know that the putting off of my body will be soon, at our Lord Jesus Christ made clear to me.

Peter was really far from churches in Asia Minor. However, Peter himself might not feel that the saints were very far. On top of that, he knew his time, so he purposely called the saints **you, beloved**.

Then, why did Peter call them 4 times **you, beloved**? The reason was that they were his brothers who had the same sense of mission to build the kingdom of God. The purpose of the saints, who were on the earth, was to build the kingdom of God. The coming of Jesus to this world is to reveal the kingdom of God.

Mark 1:15 "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand.

The Kingdom God is the country that God controls as the king. It means the Kingdom in heaven, and the one who brought it on the earth was Jesus Christ. And He made the saints live in the Kingdom of God on earth, who were saved by Jesus. It is God's grace.

We sometimes lose a sense of the precious mission because of the anxiety about our circumstances and health. However, we should not be like that.

Peter records the purpose of writing the epistle as below,

3:1 This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved. In both of them I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder,

Let us study further Peter's purpose of sending the epistle.

2 . Stir up Your Sincere Mind

When do you think that Peter started writing his second epistle after the first one? As he records, "**I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder.**" He probably began to write the second one soon after writing the first one, judging by his words, stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder.

Then, by what reminder did Peter try to stir up their sincere minds? Peter wrote perseverance, suffering and hope of Christians in this first epistle. He wrote the way of godly life in the second epistle.

Let us remember the following two points.

1) Remembering Grace of the Lord

We should remember the following words of Peter.

1:5 For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge,

1:6 and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness,

1:7 and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love.

1:10 Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities, you will never fall.

1:12 Therefore I intend always to remind you of these qualities, though you know them and are established in the truth that you have.

1:13 I think it right, as long as I am in this body, to stir you up by way of reminder,

1:15 And I will make every effort so that after my departure you may be able at any time to recall these things.

Peter wrote these verses. We are asked very few things. We need to study more. And the more I study, the more I realize my helplessness. I feel my helplessness even though I have lived for a long time as a Christian and read the Bible well. I don't think I have enough time.

2) The Teaching of the Lord Through Affliction

The important thing that we can do is to remember the Lord's grace. It is more important to remember what we were taught and what we have studied than we study something new. The reason is that we learned the Lord's important teaching through affliction.

Psalms 119:71 It is good for me that I have afflicted, that I might learn your statutes.

Yes, we have really learned something important. When we had affliction, we can hear the Lord's small, soft voice that we usually do not hear. The Lord makes us grow and teaches us while we go forward step by step. However, we soon forget the Lord's grace. Therefore, it is important that we should always remember His grace.

My friends, what we were taught by the Word and what we were taught by experience are very precious, like precious stones. They are quite different from things that we study at school. They are indispensable things while we live in this world. They are the indispensable armor that we protect ourselves against spiritual battles.

We live every day by looking forward to the kingdom in heaven. However, we quickly forget this in our daily lives. Why do we so easily forget? → We tend to look our present lives and reality rather than looking at God's kingdom and His righteousness.

Let us remember Peter who was on the Lake of Galilee. Looking at furious waves, Peter became afraid and began to sink. It shows us his humanity. Peter who had this experience wrote as below,

3:1 This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved. In both of them I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder,

My friends, the word of the Lord is given to us to be repeatedly taught and to repeatedly be read. Like this, we should remember, and our minds will be stirred up.

3:2 that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles,

The message of the Bible has been spoken by the holy prophets. It is the Gospel taught by the apostles and through the work of the Spirit. It is the decisive plan of God who controls history. Peter says it is the commandment of the Lord. Therefore, we who are mere servants must not disregard it.

Thinking about this point, **Biblicism** means our response to the word of the Lord and its attitudes. Therefore, we are not all right if we only say that the Bible is **the word of God without error or fault**, but we are asked how we sincerely live by following the word of the Bible.

God helps us to bring memories back by repeatedly reading and hearing the word of the Bible. And we are stirred up when we continue to listen to the word of God.

Conclusion

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— The Word of God —

We listen to the Lord's voice today. He gave us His words that taught about our attitudes in faith.

What did Peter write to people in Asia Minor, whom he loved?

1. They should remember the grace of the Lord

3:1 This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved. In both of them I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder,

2. They should remember the commandments of the Lord.

3:2 that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles,

* God bless you!