

March 13th, 2022

KIBC Sunday Worship Service

Message by Pastor Teiichiro Kuroda

Title of the Message: “The Word to My Beloved Children”

—The Cross of Jesus—

Text: 1John 2:1~2

2:1 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

2:2 He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

Introduction

Rakugo, a verbal entertainment, is one of the **typical narrative arts** of Japanese culture. It started around 200 years ago. It is very wonderful narrative art where a single speaker plays many roles. On the other hand, **Manzai**, a comic dialogue form of entertainment, started approximately 100 years ago. Recently, **Gospel Rakugo**, a new genre of the verbal entertainment has started to appear.

These entertainments are **narrative arts** and make many people laugh. And the impressive thing are the expressions that they use to call their partner like “Hey!,” “You”, “Mr.”, and “Ms.”.

They call their partner’s name and then begin a conversation. They draw partner’s attention and start the conversation.

My friends, when you read 1 John carefully you may find that there are many expressions of deep love such as, “**my little children (2:1,12)**, **fathers, young men (2:13,14)**, and **children (2:14)**.”

John, the author, remembered his beloved brothers and sisters, who were his family in Christ, and called them with various familial expressions. What

then did John begin to tell them? Today's text begins with such callings as below,

2:1 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

God calls each of us as a precious person and a member of God's family. How thankful are we! Then, let us put our name there in the verses. What does God speak to us by calling each by our names? It is the theme of today's message "The Word to My Beloved Children." Let us study by the following two points as below.

Main Points

1. So That You May Not Sin

1) The One who Advocates

The first word is, "**You may not sin.**" It is the amazing grace that after committing a sin, you come to realize it, confess it to God, and are given forgiveness.

However, it is more amazing when we overcome sins. We come to act correctly before we commit them. It will enable us to have through fellowship with God.

However, what about us in reality? We sometimes make mistakes in our daily lives. Those, who try to walk correctly, understand themselves very well because they have a sensitive conscience. They are distressed about their lack of love, the ugliness of their hearts, and their unfriendly words and attitudes.

On the other hand, you feel discouraged because other people, especially your friends say, "Do you call yourself a Christian?" You are told, "You are the same person, even though you go to church." You become disheartened. Sometimes you may argue with them if you have the power to do so.

Sometimes you become so weak that you cannot oppose them. Or you accept your weakness and become totally discouraged. How about you?

When we open the Bible, we understand that even Paul was troubled about his weakness. He records as below,

Romans 7:24 Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?

7:25 Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.

He wrote that Jesus Christ the Lord saved him, a wretched man. He sincerely gave thanks to Jesus the Lord.

John, the author of 1 John, writes as below,

2:1 But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

My friends, the verse above teaches quite the opposite thing from the human society of this world. In human society, a certain person, who are said to be a good person, once commits a sin, he will be expelled from the society. However, God is quite different. He intercedes with us for God.

Just because God gives an advocate doesn't mean we can commit sins. No, we should not. We should grow not to commit sins through the power of the advocate.

2) He Who Intercedes with God for Us

2:1 But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

John records in the Gospel of John, Chapter 14 as below,

14:16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another an advocate, to be with you forever,

An advocate and **the Helper** refer to the same One, the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is **the One who defends us** (*parakletos* in Greek). Human beings need the helper when they commit sins.

We who believe in God were made God's children through the blood of Jesus on the cross. The Holy Spirit is with God's children. It is an amazing privilege that is given to them.

Therefore, we first try to not commit sins. However, it is impossible for us by ourselves, so God gives us the Holy Spirit who is another Helper and Jesus Christ who is the righteous. He guides the children of God to not commit sins through fellowship with God. He protects them against sins.

Psalm 119:11 I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

When the word of God works with the Holy Spirit, it protects us against the temptation of sins.

By the way, John taught that we are given two advocates who defend us before God the Father in Heaven.

2:1 But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

The two advocates are **the Holy Spirit** (*parakletos*) and **Jesus Christ**. We are given two advocates. How happy are we!

2. Christ's Advocacy

First of all, we should understand the following fact. For example, in Japanese society when a certain person commits a sin, he must appear before a judge. And he is allowed to ask for an attorney who claims that there were extenuating circumstances.

However, there are no extenuating circumstances which can justify us because we obviously committed sin before God and His judgement on us is correct. We deserve to die.

However, Jesus Christ is the righteous One. The reason that Christ defends us before God is that He became **the propitiation** for our sins. Let us understand first His work on the cross.

1. The Propitiation

1 John 4:10 In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Then, what is the propitiation like?

God's nature is **holy** and **righteous**. Therefore, God does not acknowledge sin or unrighteousness. He also does not accept them. They are completely unbecoming to the Kingdom of God. On top of that, God gets angry at sin and absolutely punishes it.

In the days of the Old Testament, they offered an animal as a sin offering to make atonement for them. God seeing the animal offering put on the altar to be burnt and its pleasing aroma reached the heaven, and He forgave their sins. It was **the propitiation**.

However, God who is love gave Jesus Christ, His Son, as **the propitiation**. God gave Jesus Christ, the Son of God who was without defect, to put once for all on the altar of the cross was **the propitiation** and completed the way to forgive sins.

The Bible teaches as below,

Hebrews 7:27 He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself.

Hebrews 9:26 But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

Therefore, the cross of Christ means that Jesus Christ the Son of God took our place and received God's wrath for us. His cross refers to terrific sin and its horrible results.

Jesus Christ took our sin and was crucified instead of us (God's love). The cross of Christ shows God's righteousness and love together.

2) The Cross of Jesus

Therefore, the reason that Jesus Christ becomes our advocate stands on the fact that Jesus Christ the Son of God became **the propitiation** to God.

Hebrews records as below,

Hebrews 10:10 And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Yes, it is. God the Father sees us as the sanctified ones through the cross of Jesus Christ. How thankful! He sees us, who are imperfect and often commit sins, and accepts us as God's children through the cross of Christ. How blessed we are!

{Illustration}

A war makes many people miserable and unhappy. A war is breaking out between Ukraine and Russia. It is really a heartbreaking war, and many people become unhappy.

Japan once had an incorrect war and caused Asian countries and their people a lot of trouble. The war damaged many people, and they still feel the pain in their hearts even now.

I served at a certain church gathering in Los Angeles in America. The Lord blessed it and we had very blessed gathering. After the gathering, a woman invited me to her house. I was almost forced to go to her house. I didn't know why.

She was a Korean who has American citizenship. When I entered the living room, she pointed a photograph of a man on the wall and asked me, "Do you know who he is?" It was her father. She began to speak about him.

Her father was a good man and was a principal of an elementary school in Korea. In those days, Japan colonized Korea and forced worship at shrines. Her father who was a Christian resolutely refused it. Then, Japanese soldiers came and beat him hard with a stick and his arm was nearly broken.

After the war ended, her father died and was buried. Later, her father's remains were dug up to move to another place. She saw that the thickness of her father's arm bones was different. She realized the reason that her father was beaten so hard that the thickness of his arm bones was different.

I heard her story like this. She said, "I could not forgive the Japanese people for more than 30 years even though they apologized many times. However, God clearly spoke to me today. **'Forgive them.'**" The Holy Spirit really spoke to her.

She repented and prayed with tears. She said, "I forgive the Japanese people." I could not stop the tears. It was an unforgettable experience in my life.

It is very difficult to forgive a nation's mistake and man's mistake. However, the Holy Spirit helped her to forgive.

My friends, we did unforgivable mistakes before God. However, God forgave our sins through Jesus Christ who became **the propitiation** and God now sees us as the sanctified ones.

Hebrews 10:10 And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

What an amazing forgiveness and God's grace!

John continues that **the propitiation** of Jesus has power over all people of the world who believe in Him.

2:2 2:2 He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

Conclusion

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The Lord spoke to us today. Let us give thanks to Him.

John the apostle called us **my little children** in the beginning of Chapter. It was John's calling with deep love. It was to his spiritual children.

Then, what did he speak to them?

2:1 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

Let us remember today the following two points,

- 1 . So that you may not sin.**
- 2 . If anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.**

We were made the children of God through the cross of Jesus and sanctified. It was because Jesus Christ became **the propitiation** for our sins.

John said,

1 John 4:10 In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

How can we respond to the Almighty God this morning?

* God bless you !