

June 5, 2022

KIBC Sunday Worship Service

Message by Pastor Teiichiro Kuroda

Title of the Message: “Keeping the Boundary”
—Living by Self-Examination—

Text: 1 John 2:18~21

1 John 2:18 Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore, we know that it is the last hour.

2:19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us.

2:20 But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all have knowledge.

2:21 I write to you, not because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and because no lie is of the truth.

Introduction

Good morning, everyone!

Our life is made up of a length of **time**. However, the single word **time** covers various meanings. In one sense, it can mean the **time** of one’s personal life. For some, it is **time** to start school this year. For others, it is **time** to start working. For another, it is **time** to start a married life. For some others, it is **time** to build their own house.

There is **time** in a company and the field of politics. For example, January 24th was **time** when Russian army invaded Ukraine. It must be remembered by the world and history.

At first, they thought the war would be finished in about a week. However, it is not done yet even though three months have passed since the war started. Many casualties occurred and people are still under hardship.

NATO became more cohesive due to the Russian army's invasion of Ukraine. On top of that, Finland and Sweden will apply for membership of NATO. It cannot be denied that the ambition of President Putin backfired on him.

My friends, the recent news like this is shown through mass communication. We live in both our personal **time** and **time** of various events of the world. We are more or less fascinated by times like this. However, there is another meaning of **time** that we will discuss.

It is shown by the word of Jesus as below,

Luke 21:34 "But watch yourselves lest your hearts be weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and cares of this life, and that day come upon you suddenly like a trap.

It is ⇒ **God's time**.

The Bible teaches that we should keep in mind what time it is in the whole of God's master plan.

Let us study the precious time of God from today's text according to the following two points.

Main Points

1. God's Time

1) The most precious **time**

John the elder and author of the epistle said as below,

1 John 2:18 Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore, we know that it is the last hour.

When we read the Bible, we should understand what **time** it is in God's whole plan. God established His master plan from the **time** He created the heavens and the earth to when the new heavens and earth are created, which will be fulfilled by the Second Coming of Christ.

God makes **time** goes on by His plan. **Time** does not pass meaninglessly. It does not travel back and forth on the same track. Yes, it goes following to God's plan. **Time** goes forward to the goal that God planed.

Then, what time is it **now** in God's **time** today?

John said, "**It is the last hour.**" **The last hour** means **the end**. It means the time that God's whole master plan is approaching its final stage.

2) The Last Days

The New Testament interprets '**the last days**' in two meanings as below.

① It means a whole time period from the birth of Jesus Christ to His Second Coming. It is called the New Testament period and the church period.

The Bible records about '**the last days**' as below,

Acts 17 "And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,

and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.

Hebrews 1:1 Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets,

1:2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.

Now we live **in the last days**. God has fulfilled His plan. All that is left is to wait for the Second Coming of Christ.

② The other meaning of '**the last days**' is the time that is very close to His Second Coming during **the whole time period** of God's master plan. It is no surprising that Christ can come at any given time

Romans 13:11 Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed.

2 Timothy 3:1 But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty.

My friends, John the elder writes of '**the last days**' in the second meaning. And today, in the last days, is where we live.

Then, how do we come to understand that we are living in **the last days**?

The Bible records the signs of **the last days** as the following.

2. The Signs of the Last Days

1 John 2:18 Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore, we know that it is the last hour.

In those days (approximately 2000 years ago), people heard that the antichrist was coming, and that unpleasant events would take place.

Jesus repeatedly foretold about it.

Luke 21:7 And they asked him, “Teacher, when will these things be, and what will be the sign when these things are about to take place?”

21:8 And he said, “See that you are not led astray. For many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am he!’ and, ‘The time is at hand!’ Do not go after them.

21:9 And when you hear of wars and tumults, do not be terrified, for these things must first take place, but the end will not be at once.”

21:10 Then he said to them, “Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.

21:11 There will be great earthquakes, and in various places famines and pestilences. And there will be terrors and great signs from heaven.

Paul the apostle said that **the man of lawless** would be revealed before the Second Coming of Christ as below,

2 Thessalonians 2:3 Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction,

Many antichrists have come already. We understand that **the last days** have come by the sign of antichrists. **The last days** continue from the epistle of John to today and it would not be surprising if Christ comes again today.

1) Antichrists

2:19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that they were not of us

John said that the antichrist firstly came out from church. **The antichrist** goes against Christ. They **were in church** but their true natures did not draw people’s attention. It is because of the imperfections of the church of earth. They **were not of us from the beginning.**

There were people whose confession of faith is different in churches. They tried to take over the church. John said that they could not become the members of God's family even though they had an intimate human relationship.

John said, "**But they went out, that they were not of us.**"

They needed to be exposed. The light and the darkness are clearly separated in **the last days**.

{Illustration}

When I watch YouTube, I am surprised by the number of people who profess to be a prophet. They send messages every day to tens of thousands of people that **they heard the voice of God** and that **the Holy Spirit taught them**.

They always seriously argue, "**This is the word of God.**" Recently, they sent concrete messages about the Covid-19 vaccinations. They openly insist that **they are the word of God**.

They say that they are continually monitored after they get vaccinated, because a microchip is implanted in their bodies. On the other hand, they say that vaccination is applicable to **the sign of the beast** in Revelation and those who get vaccinated fall into hell.

Like this, there are people who accepted the prophecies as from God over the world and refused to have the vaccination. In America, approximately 45,000,000 people express their intention of not to have vaccination. Of course, some of them decided not to get vaccinated due to worrying about the side effects. On top of that, it is said that there are quite a few people who refuse for religious reasons.

2) The ability to distinguish **antichrist**

John the elder says that true Christians have the ability to distinguish the **antichrist**.

① **They have the Holy Spirit**

2:20 But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all have knowledge.

The Holy Spirit is the Helper. The Spirit of the living God helps and teaches the truth. Therefore, it is very important to walk with the Holy Spirit.

② **They know the truth**

2:21 I write to you, not because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and because no lie is of the truth.

Then, how can we know the truth?

Jesus said, **“I am the way, and the truth, and the life.”** (John 14:6) We need to know Jesus Christ Himself and walk with Him. Then, we are able to discern the real thing. The Holy Spirit helps us to do so.

How do you think? Do we have the ability to distinguish?

Jesus said,

Matthew 7:13 “Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many.

The narrow gate is attacked because of its narrowness.

The way of life between people in this world and the children of God is quite different. How much ability to distinguish ourselves do we have? Can we as those who live in **the last days** distinguish the antichrist?

Can we really define the boundary between antichrist and Christ? Is our confession in faith merely a meaningless row of words?

We live under the war of the last days, where the antichrist (the power of evil) actively works, and **the kingdom of God works against it.**

We should firmly keep the boundary so that we should not be swayed away by the world. The tidal current of the world is so rapid and strong.

Don't you think that we need to do a self-examination?

Conclusion

Title of the Message: “Keeping the Boundary”

—Living by Self-Examination—

The Lord spoke to us today.

Let us conclude today's sermon with the following Scripture.

2:20 But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all have knowledge.

* God bless you!