

July 17, 2022

KIBC Sunday Worship Service

Message by Pastor Teiichiro Kuroda

Title of the Message: "God Is Love"
— The Privilege —

Text: 1John 3:1,2

3:1 See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

3:2 Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.

Introduction

Good morning, everyone!

We have studied the Scripture through the sermons entitled Abide in the Truth and Abide in Christ. In the days of the early church, the church of Christ and Christians were severely attacked from the inside and outside. On top of that, antichrists appeared, and they were thrown into confusion.

However, John the author of the epistle taught that those who trusted in Christ Jesus won the complete victory even though they were under difficult circumstances.

The secret of becoming the complete winner is hidden in the following Scripture.

2:28 And now, little children, abide in him, so that when he appears we may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his coming.

Those who abide in Jesus Christ, who is the truth, receive the blessing of the Lord. We have studied the importance of abiding, as with the connection of the vine and the branches by **the parable of the vine**.

We continue studying Chapter 3 today. In a word, the content of the chapter is summarized by the phrase, **God is light**. John teaches that those who believe Jesus

as Christ (the Savior) are the real children of God. John teaches the signs of the children of God throughout the chapter.

Let us study the first two verses today.

Main Points

1. See What Kind of Love!

3:1 See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

The verse above begins with the phrase, “**See what kind of love.**”

First of all, John says that we should take notice of the love that God has given to us.

Our way of life and everyday lives are based on the fact of love. The fact of love is that God gave it first, and that love changed us.

However, it is hard to realize the fact because we are sinners even though we have faith. We have no peace until we realize God’s love.

1) Then, why can’t we realize God’s love?

Let us consider the reasons. Why are our hearts troubled? Why do we feel uneasy? Why are we worried? We read the Bible for long periods of time and go to church for many years. Why can’t we realize God’s love? There are many possible reasons.

For example:

- ① The Gospel that we believe in faith is not based on our feelings. It should be based on the truth of God’s love.
- ② We sometimes do not realize how great God is. We try to consider Him intelligently within our limitations. We hardly understand Him. Don’t we think of God according to our own acceptable level? Of course, you don’t understand Him. Don’t you imagine God as your own size?
- ③ We don’t have simple faith.

Compared to children, it is difficult for adults to accept God’s word as it is. There are many people who are full of malicious intent in our society. We cannot say that we are in a good environment. We cannot live with a sincere mind, rather we have a defensive attitude.

There may be other various reasons. However, my friends, **let us consider why we do not realize God’s love. The reason is that we lack faith, don’t we?**

The opposite word of faith is unfaithfulness. If we solve our unfaithfulness through our faith, it is possible to realize God Himself.

My friends, let us remember the disciples who were on the lake. Jesus was on the boat and then suddenly a furious squall attacked them. When the boat was tossing like a leaf, how were disciples?

Mark 4:38 But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. And they woke him and said to him, “Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?”

4:39 And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, “Peace! Be still!” And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

4:40 He said to them, “Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?” him?

We cannot realize God without faith. Even the disciples were like that.

John records again in the following verse 2, **“We are God’s children now.”**

2) We Are God’s Children Now

3:2 Beloved, we are God’s children now,

From what moment do we become God’s children?

John records in his gospel as below,

1:12 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,

The time when we accepted Jesus and believed in Him. At that very moment we became **children of God** by His grace. It is a gift from God. Then, what status do we receive, who became God’s children?

3) The children of God become Heirs of the Kingdom of God

The Epistle to the Romans records as below,

8:17 and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

The heirs of God have a noble status that is beyond of our imagination. We are given such a status. On the contrary, those who do not know God are children of wrath by nature.

Paul records in the Epistle to the Ephesians as below,

2:3 among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath,

like the rest of mankind.

Christians are not chosen because they are good. It is given only by God's grace. It is God's gift. Firstly, we should begin to know God to receive the gift, who gives the gift to us. We understand God by daily fellowship with God (devotion time is very important.)

Then, what status do they have, those who became God's children by His grace?

Let us study the second point.

2. The Privilege that is Given by God's Love

3:2 Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.

1) We shall be like Christ

Being like Him means **as He is**. We are made like Christ mentally and physically. Our sins are already forgiven but we have still uncleanness in our hearts.

However, when Christ appears we will be completely cleansed. And our bodies will be transformed to be like His glorious bodies.

Philippians 3:21 who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

It will happen when Jesus Christ comes again. And then, our bodies will be changed into glorious bodies. It will occur in future. How will it occur? Let us think about what happen in future.

2) The Certain Future by God's Plan

① Jesus in Glory

Matthew 17:1 And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves.

17:2 And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light.

17: 4 And Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah."

17:5 He was still speaking when, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him."

② Jesus in Majesty

Revelation 1:16 In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength.

1:17 When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, "Fear not, I am the first and the last,

1:18 and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.

③ We come to know Jesus face to face

1 Corinthians 3:12 For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.

④ Jesus who follows God's plan

Romans 8:29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers

⑤ Being transformed into the same image of Jesus

2 Corinthians 3:18 And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

My friends, we are given the blessed word as below,

3:2 but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.

The verse above teaches the assured future of the children of God. It is privilege that is given to those who have faith in Christ.

{Illustration}

More than ten years ago, there was a certain NHK TV program where a few elderly people were invited to talk freely to record living dialects. An overwhelming majority of the content of the conversations were the stories about them: they had

a hard time when they were younger, or how young people nowadays lack hardships.

On top of that, they eagerly repeated the same stories about their personal lives. The elderly people seem to be not much different throughout the ages.

What things do we see and what things do we speak? Are we only interested in the past? On the contrary, do we realize God's love and talk about the promised future in God?

It is important to talk about the things in the past, but it is also important to talk about the secure future. God prepares for us His gift in future. Christians who are given His love will receive His gift. It is the privilege of Christians.

Conclusion

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The Lord spoke to us through the word of God this morning.

John said,

3:1 See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

Those who trust in Christ will become like Him. There is a saying we have so much in common. They always spend time together, they naturally become similar. The weak should be affected by the strong.

The Bible teaches that those who are in Christ will have the absolute future. It is the privilege that is given in love.

3:2 Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.

* God bless you!