

October 23, 2022

KIBC Sunday Worship Service (Open Church Worship)

Message by Pastor Teiichiro Kuroda

Title of the Message: "Let Us Live with Hope"

—Changing Our Way of Thinking—

Text: Romans 15:13

**15:13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.**

#### Introduction

Good morning, everyone!

**{Illustration} Our Life is Like a Marathon Runner.**

We are really surprised at the refined performance of the actors. For example, when the now retired great actress, Haruko Sugimura, performed "Running," she acted according to the age of a role. She said, "A young man runs pushing up his chin. Then, he runs pushing his chest out as he grows older and finally, he runs with his waist." The runners of the Hakone-Ekiden (a long-distance road relay) are teens and 20s, so they probably run pushing out their chests.

**By the way, what kind of runners are we? The important thing when we run is to set goals.**

The Bible teaches us how to run as below,

**Romans 15:13: May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.**

The verse records the word *hope*.

Hope: "elpis" in Greek

⇒ The word "Elpis (hope)" in the days of the New Testament is **a feeling that springs up due to the satisfaction of achieving future goals.**

It is the joy when someone is convinced that they will receive something in future even if they do not get it yet.

Therefore, hope (elpis) in the Bible means joy and **expectation**. Christians receive

it through faith. God wants you to receive the true **joy** and **the expectation** in your life.

My friends, we are able to get this joy. The God of hope gives us joy and expectation. Then, how can we get it from the God?  
Let us study the following two points today.

### Main Points

## 1 . **Changing Our Way of Thinking**

### 1 ) **Our Viewpoint**

How do you lead your life every day? Let's look at our society. We have heard too much bad news lately: injustice, bribery, abuse, bullying, jealousy, violence, murder, etc. There are many sorrowful happenings around us. Why are there so many unhappy things?

The more we hear sad and depressing stories, the more we come to speak negative things. How about our lives? Don't we only look at one side of life?

#### **{Illustration} When She Looks at the Back Side Only**

**There was a story in America. A certain pastor visited a woman who was going through difficulty. The pastor tried to encourage her, but he couldn't. She seemed to have troubles and pain in her heart.**

**Then, the pastor took her embroidered material and said, "Look, the embroidery threads here are tangled up. Why did you do such a work? Isn't it a waste of time?" She turned the piece inside out and said, "Pastor, you saw the back side. Look, it is the right side." He saw there the amazing embroidery work.**

**The pastor said, "Yes, this is the right side! And you also see your suffering from the back side. You should turn it inside out, that is to see the right side, God's side. You would understand that God works on you, so that your life will be God's wonderful work. The important thing is to see things from the viewpoint of God. You should trust in God who is a perfect artist."**

My friends, don't we see our lives from the back side? We should change our point

of view ⇒ Change our way of thinking (important) ⇒ We should look our lives from the viewpoint of God.

**Acts 17:28: for “In him we live and move and have our being”; as even some of your own poets have said, “For we are indeed his offspring.”**

## **2) The Viewpoint of God the Creator**

The viewpoint of God is quite different. The Bible teaches that there is one God who created the heavens and the earth. On top of that, He created things as His masterpieces. Let us look at His created beings.

**Plants** : How mysterious they are! A small seed puts forth buds and makes flowers bloom and heals our hearts. There are countless kinds of plants in this world.

**Fruits** : Japan is the fruit kingdom. When the time comes, the various trees bear wonderful fruits.

**River fish** : A tiny roe hatches, grows and becomes a massive fish. A salmon is said to always swim back to its original river.

**Human beings** : A tiny, fertilized egg grows (if it is normal one) in mother’s womb and is born. On top of that, it is surprisingly created in an elaborate way. It is quite mysterious.

- ① The process of growing of children is very miraculous. At a certain time, growth hormone is secreted, and they grow so fast within a few months. On top of that, their mental state changes and they become adults.
- ② Autoimmunity becomes a popular topic under the coronavirus pandemic. When the power of autoimmunity surpasses the virus, man overcomes sickness. How strange and it is beyond our understanding. There is nothing more mysterious than human bodies.

We all are created by God. We are not made by human beings. It is very important to change our viewpoint.

God has purposes of each of His created people. Yes, He gives us His own purposes. However, if we look only at troubles, unhappiness, sad things, our hearts are gradually controlled by them. Therefore, you should change your ideas and thoughts.

⇒ You should look at the positive things (Reading the Bible)

### 3) The Viewpoint of the God of Hope

The Bible teaches.

**Romans 15:13: May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.**

The Bible teaches that God is **the God of hope**. Joy and **expectation** are hidden in His hope.

Joy is the gift from God. When we have troubles with a human relationship, we don't want to think it our own fault, or rather, we try to shift the responsibility to someone else. However, if we change ourselves first, our human relationship becomes better.

Expectation is also like that. It is the positive expectation. That is, that we expect something good will occur, because God is the good God.

Then, what should we do to live in hope?

⇒ We should **change our way of thinking**.

Let us study another important thing.

## 2 . Knowing the Value of Ourselves

### 1 ) Man Is Valuable Being.

We understand that the true value of human beings lies not so much in their property, educational background, reputation, status and so on. Then, what is the true value of human beings?

**{Illustration} "You Are Specially Created."**

**Winter is coming soon. According to the weather forecast, a cold wave is coming this winter. If a major cold wave comes, each place will be hit by heavy snow and the public transportation will be stopped and it would have various effects on our society.**

**The process of forming snow is very interesting. Clouds in the sky contain moisture vapor. When the atmospheric temperature is low, ice crystals are formed that are called frazil crystals. The frazil crystals are not formed from liquid water. They are mainly sublimated directly from water vapor. The first**

frazil crystal in the cloud seems to be very small less than 0.01mm in diameter. The fine water drops are floating around the fine frazil crystals. These water drops sublimate and cling around the frazil crystals. In this way, the frazil crystals grow.

In addition, the formation of crystals seems to be mainly decided in the process of sublimation. They are formed various shapes according to various conditions like air temperature and wind and so on. A snowflake is made of frazil crystals. It is about from 0.5mm to 10mm. (Some snowflakes form big ones.)

By the way, there was a scientist who made a special study of the snow crystals. Surprisingly, he took more than 2000 pictures of the snow crystals under the microscope. He found that each snow crystal geometrically formed a perfect shape. And none of them has the same shape. God designed each snow crystal quite different.

In the same way, God created human beings as unique. God is the artist. We are His masterpieces, precious works! Let us think about us. There's no other person in the world who is the same as you.

The work of high artistic quality ⇒ It is you.

Therefore, you are precious and valuable. It is you whom God looks towards in His viewpoint. It is very important way of thinking.

## 2) A Person Whom God Expects

Then, what should we need to do? ⇒ We should trust in God the Creator.

### {Illustration}

Suppose God is on top of a mountain. He is almighty and can clear every problem. It is obvious at a glance, and He can see through anything. And He knows the best way to reach the mountain top.

You begin to climb up the mountain and you will soon meet the One on the mountain top. As we are approaching the goal,

- ① We are encouraged.
- ② We come to have power.

② **We are given peace.**

⇒ **They are the senses of hope (elpis)**

**Romans 15:13: May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.**

The Bible records that God's promise is **absolutely true**. The most important promise is the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Bible has prophecies that the Messiah would come to the world, die on the cross and rise again on the third day. His resurrection gives the joy of **expectation** to those who believe in the Word of God. They can receive it only in faith.

**Then, what should we do?** ⇒ We should remove sin (our condition).

God sent Jesus Christ to this world. He made Jesus to be crucified and become an extraordinary sacrifice. God judged the One who was innocent. He made Jesus take our place.

God loves you that much. God wants you to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. God wants you to live with **hope**.

What do you think about today's message? I encourage you to become sincere before God and repent your sin, so that you will live in **the true hope** to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. God prepares the amazing way of salvation for you. You are saved if you believe that Jesus' death on the cross is for your salvation.

**1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.**

**1:8 If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.**

**1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

Jesus came to this world for you and faithfully walked to the path of the cross and gives hope to your life. He loves you and desires that you are walking toward the Kingdom of Heaven.

What do you think is the most important thing for you?

## Conclusion

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—Changing Our Way of Thinking—

The Lord spoke to us this morning. How should we live lives where we only get to live once? Do we have hope in our lives?

The God of hope (elpis) is followed by **joy** and **expectation**.

Then, what should we do?

### 1 . **Change our way of thinking**

It is important to see our lives from the right side, not the back side. It is like the artificial **embroidery work**. (Reading the Bible)

### 2 . **Having a true sense of value**

God is the artist. He created you who are His masterpiece. Let us look up to God and live lives with **the hope** to enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

\* God bless you!