

June 4, 2023

KIBC Sunday Worship Service

Message by Pastor Teiichiro Kuroda

Title of the Message: "A Stern Warning"

—Living Life in the True Love—

Text:2 John 1:7~11

1:7 For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist.

1:8 Watch yourselves, so that you may not lose what we have worked for, but may win a full reward.

1:9 Everyone who goes on ahead and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God. Whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son.

1:10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house or give him any greeting,

1:11 for whoever greets him takes part in his wicked works.

Introduction

Good morning, everyone.

Last time, we studied about **the encouragement to love one another.**

We, as human beings, were taught the importance of loving one another. However, we also studied that human love changes with passing time. **The true love** that God gives us never changes.

Paul the apostle said as below,

1 Corinthians 13:1 If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

13:2 And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

The love that the Bible teaches is the love (*agape* love) that Jesus Christ showed. It is a love that is beyond human knowledge. It forgives and gives endlessly.

John the apostle taught the saints as below,

2 John 1:6 And this is love, that we walk according to his commandments; this is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, so that you should walk in it.

John wrote the **encouragement to love one another** and then followed it with a stern warning. That is today's text (2 John 1: 7-11).

Then, **why** did he write to them these **words of stern warning**?

Let us think about it together.

Main Points

1. True Love Rejoices in the Truth

Firstly, the most important thing is that we must not be separated from the love of God.

The Bible teaches the true love as below,

1 Corinthians 13:6 it does not rejoice at wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth.

There is no injustice in God's **true love**. There is no defilement.

It is completely pure love. However, the love that we humans have is unfortunately only a calculated love, the love that belongs to our flesh.

However, the love that we saints have received from God is true love. It is truth itself, without injustice. Jesus said, "**I am the truth.**" I believe that where the love of Jesus is revealed in us, the love of truth is revealed, and that is shown in walk of the saints.

Jesus Christ is greatly revealed in the lives of the saints.

It is the ardent desire of John, the aged Apostle, and above all, it is his desire for the saints of God.

{Illustration}

One of my favorite German expressions is, "*Jesus ist im meinen Leben groß geworden.*" (Jesus came up big in my life.)

It means that the love of Jesus covers all my insufficiencies, and His love is revealed in me. It also derives from the meaning of "taught and learned".

The true Christians in Europe taught me about the depth of faith, where the gospel of Christ first arrived. European Christianity has a history of 2,000 years, not only 100 or 200 years. Of course, in that long history of Christianity, the Church and the saints have committed many mistakes and sins. It is true and the fact that there have been negative aspects is undeniable.

On the other hand, it is also true that there were many positive aspects. Looking the history of Christianity in Europe, we come to know that there were many saints who feared God and lived faithfully. They were people who did not rejoice in injustice, but lived righteously by the faith that was kindled by the love of Christ and the love of truth.

The lives of the saints who lived in true love certainly became a legacy to us in future generations.

We should first remember the true love.

1 Corinthians 13:6 it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth.

2. Christ's Gospel of Truth

In many cases, people in the world may think that Christians are tolerant and accept everything willingly. However, John cried out as if he broke down such a soft image of Christians.

2 John 1:7~11

1:7For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist.

1:8Watch yourselves, so that you may not lose what we have worked for, but may win a full reward.

Why did John give such a stern warning to them?

Let us study the reason why John gave the stern warning.

1) Gnosticism (Heresy)

The epistle was written because Gnosticism, a dangerous and alarming teaching at the time, had entered the Christian church. Gnosticism was an extreme dualism in which spirit was good and material existence was evil.

From this viewpoint, it is logical that God, who is spirit, could not have taken a material body and been born on earth.

Therefore, Gnosticism claimed that Jesus in human form could not possibly be God. John writes as below,

1:7 For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist.

Heresy deceives people and is of the antichrist. Heresy is the work of evil that tries to lead people away from the love of truth, the love of agape, and away from the God of truth.

Paul taught as below,

Galatians 1:7 not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ.

1:8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed.

1:9 As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed.

2) Heresy Today

Even today, there are false teachings (heresies) that lead the saints away from **true love** and turn them into antichrists. Yes, it is certain that heresy has shown up itself in different forms throughout the ages.

① The big three in Japanese heresy

- Former Unification Church (Family Federation for World Peace and Unification)
- Jehovah's Witnesses (Monominotow Bible and Book Church)
- Mormonism (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints)

It is very dangerous because a large number of people have been brainwashed by false teachings. I realize the horror of brainwashing. I don't have time to go into the depths of it today. But, as I have mentioned, the horror and danger of brainwashing is real today.

{Illustration}

It is a fact that the mother of the suspect in the murder of former Prime Minister Abe was brainwashed. They never leave the organization.

② Characteristics of the heresy

1) They have their own scripture in addition to the Bible, the Word of God. Or it has its own Bible, which it challenges with perversions and additions.

2) Each of them has its own messianic guru.

And they are characterized by obedience to the guru.

John records such heresies as below,

2 John

1:10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house or give him any greeting,

1:11 for whoever greets him takes part in his wicked works..

Then, how should the saints live in a society where heresy is rampant?

3) Abiding in the Teaching of Christ

1:9 Everyone who goes on ahead and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God. Whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son.

In short, I believe that abiding in the teaching of Christ is putting on Christ.

Romans 13:14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

It is to tightly clothe oneself with Jesus Christ. There is the secret that the saints are kept safe. And what is even more wonderful, the glory of the Lord Jesus is revealed.

“Jesus ist im meinen Leben groß geworden“ (Jesus came up big in my life.)

Now, we should remember that we may hate heretical teachings, but we must love those who have fallen into heresy, because they also are to be partakers of Christ's salvation.

Conclusion

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—Living Life in the True Love—

John the apostle, realizing that his life was short, wrote in the second epistle of John. He wrote about the importance of **living in true love**.

There are still forces of evil in society that interpret the Bible differently and try to lead us into heresy.

How we the saints should live our lives?

Colossians 3:9... you have put off the old self with its practices

3:10 and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.

* God bless you!