

April 7, 2024

KIBC Sunday Worship Service by Pastor Teiichiro KURODA

Title of the message: "Be Prepared"

-The Secret to a Winning Life-

Text: II Timothy 4:2

Introduction

• Good morning!

• Japan is an earthquake-prone country, but no one knows when a natural disaster will strike. The important thing is to be "prepared" for disasters.

The other day on TV, the president of an elevator company explained what he would do if he were in an elevator during an earthquake. The person's answer was, "First press all the buttons on all the floors. Then on the floor where it stops, exit the elevator and go outside."

• In the unlikely event that people are trapped inside, he suggested, they should use the emergency phone to call the intercom so they can be rescued. He also instructed that they should open the emergency rescue box (which are becoming more and more common these days) in the elevator and wait for help. As the saying goes, "Better to be safe than sorry." (Save it for a rainy day.)

• Regarding the importance of being prepared, the apostle Paul said the following words to his beloved disciple Timothy.

[II Timothy 4:2 Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.](#)

• Dear beloved brothers and sisters. What did Paul say about being prepared? When someone says "Get it together," I think I am being scolded, and I feel like I have to do my best.

(※The translation for "Be prepared" in the Japanese Bible is "Get it together.")

• The original meaning, however, is "be involved," "be encouraged," and "be prepared."

What Paul meant in this context ⇒ Be diligent to preach the Word of God. This is what it means. He then stated the following conditions.

- ① At all times (be prepared in season and out of season)
- ② With great patience

• This scripture, II Timothy 4:2, is the scripture given to Kitahama Church for the current fiscal year (2024).

• So why did Paul encourage Timothy to do this? There are 2 points.

Main Points

1. Reasons for Proclaiming God's Word

1. The Word of God Leads People to Salvation.

• The Bible says:

Mark 8:36 What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?

• The Bible teaches us about the preciousness of life. Life is the realm where the Creator God is in control. God the Creator rules. We cannot create life. Life is given to the body as a dwelling. The most important thing for human beings is, after all, life.

Therefore, if we lose our life, we gain nothing.

• In recent years, there have been incidents of disregard for life. This disrespect for life occurs whether people live in Japan or other countries. In Ukraine and Israel today, murderous acts of war have repeatedly occurred. It is very heartbreaking.

• But human life is not merely life. We all have a soul. The soul lives even if the body is destroyed. The Bible says this:

Ecclesiastes 3:11 He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end.

• Eternity is infinite and has no limit. There is only one Creator God who is eternal.

This verse means that the human heart (soul) is timeless and exists forever. Therefore, within the heart is the thought of God, who is eternal.

- No matter how much people deny God, they are never satisfied. This is because humans have “spiritual needs.” And those needs can only be met by God. The Bible tells us that.

Acts 4:12 Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.”

- The Bible is a book that says “Salvation is found in no one else” - Christ Jesus - and points us to the One who saves us. The Word of God leads us to God.

- Why do we preach the Word?

2) The Word of God Makes People Spiritually Alive.

Let’s consider the story of the Samaritan woman who came to draw water at Jacob’s well. In order to avoid being seen, the woman was drawing water in the harsh direct sunlight of midday. She was quickly transformed by the words of Jesus. Jesus said:

John 4:13 Jesus answered, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again,
 John 4:14 but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”
 John 4:15 The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water so that I won’t get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water.”

After this, the Samaritan woman was made alive, transformed into a person who accepted the Words of Jesus. There were two main types of people who encountered Jesus Christ.

- ① The first were those who opposed Jesus. (Religious and social leaders such as Pharisees and scribes)
- ② The others were those who approached and accepted Jesus with admiration. (The weak, the sick, the guilty, etc.)

•How about us? To accept the Word of God, we must have a humble heart. Without a pure heart, it is difficult to accept the Word of God. Remember, the Word of God saves lives. We can live by the Word of God.

•So why do we preach the Word?

3) There will be a day when people stand before God

|| Timothy 4:1 In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge:

|| Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

•Why is the day coming when we will stand before God?

⇒Because man is a creature of God.

- ① God is holy and does not turn a blind eye to evil
- ② The Kingdom of Heaven is a place only for holy people.

|| Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

•Therefore, a day is coming soon when each person will stand before God.

•This is an unreasonable world. It is a world where the unjust prosper and evil rages.

[Illustration]

The issue of kickbacks (slush funds) for Diet members is a major problem in the current Diet session. High-ranking ministers, politicians, and national leaders have been found to have committed fraud. Many unconvinced citizens are heartbroken.

•Dear beloved brothers and sisters, the list is endless. It is an unreasonable society. God is being patient and wants us to turn our eyes to Him. Why do we need to preach the Word?

- Because time is limited. We will not live (in this current world) forever. Eventually, there is coming a day when we will all, each and every person, stand before God. And we each will be judged. Paul said the following at the beginning of his letter to II Timothy.

4:1 In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge:

- The Bible thus encourages us to "Do it well (Be prepared)" for three reasons.

2. Do it Well (Be Prepared)

4:2 Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.

- Several important points can be found in this scripture.

1. With Great Patience

- We have been proclaiming the Word to our family and friends for many years but there are those who still do not understand God. I know some of you have been waiting for a long time and your hearts are starting to grow weary. Paul emphasized the importance of proclaiming "With Great Patience."

- Dear beloved brothers and sisters, people are interested in what interests them, what they want to know, and what will benefit them. As such, they are not open to God's Word. Paul encouraged people to be prepared "In season and out of season" to proclaim God's Word. It is God's territory to open people's hearts so they can believe in Him. Our job is to share God's Word to others.

2. Teaching, Rebuking, Correcting and Training in Righteousness

- The Bible was written by God

II Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness,

- The Bible is a book written under the inspiration of God (divine inspiration), the Spirit of God. In this verse He lists four useful characteristics of the Word of God.

- ① Teaching: How people are to live
- ② Rebuking: Giving "commandments" to innate sinners (God's love)
- ③ Correcting: Able to "correct" mistakes and failures.
- ④ Training in Righteousness: Leading and guiding people, nurturing

• Thus, the Word of God is the book of God that builds up people. This is made possible through a personal relationship with the Lord. A personal relationship with God begins by touching/encountering the One who Himself has personality. It's even been described as a kinship fellowship. Experiencing the presence of the living Lord builds us up.

Conclusions

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• God spoke to us this morning through the following passages.

4:2 Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.

• Why do we proclaim God's word?

1. The Word of God is the Book of God that saves souls.
2. The Word of God gives proper guidance for how to live.

II Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.

* God bless you!