

From the Pulpit of the Japanese Baptist Church of North Texas
July 10, 2016

By His Wounds

1 Peter 2:22-25

2:22 He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth.

2:23 When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.

2:24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

2:25 For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

1. Jesus Christ: Theme of the Bible

There is a candy shop called “Kintaro-ame honten” in Negishi, Taito-ku, Tokyo. The Kintaro-ame candy made at the store is famous as a Tokyo souvenir. It used to be sold at many candy shops when I was a kid. It is a long candy bar and when you break it, the face of Kintaro appears. Nowadays, not only Kintaro but other patterns are available, even Halloween’s.

The Bible is comprised of 66 books that were written at different places and times. There were many different books of history, songs, letters and prophecies. But the Bible has absolutely splendid unity, and the principal theme is Jesus Christ and every chapter of the Bible indicates Jesus Christ. Just as Kintaro-ame candy, Jesus Christ is described everywhere in the Bible.

Now, we are studying the teaching for servants. After this, teaching for wives and husbands follow. These chapters teach us moral and ethical issues as well as interpersonal relationships, but today's scripture emphasizes that the moral, ethics, or life-related teachings in the Bible are not just random examples to follow. The teaching is based on Jesus Christ and what he did for us. The Bible teaches us how we should be based on what Jesus Christ is and what we should do based on what Jesus Christ did for us.

For example, the Bible teaches us to forgive one another. But this does not mean we should tolerate other's mistakes or to be generous. As the Bible says in Ephesians 4:32, "Forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you" teaches us about the forgiveness of Christ, not of people. We forgive each other because we are already forgiven. By seeking the forgiveness of Christ, experiencing it, and living in the blessings, we can truly forgive one another like Christ.

The theme of the Bible is Jesus Christ. All the morals and ethics are based on Jesus Christ and that is different from the teachings of this world. If you are separated from Christ, you cannot understand the teaching of the Bible correctly. Moreover, you cannot put it into action. When we read the Bible and study, we should not overlook Jesus Christ described in the Bible.

2. Jesus Christ: Suffering Servant

Apostle Peter taught us the lessons for servants based on the salvation work of Jesus Christ. He showed them Jesus Christ, who suffered on the cross.

Peter said, "Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example,

so that you might follow in his steps.” (1 Peter 2:21) He said “Christ” but “Jesus.” It is very meaningful that Peter didn’t mention, “Jesus suffered” and intended to say, “Christ suffered.” If he tried to teach, that you must be patient because your sufferings are much smaller than Jesus’, he would have said, “Jesus suffered.” Peter phrased “Christ suffered” because he wanted to teach something else.

“Christ” is the word represents “Savior,” who was mentioned in the prophecy of the Bible and people awaited for Him very long time. The core purpose of the Savior who came to this world was to save the people from sins; but they didn’t know how this was achieved, even though the Bible told them already that Savior would be going to save them through sacrificing Himself, in the Old Testament. Suffering for death on behalf of sinners is “redemption” in the Bible. It means that the Savior sacrificed His life for someones who were sold because of sins, to buy them back. The Bible foresaw that the Savior Christ would be the Redeemer of sinners and would go through sufferings. So, when we say, “Christ suffered,” it doesn’t simply mean suffering, but implies the suffering for redeeming and saving us sinners.

Suffering of redemption that Christ went through is described in Isaiah 53:5-9 very well. It is called “Suffering Servant.” Today’s verse in 1 Peter 2:22-25 is identically matched together; we should compare them here.

Isaiah 53:9 Although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.

1 Peter 2:22 He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth.

Isaiah 53:7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not

his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.

1 Petr 2:23 When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.

1 Peter 53:5 But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed.

1 Peter 2:24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

Isaiah 53:6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned--every one--to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

1 Peter 2:25 For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Peter says that “Suffering Servant” in the Old Testament is Jesus Christ.

No one suffered like Jesus for any unreasonable causes ever, and no one experienced such painful suffering on the cross like He did. Our sufferings are surely smaller than His, but Peter doesn't speak about the scale of suffering, but teaches that Jesus' pain was “Suffering of Christ,” to redeem and save us. If you think that revenge through unreasonable mistreatment, or that you can likewise be unjust when your employer treat you wrong, those are all are very sinful thoughts. Peter taught the servants to act as redeemed and saved ones avoiding the sin, because Jesus Christ suffered for you to save from

sins. Remember for who and for what Jesus suffered when you suffer.

3. Jesus Christ: Lamb of God

Peter described Jesus Christ as a redeemer and the Suffering Servant and taught servants that they were redeemed and healed by this “Suffering of Christ”. These were big encouraging words for servants who were disregarded and suffered. And these words became the power of servants in the first century as well as people in these days. Past and present, this word has been filled with unfairness and injustice. You might be blamed and receive disadvantage even though it is not your fault. If you have not experience such things, you don’t know what to do when you face trouble unexpectedly. In this situation, you should look at Jesus Christ, his suffering. “Suffering of Christ” saves us from sins. When we understand that it is “Suffering of Redemption”, you can overcome it even you are suffering from the unfair event.

Jesus Christ instituted the “Lord’s Supper” in order that we shall keep remembering His death was the “Death of Redemption.” And Church has been keeping this. In the old days, Christians prayed and sang “Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us” when the bread and wine were prepared on the table in the Lord’s Supper. After the preparation, they prayed “Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, grant us peace.” We sing our Hymn No. 226 and it has this prayer.

O Lamb of God most holy! Who on the cross didst suffer,
And patient still and lowly, Yourself to scorn did offer;
Our sins by You were taken, Or hope had us forsaken:

Have mercy on us, Jesus!

O Lamb of God most holy! Who on the cross didst suffer,
And patient still and lowly, Yourself to scorn did offer;
Our sins by You were taken, Or hope had us forsaken:
Your peace be with us, Jesus!

The verse of this morning indicates “O Lamb of God most holy”. As it says “By his wounds you have been healed”, Savior Lord Jesus Christ heals us by his wounds. By the cross and the resurrection of Jesus Christ, we “have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.” There is no one who does not face problems. It is impossible to live our life without any kinds of wounds. We always have various problems and wounds inside. However, all the problems and wounds will be healed by Lord Jesus Christ, the “Wounded Healer”. For any kinds of problems, when we return to the Shepherd and Overseer, Jesus Christ, there is a solution in him. Let us see His “Mercy” and taste His “Peace” shown by the Lamb of God in the Lord’s Supper.

(Prayer)

Dear Father, please let us open our eyes and let us see Jesus Christ clearly shown in the Scripture and the Sacrament. Help us to seek the mercy and peace given by Him. In the name of Lord Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, Amen.