

Public Service at Surabaya - Sunday, March 11, 2007

We still confer around the epistle Jude, which consists only of one chapter and refers to the covering of badger skins, that is, the attention and protection of God towards the true Church as well as separation from the false one. Today the false still mingles with the true, as it were tares and wheat growing together in a field and the tares even seems to thrive more than the wheat. Nonetheless, God will someday separate them.

The signs of the true Church are written in Jude 1:3, 9, 20-25:

- Verse 3 about faith (contending earnestly for the faith)
- Verse 9 about hope
- Verse 20-25 about love

Thus, the true church has faith, hope, and God's love.

Jude 1:3

3 Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.

How to contend earnestly for the faith?

1. Through obedience by hearing and doing the word of God. The practiced word results in works of faith. (Please read the previous sermon – March 05, 2007)
2. Through the tested faith

Job 23:10

10 But He knows the way that I take; When He has tested me, I shall come forth as gold.

God allows our faith to be tested to have pure/spiritual gold, not to destroy us.

Below are significances of pure/spiritual gold:

- a. **To find the genuineness of our faith / to find the pure or tested faith**

1 Peter 1:5-7

5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

6 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials,

7 that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,

2 Peter 1:5-7

5 But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge,

6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness,

7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.

The pure or tested faith is the growing faith; meaning the more the faith is tested, the greater and purer it be.

Here is the growth of faith based on Tabernacle structure.

- steadfast/true faith by hearing by the word of God (Gate: <http://gptkk.org/gerbang-en.php>)
- virtue (Altar of Burnt Offering: <http://gptkk.org/mkb-en.php>)
The first expected virtue is repentance. It is a big mistake if we bring an offering without any repentance, for example money from stealing, because it is not a virtue.
- knowledge of God = baptism of water = to know first Jesus in death and resurrection (Laver: <http://gptkk.org/bejana-en.php>). This is the first knowledge of God.
- self-control (the Door: <http://gptkk.kemah-en.php>).
The fullness/anointing of Holy Spirit controls our flesh not to satisfy its lusts. Some people always do everything to get what they want, as they cannot control themselves. King Herod, for example, could take a wife of all girls whom he chose, but he married his brother's wife. He did everything to get the woman for he could not control himself.
- perseverance and godliness = patience in the three main services (Holy Place)
 1. General (Golden Candlestick: <http://gptkk.org/pelita-en.php>)
 2. Bible Study Service (Table of Shewbread: <http://gptkk.org/mrs-en.php>)
 3. Pray and Worship Service (Golden Altar of Incense: <http://gptkk.org/dupa-en.php>)
- love (Ark of Covenant: <http://gptkk.org/tabut-en.php>)

We should not marvel at trial although we have sincerely served and ministered God, as Job said, "When He has tested me, I shall

come forth as gold."

From the above description, there are seven stages of spiritual growth: from faith to love. The figure seven points to two good things:

- perfection; perfect faith comes through the tested faith.
- seven lamps of golden candlestick, which speak of light. Thus, if our faith is tested, we will have a lamp in our life.

What is a lamp for?

- **in house**

Matthew 5:15

15 "Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.

We probably do not have a refrigerator, radio, or even a bed, but must have a lamp to light darkness in the house, that is, darkness of basket and bed, which neither knowledge nor riches can work out, but only the light or growing faith.

- **Basket**

It refers to economy. Many marriages destroyed because of economy. The marriage looks so good when the economy is good but it broke when the economy became bad. None can settle such condition but the tested faith/growing faith with seven stages of spiritual growth as the lamp burning in household. We live from the tested faith/light in the difficult world that is like the desert on which is difficult to sow and reap. Besides, basket points to sins concerning eating and drinking that is to say being drunk, smoking, consuming illegal drugs, etc. Either husband or wife and children may commit such sins. Therefore, we must have the tested faith/growing faith that we have patience in committing three main services until the peak, i.e. love overcoming two kinds of darkness.

- **Bed**

It refers to sexual sins also marrying and giving in marriage. We must be careful facing free-sex between man and woman who are not legal spouse, homo-sex, and lesbian that happen all over the world. Only the tested faith/seven stages of spiritual growth as a burning lamp may fight against such sins.

- **for the body**

Matthew 6:22

22 "The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light

The more the faith is tested / grows up, the clearer the eye is to see and know Jesus to the perfect knowledge of Jesus the Heavenly Groom.

2 Peter 1:8

8 For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now it is important to have tested faith that we have spiritual growth as burning lamp in house to shine over darkness. Besides, the lamp is for the body that our eyes are clearer to see Jesus Heavenly Bridegroom.

Many Christians only know Jesus as the Physician. This is good, but soon after they are healed, they no longer need Him and forget all He has done. Instead of such knowledge, we should know Jesus as the Groom and the Head and we are His Bride/Body, that we need Him all the time – since the body cannot be separated from its head. Flowing from that, it is important to have growing faith with seven stages above as a lamp. So our eyes become clearer in the light.

By the faith being tested through possibly illness or in job/study, we should not be downhearted but able to see more clearly Jesus' amazing greatness to His being Heavenly Groom. Now the question is: how to know Jesus the Heavenly Groom? By understanding and believing in Bride Tidings. This is the meaning of "looking upon Jesus the Heavenly Groom."

Just to remind you: let us hold fast to the only true teaching word (Bride Tidings) and lest we be tossed to and fro and carried about with other teachings!

Here are the apparent matters of the tested faith:

- **2 Peter 1:9**

9 For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.

We walk in righteousness and holiness, being delivered from forgiven sins / not repeating sins. If we repeat sins, our faith will waver and even die.

- **2 Peter 1:10-11**

10 Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble;

11 for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

We become sure of our call and election, being faithful in the service and ministry to the consecration of the Bride (since we set our eyes on Jesus the Heavenly Groom). Now do not see others but let us introspect ourselves about our faith whether it is tested as pure gold/growing faith or not. The proof is evident if we live in righteousness and holiness, not repeating sins

God has forgiven but being free of them. Besides, we are firm in the calling and election, also faithful in consecration unto the consecration of Bride encouraged by love in our obedience, not by compulsion or worldly things. In such a manner, we have the tested faith as pure gold/growing faith with seven steps toward perfect faith in which we have lamp so that we will not fall.

The consecration of the Bride is consecration performed in nothing but love/obedience to result in a ticket into kingdom of heaven/New Jerusalem/city of Bride (verse 11).

- **heavenly riches**

Revelation 3:18a

18 "I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich;

Church of Laodiceans depends on worldly riches but the Lord counsel them to buy from Him gold refined in the fire, that they may be rich.

Riches of the world is measured by much money that men become covetous and misuse the money. Being bound by the worldly riches/money, one will become stingy and greedy. Now God is showing us that we live not by riches of the world.

Depending on the world, one will become stingy and greedy, also merry with sins concerning eating-drinking and sexuality. Thus, mistake in finance is a danger of which servants of God must beware. Do not use the money to serve in Sunday School for buying something else.

Luke 12:15, 19

15 And He said to them, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses."

19 'And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.'"

So is he whom the world says as rich man but not toward God although he will pull down his barns and build greater and be merry because of many goods laid up for many years. Now God emphasizes the measure of heavenly riches we have through the test of faith/growing faith as gold, not worldly riches. Do not have misunderstanding if we have a test according to His will because we will get spiritual gold/heavenly riches.

Luke 12:20-21

20 "But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?'

21 "So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

Thus, heavenly riches are measured not by much or less money, but how we share with others. This is to test the faith. For example, the Churches in Macedonia were in poverty and a great trial, but they could share. Such are rich people before God.

2 Corinthians 8:1-4

1 Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia:

2 that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality.

3 For I bear witness that according to their ability, yes, and beyond their ability, they were freely willing,

4 imploring us with much urgency that we would receive the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.

How did they do it?

1. They lived by faith, not money

Living by money, one will never give neither in poverty nor in riches. I am sad if there is a servant of God does not give, saying that it is because of small church in village. Do not be like that because such is not a reason but depends on what we live. Do not live by money.

2. They gave themselves to the Lord – so that it was not hard to give their money.

2 Corinthians 8:5

5 And not only as we had hoped, but they first gave themselves to the Lord, and then to us by the will of God.

Thus, the key to give is living by faith – not money – also giving whole life to God. In such condition, we can give although we are poor and in temptation.

We should do likewise firstly by giving God a tithe and special offering.

In short, we have growing faith that we do not repeat sins but ministering God seriously until we have the ministry of Bride. Then we have spiritual/heavenly riches through living by faith.

- **godly glory/characters**

2 Corinthians 4:16-17

16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.

17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,

The Ark of Covenant was made of acacia wood overlaid with gold inside and outside. Wood points to men and gold refers to godly character or the character of God, while the ark shows the Bride made of wood and overlaid with gold and the mercy seat is the Bridegroom. If wood (flesh and blood) is not overlaid with heavenly gold, they will not partake in the glory of God (1 Corinthians 15 - flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God). Therefore, they must be overlaid with gold.

1 Peter 3:3-4

*3 Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel—
4 rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.*

1 Peter 3 speaks of adornment of the Bride. As we suffer testing, we are being adorned with spiritual adornments (as if wood being overlaid with gold), that is:

- **gentle**

Being tested in sufferings, we must have gentleness so that God's purpose is fulfilled. You may ask why you have to suffer together with God. Because blood and flesh cannot enter the kingdom of God, seeing wood is not worthy in heavenly kingdom. It has to be overlaid with gold to become God's Bride like the wood can become the ark of covenant. We can have the gold of gentleness through sufferings. We study in school with tests. If we have bad marks, we fail and have to undergo the same test. Likewise, the sufferings will not stop before we have the gentleness (godly character) as follows:

1. willingness to accept the hard teaching word / the word which is sharper than any two-edged sword

If we can receive hard word even the harder one, we are already gentle. On the contrary, if we criticize it about the long time, the hard word, etc., the test will happen continuously until our heart becomes gentle to receive the hard teaching word. We have received gospel and now we must be gentle as the last process to become the ark of covenant. No other way but the teaching word can process us. It does not mean that gospel is not important because I will not be here without it. It is important to bring us to faith, tested faith. We have the heavenly kingdom and the last gold, i.e. gentleness to receive the Lord Himself in form of teaching word sharper than any two-edged sword, which will perfect us.

2. favor to accept the goodness and badness of the others. It is not easy to do.

For example, a husband makes quarrel with his wife because of envy about bigger salary his wife receives. Likewise, servants and sons of God feel so difficult to accept the goodness of the others such as God's use in preaching, playing musical instrument, or singing if there is no gentle heart. Let us learn to Jesus who is gentle to accept an unclean woman also others in their goodness. Toward others in goodness, we must follow his example. Besides, we must pray for those who are in badness, especially for husband/wife in marriage. Such is gold overlaying the inside of ark (gentleness).

- **quiet = able to restrain the tongue**

Tongue is rudder; so if we are able to restrain our tongue, we will berth at Peace Harbor. Jesus, for example, was quiet as being reproached. This is gold overlaying the inside of the ark. In short, restraining the tongue encourages us to speak good words only (not idle talk).

Our inward man is overlaid with gentleness and quietness, while the outward with obedience.

1 Peter 3:5-6

*5 For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands,
6 as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror.*

The outward layer of gold we can see directly is obedience as Sarah's obedience to Abraham, calling him Lord. Sarah obeyed him although he gave her to other man twice because he was afraid of being killed. Nevertheless, God pleaded her. In premarital lesson I say that a wife obeying his husband is following the example of Jesus who obeys Father God. I say to the husband to-be that he may not be cruel to his wife who is obedient for it means resisting Jesus. Thus, I suggest wives not to be afraid to obey their husbands because there is Jesus' example so if the husband is cruel, he will resist Jesus Himself. On the contrary, if there is no wife's obedience, there will be no Jesus in household and the husband will always be contrary to his wife. In such condition, she will have no strength to defeat his husband.

With gentleness, quietness, and obedience, there will be miracles. Sarah could bear a child although she had menopause because of the gold of gentleness, quietness, and obedience she had. What amazement!

Students of Lempin-el, you may face no way out in ministry. Just show the gold of gentleness, quietness, and obedience, not intelligence nor attorney, and God will work to open the door of miracle as He opened the door of Sarah's womb. Formerly, it was a reproach in Israel that a woman did not have any child although now many spouses in Holland do not want to have baby. The opened womb means problems are settled/reproach is removed also the opening of the gate of heaven.

If we want the gate of heaven is opened, we must be quiet and obedient like Sara. She remained obedient even if Abraham twice let her to be other men's wives. Seeing this, God did not close His eyes; He protected Sara and took away her reproach through Isaac, even opened her the gate of heaven.

Job 23:10-12

10 But He knows the way that I take; When He has tested me, I shall come forth as gold.

11 My foot has held fast to His steps; I have kept His way and not turned aside.

12 I have not departed from the commandment of His lips; I have treasured the words of His mouth More than my necessary food.

We walk in heaven, like we learn to Job whose body, soul, and spirit are tested until all his riches and sons even his wife who is one body/spirit with him leaved him and despised him. Nevertheless, Job had gold.

Verse 11 shows how we walk in heaven, that is, walking in righteousness and holiness, and having the heart as transparent glass - without bitterness, wickedness, and uncleanness (verse 12 "I have treasured the words of His mouth") - although in a trial.

In short, walking in heaven means below:

- Walking in righteousness and holiness, although facing temptation.
- No bitterness, wickedness nor unclean sins in heart but upright heart, like transparent glass.

Revelation 21:21

21 The twelve gates were twelve pearls: each individual gate was of one pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.

The heart like transparent glass is to confess as what we are, such as:

- Be honest if you become discouraged of a trial
- Be honest to confess your sins to God. Do not hide anything!

In such a manner, we are learning to walk in New Jerusalem whose street was pure gold like transparent glass. To finish, let us pray that we may enter into New Jerusalem even though we have scores of weaknesses. Just be honest to God!

God bless you!